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MASTERPLAN

PENNSYLVANIA LANDSCAPE DESIGNER JOSHUA GILLOW LEAVES NO HAND-CHISELED STONE UNTURNED

FOR AWARD-WINNING LANDSCAPE DESIGNER

Joshua Gillow, outdoor design is about much more than just furnishings and fabrics. His creativity and measured planning focuses on building a complete foundation for outdoor living from surfaces to swimming pools, lighting to landscaping.

But today, the goal of most

any project is blurring the line from the indoors to the outdoors. As the founder and owner of MasterPLAN Landscape Design of Brodheadsville, Pennsylvania, Gillow strives to do just that.

For this project in Center Valley, Pennsylvania, the indoor/outdoor transition occurred in two phases, resulting in an effortless pro-

gression from the sunroom to the hardwood second-story deck, and from the home's basement game room to an expansive pool and spa area.

"They appreciated the disguised character of the home and understood its true potential, but they needed our help to accomplish the expanded outdoor living spaces," Gillow says.

The first phase began with renovating the front and side driveway areas and the backyard deck, complete with a custom pergola. About a year later, the second phase transformed the backyard, adding a swimming pool, spa, patio, pool house, custom fire features, retaining walls, landscaping, lighting and irrigation systems.

Designer: Joshua Gillow

Developer: MasterPLAN Landscape Design

Location of project: Center Valley, Pennsylvania

Other contributors: Keystone Custom Decks, L&S Hardscapes, Monogram Custom Pools, PSA Turf & Irrigation

Photography credits: J Taylor Design; Techo-Bloc



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Landscape designer Joshua Gillow is at home by the pool.



A Weir water feature is the pool's focal point, in conjunction with the hand-chiseled, full-profile stone retaining wall and inlaid decking of durable Cumaru. Automatic covers for both the swimming pool and spa minimize maintenance when not in use. Technology also figured into Gillow's plan, as the client can operate all water features, jets, lights and covers from his smartphone.

The pool and spa area's adjacent retaining walls are constructed of footed masonry with the same full-profile, hand-chiseled stone to match the deck and the house. Though the project encompassed multiple phases, the use of consistent wood and stonework created a congruous look.

To add warmth and a custom gathering spot during cooler Pennsylvania evenings, Gillow's team constructed two fire features

out of full masonry, with a natural brownstone cap.

"The fire features add a beautiful charm to the space, playing and reflecting off the water," Gillow says. "The LED landscape lighting also produces visual impact and extends the evening so the client can entertain for as long as they like."

The homeowner supplied furnishings, preferring to keep it simple in design and color. With those finishing touches, the clients' distinctive spaces for dining, playing and relaxing were ready for fun.

"The size and scale of these spaces can vary, but they're always a part of the plan," Gillow says. "Spacing entertaining areas far apart often creates a feeling of disconnect and requires more energy for company to engage. We design outdoor living spaces for everyday use that make any group size comfortable." 



"For the side entry, we installed a wider paver walkway, a gas lantern, numerous LED lights that splashed against the stone and stucco, and a small Basalt spire water feature to create a welcoming feel," Gillow says. "In the backyard, the original stone terraces were not ample enough for entertaining, so we designed an expansive, elevated living space using a warm Brazilian Cumaru hardwood."

After revamping the topography of the outdoor area, his team constructed the swimming pool—a gunite concrete structure designed to serve as an activity center.

Next came creative lighting, including fixtures around the pool, as well as across the entire outdoor space. "Full-spectrum LED lights illuminate the aquatic feature, so the fun doesn't have to stop when the sun goes down," Gillow says.



The upper deck transitions off a sunroom. Access to the pool and spa is from the basement.