

HOMIE & DESIGN





BY EILEEN GORDON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEITH ROCKE

La Fenice

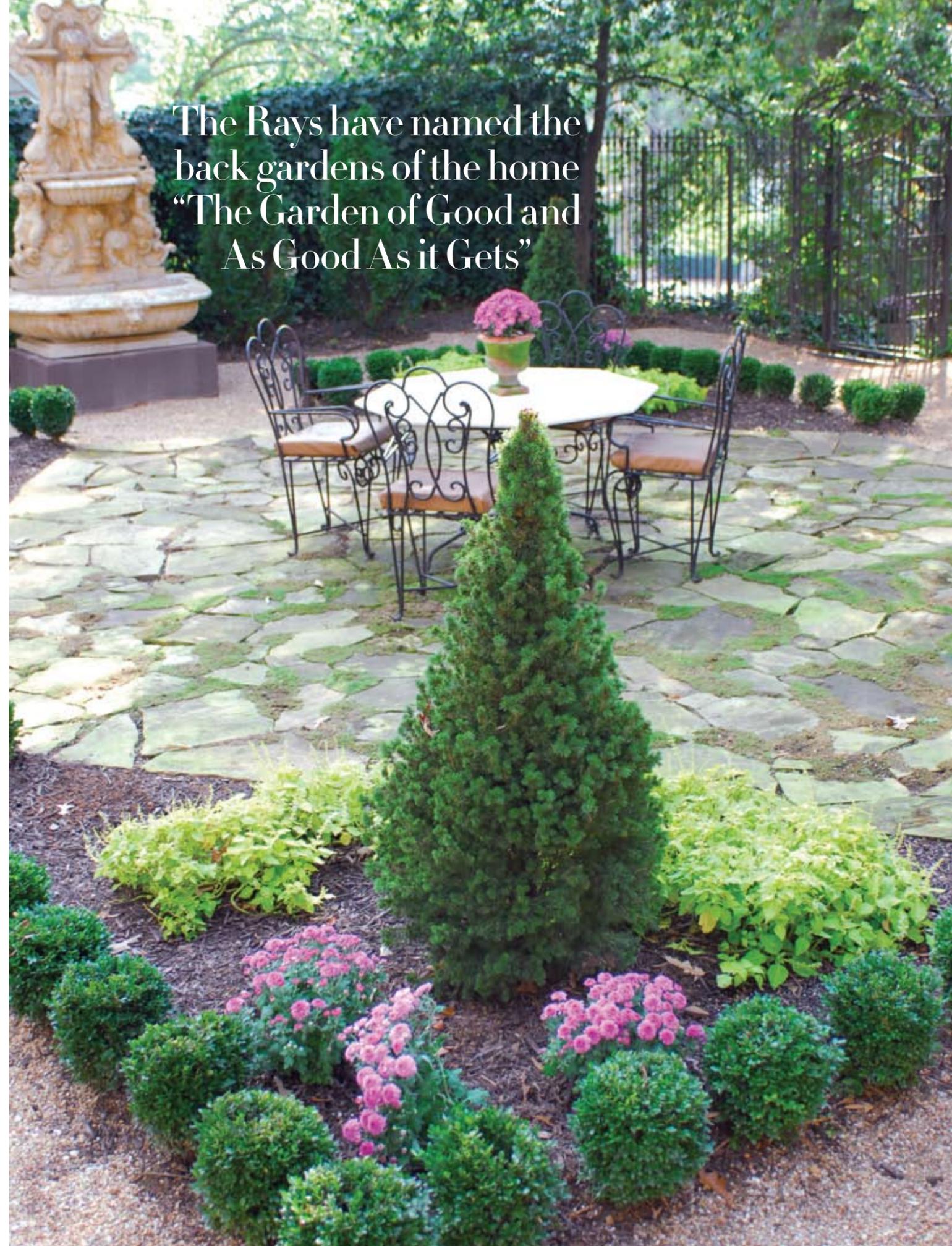
The Phoenix (rising from the ashes)

French songstress Edith Piaf could easily be imagined sauntering through the iron doors of this magnificent European style villa on Atlanta's famed Peachtree Battle Avenue, and she would feel right at home. This house is the total creation of artist, sculptor and fashion designer June Ray and her adoring husband. Piaf's languid tones filled the home, which on this perfect early autumn day had nearly all of its floor to ceiling French doors open revealing the beautiful surrounding gardens.

In redesigning this home, June followed no rules of traditional design but, just as any truly creative soul, followed her vision and inspiration incorporating Italian, French and Spanish influences. The architectural elements throughout are splendid without being overly opulent; the color palette is perfection. And, for the few hours *Southern Seasons Magazine* visited, it seemed like we were in the heart of a historic district in early nineteenth century Europe.

It was surprising to learn that the home was just recently rebuilt from the ground up following a devastating electrical





The Rays have named the back gardens of the home “The Garden of Good and As Good As it Gets”

TOP: LYDIA JORDAN, A GOLDENDOODLE, ADORES THE SURROUNDING GARDENS OF HER HOME.

ABOVE: IN AN IRON PLAQUE SET IN TO THE BRICK DRIVEWAY ARE THE FRENCH WORDS INTERPRETED TO SAY “ALL OF OUR GUESTS BRING US GREAT PLEASURE, SOME WHEN THEY ARRIVE AND OTHERS WHEN THEY LEAVE.”

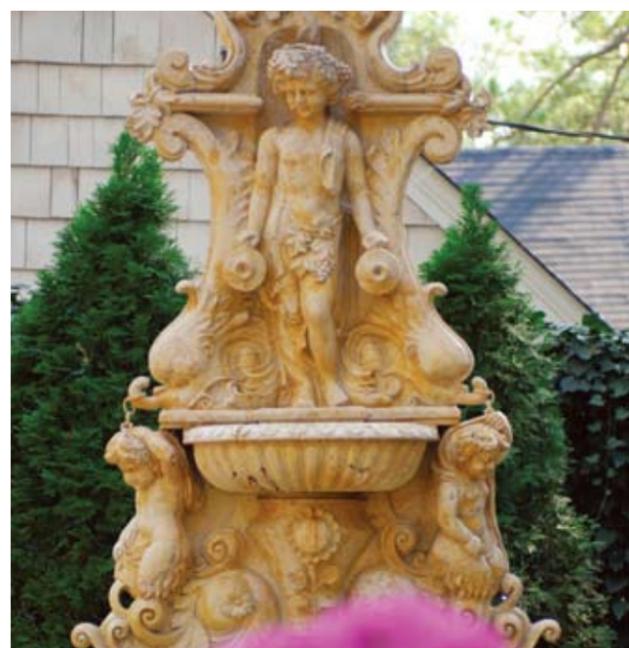
ABOVE LEFT: THE HERRINGBONE BRICKS OF “LYDIA’S LABYRINTH” WERE HAND LAID BY JUNE AND HER HUSBAND.

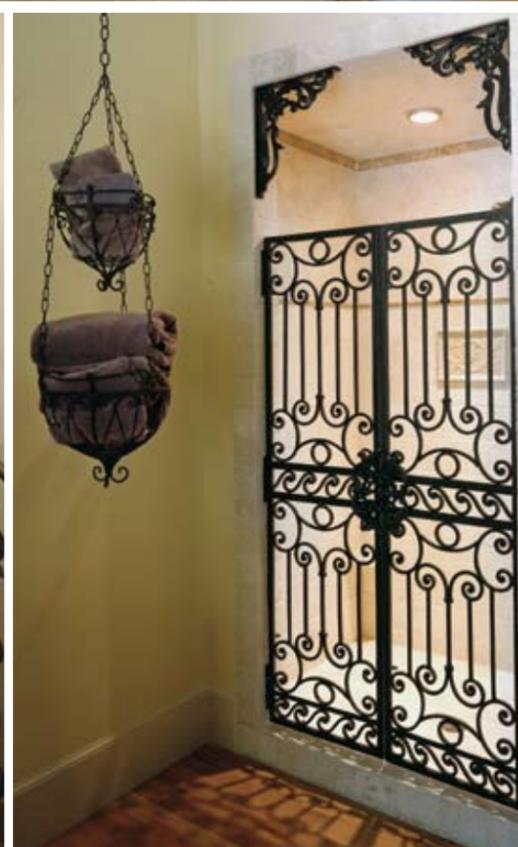
fire which occurred shortly after the Rays first moved in the original home. Following this disastrous event, the couple forged ahead to rebuild their dream home. June acted as architect and designer from the beginning and created a larger more intricate home, replicating many of the original elements but expanding and enhancing the original design.

In June’s redesign of the home, she opted nearly exclusively for an abundance of floor to ceiling French doors instead of windows. “I thrive on natural light – I need the light!” Due to the enormous trees surrounding the setting of the home, the light that pours in is beautifully filtered without glare.

June’s abundant use of authentically designed French wrought iron is stunning against the mostly neutral palette of colors. Her magnificent collection of marble sculptures (very much in the style of French master crystal artist, Lalique) can be seen throughout the home. Each guest room and bath is striking and simple with a breathtaking visual impact. And the view of the gardens from every window becomes a focal point of each space.

The final result is more than a gorgeous residence for the Rays, but an authentic atmosphere that is so warm and inviting and ultimately livable that it defies its own intricate artistry.





ABOVE AND RIGHT: THE BEAUTIFULLY DAY-LIT KITCHEN IS AN INSPIRATION FOR FINE CUISINE FEATURING THE PRESTIGE OF A BLACK ENAMEL BRITISH AGA STOVE.

LEFT: DESIGNING THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE HOME, JUNE INCORPORATED BLACK WROUGHT IRON ELEMENTS INCLUDING THE STAIR RAILS TO THE "PENTHOUSE" AND THE UNIQUE SHOWER DOORS IN SEVERAL OF THE GUEST BATHS.



OPPOSITE PAGE AND TOP: THE MASTER BEDROOM AND EACH OF THE GUEST ROOMS HAVE A DISTINCTIVE FLAIR REMINISCENT OF A LAVISH BED AND BREAKFAST IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF FRANCE.

LEFT AND ABOVE: THE HOME IS APPOINTED THROUGHOUT WITH THE MAGNIFICENT MARBLE SCULPTURES OF ARTIST JUNE RAY.

RIGHT: THIS NEARLY LIFE-SIZED PORTRAIT OF JUNE, BY ARTIST PAT FULMER, SETS AN INTIMATE TONE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE MASTER SUITE.