

Reaching for the Sky

Columnar Trees play key roles in the Garden

By Dave Dunn

Rideau Woodland Ramble

Modern gardens are to a large extent dictated by the space they have to live within. More and more, we are challenged with tighter spaces to plan within, and therefore tall, columnar or vertical specimens are becoming an important element of the garden.

Reasons to Reach for the Sky

There are many reasons to seek out such a plant. You may have a small yard, or a tight special place where a dramatic form will be an important visual element. You may be constrained by location of overhead wires, and therefore growth habit is crucial. Your composition may be very horizontal, and you need a strong vertical element to offset it. Finally, you may just be looking for a big dramatic visual impact intended to provoke and surprise the viewer.

Columnar Choices

You can find many columnar or tall and narrow specimens that are both coniferous and deciduous. Your selection is only constrained by the colour, texture and height objectives you have as well as the particular growing conditions of the site. Rideau Woodland ramble has many columnar trees selected to play several roles in the garden. They include crimson Sentry Maples, Columnar green Maples, Crimson Spire Oak, Pyramidal English Oak, Pink Spire Crabapples, Columnar Blue Spruce, Columnar Mountain Ash and so on.



colours. Consider the value of a strong crimson vertical line, from the sentry maple, or a vertical brush stroke of blue from a columnar blue spruce

Drama

At the end of the day, you would agree that a garden, either planned as a place to visit and be in, or an image to enjoy from afar, benefits from the elements of surprise, dramatic and bold moves, and contrasts in colour, form, texture and scale. These kinds of dramatic juxtapositions serve to heighten the experience, and help your eye read the overall impact of your plan.

In that spirit I challenge you to be bold, go for drama and reach for the sky with some interesting and unusual columnar forms in your garden!

Dave Dunn

Rideau Woodland Ramble

www.rideauwoodlandramble.com