

DOYLE HERMAN DESIGN ASSOCIATES

*DHDA Grows Its
Landscape Business*

BY CANDACE MANROE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY NEIL LANDINO JR.

WHETHER GROWING ALONG the East Coast or in the Middle East, the award-winning international landscape designs of Doyle Herman Design Associates, viewed carefully, all reveal the same signature. “We lean towards strong geometry and bold structural forms,” says Kathryn Herman, one of the firm’s two principals, along with James Doyle. Their designs then leaven those assertive features with a soothing symmetry and sensitivity to a property’s architecture and its past. Their signature style’s holistic attention to detail means every t is crossed, every i dotted, “from custom gate ornaments to a type of gravel,” says Herman. In May, after 20 years of planting its flourishing John Hancock on landscapes at home and abroad from its base in Greenwich, Connecticut, the firm went bicoastal with the opening of an office in Los Angeles. “We wanted a national presence,” says James Doyle, “and California has a strong design community. Being here affords us yet another design and horticultural challenge.”

Already they’re engaged in seven projects across the state. Either Doyle or Herman has a hand in every project with Anna Hoffman serving as the lead California designer. “Being here is an opportunity for



While the front landscape of this young family’s home plays off the traditional architecture, the rear goes more modern to reflect their energy with a zipper path that leads from the terrace to outdoor art and a fire feature. **LEFT, TOP** A rustic gate adds the right touch of privacy to this house, which is a converted dairy barn.

LEFT, MIDDLE Custom gates mimic the home’s architectural details. Layers of hedges and trees clipped into aerial hedges provide the right amount of visual separation for the property. **LEFT, BOTTOM** The long, narrow lap pool and spa are surrounded by a modern perennial garden planted in color blocks.



This pool garden was designed to complement the new pool house. Level areas were carved out of a sloped site and the spaces were broken up and enclosed with hedging.

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us to do more modern work," observes Doyle, his soft Irish accent still delightful after 20 years of living in the U.S. "Modern architecture simply isn't as available on the East Coast."

The change of terrain on the West Coast also intrigues the principals. "In California, there are a lot of steep slopes that add another layer of interest to landscape design," Doyle says.

Plant materials also are different. "We already know the plants, having done projects here and in the Middle East, which has a similar climate," says Herman. Both she and Doyle are hands-on gardeners, and each of them admits to growing California-zone plants in Connecticut. "We use them as annuals," offers Herman. "I have a garage full of agaves and agapanthus over the winter," laughs Doyle.

The 12-person staff has worked on projects that encompass more than 400 acres with budgets to match. "But our design isn't about the size of the project," insists Herman. "We also don't believe huge budgets are required to create beautiful outdoor environments." Instead, their concept of an ideal job is one in which "the client allows us to challenge them," she says.

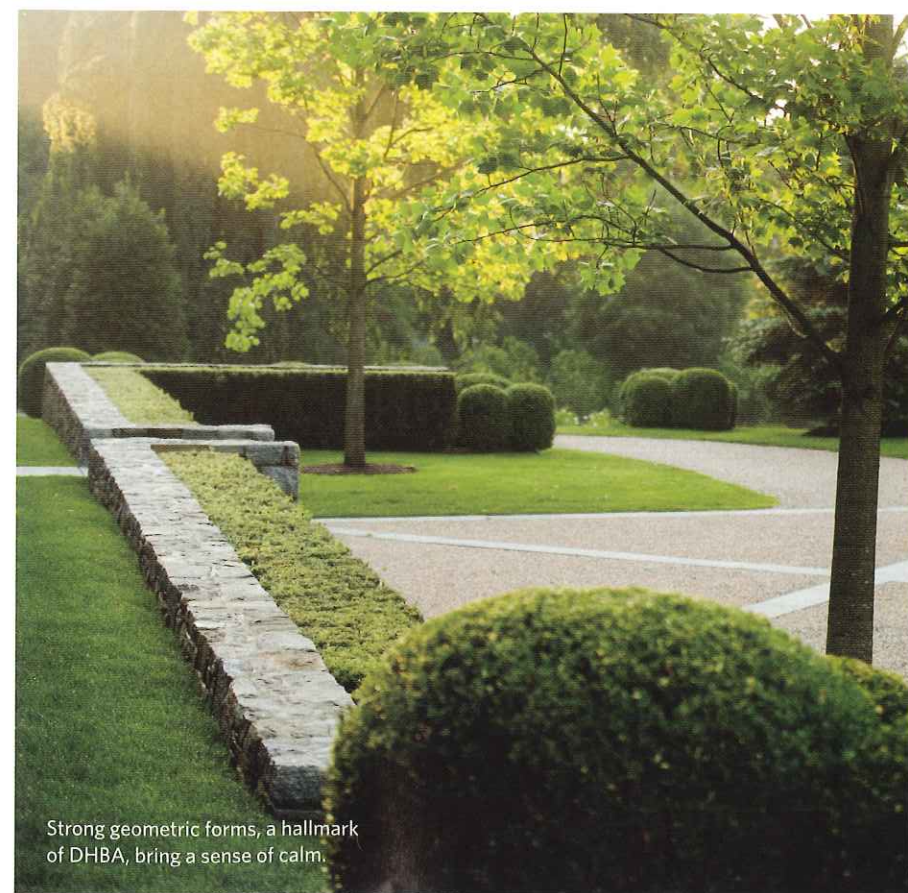
Teamwork is a big part of the skill set DHDA brings to the job. "We're accustomed to working with architects and designers and understand that process very well," Herman notes. Working closely with architects is second nature to landscapers who take their cues from the architecture. "We always play off the architecture in adding structure from hardscaping to the decoration of the garden to water features. It's all about creating a holistic environment," Herman explains.

While some challenges such as California's drought will require unique solutions, the overall look of the landscape designs within the state will nonetheless bear evidence to DHDA's hallmark features. "Our design style is one that can be adapted using different plant materials," says Herman. "We are drawn to plants that lend themselves to structure." So start looking. The DHDA signature—best revealed in the details—will be appearing on more California properties. **CH**

Editor's Note: *The Landscape Designs of Doyle Herman Design Associates* is available on Amazon for \$47.73.



The main axis on the property terminates with art by David Harber.



Strong geometric forms, a hallmark of DHBA, bring a sense of calm.