

Superbly
CIRCULAR

A difficult space is transformed into a contemporary blend of circles, colours and textures



There is nothing like a garden with awkward spaces, converging lines and odd angles to throw a gardener's stride out of kilter. It is much easier to work in a garden space with regular proportions and definite lines. However, not every garden is stylishly symmetrical and there are ways to work around odd angles and irregular features.

This month's garden presented a design challenge of this nature. The awkward area could not be more prominent; from whichever angle you enter the property, you walk alongside it and are exposed to it.

THE CHALLENGE

1. Create impact in a way that is best enjoyed at close quarters.
2. Planting should not create a security risk near the front door, and the look needs to be clean and uncluttered.
3. The area should remain attractive all year round.
4. The area should be easy to maintain.

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THE SOLUTION: A STRONG GROUND PATTERN

A superb design consisting of a series of different sized circles overlapping in an interesting polka dot ground pattern.

Circles are a very powerful design tool in small and awkwardly shaped areas. This dominant shape diverts the eye away from the irregular perimeter lines and onto what is contained within the circle. Circles are striking and allow scope for simplistic plant choices without sacrificing impact. By maintaining a simple planting design, the overall impression is strengthened.

PLANT CHOICES

There is a golden rule to bear in mind when working with a restricted plant palette that will be enjoyed up close and personal: do not overlook the fantastic contribution that texture differences can make to the experience of the garden. Texture variation should be maximised even within the same colour spectrum. Combining foliage in contrasting colours and textures and different shapes will produce superb interest. The simplistic ground pattern allows the gardener full scope in creating dramatic contrast, as the effects will not become overpowering.

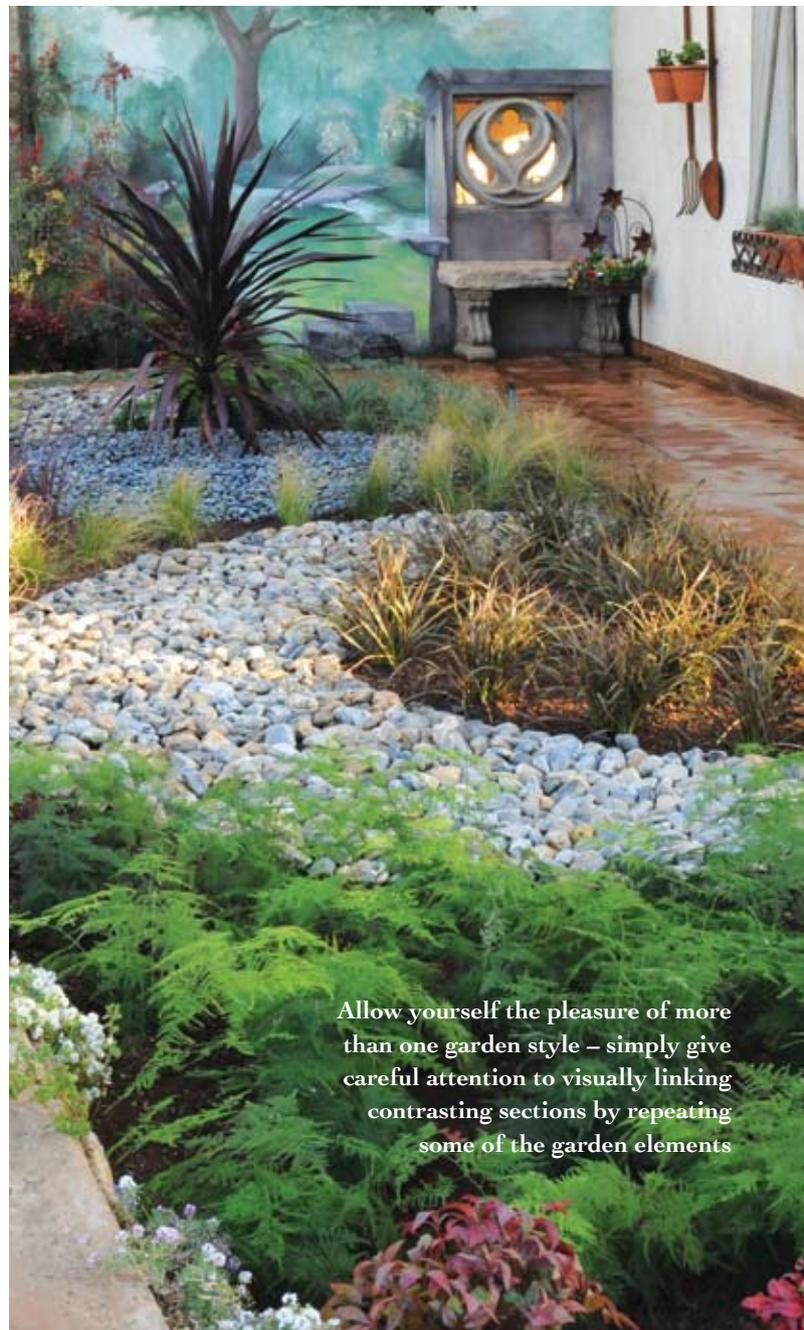
CONTRASTING FOLIAGE

Plant choices in this month's garden consist mostly of a no fuss feast of ornamental grasses. Colourful *Nandina domestica* 'Pygmaea' provides a fiery winter display alongside the fairy-like lightness of the fronds of *Asparagus plumosus*. Cheeky tufts of grey *Carex* 'China Blue' seem to hold hands to form a perfect circle alongside the irregular wavy leaves of *Phormium* 'Baby Bronze'.

Delicately arching *Scirpus* 'Green Mist' develops an attractive golden tinge in winter, offset by the maroon shade of *Phormium* 'Rubra nana' in its soft architectural shape.

LANDSCAPING MATERIALS

Hard landscaping materials need to be equally well considered to maximise interest. 'Crocodile skin' pebbles were chosen to create a flawless fusion of shades of grey and charcoal, blending with elements of earthy sandstone and terracotta. This effectively links the colour of the ground shapes with the sandstone type cladding of the retaining walls edging the area.



Allow yourself the pleasure of more than one garden style – simply give careful attention to visually linking contrasting sections by repeating some of the garden elements



The use of 'crocodile skin' pebbles sets the tone for the complementary use of beautiful charcoal pebbles in two of the circles, as an expansion on the contemporary feel of the garden space. Two *Cordyline* 'Burgundy Spire' plants sit proudly on the smooth charcoal carpet creating a beautiful texture and colour contrast – both a worthy focal point from two viewing angles.

Glass beads have been casually scattered amongst the charcoal pebbles, around the 'Burgundy Spires' to catch the light and instantly draw the eye to these focal points.

CURTAIN CALL

Three leopard trees outline the stage for a beautiful mosaic mirror ball water feature with water dancing out the top and mysteriously disappearing into the blackness of a sunken pool. Light patterns from the mirror pieces dance on the already mottled and rough texture of the leopard tree bark. These lively reflections animate the area and stir the senses.

An awkward asymmetrical 'L'-shaped space was transformed into a contemporary garden and sits comfortably next to contrasting garden styles, anchored and blending with its surroundings by a careful repetition of colours, plant textures and the choice of hard landscaping materials. This garden has come full circle.

- The addition of scattered glass beads repeats the element of shimmer and light refraction, in keeping with the major focal point.
- 'Crocodile skin' pebbles visually link the sandstone type wall cladding and adjoining charcoal pebbles.
- The attractive mottled bark of a cluster of leopard trees adds another dimension of texture and colour interest.
- *Cordyline* 'Burgundy Spire' offset in sleek circles of charcoal pebbles form a thoroughly contemporary and dramatic focal point. 🌿



PLANT LIST

1. *Nandina domestica* 'Pygmaea'
2. *Phormium* 'Rubra nana'
3. *Cordyline* 'Burgundy Spire'
4. *Phormium* 'Baby Bronze'
5. *Carex* 'China Blue'
6. *Asparagus plumosus*
7. *Scirpus* 'Green Mist'
8. 'Crocodile skin' pebbles
9. Charcoal pebbles with glass beads

