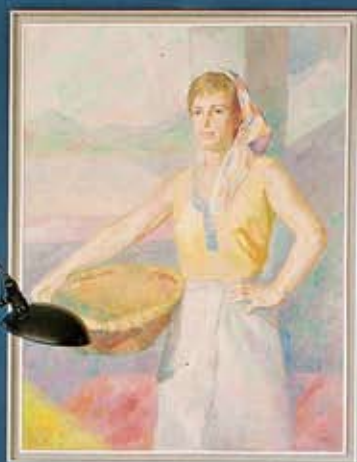


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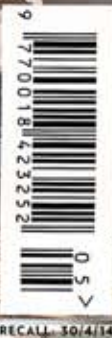
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NEW ORDER

By blurring the boundaries of her sculpted Mediterranean-style garden, Jo Haigh has made it look perfectly at home in the dramatic Yorkshire Dales

WORDS PAUL HENSEY
PHOTOGRAPHS ALLAN POLLOK-MORRIS

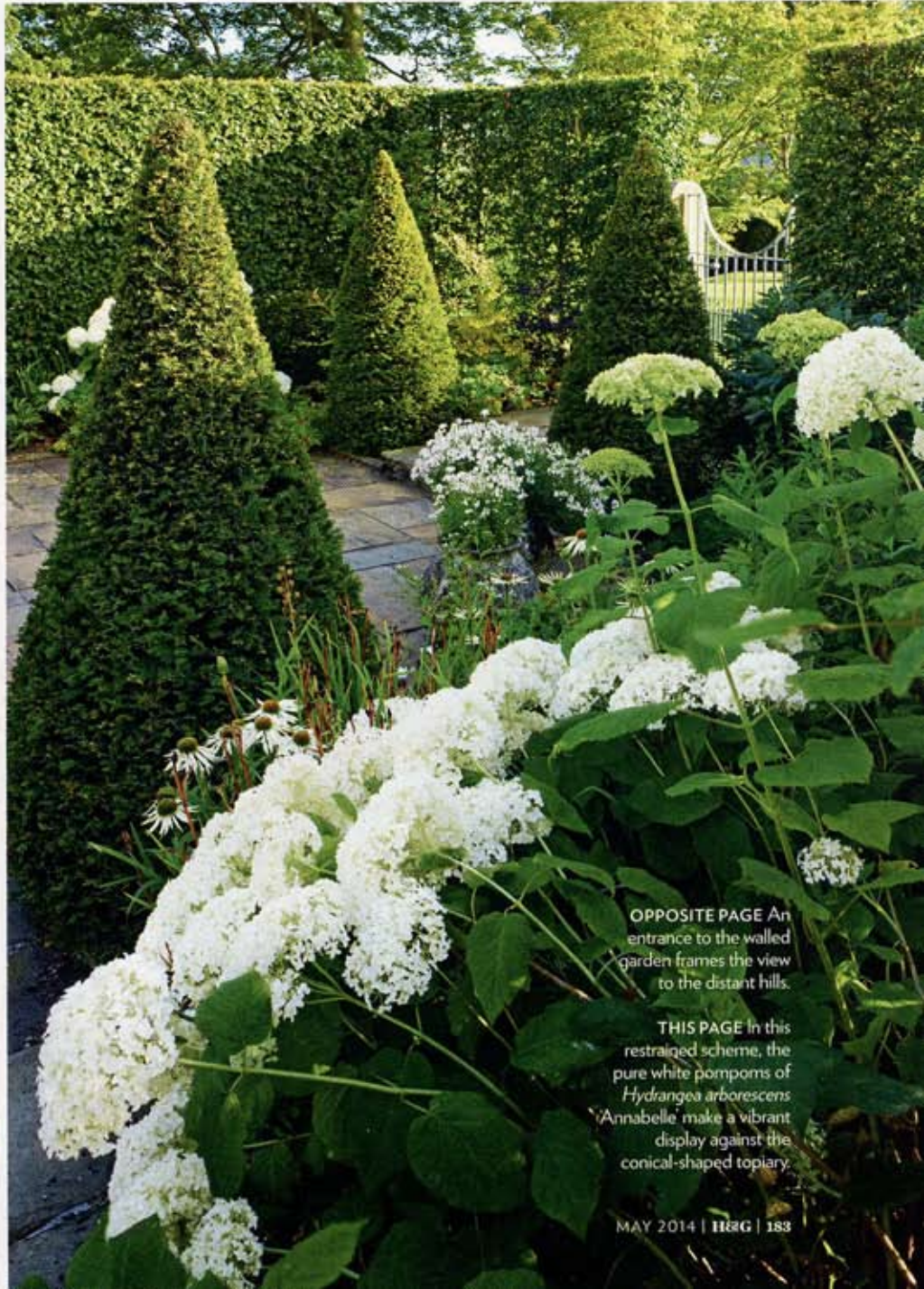
Above the junction of two rivers, amid the rippled and rugged crags of North Yorkshire, sits Jo Haigh's garden. By late 2000, Jo and her family had almost completed the restoration and extension of their farmhouse to create a modern family home but, Jo recalls, "We felt that the house looked very stark standing on its own, disjointed from the countryside around it." While creating a garden seemed the obvious way to establish the property within its surroundings, Jo had fixed on nothing more definite than a desire to have a walled garden, so she turned to garden designer Tim Rees for help.

Images of Tim's previous work, in particular his French gardens, spurred Jo's ambition "for something with a Mediterranean feel in North Yorkshire". Further inspiration came from photographs of Nicole de Vésian's garden, *La Louve*, in Bonnieux, Provence, carefully planted to be in harmony with the landscape. Subsequent visits to gardens closer to home, such as Hadspen and York Gate, reinforced Jo's growing wish for simple, sculptural forms with a limited colour palette.

Starting from a blank canvas, the garden has taken several years to complete and has emerged more as a response to the rural scenery than as a reaction to a tight brief. Throughout the process, Jo's priority was to maintain the dramatic views, and not to let features within the garden itself segment them. She has been



To the north of the garden are sweeping views of the Dales



OPPOSITE PAGE An entrance to the walled garden frames the view to the distant hills.

THIS PAGE In this restrained scheme, the pure white pompoms of *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle' make a vibrant display against the conical-shaped topiary.



THIS PICTURE In the walled garden, formal notes, such as the clipped box balls, are softened by the profusion of mixed perennials in the borders, including dainty white *Campanula persicifolia*.

BELOW LEFT A path made of stepping stones leads round the side of the house overlooking the meadows.



helped by the fact that the boundary is a river, so the garden naturally merges with its banks and the countryside beyond. Mown lawns extend to the wildflower meadow, a previously sterile field in front of the house that has been replanted using only native flora, and this in turn blends with the wider pastures beyond. A mown path runs across the meadow and draws the eye towards a small pond at the end.

The forms of the surrounding terrain have also provided motifs for some of the features that Jo has created in the garden. For instance, clipped box and yew accentuate the nebulous shapes of sycamore canopies and are grouped to synchronise with the roll of the distant Dales, "making the house and garden merge into the landscape", Jo says.

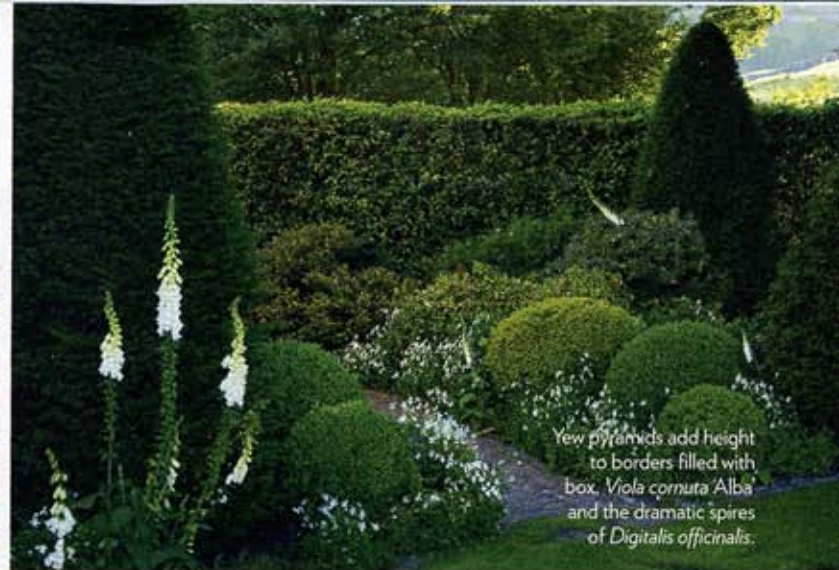
But what of Jo's desire for a walled garden? Now complete, it is a private and, perhaps more importantly, sheltered space with a lawn and beds planted with a traditional mix of perennials. A greenhouse has extended the season for the vegetables that are grown and is also used to propagate plants for a local community planting project.

Dominated by evergreens, the garden is, says Jo, "a very calm space and the greenery helps to enhance that serenity". Plants have been selected not to compete with the landscape, but to add accents and interest. While an extensive display of spring bulbs gives early-year colour and the perennials and wildflowers in the meadow peak in late summer, it is the underlying structure of the garden that creates year-round interest. "Winter is a favourite time of year," says Jo. "Shapes stand out and contrast with other silhouettes; it's when things such as the scent of *Sarcococca* are really appreciated."

Gardens can involve any amount of maintenance but, in spite of its scale, Jo says that always having a gardener here would be too much of an intrusion. Instead, a small team works for one day a week, which ensures the gardens remain private for the rest of the time. ■



Tucked between the house and the small orchard, the sheltered courtyard is home to a simple yet elegant water feature.



Yew pyramids add height to borders filled with box, *Viola cornuta* 'Alba' and the dramatic spires of *Digitalis officinalis*.



ABOVE Self-seeding cosmos grow in swathes, lending a naturalistic look to the garden.

THIS PICTURE A small grouping of box balls adds structure to the foreground and reflects the shape of the sycamore canopies.



Yorkshire
GARDEN

GARDEN GUIDE

ORIENTATION Formal gardens to the east with informal meadow to south.

SOIL TYPE Free-draining floodplain soil.

SPECIAL FEATURES Located at the junction of two rivers with open views.

GARDEN DESIGNER Tim Rees, treesassociates.com.

