

GARDENS Four Seasons

GARDENDESIGN
NOV./DEC. 2018

FOCAL POINTS



*“A garden is a
delight to the eye
& a solace for the
soul”*

~ Sadi

*(wish I could
describe so
eloquently! - sigh!)*

The term Focal Point gets tossed around quite a bit in the world of design but it pretty much boils down to the item people notice first or pay the most attention to upon entering a space. It's a precise strong element & often will complete a view, adding to the interest.



- *BEFORE* - a pretty scene.....



.....AFTER - spruced up to the nth degree with the addition of a red bench. All the plantings stand in sharper contrast - & surprisingly the rocks appear more defined.

It's wise advice to keep the number of Focal Points to a minimum, otherwise you risk the scene becoming too busy & cluttered looking. However, I am the worst offender of not following this guideline. As I compose my latest E-Newsletter, I've taken a different view of my own garden. I have waa-a-y too many Focal Points but my excuse is that I want them all! But enough about my yard!

Seriously tho' a general rule is to have one 'Prime Focus' per view - this offers the most visual impact for sure.

What can act as a Focal Point?

Any strong feature in your yard can become a Focal Point. A quaint garden shed can take centre stage (so to speak) but so



can a particular plant. A gateway, an arbour, fetching container, or even a decorative path can work too.

If there is a part of your garden - a border or distant view that just needs that certain something - perhaps adding a Centrepiece is just what the doctor ordered?



- a lone boulder or a rocky composition provides a phenomenal Focal Point

Equally, as you can tell below - a spectacular view can be played up - whether off in the distance or on your own property.



- the shapely tree trunk is the Focal Point in this view.

Where should it be placed?

It can act as a central point, off to one side or a surprise as you 'round a corner.

The human eye naturally follows lines so it can be placed at the intersection of paths or borders, anywhere you want to

‘focus’ attention or at the point of your yard’s ‘longest view’.

Our eyes naturally scan a vista starting with the ‘longest view’ or the point farthest off in the distance. Your longest view could be straight out into your yard running parallel to your fence. If you’ve a small or irregular shaped yard the longest view might be on an angle off to a deep corner.



- in this photo the ‘longest view’ is played up with a beckoning shady haven!

Additionally it can be used to detract attention from an element within the yard or in a neighbouring view (which is an even *longer* view - but we won’t get into that today.)

Maybe you want to play up an architectural feature like, say a 'Barney' Purple Front Door & want a plant nearby to enhance that? *(I can hear you giggling - I really DO have a purple front door! :)*



- in this modernistic front yard the fetching small Spruce grabs your attention first!

Other considerations - Will it be viewable in all four seasons? Seen from a window?

What can it do:

It grabs your attention, acts as a visual starting point & is usually a very impressive object.

It can be used as inspiration for the rest of the design - for instance - I've often planned a yard around a specific Focal Point.



- the Centre of Attention can be as simple or as luxe as you desire....here is a basic post & rail corner dressed up amongst pretty perennials.....

a& here is the identical idea dressed up with white picket fence backdrop - same concept - different materials.



On the other hand it can be added after the yard is planned - much as you would add throw cushions on a sofa or armchair.

It can either complement the surroundings or create contrast to them & in doing so, amp up the rest of the garden.

I always find it interesting when we take a closer look at our yards with a specific agenda, particularly in this season when the 'bare bones' are more apparent, we can be surprised by what we see that might otherwise be missed.



READER FEEDBACK

Response from last issue's GARDENDESIGN - SECRET GARDENS.....

“Hello Denise:

I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed this particular issue and that I can really relate to it because, I realize that my garden is my ‘zen place’ as well. Putsying in my garden is the best free therapy for me because, I love being outdoors enjoying the warmth of the sun and the beauty of nature. It’s where I let my creative juices flow or just get lost in even the smallest task and forget about everything else. It’s where I connect most with my mom who loved flowers and the robins. She loved her ferrels too which fortunately I don’t have to deal with as it would break my heart to know they were out in the elements especially in winter.

Regards & Best Wishes.

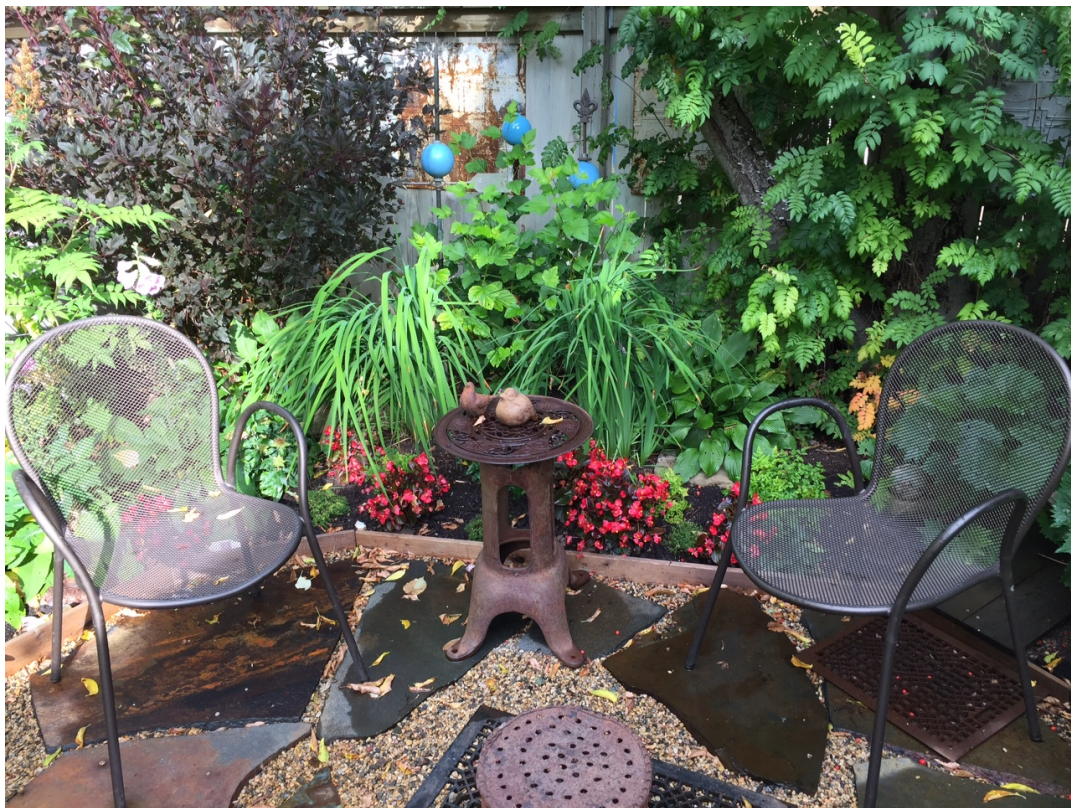
Rose S.”

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Thanks Rose - I think many of us can relate to your enjoyment!

SECRET GARDENS also prompted a local reader to share photos of the Relaxation Area she'd developed. Impressive how alongside some ingenuity, a dream & a bit o' sweat a fabulously relaxing space can be created! Joan M. told me the metal lid is from old coal or wood burning stoves like my Gramma used to cook on - brilliant!

I'll be checking out yard & antique sales for a few to use as stepping stones in my own yard. Great tip Joan - thanks for sharing!



I love hearing from you so keep those cards & letters comin' in folks! :)







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## **CHRISTMAS SHOPPING?**

Why not a Brilliant **GIFT of LANDSCAPE DESIGN ?** (also a nifty idea for yourself !)

I am celebrating our FESTIVE SEASON with a **SPECIAL OFFER** on my **CLASSES & SERVICES.**

### **CHOOSE FROM:**

**\$20** off - a One Hour Consultations

**\$25** off - Landscape Design CLASSES

**\$60** off - CONCEPT PLANS

**10%** off - any Full LANDSCAPE  
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(price varies according to option selected)

Simply make your selection & pay in full by Dec. 31, 2018.

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Satin Ribbon!

FREE delivery anywhere within Saskatoon city limits.

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Existing Yards!”***

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## PLANT OF THE MONTH

### COLUMNAR MUGO PINE (*Pinus mugho* 'Columnaris')



This just in! I've decided to add another tree to my *already* full back yard.

Rhubarb -  
find another spot!  
& so what if I have less space for Vegetables?

Priorities,  
right? :)

A nifty bit of year round green to add to any size yard as it reaches a height of only 10' & just a 4' spread. Finely



needled, it offers a striking emerald green foliage & typical pine cones as accents. Come to think of it - this would be a perfect tree to decorate with outdoor Christmas lights!



A major sun lover like most conifers it requires well-drained soils (ie: not good for low spots where water collects) & is quite tolerant of urban air pollution. Once established it's extremely drought resistant & with a hardiness of zone 2b grows well in Stoon gardens. The compact size makes it a choice selection for small or large yards!



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## DESIGN BRILLIANCE



This fabulous Gate Arbour takes my breathe away! Not only does it do a remarkable job Focusing your Attention & then some - it also shines at visually introducing the sumptuous garden beyond!

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**GARDENDESIGN  
BACK ISSUES** on  
**GARDEN DECOR** might  
spark your interest in adding  
an item for your Focal  
Point?

Zip me a request & it'll  
be yours!

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& NOW you can kick back & peruse my newest  
PINTEREST Board - FOCAL POINTS - more motivation to  
check your own piece of Paradise for possible locations.

Simply click this link & voila!

<https://www.pinterest.ca/gardens4seasons/focal-point/>





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## 2019 Jan/Feb GARDENDESIGN

will feature a look at some of the **BEST ONLINE SOURCES** for unusual **SEEDS & PLANTS**. We all have that desire to add something just a little more outstanding than what is commonly available. Watch for it!

Meantime - I want to thank all my readers for welcoming **GARDENDESIGN** into your life every couple of months - I consider it a privilege to be able to inform & every once in a while, entertain!

I wish you ALL the warmest, joy filled Holiday Season ever - no matter how, when or where you celebrate!

Merry,  
Merry CHRISTMAS!



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**Feel free to forward this to any friends!**

*(or they can email me to request their own copy!)*

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**DID YOU KNOW? - I never, Ever, EVER share my email list - NEVER! :)**

\* to UNSUBSCRIBE from GARDENDESIGN please reply to this email with NO THANKS!

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