

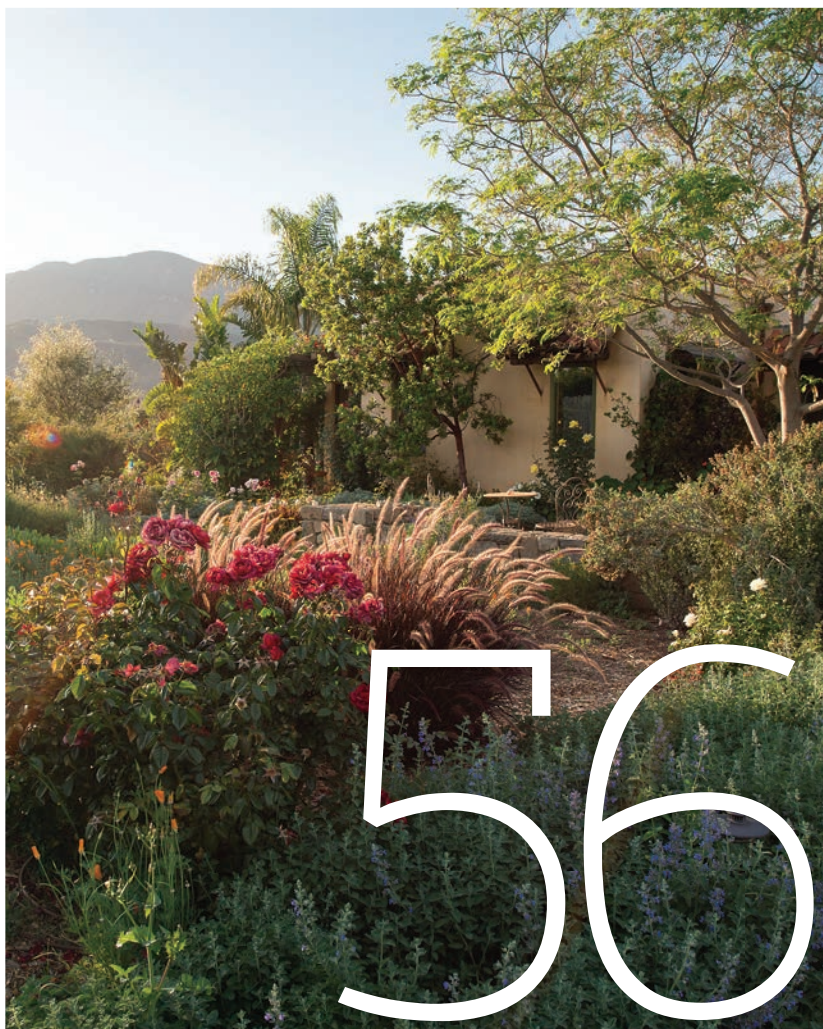
EXTERIOR DESIGN

— LIVE OPENLY —



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BIG TIME DESIGN

PROJECT

RYAN HUGHES COMBINES
SCIENCE AND ART TO
CREATE DRAMATIC
OUTDOOR SPACES

BY LAURIE RUDD





For the past two decades, Ryan Hughes, owner and creative director of Ryan Hughes Design Build in Palm Harbor, Florida, has built a reputation for redefining exteriors through over-the-top, one-of-a-kind designs. His expertise in the world of exterior design is undisputed.

Hughes' projects now total in excess of \$110 million. His exterior design expertise is highly sought after on a consultant basis for projects nationwide. Exhibiting a fresh perspective on outdoor living, his gallery of work is heavily infused with creativity—and a dash of drama. In a conversation with him about his creative process, Hughes outlines his outdoor design philosophy that combines art and science.

What inspires your outdoor living designs?

I have been fortunate enough to have traveled the world from an early age. From those travels, I have been able to translate a global perspective and take

inspiration from international venues and lifestyles. These cultural experiences and architectural influences have produced a diversity of styles that can be seen throughout our portfolio.

How do your projects illustrate your philosophy of including science and art in exterior design?

For any project, the space planning is the science that makes everything function, whether it's for areas of relaxation, lounging or dining. In a recent project that we named 'Big Time,' what the homeowners and our team accomplished was incredible. The project's nearly 5,000 square feet of outdoor space was designed to include multiple outdoor rooms, water and fire features. This required considerable space planning. Artistry was added following design principles of proportion and balance, but also with the latest in modern technology and custom materials, colors and textures. These cultural experiences and





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How is outdoor design changing in the lofty echelons of luxury?

Design is changing because luxury clientele put more emphasis on outdoor living, with a larger percentage of the overall home budget put into their outdoor spaces. Clients who think this way are drawn to us. The luxury client looks to professionals for not just design expertise and fresh ideas, but also for design solutions to challenges throughout the project.

What are some of your favorite items to include in an exterior design project?

Water features and fire features are always popular elements. But in high-end projects, it is more than just the features; it's about creating the experience and ambiance. In 'Big Time,' we added a fire

feature that was encased in a custom-made globe-like sculpture (above). The fire filled the center and created an amazing focal point for one of the outdoor seating areas. We find that artwork is just as important in outdoor as in indoors. We educate our clients that the design is not complete without the furnishings and the artwork. Those are the elements that personalize the space.

Are there exterior design trends you would like to see continuing in the future?

I would like to see the continued addition of drama within outdoor living spaces. No longer are the outdoor spaces, especially for luxury clients, an afterthought. For those who want the luxury of their home to extend outside, the possibilities for drama are continuing to grow, and this often incorporates, again, science and artistry. In the area of outdoor lighting alone, there are tremendous advances occurring. It is exciting to be able to present my clients with what is at the leading edge of outdoor design. □

