

# A STUDY IN STONE AND WATER

BY DANIEL G. JACOBS MANAGING EDITOR

Reconstruction of the Ashley Priddy Memorial Fountain earns the ultimate compliment from an Italian visitor

## *“Bellissima.”*

With a single word, the Italian visitor validated the seven months of time, effort and energy Lambert Landscape designers and crew poured into the planning and rebuilding the Ashley Priddy Memorial Fountain in Holland Park, TX.

The fountain is located in small plaza surrounded by roads on all sides. The visitor was driving by, leaned out his window and exclaimed “bellissima” to the crew. The word translates as “lovely” or “beautiful.”

“A lot of the architecture is very classical in that town,” says architect Paul Fields,

president and director of Lambert Landscape. “We wanted something that was not only classical and related to the town, but also really created a gateway — something that makes an image and a statement as a gateway to the city.”

The fountain was originally built in 1987 with a porous stone. A series of freeze and thaw cycles had severely damaged the fountain, and it was in need of constant repair. Fields chose Istrian stone to construct the fountain. The non-porous limestone makes up much of the building façades along Venice’s Grand Canal.

“It was used quite extensively back in the 16th and 17th centuries,” Fields explains. “It accepts carving really well and is durable.”

And it blends well with the nearby architecture.

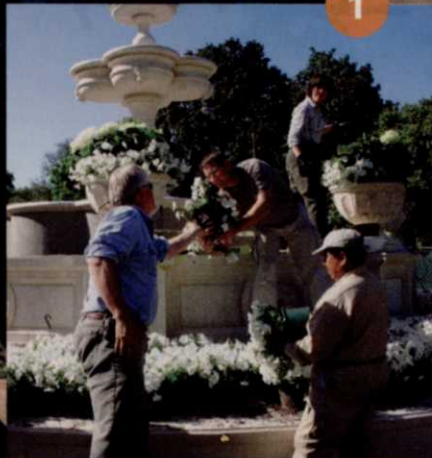
“There’s a lot of classical architecture that surrounds this site,” Fields says. “There’s an old Romanesque church that’s a landmark in the city that’s adjacent to the site. We wanted something that felt congruent to the city and the surrounding space.”

The beauty of the fountain was enhanced with plantings of white hydrangeas and petunias. An evergreen groundcover base provides year round color to the structure. Lambert Landscape also added architectural agaves to the large urns around the base of the fountain.

The fountain melds nicely with nearby buildings, but to accomplish that Lambert Landscape had to reach out to the Old Country and surmount language and time constraints. Fields sent drawings to Italy, where artisans carved the material and shipped it back to the states. The company had only three months to plan and four months to complete the project so it would be ready for an Easter dedication.

And unlike most private projects, the fountain was city-owned. Two families carried the brunt of the cost of the reconstruction. Fields had to please a committee of people.

Not only was the company able to complete the project on time, it earned a Grand Award from the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) last year. **LMB**



**Main images.** At night, the fountain beckons residents from city. Lighting was incorporated into the fountain's basin.

1. Workers install white hydrangeas and petunias enhance the Istrian stone work.
2. The lion's mask is a symbol of stateliness and power.
3. Classical urns broaden the base, offsetting the 40-ft. diameter of the structure and the 18-ft height of the central fountain.

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