

PRIVATE AIR

LUXURY HOMES

Volume XIII Issue IV



Exquisite
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A MODERN HOMESTEAD

A stunning Emerald Bay residence meticulously designed by Summer Jensen, Page 152



ANTIQUES IN BLOOM

Inner Gardens, led by Stephen Block, transforms ordinary spaces into extraordinary landscapes, merging timeless antiques with lush design for an unparalleled aesthetic experience.

Words By: Gina Samarotto

Photo by Art Gray



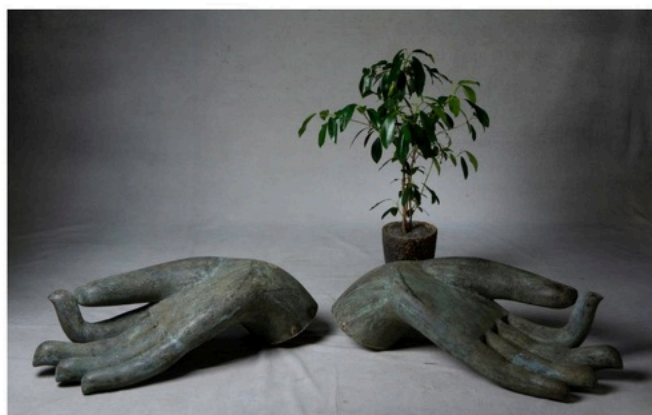
Photo by Michael Clifford

It seems an idyllic pursuit for treasure hunters among us: perusing Parisian flea markets for bespoke finds, discovering hidden gems nestled in the shadowed corners of abandoned barns, and exploring the myriad colors, textures, and heady scents offered up in lush growing fields. What may sound like a dream to some is, in the case of Stephen Block, a quintessential career.

Stephen Block, the visionary owner and founder of Inner Gardens, has successfully melded his passions as an antique dealer and landscape designer into a design firm that quickly became the coveted 'go-to' for celebrity clients and celebrated architects alike. Having designed enchanting spaces for luminaries ranging from Elton John to esteemed venues like the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, Block's unique take on design creates elevated spaces that not only invoke emotion but also celebrate aesthetics at their most sublime.

Formally trained in horticulture, Block's design talent is largely self-taught. Eschewing hours at a drafting table for traditional landscape plans, Block prefers a 'point and gesture' design approach. This method draws clients into the proposed space in real-time, as he verbally illustrates his concepts. His passion is contagious, as evidenced by his roster of clients and their drop-dead gorgeous spaces.

"Where many landscape designers opt for spaces with younger plant material, I prefer to use full-size specimens. Once installed, these create a space that is immediately mature and ready to welcome guests," Block explains. This approach seamlessly integrates with the found objects that serve as focal centerpieces in Inner Gardens' work. "In my search for pieces, I look for those objects that immediately speak to me—pieces that elicit an emotional response." Inner Gardens offers clients a curated collection that includes unique pieces like vintage Spanish candle stands, upcycled to become a stunning collection of patinaed martini tables; English chimneys reimaged as striking pairs of raised plant stands; and rare Willy Guhl concrete pod chairs. Even a primitively styled dog, crafted in mid-century Africa from wood and iron, doesn't just speak—it bellows with emotion. "In placing the pieces I find, I wait for the 'right' project—one that will best showcase a one-of-a-kind, once-in-a-lifetime treasure."



DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE

To satisfy the demand for objects needed in multiples or to recreate pieces no longer available, Inner Gardens launched its own collection of meticulously detailed, high-quality reproductions. Indeed, their line of reproduction containers can be found in the most distinguished of rooms and outdoor spaces. From troughs designed to be lightweight enough for rooftop gardens yet distinctive enough to satisfy even the most discerning eye, to delicate bronze handkerchief planters and exquisitely hefty, laboriously crafted fountains, tables, and statues—the impressively sprawling assortment of objects showcased in Block's line of reproductions spans diverse and comfortably sprawls across decades of design styles.

Stephen Block's extraordinary work at Inner Gardens stands as a testament to his passion for beauty and a well-honed intuition. His expertise in sourcing garden art and antiques worldwide, selecting "hidden gems" and "place makers" as key components in his designs, further underscores his reputation for excellence. Through collaborations with top-tier design talents like Michael S. Smith, Martyn Lawrence Bullard, Jeremiah Brent, and The Clements, Stephen has cemented his status in the design world.



Adopting principles of wabi-sabi, Stephen's approach to interiorscaping and exteriorscaping transforms spaces into exceptional environments, as seen in notable projects at the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills, Spago, Soho House West Hollywood, the Maybourne Hotel Beverly Hills, and The Proper Hotels. His meticulous attention to detail and skillful incorporation of diverse plant varieties for both beauty and functionality exemplify his commitment to creating timeless and engaging landscapes. The acclaim for his celebrity landscape designs, catering to clients such as Elton John, Ellen Pompeo, Sofia Vergara, and Ashley Tisdale, speaks volumes about his ability to blend functionality with unmatched aesthetic appeal, making Stephen Block and Inner Gardens a beacon of design innovation and excellence. ✈

www.innergardens.com



Photo by Michael Clifford