

Landscaped With Love



Pagliai incorporated large trees and wide walkways in Bill and Kate Gaither's Cornelius garden to match the scale of the garden to their large, stately home.

Local Garden Has International Pedigree

It's an extension of your self. It's an organic expression of your personality. It's your temple. It's your retreat. And if you happen to know Sally Pagliai, it could be your garden.

Pagliai is a passionate landscape architectural designer who has built gardens from Singapore to Florence. She could base her business - Studio Pagliai - anywhere that gardens grow, but for her, North Carolina is the ideal location. It's not just the temperate climate and variety of plants that thrive in the Piedmont. It's the local quality of life, the relaxed pace and the people that most appeal to the 43-year-old mother of two, who jets off to

landscaping design jobs in the Hamptons the way some Greensborans commute to Kernersville.

Exotic as the Studio Pagliai portfolio is, with its Italian pergolas, California reflecting pools and Long Island seaside vistas, Pagliai is equally charmed by the homeowners of North Carolina who seek the beauty, serenity and solace that a professionally designed landscaped garden can bring.

"It's really about the people I work for and their connection to their property that enables a truly beautiful garden to happen," explains Pagliai. "My relationship with an aspiring garden owner



The Blower Property in Molino del Piano, Italy was originally a 14th century convent. Pagliai's objective was to create whimsical, vibrant gardens and outdoor living spaces. She used a mix of indigenous, cultivated and historically appropriate plants and hardscape materials.





On the Holl Property in Lake Lure, NC, Pagliai wanted to complement and make the native woodland environment accessible. She relied heavily on native stone and plant materials to create spaces that also reflected the home's architecture.

goes much deeper than simply filling a list of requests. It's a shared commitment to bring the garden to life." Collaboration is what makes every design stronger. Studio Pagliai engages specialists that include sculptures, stone masons and horticulturalists to contribute to the creative process.

Her finished gardens may be genteel, but Pagliai's masterpieces often start with bulldozers and dump trucks. It's not unusual for a design to demand extensive grading and a lot of serious earth moving. Pagliai's canvas is topography and her pallet includes concrete, water, iron, brick, boulders and a vast range of native and imported flora. Pagliai isn't averse to the heavy lifting, and a manicure doesn't stand a chance on her hands, but these days she is more inclined to revel in her role as the maestro of what she considers a mostly artistic process.

Her artistry is visible in the Cornelius garden of Bill and Kate Gaither. "They have a lovely, spacious stately home on a large piece of property. The lot backs to an agricultural area, which gives the property the feeling of going on forever. The first thing I noticed was that the scale of the garden wasn't working with the scale of the house - the previous landscaping attempt had been done in tiny strokes. Studio Pagliai did things that were very simple but large. We brought in large trees and big evergreens. The circular drive was

built away from the house to accommodate a wide walkway to the front entrance. We didn't use a lot of fussy materials. We kept it simple and elegant, because there's an elegant quality to the house both architecturally and on the interior."

Having global clients and living in Greensboro allows Pagliai to seek challenging opportunities in North Carolina. But be advised, Studio Pagliai has a rigorous three-part client screening process. You must be committed to achieving excellence. You must be enthusiastic. And most of all, you simply have to be nice.

A student of The University of California at Berkeley and the UC International Program in Florence, Italy, Pagliai holds a Bachelor of Science in landscape architecture from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. She apprenticed with world-renowned landscape architects Peter Walker and Martha Schwartz. She has consulted with Florentine architect Elio diFranco. Currently Pagliai consults with landscape architecture firms in North Carolina and California and with Jack deLashmet & Associates in Long Island, NY.

Sally Pagliai works from her home and garden in Sunset Hills, Greensboro.