

# Courtyard Centerpiece

By K. Schipper

**Client:**

Private homeowner, Salt Lake City

**Landscape Architect:**

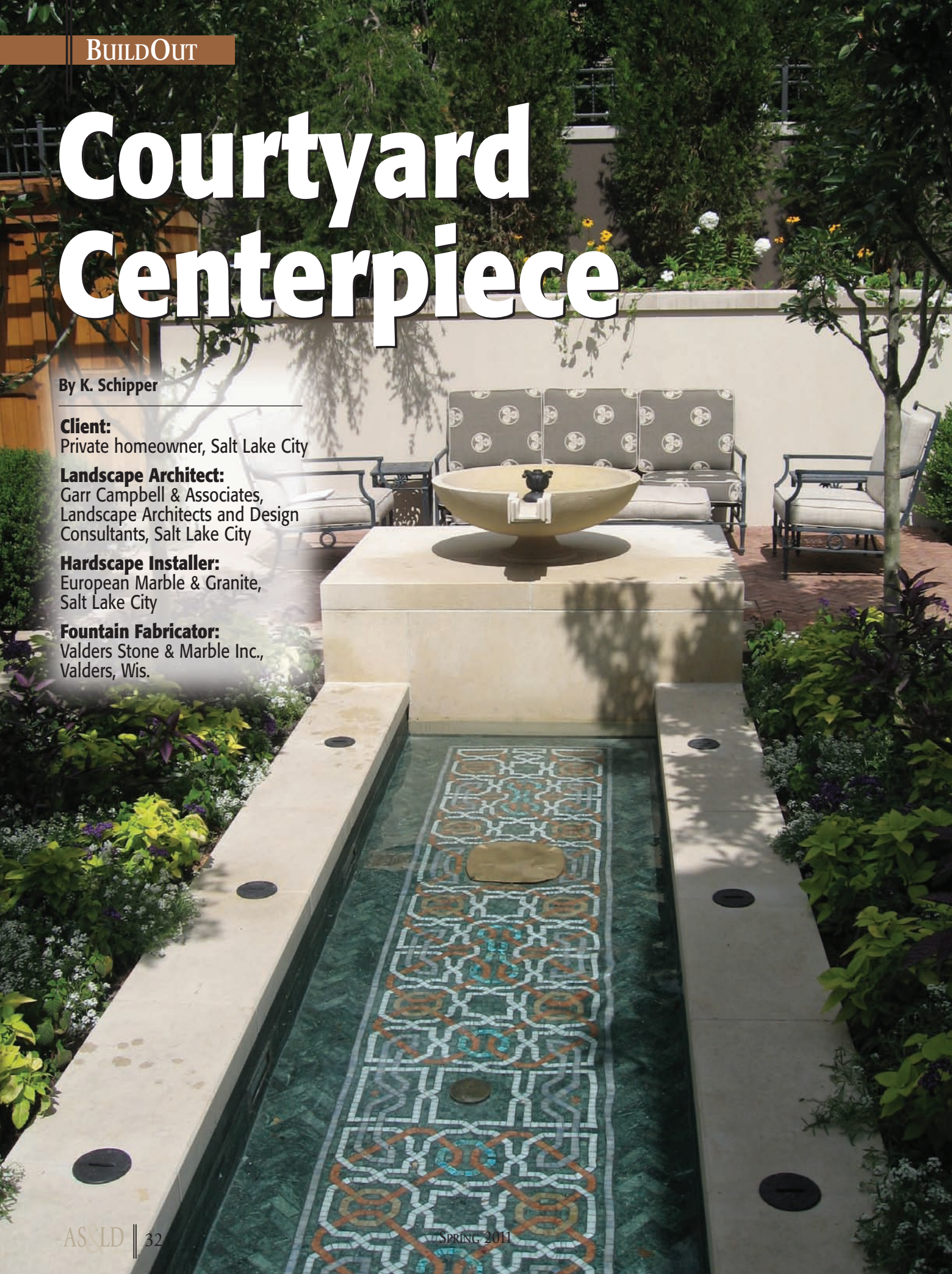
Garr Campbell & Associates,  
Landscape Architects and Design  
Consultants, Salt Lake City

**Hardscape Installer:**

European Marble & Granite,  
Salt Lake City

**Fountain Fabricator:**

Valders Stone & Marble Inc.,  
Valders, Wis.





**SALT LAKE CITY** – Say *backyard water feature* to most people, and they automatically assume a swimming pool – especially when a home’s design evokes Southern California and the Mediterranean.

When the new owner of one historic local home chose to return it to its previous glory, however, the *pièce de résistance* for the landscape portion of the job turned out to be only 14" deep.

Two scupper basins carved from Wisconsin dolomitic limestone spill their wares into a reflecting pool, with jet sprays along the coping and a custom mosaic lining echoing a new mosaic installed in an existing arcade.

Or, as one of the principals involved in the project observes, “It goes way beyond the landscape client who asks, ‘What can I get for \$100?’”



(Left) The home’s backyard, although small, serves as an outdoor room, with the scupper basins and reflecting pool providing a visual focus. (Top) A different view of the formal garden shows the existing arcade in the rear and one of the scupper basins at left. (Above) The intricate mosaics were created specially for the project. (All photos and drawings courtesy Garr Campbell & Associates)



## **Labor of Love**

The fountain proved to be a labor of love for its designers, Garr Campbell and Todd Price of Salt Lake City-based Garr Campbell & Associates, Landscape Architects and Design Consultants.

Campbell explains that his work on the job came from a connection with a New York-based decorator firm he's collaborated with previously.

"We had done another project here in Salt Lake," he explains. "When the clients visited that property, they decided to hire both the decorator and my firm to design and oversee the project's construction."

Campbell's firm also provided architectural design services for the restoration of the house, which he says was in definite need of help.

"The house was built in 1926 and had gone through several remodels, none of them successful," he says. "It was badly in need of extensive repair and modern upgrades."

Campbell describes the house as being in the Spanish/Moorish style. Designed by Georges Cannon, the residence is unique for its setting.

A large home on a small lot, the backyard features a rear garden courtyard rather than the more typical 1920s clothesline and vegetable garden.

Campbell, who worked for many years in the Middle East, explains that the courtyard or outdoor room is very common in Moorish homes, as is the presence of running water for irrigation, ambience and aesthetics.

"The owners wanted the landscape done in a traditional Moorish theme utilizing Islamic construction details and decoration," says Campbell. "Consequently, the courtyard incorporates a fountain/reflecting pool as the dominant decorative feature and located on an axis with the principal public room in the home, the living room."

By placing the fountain that way, he adds that it creates three distinct spaces in the courtyard area. One is a formal square lawn area planted on three sides with an elaborate flower border. The second is an informal rectilinear lawn adjacent to the

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The fabrication of the octagonal basin was a first for Valdars Stone & Marble Inc., although the company subsequently created another for a convent.

home's courtyard arcade. The third is the fountain.

"All are similar in scale and proportions common in historic Moorish courtyard gardens," says the designer.

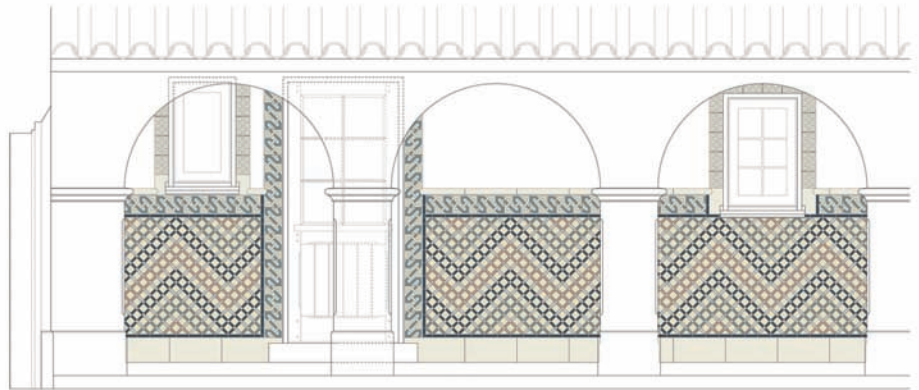
### Stone and Tile

To take the revamped courtyard from design to reality, Campbell relied on a number of other firms, including locally-based European Marble & Granite, and Valders Stone & Marble Inc. of Valders, Wis.

Campbell explains that European Marble & Granite is a stone importer and fabricator; while its specialty is interior stone, the company's European Stone and Tile division focuses on importing and installing stone tile in both interior and exterior applications.

"We've used their materials on other projects," says Campbell. "They've done a beautiful job on this project."

Kathleen Fuhriman, European Stone and Tile project manager for the job, says the company's involvement actually began by doing some of



An architect's drawing shows the arcade with its mosaic. The arcade is also common in Mediterranean architecture. The design used for the mosaic is Spanish.

the stonework on the interior of the home. At Campbell's suggestion, the company was then included in the bidding process on some of the exterior hardscape work, particularly the mosaics featured at the bottom of the pool and on the wall of the courtyard arcade on the south side of the home.

In both cases, Campbell provided the company with detailed plans for the mosaics, which his team designed. Working with European

Stone and Tile, the materials and colors for the two were then chosen.

Fuhriman then found a local custom-mosaic artist to execute the designs.

"I submitted the colors to the mosaic maker, who made the (wall) mosaic to the specifications," she says. "It turned out really well, and I think its success emboldened the designer to incorporate the mosaic into the fountain."

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The project with the fountains and side jets in operation; cooperation by all involved was critical to making sure the fabricated pieces fit together properly, with some of the stone being cut onsite.

She adds that the wall mosaic – described by Campbell as based on an existing wainscot from the Alhambra in Grenada, Spain – was mounted on mesh and installed by a crew from European Stone and Tile.

The mosaic for the reflecting pool was created in much the same way, Fuhriman says.

“It’s also a custom mosaic, and the pieces are very tiny – about 5/8" X 5/8," she says. “The pattern is unusually intricate and contains seven different stones in seven distinct colors.”

Her biggest challenge, Fuhriman says, is the use of turquoise in the reflecting-pool mosaic. She says finding a source for that material was particularly difficult.

And, while Fuhriman says European Marble & Granite is a stone supplier, in this case she agreed with Campbell’s choice in sourcing the remainder of the pool stone through Valders.

“We’ve often sourced them for this kind of limestone,” she says. “We’ve done other jobs with pool copings and fountain features, and



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### "Work of Art"

Campbell based his choice of Valders Stone & Marble on the exquisite nature of the company's dolomitic Wisconsin limestone and his previous experience with Valders on other projects, including the landscaping for Salt Lake's luxurious Grand America Hotel.

"We specified Valders Stone for that job and were very happy with the quality of the materials and their professionalism and ability to get things done," he says.

From the supplier's perspective, Michael Schumacher, LEED® AP for Valders, says that company has good rapport with Campbell, who provided his own shop tickets for the project.

"To get all the pumping in exactly right so we got the effect we were looking for, we did all the stone tickets," Campbell says. "That way I knew that everything fit exactly where it was supposed to be. And, it eliminates a lot of the confusion you can get having various people trying to work on a piece like this."

Schumacher says it was a fairly complex job to execute, and Valders employees dealt directly with Campbell to make sure everything worked together and fit properly.

"It was fairly ornate, and it took us more than one week for each bowl," Schumacher says. "That's inclusive of programming times and machine run times, but not necessarily inclusive of man-hours."

The two bowls were each fabricated in one piece from 3' X 4' X 16" blocks. The company has approximately 20 work stations, and Schumacher says they began by reducing the mass of the cubes, shaping the exteriors, and then removing the stone on the interiors of the basins.

In the end, the rounded bowl spent almost 40 hours being shaped, while the octagon took only about a quarter of that time.

In addition, Valders provided a base for the round bowl, and plenty of coping pieces and base panels – all crated in Wisconsin and sent by flatbed semi to Utah.

European Stone and Tile's Fuhrman says installation of the fountain was actually one of the last pieces in the completion of the home's hardscape. A multi-step process, it incorporated the work of two other firms: The Fountain People of Dallas, with the design and construction of the fountain's mechanical system, and locally based Dolphin Pools, which assembled it.

Valders' Schumacher says one of the challenges for European Stone and Tile was cutting some of the

coping onsite.

"There were some things that had to be altered onsite because there's no way for us to see where they might lay out," he says. "With the lights and the jets, if the stone was off by fractions of an inch, nothing would fit correctly."

Installation of the fountain was finished in late spring 2010, followed by the planting of greenery and Campbell says of the now-completed project, "The owner seems to be very pleased, and I consider it a work of art." ■



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