



Collector or Arranger?

by Carol Brinkman, HCMG

Until today, I didn't know the medical term for my condition — one-of-each-itis. No kidding, I read about it online. According to Billy Goodnick, a landscape architect, educator and writer in California, most gardeners are either collectors or arrangers.

Quoting Goodnick: "The Collector's objective is simply owning and successfully growing all of the plants that they adore. Collectors don't pay a lot of attention to the other plants that are growing nearby —the big picture takes a back seat to growing each individual plant. The criteria for where to plant the new purchase are straightforward: 1) Is there an empty space, and 2) Can I get it to grow?"

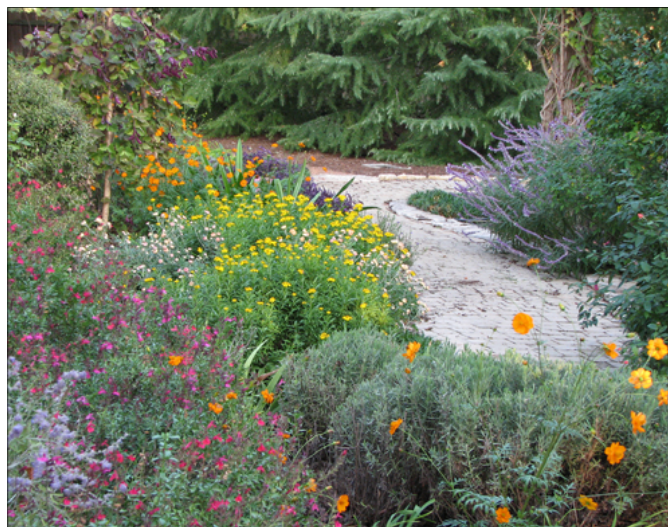
The Arranger is one who "is all about creating combinations that result in vignettes. The objective is a play of colors, forms and textures that will be subtly relaxing, exuberantly energizing, or whatever mood you'd like to create."

Goodnick is quick to say that the collector's one-of-each-itis is not a terminal condition. In fact, he maintains the collector can have a garden worthy of admiration by simply applying the basic design principles of color, form and texture to the collection as does the arranger. The idea is to create harmony and unity in the arrangement.

Guidelines for his 5-step program are:

- 1) Sketch an outline shape of your planting bed; scale is not important — just shape.
- 2) Divide the sketch of the bed into three flowing forms that have contour and fit together as in a simple jigsaw puzzle.
- 3) Your new plants are in a shaded area awaiting planting. Step back and look for the common traits of bloom color, leaf color, form/shape, and size. Group the plants accordingly.
- 4) Decide which trait you will use to bring order to your planting. As an example, if you have chosen color as the trait to work with, you might have three color groups — cool, warm and white/silver. (This is actually a variation on the theme of "drifts of color".)
- 5) Within each color area, fine-tune the arrangement of the plants to emphasize texture, form, contrast and size with the larger/taller plants to the back of each color area.

Using this plan for recovery, you can create a planting that is pleasing to the eye even as you to indulge your impulse buying!



The owner of the garden obviously has a chronic case of one-of--itis.