

# CAMERA READY

After photographing hundreds of other gardens, Stacy Bass gets some perspective on her own gorgeous landscape.

by ANN KAISER photographs STACY BASS



*The view from the back of the home is ever-changing, but always a beautiful one. The dock was in place before the outdoor overhaul, but the new landscape design encourages use of all the home's outdoor space.*



Sculptures by Allison Armour and David Harber are the focal points of the front gardens. "The front has much more of an inward feel," says Jancski of his design. "It's much more about looking at things right in front of you."



"As a garden photographer...I felt like I needed to **HAVE A PERSPECTIVE** on it and find a way to express my **POINT OF VIEW.**"

—STACY BASS



Since photographer Stacy Bass and her husband, Howard, moved into this house on the waters of Long Island Sound nearly eighteen years ago, it's gone through some major changes. Part one involved a gut renovation completed in 2010 that brought the home up to date in contemporary style (the results of which appeared in the Sept./Oct. 2011 issue of *athome*). And part two, where the couple addressed the outdoor areas of their home, followed a few years later, when the Bass's realized the inside no longer matched the outside. The landscape project also served as a chance for Stacy to finally present her own point of view on the subject, something she felt strongly about, particularly after the publication of her book, *In The Garden*, in 2012.

"As a garden photographer, I'm always asked about what kind of gardens I have. And for years and years, I used to have to say, I don't really have a garden," says Bass. "I felt like I needed to have a perspec-

tive on it and find a way to express my point of view."

After seeing landscape architect Sean Jancski's work at the 2011 A-List Awards, Bass called on him for her project and, of course, she had no shortage of ideas. In her line of work, she's seen a lot of beautiful homes and gardens, and had collected ideas that inspired her—and that could also reasonably be re-created on her third-of-an-acre plot.

A garden photographer asking for help with her own garden? "That's a tall order for a landscape architect," says Jancski. "It's a challenge, but challenge is good. It makes you up the bar."

The two turned out to be the perfect team. Says Bass: "For me, the creation of the garden was all visual. I'm not a horticulturalist; I don't know what flowers do well in what light—no idea. But I know the shapes of things that I like; I know the texture of things that I like, and I know what colors work well together. I think it was a great merger of Sean's expertise in landscape architecture and horticulture,



*The rear of the home features several spots for relaxing, including an open terrace and seating area around the fire pit and fireplace. Janeski used wood decking for a softer feel underfoot.*



Whether the family is on the water or just taking in the view, the changing colors and textures of the landscape make every season a gorgeous one.

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and my visual approach to it.”

Howard and Stacy gave Jancski a few notes and a lot of freedom. His challenge was to create something that wouldn't overwhelm the small property, while also crafting a garden with interest and a point of view. Jancski presented the couple with a 3-D rendering of the property. They made a few adjustments and then it was time to build. The final design included two very different spaces: In the front, a series of pocket gardens; and in the back, a new pool with a seating area from which the family—which includes the couple's four children—can enjoy the beautiful views of Long Island Sound. The design also picked up some of the feel and materials used in the interior renovation, such as a combination of wood and stone for the pool patio, outdoor shower, and front fence and gate.

In the rear yard, the goal was to create something more contemporary and streamlined than what previously existed. The minimal landscaping and kidney-shaped swimming pool were replaced with a seating area around a stucco-and-stone fireplace, an outdoor shower, and a pool with a double-infinity edge. At first the Bass's weren't sure they could manage an infinity pool, given the lay of the land, but

Jancski made it work on not one but two sides. In addition to the fireplace, there's a fire table in the seating area where the family can enjoy s'mores—and the view—until the snow falls.

Jancski, of course, knew that this property's major focal point is the view, which changes with the season. “Looking at those tidal marshes over the course of a year, you get a very different feel from season to season. The color is really amazing,” he says. “That made this feel like a very unique property.”

The front yard features more traditional gardens, though their crisp, architectural detail gives them a distinctly modern style. The idea was to give them a clean, contemporary look, and to have structure that would hold up in every season.

“We wanted to make it interesting without just jamming a bunch of plants in there,” says Jancski. “We wanted it to look sculptural and architectural without being too busy.” He used a minimal plant palette in a small scale—dwarf boxwoods and arborvitae for shape, small perennials and ground covers—and created space for two striking sculptures. A stainless-steel circular design by David Harber and a water sphere by Allison Armour serve as centerpieces of two of





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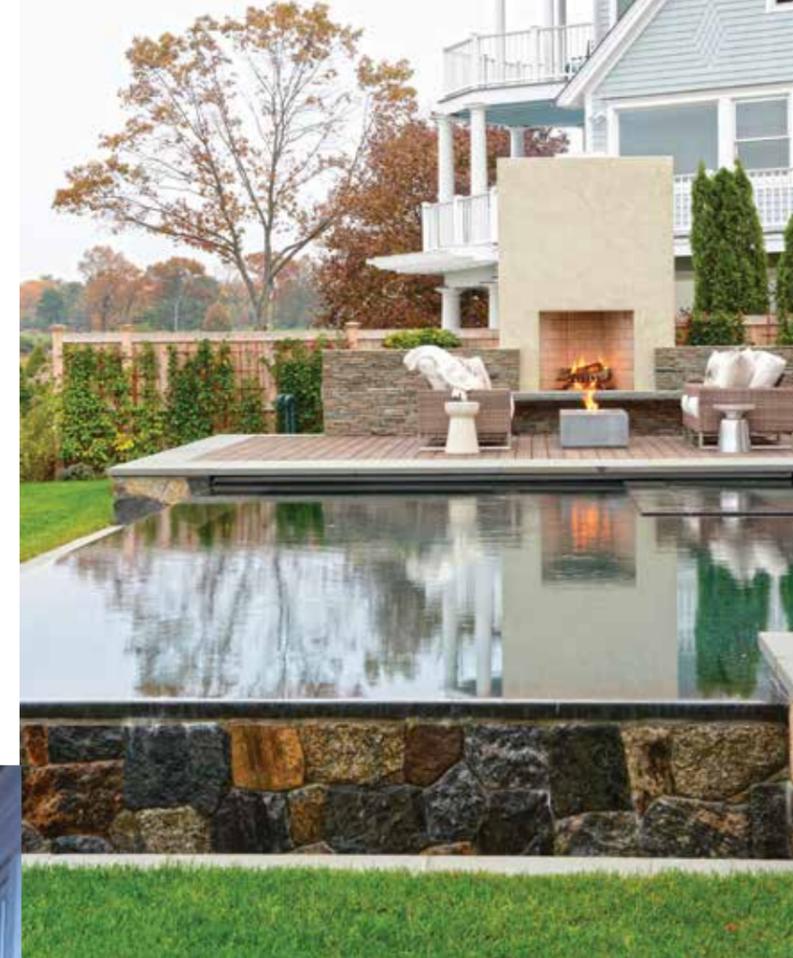
The outdoor shower is one of Jancski's favorite features of the landscape. The combination of wood and stone echoes the materials used elsewhere on the property.

the pocket gardens. The sphere can be seen from the street, and often stops passersby in their tracks.

"It's arresting in a very positive way. It just stops you and gives you a minute to contemplate," says Bass. As a photographer, she loves to see the way light interacts with the piece, too. "It looks very different at different times of day and different times of the year—I love that it's a dynamic and transforming thing."

Jancski was also thinking about light—or lack thereof—when he designed these spaces. All of the landscape and pool lighting is LED (and the lights in the pool can change color), so the family can enjoy their pool and gardens into the evening as well.

With a combination of inspiration and expertise, this home now looks fresh, modern, and fabulous from every angle. 🏡



#### RESOURCES

Allison Armour, [sphere-fountain.com](http://sphere-fountain.com)

David Harber, [davidharber.com](http://davidharber.com)

Sean Jancski Landscape Architects, 914-967-1904, [sjlandscapearchitects.com](http://sjlandscapearchitects.com)

Peter Cadoux Architects, PC, 203-227-4304, [cadouxiaa.com](http://cadouxiaa.com)

Wagner Pools, 203-655-0766, [wagnerswimmingpools.com](http://wagnerswimmingpools.com)

A. Anastasio Fence Company, 203-255-9612, [anastasiofence.com](http://anastasiofence.com)

