

Plantscaping trends and awards, plus a webinar alert!



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By JIM NAU



TROPICAL TOPICS

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Plantscapers Take Spotlight
Retailers Choose a Tropical
The Latest in Plantscaping
Webinar Alert!



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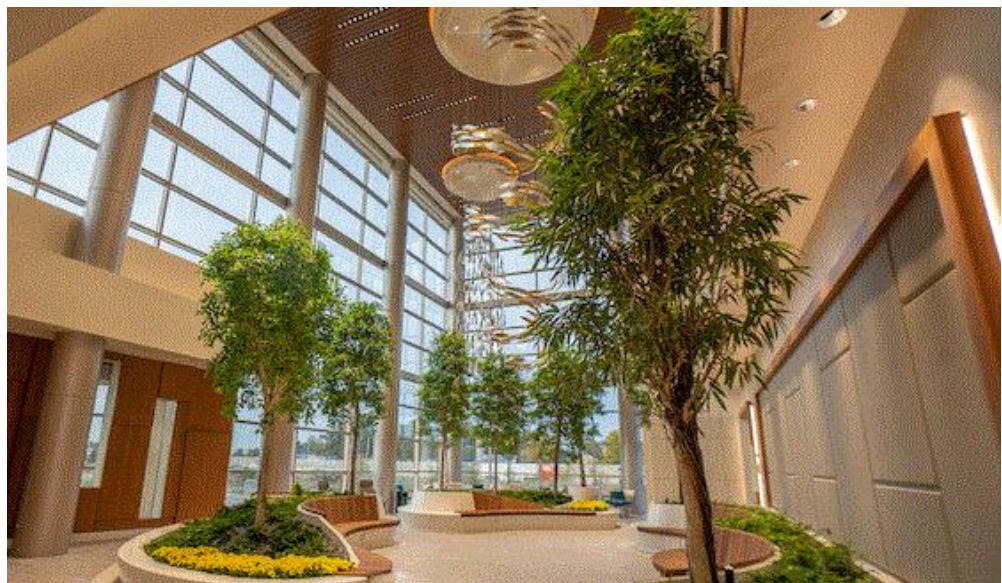
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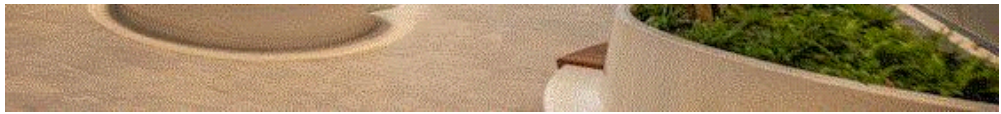
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Interior Plantscapers Take Spotlight

Just because I didn't attend this year's Cultivate'19 event in Columbus, Ohio, (my first time missing out in 11 years!) doesn't mean I don't have some tropically related Cultivate information for you. In fact, I have quite a bit!

Let's start with highlighting some winners of the AmericanHort International Interior Plantscape Awards. Taking home the award night's big prize—the Diamond Award—was Planterra, for their atrium creation for the Parkview Cancer Institute. A lot went into this modern atrium design, including acclimating the large trees for 12 months prior to installation. LEDs were carefully selected for the install, as these trees require that supplemental lighting.





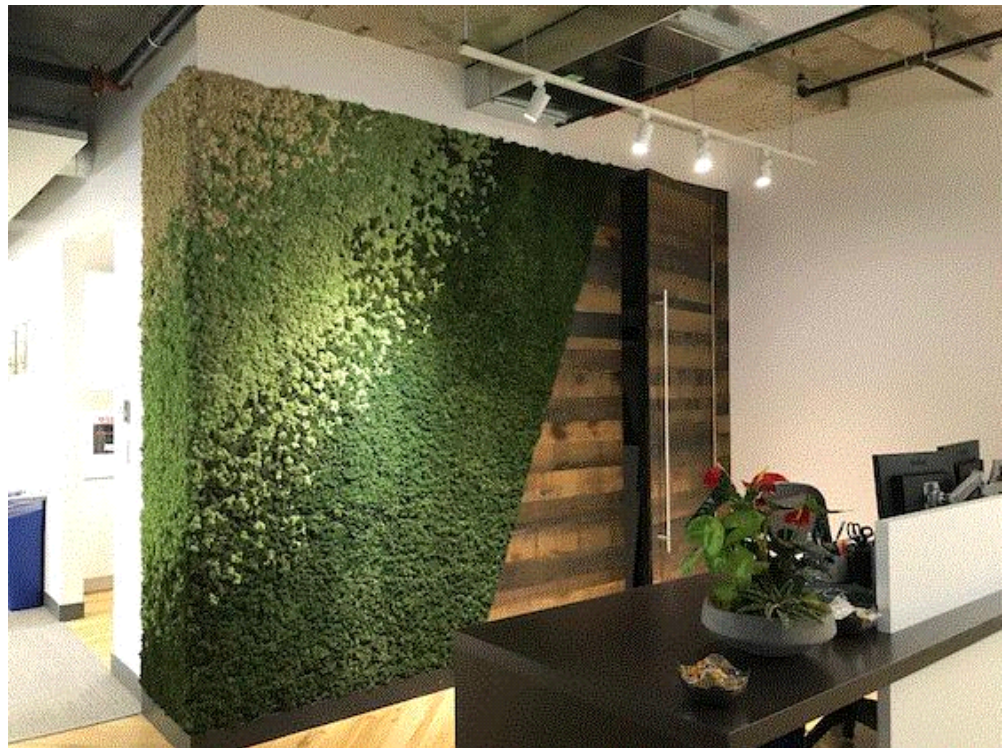
And how about this at Anthem Las Vegas by Ambius Los Angeles?



And this at Embassy Suites Landmark Center by Natura?



And finally, this really cool moss wall by NPK Associates?



Those last three are all silks, replicas or preserved materials, can you believe it?

My complete list of winners has the names of 75 award winners in all sorts of categories and sizes. It's truly amazing to me—as someone who struggles to keep my cats from knocking my bromeliad off the windowsill—how interiorscaping firms create and maintain plantscapes in atriums, offices and hanging off walls. Each and every one of them is tremendously deserving. Congrats!

NEW FOR 2026



Retailers Choose a Tropical

A tropical plant—more correctly, plants—took home a Retailers' Choice Award from Cultivate'19. That's a pretty high honor, because these awards recognize plants and products that retailers are just dying to sell.

And it turns out that this year's participating retailers—those that walk the show floor with an eye for what they think would sell like hotcakes—really liked the four varieties of Thai Dye Croton from ForemostCo. With new genetics from Thailand (hence the name), these crotons have much larger and incredibly vibrant leaves, and some very non-croton-like forms. I mean, really, take a look at them!



Thai Dye Twisted



Thai Dye Gnarly



Thai Dye To The Max



Thai Dye Tubular

It's awesome to have new plants for interior work, isn't it?



The Latest in Plantscaping

While I wasn't at Cultivate, I did have eyes and ears in relevant sessions via my colleague, Ball Publishing staff editor Allison Westbrook. She attended plantscaping consultant and author Kathy Fediw's talk on Interior Plantscaping. Here's what Allison has to share from the session.

Indoor plants are in, as you know, and Kathy says this makes indoor plant growers, retailers and installers "the cool dudes." So enjoy that status, tropical plant people!

Kathy started off by stating that millennials buy plants because they were heavily taught about the environment in school and now have buying power. This gave me pause, as I had never thought about it that way, even being a millennial myself. I'm a plant person, so I might be outside the norm, but I can see how that might be true. After all, we did watch a lot of educational programming about science, such as The Magic School Bus and Bill Nye the Science Guy. I don't know about you, but when Ms. Frizzle told me plants were cool, I was on board.

Here are a few design trends that Kathy sees in her business:

- Design trends come from four letters: HGTV. If Chip and Joanna Gaines say it's trendy, it is.
- There's a return to the "happy hippie days," that baby boomers like to reminisce about and younger people glamorize and wish to emulate.
- The home a nest and sanctuary, even as the lines between home and work are becoming blurred.
- Entertaining at home means that people want things to be portable and moveable; no more heavy, immobile plant containers.
- Hot-desking and hoteling—some companies are not assigning desks anymore, it's a find-a-spot-to-work outlay instead. She's heard of companies saying, "Pick a plant for the day and take it to your space. Bring it back at the end of the day."
- Multi-use furniture, such as interactive and standing desks. How can plants be incorporated into them?

So, what can you offer that meets these trends?

- Small plants—they're in, with some companies having a goal of "a plant on every desk"
- Portable containers for interior tropicals
- Partitions in offices made of plants
- Textured, colorful containers
- Easy care plants—such as succulents and bromeliads

Kathy then discussed what's hot in interior plantscaping outside the U.S. In two words—moss walls. A few other things she noticed on her travels were indoor hanging plants in Great Britain, where floor space is at a premium, and a more natural look in Australia, with green walls made of sconces or pots, with plants growing into one another.

Thanks for the reporting, Allison!



Webinar Alert!

The good folks at Ball Publishing have arranged for another super-informative webinar—free of charge for you—that'll help you up your growing game. This one is "Growers Talk HydraFiber." What makes this HydraFiber webinar different from the other several webinars BP has offered with the manufacturer (Profile Products) over the last few years? Because the growers actually using the product are the ones discussing it! What it is, the pros, the cons, how it differs from other growing media and how it really works IRL (in real life, for those who need a translation).

The growers dishing on the product will be:

- Scott Barnitz of Bob's Market in Mason, West Virginia (annuals)
- Chad Cagle of Colorpoint, Paris, Kentucky (hemp)
- Steve Garvey, Dallas Johnson Greenhouses, Council Bluffs, Iowa (annuals)

These folks will be joined by one of Profile Products's technical guys, Daniel Norden, who will share some examples and be around to answer any of your technical questions.

Join the group for this frank discussion and learn something about what could become your new growing media.

It's scheduled for Tuesday, July 30, at 1 p.m. Eastern/12 Central. Register for the webinar at www.growertalks.com/webinars.

Suggestions, comments, questions or news to share? Just drop me a line at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Ellen Wells
Editor-at-Large
Green Profit

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