

H GENTRY HOME

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What inspired you to go into landscape design and architecture?

As a boy, I would spend hours playing in my parents' backyard "Dirt" pile creating miniature landscapes, paths, and water features for my matchbox cars and figures. Later in life as a high schooler, my passion for creative landscape design re-surfaced while working on a ranch property in Mendocino. This time, using tractors and hand tools, I was able to work with the land and shape it into real life paths and garden spaces. After that, I was hooked!

My most pivotal educational experience was at Filoli in Woodside. After I earned a degree in Horticulture from the University of Vermont, I was incredibly fortunate to intern in the gardens at Filoli—they truly are the Bay Area's premier historical gardens. That time at Filoli informs my work to this day. I realized then that designing and then building a garden are just the first steps. Maintaining it and seeing it flourish properly is an honor. Not only do we help our clients envision their dream garden, we help them build it and also offer ongoing fine gardening services to ensure it grows beautifully over time.

Do you have a particular style? Our team prides itself on being able to work in a myriad of styles to meet the needs of the client and the sites that we work on for them. The best style is one that is timeless

and adapts with each site and for each client. Many of our clients are seeking a "Transitional Style" design. This essentially means that they would like to marry the style of their home with a modern landscape that is responsive to our California weather and lifestyle. Features and nuances of each project are taken from physical cues that exist at the site, such as mature trees and topography.

Which landscape architects do you most admire? If I had to narrow it down, I'd say one from the present and one from the past. For the past, it has to be Tommy Church. He understood life in the Bay Area and was a visionary for western gardens and design. He reshaped how, when, and where people use their gardens. For example, he understood folks gravitate towards the mature stately oaks in the afternoon, sipping iced tea, and watching the sun go down. He figured out people and the way they want to use their gardens before they figured it out themselves. We keep these ideas in mind for every project that we work on with our clients.

My present day mentor is Andrea Cochran in San Francisco. Her knowledge of plants and their environment is incredible. You can have an incredible design, but if you don't know your plants and you don't specify the right one for the right location, the

