



# Daniel Richards by Alexa Stevenson

A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT INFUSES HIS WORK WITH A MODERN AESTHETIC



**The Designer** | Daniel Richards (BELOW LEFT) is a senior designer at Plant Specialists in New York. **So Sleek** | Resin Christophe Pillet lounges (LEFT) inject a graphic element to Richards' terrace at this year's Kips Bay Show House. **Soft Edge** | On the same terrace, Jean-Marie Massaud's Truffle chair (BELOW RIGHT) is a stark contrast to the white tulips and lead-coated copper planters. **Bronze Age** | Richards commissioned Camie Lyons to install a bronze and steel sculpture (BOTTOM) into one of his gardens' reflecting pools. See Resources.



**Describe your style as a landscape architect:** Classic, timeless modernism—clean lines without sacrificing the warmth of a garden. **Where did you receive training?** In Australia I earned a bachelor of fine art in architecture and planning at the University of Queensland and a graduate diploma in landscape architecture at Queensland University of Technology. I've been in professional practice for 10 years. **Do you prefer to design private gardens or those created for the public?** I love the rewards of designing private gardens. Seeing a client's reaction once a garden is complete—or even better, as it evolves over the years—is invaluable. **Have you done any work in Connecticut?** I'm currently working on two proposals in Greenwich, and I hope there will be more to come. Connecticut is such an amazing environment to design and nurture a garden. **What are your favorite elements of a landscape?** Water, for its relaxing and mesmerizing qualities, both as a still surface and for the sound it makes moving in fountains. **Sculpture is often incorporated into your work. Why?** Sculptures animate the garden rooms I design for the landscape. They are a draw card that ignites curiosity to explore a garden. If it's possible for the interior, it's just as possible for the exterior. **What are your favorite materials?** I gravitate towards a combination of evergreen hedging (for the garden's frame) plus deciduous specimen trees to illustrate the various seasons. **Favorite plant?** *Cestrum nocturnum*, for its subtle discretion. Visually, it's not spectacular, but the fragrance—obvious only at night—is intoxicating. I use it as background planting. **What mistakes do you see too often in landscape design?** The use of too many species in one garden. Simple plant palettes—mass planted—have a much more rewarding effect. **Is there a plant you can never use too much?** Anything that hedges well! **Name a source of inspiration?** Marcel Breuer. He seamlessly integrated architecture and the landscape in a beautiful and effortless manner. **I cringe when I see:** Ill-considered spring color combinations—it's not that hard! **What would you do for work if not this?** I'm one of the lucky people who love what they do and wouldn't want to do anything else. 🍌

