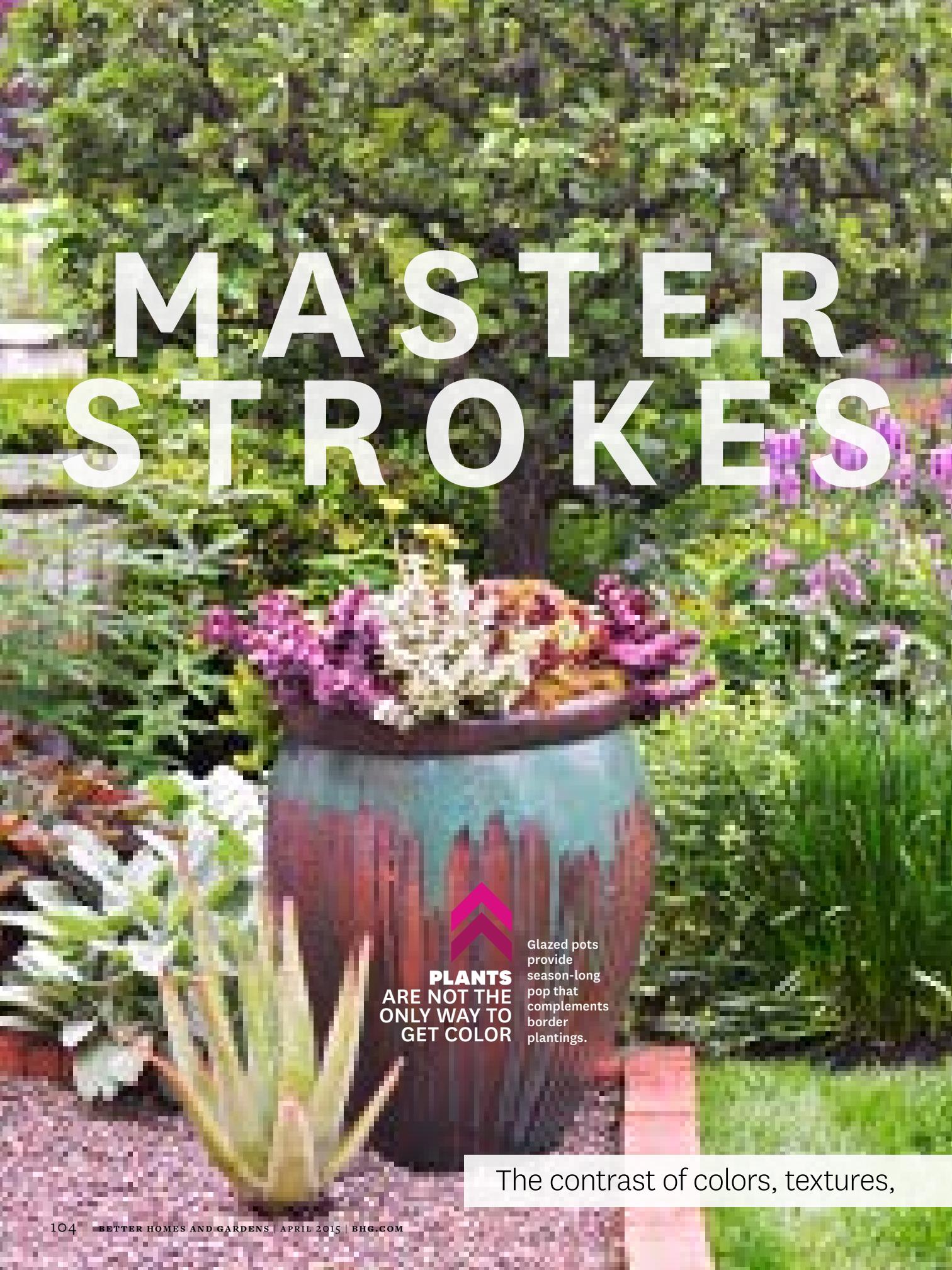


MASTER STROKES



**PLANTS
ARE NOT THE
ONLY WAY TO
GET COLOR**

Glazed pots provide season-long pop that complements border plantings.

The contrast of colors, textures,

BY ERIC LISKEY
PHOTOS MATTHEW BENSON



and shapes turns these garden borders into *works of art.*

Salvia blooms erupt in cool purples in early summer. Silvery foliage, in this case lamb's-ear, is a no-fail partner for purple blossoms or leaves.



Building blocks

Kim Visokey is a self-taught gardener who thinks of herself as an editor, filling in holes and moving plants as needed. “Gardens evolve,” she says. “Every year is a little different.” Five simple concepts inform all those moves and edits:

REPETITION Repeating colors and textures delivers cohesiveness, but Kim practices a looser form of this art. “I like to repeat things, but not always with the same kind of plant,” she says. The same deep purple, for example, comes from Plum Pudding heuchera in one spot and from salvia in another curve of the border.

CONTRAST While repetition unifies, contrast offers visual drama. “Chartreuse and purple are a great yin and yang,” says Kim, who pairs Golden Mop cypress with purple betony. Likewise, divergent shapes and textures stand off from each other, like large heuchera leaves next to strappy allium foliage.



**THIS ONE
IS NOT LIKE
THE OTHERS**

“The tension between soft and fluffy, and large, sharply defined leaf shapes really works,” Kim says. These Helen Von Stein lamb’s-ears are perfect for borders because they contrast with so many other plants.

Kim relies on stand-out plants like Golden Mop cypress, *above left*, Helen Von Stein lamb’s-ears, *above right*, Plum Pudding heuchera, *below left*, and sedum, *below right*, for contrast and repetition.



**FREE
PLANS!**



Download plans based
on Kim's borders.
[BHG.com/Borders](https://www.bhg.com/borders)



**SOFTEN
HARD EDGES
WITH CURVES**

"I love the curves of the lawn and edging," Kim says. "But I also like the linear, clipped hedges, because they counter the arcs of grass, brick, and gravel."



Catmint, above left, lady's mantle, above right, and purple smokebush, below right, express the contrast that is so integral to Kim's designs.

GROW A BACKGROUND

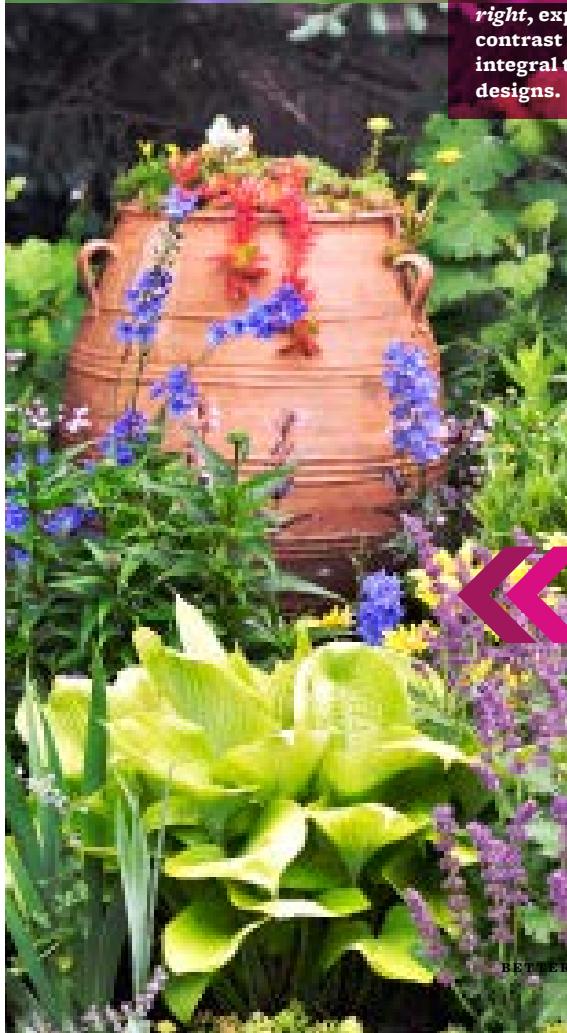
Arborvitae hedges, *opposite*, surround the garden, acting as green foils that help the flower colors pop. "I think of them like the drapes that flank a set in a theater," Kim says. "They provide depth," especially the way she plants them: in sections, staggered and angled like so many panels, rather than a flat, featureless screen.

USE PLANTS EN MASSE

Massing plants creates blocks of color and texture that get noticed even in a large border, where a single plant might disappear. Planting in blocks is especially important when plants are small or finely textured, like the delicate golden lady's mantle in this border.

THINK YEAR-ROUND

Shrubs like evergreen arborvitae and purple smokebush keep the garden interesting 12 months a year. "When snow hits, they're very graphic and cool," Kim says. ■



ADD DECOR

"Think beyond plant material for filling holes," Kim suggests. "Pots, sculptures, fountains, whatever. If this urn were a perennial instead, this border would just be a sea of plants."

For buying information see page 168.