



Meditation in Green

An Ogunquit garden captures the sublime serenity of the natural world



LANDSCAPE
by Candace Karu
Photography Trent Bell



In 1984, Marty Levy came across a building lot being cleared along the Marginal Way in Ogunquit. This historic footpath, which meanders high above the town's expansive sandy beach, has one of the most commanding and picturesque ocean vistas in Maine. As he and his wife Marilyn gazed out to the glittering sea, Levy was overwhelmed with a sense of destiny. "This is where I'm meant to be," he thought. They began building their home within the year.

In the intervening years, the house has undergone myriad changes. More visible, however, are the changes that surround the home. In the late 1990s, the couple met Ted Carter of the Carter Design Group in Buxton. The Levys felt an instant connection with the landscape designer, and together they embarked on a journey of personal and spiritual discovery when they collaborated on the creation of a lush meditation garden.

The project has evolved over the years, but its most enduring element has been the waterfall, an ever-changing feature of auditory

and visual beauty that cascades diagonally across the steep, narrow lot. In spite of its man-made origins, the waterfall looks and feels as if it has always been a part of the landscape. Adding a feeling of contemplation and tranquility to its verdant surroundings, its gentle song can be heard throughout the garden and the house above.

Richly stained mahogany railings surround the upper deck, flanking the granite steps that descend the steepest part of the hill and into the heart of the garden. A subtly curved mahogany bridge spans the waterfall. As the slope levels off, flat granite stones nestled into soft green moss create a path leading to a large statue of the Buddha. "This Buddha embodies a sublime serenity with a deeply inward orientation," explains Carter. The area is tucked into the quietest corner of the sanctuary, creating a tranquil space that is perfect for meditation and reflection.

"As I designed this garden, I had to set personal ego aside," says Carter. "I felt a responsibility to do what was best for the project." To

LANDSCAPE



this end, he worked with multiple craftsmen to refine various aspects of the garden. The delicate yet surprisingly sturdy bamboo and jute fence and gate are the work of Masahiko Seko of Seko's Creative Garden Designs in Gorham. Stonemason Scott Palmer, who now works for Carter Design Group, constructed the waterfall with such precision that it blends seamlessly into the hilly terrain.

The Marginal Way skirts the lower boundary of the Levy's meditation garden, and it is a rare day, even in winter, when walkers do not pause for a moment to admire this precious green gem as they pass by. Visitors are respectful of the small sign at the bamboo-gated entrance that politely asks them to "please enjoy without entering." The garden's many charms are visible to all, a brief and tranquil respite amidst the bustle of foot traffic along the path.

MH+D

**PARTIAL PLANT LIST FOR
THE BLUE HILL
PENINSULA LANDSCAPE:**

Cleveland Pear
Hydrangea
False Cypress
Flowering Crab
Hosta
Maidenhair Fern
Flowering Cherry
Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper
Winterberry
Witch Hazel
Canadian Hemlock
Barren Strawberry
Boxwood
Korean Dogwood
Dwarf Blue Spruce
Juniper
Andromeda
Dwarf Austrian Pine
Japanese Maple
Viburnum
Pagoda Dogwood

