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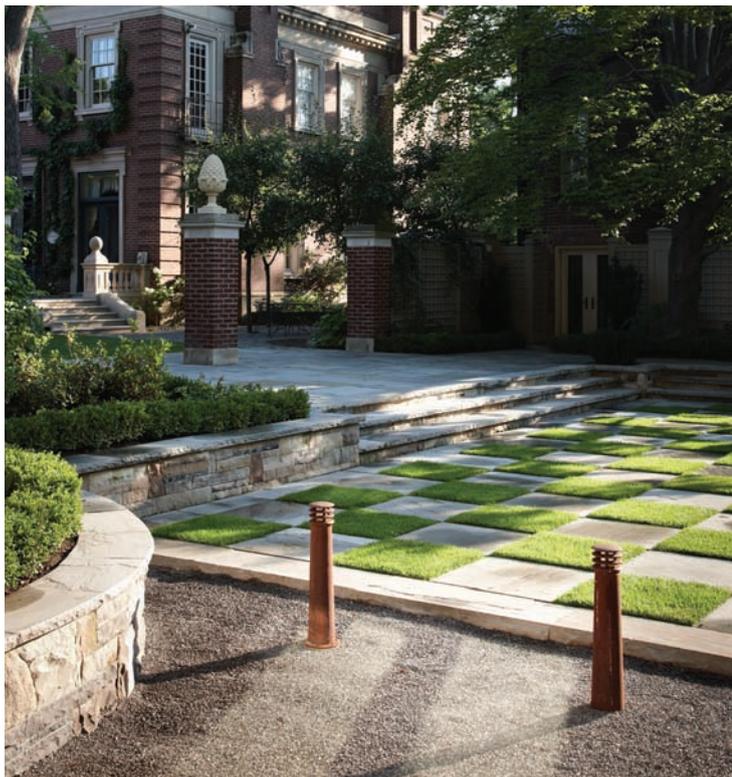


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WORLDS AWAY

Just steps from the main house, a tranquil garden cottage makes the perfect city retreat for a busy couple.

Text by RHEA SEYMOUR | Photography by MARK BURSTYN



It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. When the owners of this stately Georgian home saw the chance to buy the land next door four years ago, they jumped at it. “The property was a bit of a mess, with an old brick garage and a meandering path with leafy shrubs,” says the wife. “You wouldn’t even have wanted to sit and read because it was too dark.”

Excited by the possibilities, the couple called on Toronto architect Anthony Belcher to integrate their garden with the new property. Together, the decision was made to demolish the existing garage, build a stone terrace to extend from the original garden path and construct a “summerhouse” as the visual focus of a new courtyard. Raised in England, the wife loved the idea: “Roald Dahl wrote all his books in a rustic summerhouse, and I was taken with the notion of having a place for rest and refuge, removed from the busyness of the main house.”

Belcher’s design for the summerhouse is reminiscent of 18th-century Palladian garden pavilions with classical features,

ABOVE: The expanded garden’s striking checkerboard lawn is an entertaining space that’s big enough to accommodate a tent. **Garden and summerhouse design**, Anthony Belcher Architect.

TOP RIGHT: The “moon gate” within the cedar fence creates a framed view of the manicured garden and classically designed summerhouse. **Fence construction**, Salivan Landscape; **summerhouse construction**, Moonraker Construction.





including columns and an ocular window. The interior, which includes a bathroom and kitchenette, evokes a Nantucket beach house, thanks to interior designer Julia West's light colour palette and traditional furniture. She chose durable indoor-outdoor fabric for the upholstered chairs and covered the floor with no-fuss cream porcelain tile. "It looks like limestone but doesn't scratch, so it's perfect in a room where you've just walked across a gravel patch to come inside," says West.

From the seating area of the summerhouse, the owners have a unique perspective of the main house and low-maintenance garden, for which Belcher used a tasteful mix of white and green shrubs and perennial flowers, including clipped boxwood hedges, climbing hydrangeas, roses and English ivy. The courtyard was surfaced with alternating squares of lawn and flagstone to create a checkerboard pattern — a tribute to a rooftop garden the owners discovered on a family trip to Paris.

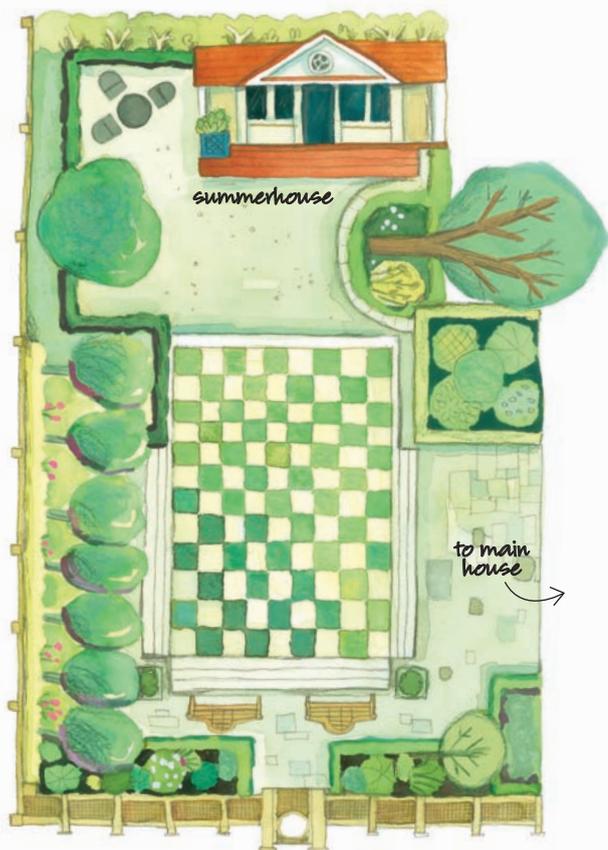
"It's like having a cottage in the city," says the wife. "Instead of driving up the highway, you can just wander down to the bottom of your garden and go missing for a few hours."

ABOVE: A wall of folding doors opens the summerhouse to the garden. Cast-iron lighting bollards provide a divide between the gravel and the lawn. **Doors**, Tradewood Windows & Doors; **circular window**, Loewen; **lights**, Mille Luce Designs.

RIGHT: Exposed Douglas-fir rafters and ridge beams complement beadboard panelling and generous mouldings. **Interior design**, Julia West, Julia West Home; **yellow pillows, throw**, Hollace Cluny; **vase**, Fresh Home & Garden; **basket**, Angus & Company.



The Plan



ABOVE: The raised stone terrace is planted with graceful linden trees, forming a hedge on stilts and a backdrop to the view from the terrace. Clipped boxwood shrubs and climbing hydrangea bushes bring structure to the space. **Perennials, shrubs, vines, O.J. Muller Landscape Contractor.** LEFT: The fences have latticed panels to encourage the growth of climbing flowers between classically detailed pilasters. Teak benches are reproductions of a design by the British architect Edwin Lutyens. **Benches, Eddo Pollak Design.**

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Illustration by Melissa Sweet