TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE DATE: 5/20/11

EPISODE NAME: Landscape Design for Your Home

First of all I am new to Vermont I've been here six years home and I'm so thrilled has to be here. I came from the Boston area I loved it there I was there 30 years but then was able to come up here to Saxons River and I don't think I'll ever go back its wonderful. I came to this field because I fell in love with Japanese Gardens in the middle of graduate school I was at architecture school I open up a book on Japanese Gardens and went this is something I can do. I was able to go to Japan and work with a garden master come back and start building gardens teaching about gardens and learning more for the rest of my life. So I've continued to do that I still designed gardens all over the country and some in Canada and have the studio here to do that. I do lectures all over the place like you do and I write books and blog. I have a wonderful life.

Leonard.: Sounds like you really kept up with a lot of things. I know we have seen one of the landscapes and you mention some of the others. What's the process? Is there a process you go through when you're looking at a landscape?

Julie.: Yes I've tried to narrow it down to the simplest language possible and I'll do it as fast as I can. I have a new book home outside that talks about the six steps that I think you every landscape designer and every homeowner can go through to look at their landscape. What we do is start with a site what I call lay of the land. We look at the actual site as we do today and how this site analysis of in the shade and all those things that are normally part of a site the look at but you also look at the ideal site. What makes you different? What are your longings for landscape? What are the daydreaming places you when two as a child that can tell me something about who you are and what you want in your garden. I have a personality test in the book it's really fun and a static pairing so I can really understand my clients well and make their garden different than anything anyone else is has ever seen. That's number one member two quickly is big moves and how you organize the site. At several ways to do that. That's the hard part of design for people. The third part is what I call comfort zone and looking at all the areas around the house for instance the what we might call the front yard I call the welcoming zone in if it's meant to be welcoming then how you make it loo the k that way and the work that way. Then I go on to making it flow. How to link all those zones together so that they float together in a wonderful way using paths and places pausing in places stopping places. The next piece the fifth one is how it is you place the pieces. How do the elements of a landscape go
together so that they are aesthetically pleasing. That's not easy but it turns out that most people are pretty good at it if they only just rest themselves. Finally we look at sensory pleasure which is the details of the landscape of plantings finely at the end I get to the plantings in the book. Because the rest of it is all about how do you lay out a property so that it becomes a pleasure ground for you and your family.

Leonard.: I think a lot of people are scared off by the thought of designing a whole landscape. They have no clue where to start they think I can’t possibly think about all this. Is it that scary? Or can people just get involved and do it?

Julie.: It's a great question because it isn't that scary. It is scary for people absolutely I see this all the time. Even architects who know how to design houses or interior designers they walk outside and they're scared too. What is it about it? It's boundless pace that we're dealing with we're the sky and set a ceiling and the space your neighbor's house is it's hard but it's not impossible because we know a lot already we know how to work on the inside of houses and it's really the same principles that apply inside apply outside. We know how to paint walls we know how to deal with color of those things are not so difficult. When I tried to do when we come outside is to completely demystify the process of landscape design and make it as simple as simplest language I quite possibly can. I hope it's helping people I think it is because really it's a step by step process. That you go through

Leonard.: The other thing that you mentioned about the whole aspect of dreaming and getting back to childhood. Tell us a little bit more why it's so important to us as adults designing the landscape.

Julie.: I think that for me that old adage form follows function. That's not really true the first thing is the form that we create and the land should follow the feelings that we have functions can go after that but if you don't get the feeling right then you haven't succeeded in making a beautiful garden or landscape somehow. What I've done is to get at my client’s feelings about what they want to create in this garden everyone's different everyone's unique eye as the simple question forage ago was a child for daydreaming for reverie for reflection where you go Leonard?

Leonard.: The woods. I was lucky I had some nearby I was in the country.

Julie.: Okay now some people went to the sea some people went to the top of a mountain some people went to a little place under the rhododendron bushes. There all different there all the same but it's really helpful to get people to remember that they have strong feelings about what a landscape means to them.

Leonard.: Not just a function of getting from point a to point b where's the patio and these things are very functional but it's having a landscape that is not only functional but you really feel relaxed on whenever the feeling is you want in the landscape.
Julie.: Exactly. And along with that is of course let's get our children back out into landscapes to their too much behind the screens as well as we are and this of course is a big movement in this country right now. Thank heaven no child left behind and no child left inside is really what we're looking at. We've done a number of children's gardens. It's not so hard to help children play once more the way we all played outside in the landscapes. If the landscape has some richness to it texture and some interest if it's all bulldoze down and it's just lawn why would they want to be there.

Leonard.: I know it's interesting you were talking and one of the garden's it came to mind that you worked on was one of my favorite ever and it's interesting you mention the six steps us thinking about the music garden in Toronto and the six different parts. Could you tell us a bit about that garden it's just fabulous.

Julie.: Thank you Leonard that's probably my favorite I should say. This is a garden it's a public park right on harbor front which is an important part of Toronto. Its backdrop is of course the harbor with all the energy of fog horns and there's an Airport. All these things going on in the harbor. Not an easy place to put a contemplative garden up against. The other side of the garden are all condominiums so that it's a wonderful place to be. You look from the terraces of the condominiums on to the garden and onto the harbor. The big idea of the garden was a piece of music. The first cello suite by Bach. I was offered this is an opportunity to design as three acre public park by yo yo mama the wonderful eminent cellist who is just a special person in the world. He had this idea that why not have a garden a contemplative garden and have the design of the based on a piece of music. So he asked me if I could do this I said maybe and I listened really closely to the music and had everyone around me listen to it. Out of that music I cleaned both feelings about how it is when you go through the preludes section how that feels and forms how does that make me think about nature. When people hear it want to play it in my lectures a lot they hear riverscapes they hear flow they hear water going in and out and movement up and down and that's what I created. There's a little riverscapes the two walk through. The corant to the next movement of the garden is hard to describe you have but it has this consistent movement through it and I create this little squirrel trails and places you can be all in a birch grove. It went from there it was a very joyful process as a great garden should they.

Leonard.: From the chance I had to visit it I remember one part coming down some steps I think it was a dance moves perhaps.

Julie.: Yes the jheek.

Leonard.: Coming down you almost if you did it fast you almost felt like you're dancing.

Julie.: Perfect yes.
Leonard.: It really physically brought you into that whole spirit of music. I think the naturalism of it the plantings there's a lot people can do even if they don't do something like that on their own landscapes to help bring some concept to mind to their own landscape.

Julie.: Exactly and I think what people need to sometimes do is forget for a while the worries about the technical aspects of garden's. For little while we think about what do they want to feel when there and then garden. How does it make them feel and one of the reasons why I ask that question about childhood daydreaming place if I had a plan to work with is because that reminds them of all those feelings they had in the landscape when they were little and realize that's what they still want. They want to have a place that satisfies and fulfills these longings for beauty meaning and joy and contemplation in your life.

Leonard.: Now you have a new initiative could you tell us about that?

Julie.: I love what I do so much you can see that I'm sure and much of what we do in the studio is to work for institutional clients like museums and we do children's gardens an all sorts of things. We do a lot of residential gardens and I love doing all of them but I felt like we were reaching all the people that I'd like to reach I can't design something for everyone and can really afford to so we thought now we have the new Internet age let's see if we can't help all kinds of homeowners. So we've created a process called home outside design based on the book. For inexpensive amount of money you can hire us as long as you measure your site for us. If you are relatively simple site we'll send you a little workbook and you'll do the personality test and the children stay draining place an all these other things we ask send it back with your measure drawing and we'll come up with two designs. You can take where you live in the country to your local garden center or to another designer or doing yourself and we're trying to help more people that way and educate them about how great landscape design is and get people back outside. That too much behind computer screens TV screens iPods. They need to get outside because nature's the great healer.

I hope you've enjoyed our visit with Julie today and learned a few tips about landscape design. For University of Vermont Extension, I'm Leonard Perry.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. University of Vermont Extension, Burlington, Vermont. University of Vermont Extension, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating, offer education and employment to everyone without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.