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Great garden gig

■ Dig Garden Shop owner specializes in designing rooftop oases for condo dwellers — and has a cool store, too

By **SUZIE RIDGWAY**
for The Tribune's
Home section

When you visit Dig Garden Shop and ask which bird feeder to choose, little do you know that you're talking to a talented landscape architect who, in just the last three years, has designed more than 25 rooftop gardens for homes in the Pearl District.

Dig, owned and operated by landscape architect Thomas Adkisson, is a small garden specialty store tucked away in the Pearl.

The shop which opened in 1990, features contemporary planters and containers, as well as French furniture and regionally crafted artwork for the inside and outside of a home.

The relaxing and inviting store is filled with bubbling fountains, Buddha-head statues, artisan bird feeders, customizable garden bricks, stones and outdoor furniture.

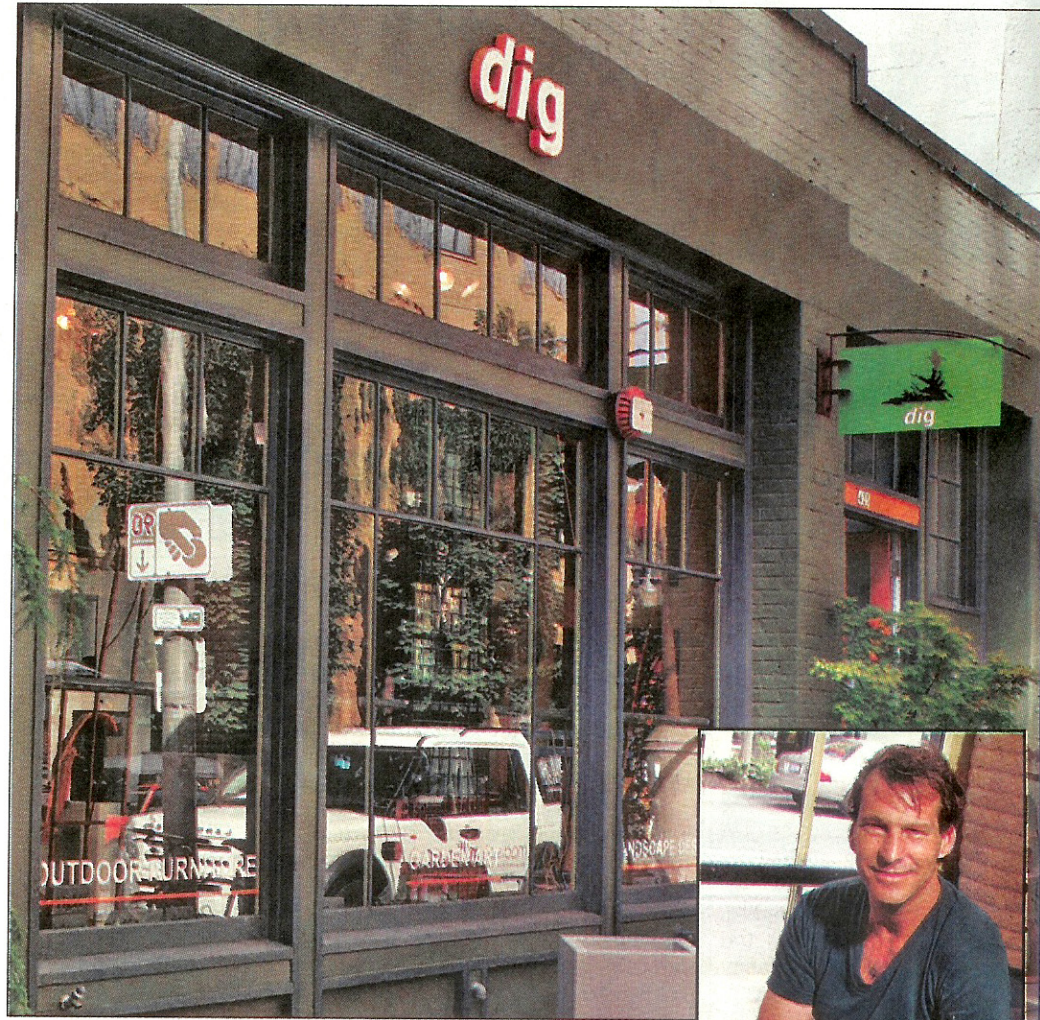
The fountains, coupled with store's setup, encourage a meandering stroll that allows you to discover hidden treasures around every corner.

In addition to running Dig full-time, Adkisson also serves as a consultant and designer.

"That's what's kind of cool about the Pearl," he says. "You have these designers who own these stores. You get to talk to a professional designer who's trying to sell retail, too."

Adkisson creates rooftop, terrace and patio gardens in the Pearl, as well as gardens in the West Hills. Because of the logistics of getting to the upper condominium and penthouse floors, Adkisson says that he's getting into more lightweight planters, like plastic, fiberglass and metal.

"I also make planters of all different sizes," he says. "I have planters on wheels that I make in any size you want, made of galvanized steel that I have



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Thomas Adkisson (inset), owner of Dig, is a professional landscape architect who designs rooftop, patio and terrace gardens for condo dwellers in the Pearl District.

powder-coated."

For his design services, Adkisson begins with a two-hour consultation for \$190, during which time he checks out the available space and helps homeowners decide what will realistically work.

"Most people have an idea of what they would like but they don't have a game plan," he says. "I help bring it into focus."

Adkisson installs gardens on his days off and before his shop opens for business for

the day. Though running the store and designing is a tremendous amount of work, he mostly performs alone.

"It's a calling. It's a great gig for one person. To make an empire out of it, I think, takes a good business plan that would take a lot more emphasis out of enjoying life," he says.

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