

FILM REVIEW

Japanese anime 'Your Name' goes in delightful directions.

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The weekend is packed with monster events including the Art Car Parade and the Houston Barbecue Festival.

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IN THE GARDEN

Homeowners want their landscapes to stand out on the block



Courtesy photo

A new survey shows that Houston homeowners want a distinctive look, great plants, natural stone and professional design help for their yards.

YARD of the YEAR

By Diane Cowen

WELCOME to the new world.

The backyard was once just about having trees, shrubs and annuals for pops of color. Today local landscape architects and designers say that stylish outdoor spaces are getting as much consideration as the homes they're attached to.

Modern architecture is on the rise, and homeowners want their yards — front and back — to be in synch, said Johnny Steele of Johnny Steele Design.

"I met with clients the other day in Memorial, and it's not the typical brick, Georgian or Mediterranean style home that we might have seen a few years ago," said Steele, a landscape architect.

The result is an opportunity to rethink plants, hardscapes and structure.

"It's cleaner in terms of the lines ... we're using fewer types of plants in a design — six or seven instead of 15 varieties or species. That's definitely a trend that I'm seeing," Steele said.

When considering the wow factor that his clients are looking for, less



Rame Hruska

Landscape architects are using less color and more texture in contemporary gardens.

may actually do more. "I can do that with one bold stroke here and two bold strokes there," he said.

Houzz — which offers remodeling and design ideas — recently released a report on trends in home landscaping.

Survey results supported local observations: homeowners want a distinctive look, great plants, natural stone and professional design help.

At Curtis & Windham, landscape designer Frank Brown III has been busy turning parts of soft green lawns into functional sources of food.

"Organic vegetable gardens," Brown said. "I've never done so many in my life. Almost every client is asking for one now."

Some are small herb gardens in window boxes or patio pots. Many, though, are raised beds filled with peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and zucchini.

"First it was with people who had children, but now it's everyone just wanting good food," Brown said.

More attention is being paid to lighting, with clients ditching harsh light in favor of warmer tones that feel more like indoors and can be op-

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