

PLANTWISE: **WHAT'S GROWING THIS MONTH**

Autumn Attack Plan

BY KATE BRYANT



PLANT IT Composting: The fiery leaves of autumn don't just light up the trees—they are a nutrient goldmine, especially when layered with nonmeat kitchen scraps. For a faster turnaround, shred the leaves with a mower before adding them to the mix.

Planting: Fall is a great time to plant cold-hardy trees, shrubs, and perennials. Try to act between the first seasonal rainfalls and winter's saturation. You want soil that's damp (not hard-baked from summer) but not yet sodden—digging soaked soil leads to compaction that inhibits root growth. Now is also the time to plant daffodils, tulips, and crocus, as well as garlic and shallots. Come December, they can still be found in nurseries (often at steep discounts), but plant them as soon as you get home. Indoors, try fuss-free paperwhite narcissus: plop some pebbles into a canning jar, add the paperwhite bulbs, and water just to the base of the bulb. Watch for their starlike blooms in about three to four weeks.

SEE & DO There is no better time to gawk at—or purchase—ornamental grasses. Along South Waterfront Park look for design firm Walker Macy's sweeping, grassy plantings flowing in the cool breeze. See some blades you like? Snap a picture and bring it to **Wind Dancer Grasses** (winddancergarden.com) in Salem, where more than 100 varieties of grasses are flowering like mad and available for sale. Call ahead for an appointment: 503-364-5537.

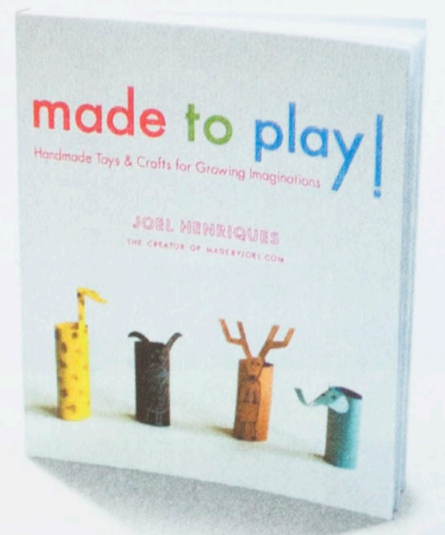
For more gardening tips, see Kate Bryant's blog at portlandmonthlymag.com/plantwise.

DIY FIVE

A Portland artist's new book lends kids a crafty hand for the season of indoor fun. **BY ZACH DUNDAS**

MOMS, DADS, grandparents, uncles, and aunts need not fear youthful holiday vacation hours, begging for pastimes sans batteries, Wi-Fi connections, or Fireman Sam DVDs. Portland artist and author Joel Henriques offers elegant, craftily modern alternatives in his new book, *Made to Play! Handmade Toys and Crafts for Growing Imaginations* (Shambhala, \$19). The finger puppet menagerie below—created by 10-year-old consultant Aiden—might come from the simplest of the book's 35 DIY projects, but like all of Henriques's plans it gives spry imaginations room to roam.

The book spins off of Henriques's successful website, MadeByJoel.com. Launched two years ago to document the painter's efforts to amuse his tod-



dlers, the site now draws more than 100,000 unique visitors a month. "I want to make toys that can be played with in an open-ended way," says Henriques, "and create a nice environment for kids and families to find stuff to do."

These humble aspirations landed the book deal, followed by an October shoot for *The Martha Stewart Show*. And his in-home audience is growing, too: a new baby joined the twins five months ago, giving Henriques even more fingers to put to work on lions, modernist dollhouses, or paper models of Paris.

