



## Surfaces

# PORTLAND PASSAGE

Vera Katz Park is no more than the width of the sidewalk it borders and stretches only one city block on the north side of the Gerding Theater in Portland, Oregon's Pearl District. But as passers-by enter this recently transformed space, the soothing sound of flowing water draws their attention to the park's centerpiece: Three stone water channels form a sculpture that carries a single ribbon of water through the park, creating a babbling-brook effect. Designed by Scott Murase, principal of Portland- and Seattle-based landscape design company Murase Associates, the water channels stand about 3 feet high and are constructed from charcoal-black basalt imported by Seattle-based Yellow Mountain StoneWorks from a small village in southern China. The hand-honed finish brings out the rich color and subtle grain of the dark stone. The drought-tolerant landscaping includes pygmy bamboo and scouring rush that fill the beds flanking the sidewalk. But the park is practical too, featuring a bioswale to filter storm water and wide wooden benches on which to relax in this revitalized public space. See [yellow-mountain.net](http://yellow-mountain.net). — JACKIE D'ANTONIO



## Go Now

# NEW VIEWS

Head indoors for two unconventional views of botanicals. In "New Bamboo: Contemporary Japanese Masters" (pictured above), at New York's Japan Society Gallery through January 11, 2009, bamboo sculptures by 23 living artists push past the plant's form and function and instead use bamboo as a medium for creativity. Traditionally used in Japan to make baskets, bamboo appears here in rebellious abstract forms, from unruly spikes to sexually charged figurines. The gallery exhibit "Looking at Leaves," showing now at the Harvard Museum of Natural History through February 8, 2009, is a series of large-scale, black-and-white images by New York photographer Amanda Means that asks the viewer to consider the elegant form and function of leaves, beyond what the naked eye can see. Using the leaves themselves like negatives, Means illuminates minute pathways of veins and tiny trails left by insects — tattoos of a wild life. For more information, see [japansociety.org](http://japansociety.org) and [hmn.harvard.edu](http://hmn.harvard.edu). — JENNICA PETERSON

## Sculpture

# DARK PLANET

This orb might look like a clam-encrusted stone, but when light from within seeps through its cracks at night, you know you've got an intriguing piece of garden art. *Dark Planet* is one of British designer David Harber's latest designs, several of which were seen last spring at the Chelsea Flower Show. The incredibly tactile sphere is tiled in polished river-washed black puddle stone and practically begs the viewer to reach out and touch it. But nighttime is when it really shines. *Dark Planet* comes in two sizes: 30-inch diameter for \$9,979 or 39-inch diameter for \$11,693. Distributed in the United States by Haddonstone; call 856-931-7011 or e-mail [info@haddonstone.com](mailto:info@haddonstone.com). See Harber's other sundials, water features and garden sculptures at [davidharbersundials.co.uk](http://davidharbersundials.co.uk). — MEGAN PADILLA

