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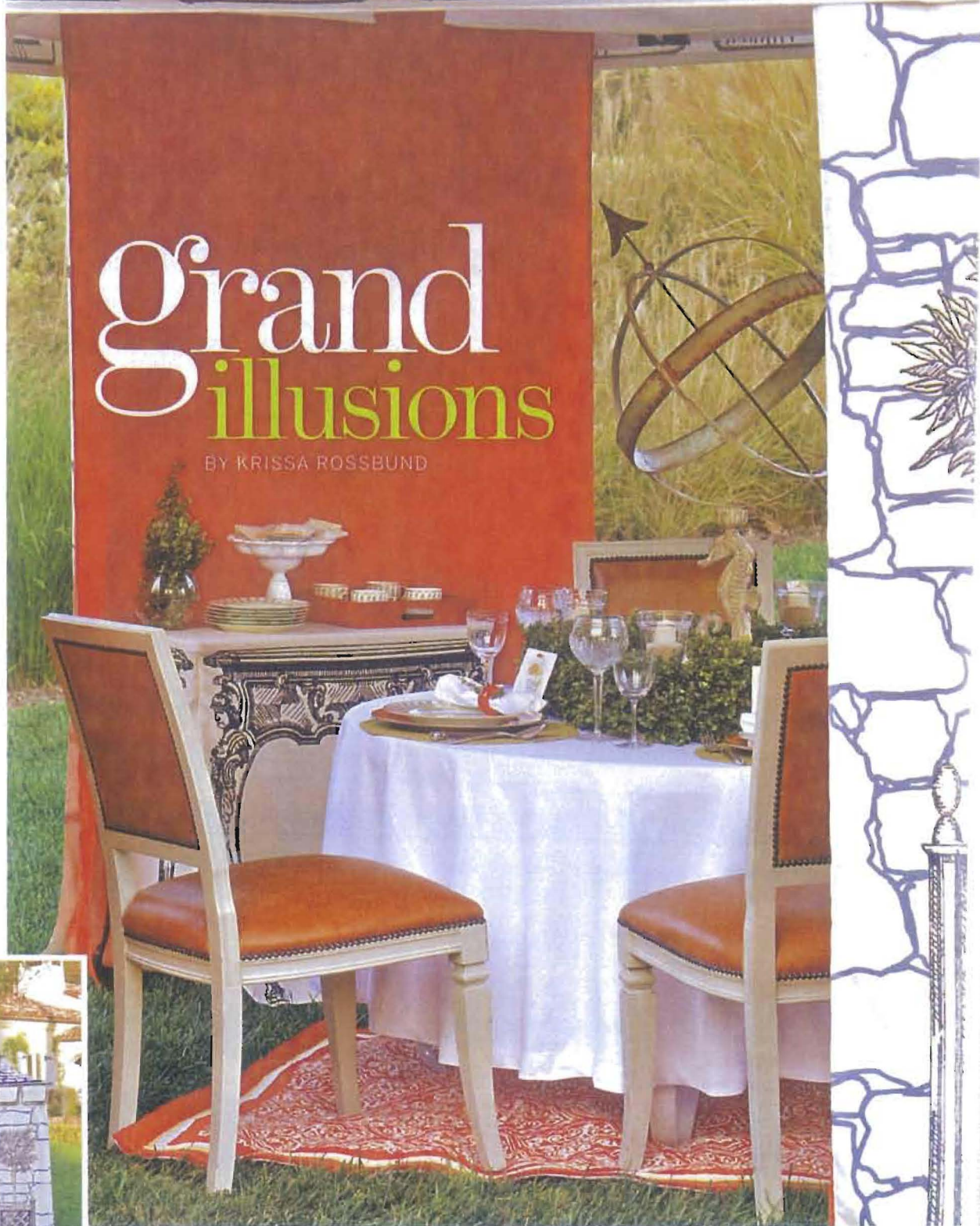
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Grand illusions

BY KRISSA ROSSBUND



Landscaping-in-a-bag with Mark Cutler's canvas creations

Los Angeles designer Mark Cutler loves formal settings, and he works hard at seeking out fine antiques for his clients. But the playful side of this Australian-born creative talent leads him to find alternatives when a desired piece isn't available or feasible.

An elegant alfresco dining experience, for instance, can be a challenge without appropriate landscaping. To compensate, Mark created a canvas pavilion that is easily erected in 20

minutes for a nearly instant formal garden environment. "The Tableaux series is all about enjoying antiques," he explains. "By printing the outline of a historic table, or in this case, a stone-garden pavilion, there is an easy and whimsical way to have something that in reality you don't."

Enhanced by the faux setting, this outdoor locale doesn't skimp on the tabletop accoutrements. A basic round table >

The "Louis" console cover provides a note of elegant whimsy.



outdoor finery

To playfully mimic the look of a fine antique for worry-free use when entertaining outdoors, camouflage a mundane folding table with "Louis," a console table cover by Mark, \$656; Mark Cutler Designs (310/360-6212). His weather-resistant tent is \$4,500.



covered in a white cotton cloth is anchored with an orange-hued indoor/outdoor rug. A tent liner that matches the vibrant rug adds punch to the color scheme. Orange porcelain chargers framing leaf-embellished dinner plates echo the bright accent color, and cut crystal adds sparkle and light.

To create a garden-perfect centerpiece, the table's center is framed with a border of boxwood (sprigs are inserted along the perimeter of a square of floral oasis). White carnations fill the boxwood square, and an antique iron armillary tops the bed of blooms as the ideal garden ornament.

"I wanted to extend the idea of clipped hedges inside the tent, just like you would have in a shaped garden," says Mark. "The armillary achieves the same thing. It would typically be the focal point of the garden, so I used it for the centerpiece. It has scale and size without the bulky volume that a floral arrangement would have offered." ►

Details: Mark Cutler, Mark Cutler Design, 8656 Holloway Plaza Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90069; 310/360-6212; markcutlerdesign.com.



setting the table

"Constance" dinnerware, \$425 for five pieces: Bernardaud (800/884-7775); • "Laque de Chine" charger, \$150; Haviland (800/793-7106); • "Colleen" stainless flatware, \$60 for a 5-piece setting, and "Clarendon" goblet, \$60; Waterford (waterford.com); • "Colebrook" wineglass, \$60 and "Clare" flower pot with saucer, \$150; Marc Jacobs for Waterford; • Tablecloth, \$49; napkins, \$12; Bed Bath & Beyond; • Lacquered napkin rings, \$43 for eight; Cole River Co. (coleriverco.com), trade only; • Armillary, \$495; Mark's Gardens (800/487-4854).