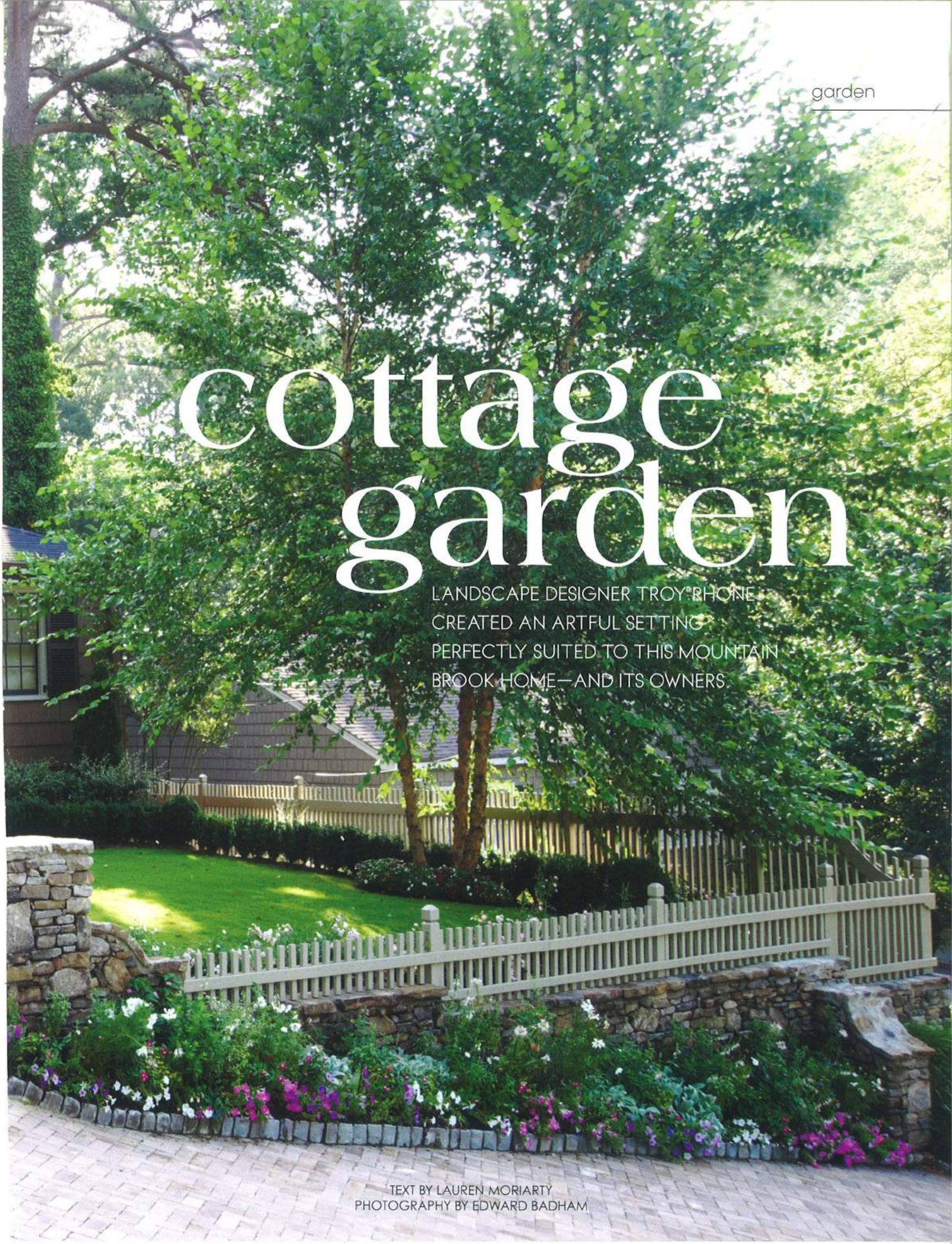


cottage garden

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER TROY RHONE CREATED AN ARTFUL SETTING PERFECTLY SUITED TO THIS MOUNTAIN BROOK HOME—AND ITS OWNERS.

TEXT BY LAUREN MORIARTY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDWARD BADHAM

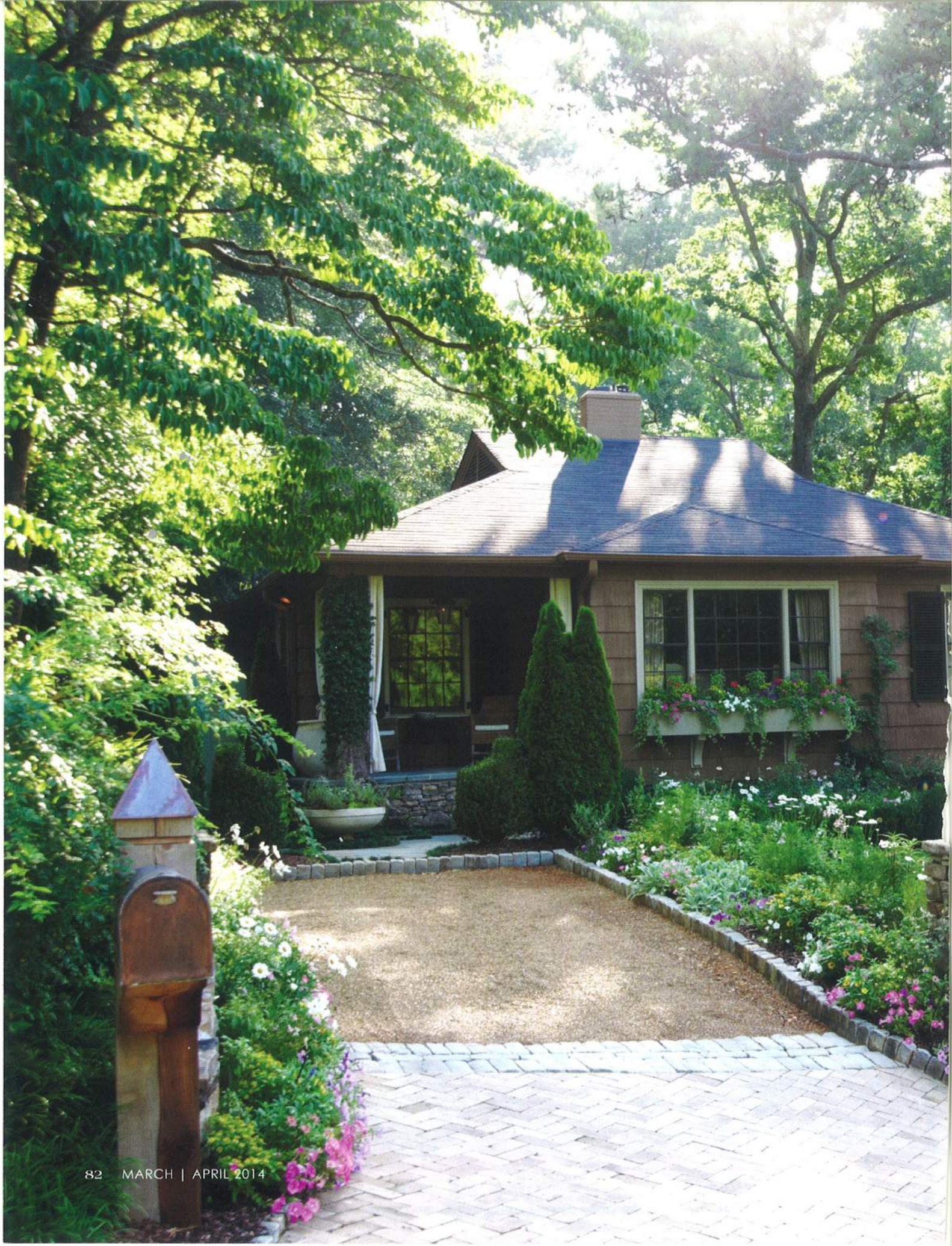
Life is a garden," Birmingham-based landscape designer Troy Rhone says. His richly textured and cohesive garden designs fuse seamlessly with the homes and people who live in them. With projects spanning 13 states and reaching as far as London and Amsterdam, Rhone creates works of natural art for homeowners around the world.

"The house's architectural, landscape, and interior design need to flow together to create a home," Rhone says.

Perched on a hill in Mountain Brook, the Keebler's home features a cottage-style garden that reflects the house's design with traditional stone accents and a rich color palette brightening the grounds. The property's particularities presented design difficulties. "Trying to make the house sitting on a hill look level was very challenging," Rhone says.

To trick the eye, Rhone cleverly widened the driveway to make it appear centered on the house and incorporated brimming planters beneath the windows. The window boxes add color but also ground the windows themselves, creating the illusion of a level yard despite the hilly surroundings.

Rhone's process of design begins with a clear focus on



"THE HOUSE'S ARCHITECTURAL, LANDSCAPE, AND INTERIOR DESIGN NEED TO FLOW TOGETHER TO CREATE A HOME," RHONE SAYS.

the client. "I spend time with the homeowners and the story of the garden evolves. I get to know their taste and sense of style and work off that," he says.

After talking to the homeowners and interior designer, Rhone got to work creating a cottage garden with the splashes of color the homeowners desired. Flowing flowers flood window boxes and trim the perimeter. A picturesque picket fence frames the property, and an unexpected robin's-egg-blue wooden gate pops in the background. A stroll through the gate reveals a strong holly fence, creating architectural interest with a statement urn. The overall effect is effortless and a natural progression of the house's character.

"Every garden has a story to tell, every client has a story to tell," Rhone says. "Gathering information from the client allows the garden to create its story."