

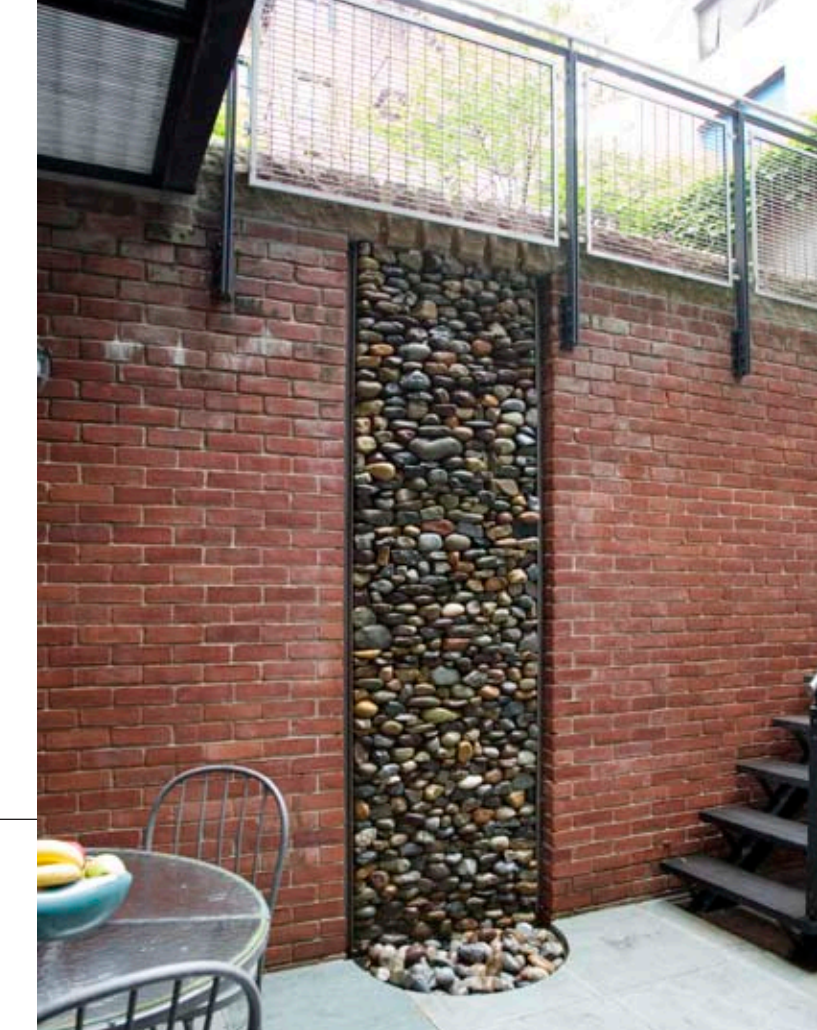


ROBIN KEY

ROBIN KEY LANDSCAPE DESIGN

A good interior designer will often speak of clean lines, quality materials, comfortable spaces, and inspiring views. Robin Key will describe the same qualities in her own work. However, she is not an interior designer. Instead, she is a landscape architect recognized for creating outdoor rooms with the same attention to detail and varied design aesthetics as one who practices indoors. Her landscape architecture firm, Robin Key Landscape Design, completes projects ranging from small urban rooftop and backyard gardens to expansive country estate gardens. Sensitive to client needs, community contexts, and the environment as a whole, Robin Key Landscape Design approaches its work with a collaborative spirit and award-winning creativity.

The firm seeks design solutions that respond to both the surrounding architecture and site conditions. A contemporary house might be complemented by a limited plant palette with specimen trees. An expansive property might have a layered arrangement of large and small trees, shrubs, and perennials. Key's strength is her knowledge of plant material and her ability to effectively organize outdoor spaces. Working extensively in the urban environment, she has broad experience with

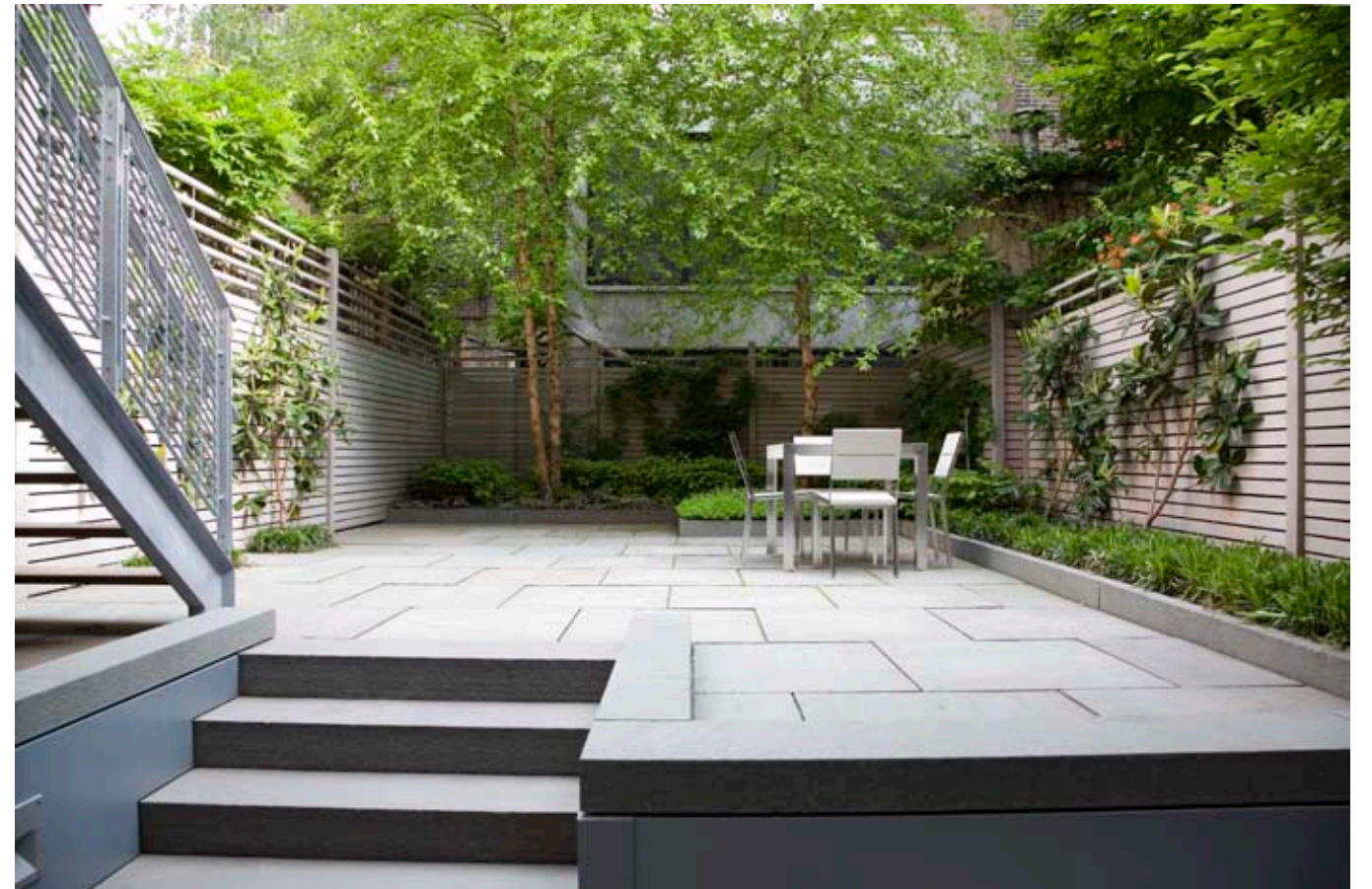


shade loving perennials and shrubs. “We like to use as much native plant material as possible,” she explains. This makes the landscape much more maintainable. Creative problem-solving—such as combating voracious deer appetites or identifying plants that grow in sandy beach soil—is a critical part of successful designs.

The firm's landscapes reflect each client's style and wishes. “I like to design gardens so clients actually use them,” explains Key, who spends a lot of time talking with clients about how they will use outdoor spaces alone and in conjunction with indoor rooms. She is mindful of views out from indoors, and how garden furniture relates to furnishings inside a home. She often specifies outdoor furniture to encourage flexibility. Ottomans that multi-purpose as tables or seating are a popular inclusion. The firm works closely with craftsmen who share a commitment to quality materials and workmanship.

ABOVE
A river-rock waterfall creates a cooling retreat in this multi-level urban garden.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer

FACING PAGE
This Greenwich Village townhouse garden was designed to function as a space for entertaining guests as well as an outdoor play space for a young family of six.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer



In twenty years of practice, Key's firm has become known for its hands-on approach and close client relationships. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Plant and Soil Science from the University of Vermont and completed graduate coursework in landscape architecture at Cornell University. The licensed landscape architect practiced for ten years before beginning her own firm in 1987. Today she is joined by two associates; the team accepts a limited number of projects each year to ensure a high level of attention to each one.

A native of Ireland, Senior Associate Gareth Mahon studied engineering in Dublin and Glasgow, Scotland, before moving to the US to pursue a career in landscape design. He received his Masters of Urban Design degree at City College New York where he performed graduate research in sustainable design in Ecuador. His

interest in urban spaces led to his design taking first place in the Williamsburg Waterfront Design Competition for the East River in Brooklyn.

ABOVE LEFT

Details for this restoration project include a widened basement entrance complemented by gracious brownstone detailing and new custom ironwork, which references historic ironwork in this New York City neighborhood.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer

ABOVE RIGHT

Modern-day amenities, such as a radiant heating system installed in the front stairway, work seamlessly into the restoration of this 19th-century row house in the Chelsea Historic District.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer

FACING PAGE TOP

A series of multi-stemmed crape myrtle trees sit in custom zinc planter boxes, creating a lacey green backdrop for this private terrace garden.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer

FACING PAGE BOTTOM

The clean modern lines of this West Village brownstone garden are highlighted by generous bluestone detailing, a refined plant palette and a custom-designed fence.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer



Associate Erin Moriarty holds a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from Cornell University and a Bachelor of Science in Ethnobotany from Vassar College. She has a vast knowledge of plants, landscape elements, and cultural traditions from around the world and has taught courses on environmental responsibility to both children and adults.

In addition to practice, Key donates services to several schools and churches. At her weekend home in Vermont, Key has extensive woodland, perennial, vegetable, and fruit gardens and participates in the Vermont Tree Farm Program. The firm has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity's Bronx Row House Project. This combination of design and hands-on involvement lends balance and perspective to every member of the team.

Robin Key Landscape Design has been recognized with the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation's Front Stoop Award in both 2006 and 2001.



TOP LEFT
Woodland plant material includes variegated Solomon's seal, Japanese painted fern and sweet woodruff.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer

BOTTOM LEFT
The delicate steel canopy and wisteria vines provide much needed shade on this rooftop garden. Custom lead-coated copper planters anchor the space with mature plantings.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer

FACING PAGE LEFT
The metal canopy is covered with wisteria at the height of its bloom.
Photograph by Francine Fleischer

FACING PAGE RIGHT
The existing native plant vocabulary of ferns, trilliums, columbines and baneberry were complemented with shade-loving perennials to create a layered plant border at the designer's personal 1806-built farmhouse.
Photograph by Gareth Mahon



Q & A MORE ABOUT ROBIN ...

WHEN I'M NOT WORKING YOU CAN FIND ME . . .

Working in my Vermont garden weeding, moving plants around, experimenting. I also love to cook the wonderful food that my husband produces in our vegetable garden.

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF BEING A DESIGNER?

Collaborating with others on design ideas, problem-solving, and having the opportunity to research and explore different materials, plants, and construction methods.

WHO HAS HAD THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?

The landscape architect Jens Jensen.

WHAT IS A SINGLE THING YOU WOULD DO TO BRING A DULL HOUSE TO LIFE?

Develop beautiful views to enjoy while looking out from the inside.

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