

WINTER 2018

# GARDEN DESIGN



DISPLAY UNTIL 03/10/18

\$12.95 US | \$15.95 CAN



8 1>

7 25274 29221 9

## DREAM GARDENS

*How four designers created the backyard wonderlands they always wanted*

112 | A COLOSSAL GUIDE TO CONIFERS

64 | NATURE-INSPIRED FLORAL DESIGNS

104 | ON THE HUNT FOR WILDFLOWERS





# ENGLISH EXUBERANCE

A love of English gardens transforms an 18th-century Connecticut estate into a horticultural haven anyone can tour.

**By Lise Funderburg**  
**Photography by Ngoc Minh Ngo**

This vantage point in the Double Border garden at Hollister House Gardens in Connecticut shows how vertical elements and views connect discrete garden spaces throughout the property. In the foreground are pink and red lily-flowered tulips, which homeowner George Schoellkopf says he prefers because they last longer than other varieties, “unless something eats them.”





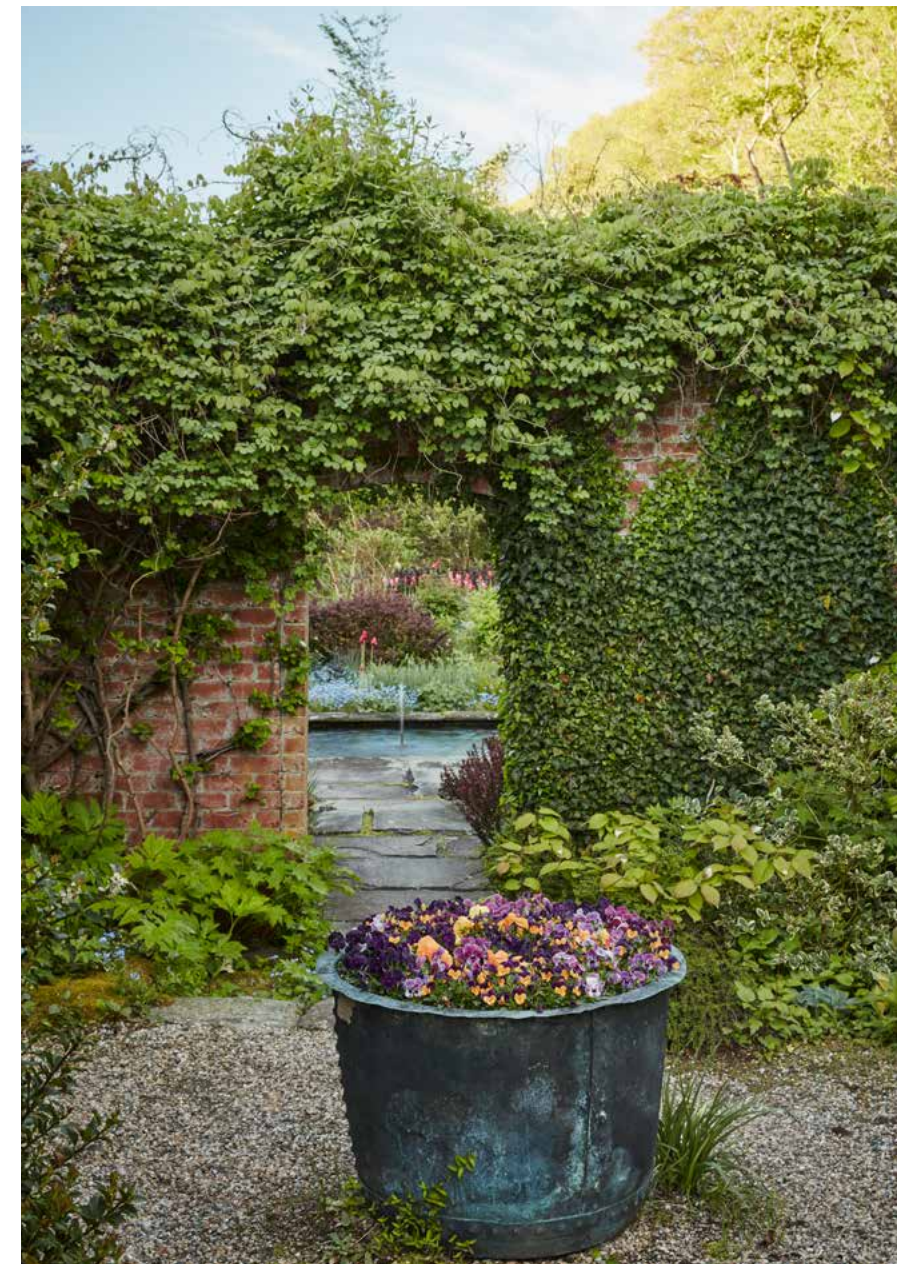
**Above:** Water is pulled by gravity from an uphill stream into the reflecting pool and propelled through a small fountain within the pond. To avoid overflow, a drain under the antique Chinese water jar allows water to spill out to the brook below. Two copper beech trees peeking out from the yew hedge at left hint at a hidden garden beyond, and a Japanese maple provides shade for an 1830s Regency iron bench in another garden room partially visible at far right.

since 2007, Schoellkopf still tends to the garden. Now, however, they outsource more onerous tasks, such as laying stone or trimming the yews. Thanks to 10 years of having horses (and their manure) on the property, as well as centuries of nutrients washing down from the hill above, the soil doesn't require much fertilizing, so they can focus their efforts on the abundant plantings.

Because he admires the chockablock English planting style, Schoellkopf consistently pushes up against growers' spacing instructions. For the most part, the serried placements result in

splendid combinations, such as his mix of ironweed, garden phlox, and day-lilies, which come fully into bloom at the end of summer. Crowding hasn't worked so well with bearded irises, which he now relegates to his potager, or with coneflowers, which responded by "either dying immediately or languishing a few years and then slipping away quietly." He still puts the satiny white 'Jan van Leeuwen' peonies into the long border beneath the house, but other varieties are consigned to a well-spaced row in the potager. Gaillardias turned out to prefer the gravel in the paths to life inside the beds.

Many longtime gardens have endured shifts in climate conditions, and Hollister House is no exception, particularly in its increasingly mild winters. "We used to have weeks at a time when it would get to 20 below every night," Schoellkopf says. "That simply does not happen now." During his 39 years in residence, he's seen the hardiness zone shift from a 4 to a 6. There is one upside: He can now grow *Buddleia*, *Magnolia ashei*, and *Franklinia alatamaha*, a rare American native that was saved from extinction in the late 1700s by naturalists John and William Bartram.



**Left:** This massive brick-faced wall that separates the Garden House terrace from the Walled Garden is made of concrete and rebar and set 6 feet into the ground. In the foreground is an English laundry copper filled with violas and pansies. This is a gathering point along the path, but through the arch in the wall visitors are able to catch a glimpse of the reflecting pool. "I like to create separate spaces that connect in such a way that you are drawn from one to the next," Schoellkopf says.

**"I MAINTAIN THAT YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH EXUBERANCE BECAUSE THE FRAME CATCHES IT."**

—SCHOELLKOPF