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BY CORINNE JOY BROWN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE MUNDINGER

TAKING THEIR CUES FROM NATURE, Managing Partner and Director of Design Andrew Wisnoski and architect Mike Hamberg, Principal of Poss Architecture in Aspen, Colorado have created a masterpiece of residential design celebrating the perfect intersection between heaven and earth. The remarkable location of the Sunset Ridge home, high above the town of Telluride in southwestern Colorado, offered unlimited possibilities with only one specific challenge—how to integrate a manmade structure on such a majestic natural site.

When the clients first came to Poss in 2011, inspired to build a year-round, Rocky Mountain getaway, they only knew they wanted a signature, contemporary home, something as unique as it was comfortable.

“We considered all the elements of nature when offering our suggestions for an organic, flowing plan,” says Wisnoski. Among many creative decisions, those elements precipitated the inclusion of an integrated water feature; a stream that begins at the entrance

Integrated onto the site with multiple wings on either side, a luminous main entry beckons under a flared and lofty roof, entirely framed in glass.

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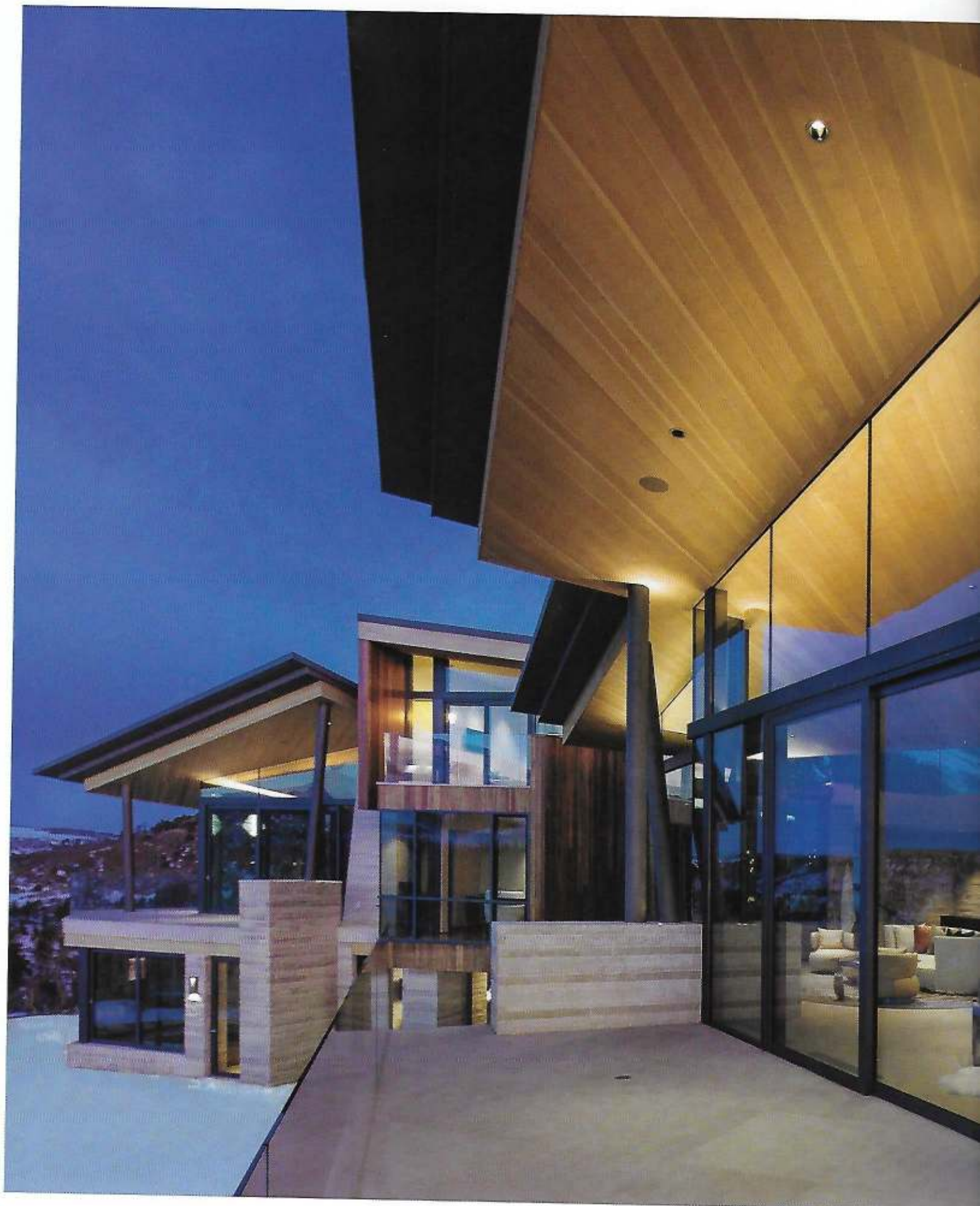


and cascades through the house to a spacious pond with a far side pavilion. Several luminous fireplaces were installed throughout, adding the glow of a hearth wherever needed. Glass walls with sliding doors and spacious decks offered fresh air and outdoor seating. The very separation between the interior and the out-of-doors became invisible in a plan that wholly embraces both.

"Because of the dramatic 360-degree views," Wisnoski continues, "both around the home and above, we conceived of a way to focus on the surrounding San Miguel mountains, majestic Wilson Peak, the arc of the sun, and the ever-changing beauty of the Colorado sky."

That goal was achieved by linking independent wings of various sizes, totaling an eventual 12,000 square feet, into a radial arrangement across the site. The plan allows for maximum advantage of the site's topography, with subtle elevation changes in the floors to other wings that act as bridges. More importantly, the links between the wings are made of triple-pane glass without visible mullions, dissolving any sense of weight and allowing for an unexpected roofline that joins the forms without suppressing them.

The spacious living room exemplifies flow, the absolute continuity of structure, form and surface, plus the variable play of light at every level. Two seating areas address either the warmth of the fire or the drama of the mountains outside. Wherever you look, nature reigns.





The house seems like an artistic arrangement of paper origami as roof planes appear to fold and unfold depending on your point of view.

"The roof forms are inspired by the rugged, angular mountain peaks in the distance," adds Mike Hamberg. "They soar above, carried by columns strategically placed in order to open more views." In all, the house seems like an artistic arrangement of paper origami as roof planes appear to fold and unfold depending on your point of view, and the end result is a playful structure of steel, glass and quarried stone that seems to have merely alighted on the site on its way through the galaxy.

Angular roof overhangs provide natural shade and cooling during warm summer months, while numerous glass walls, sliding doors and spacious decks blur the lines between indoors and out.



Considerations in shape and form were based on the fact that in nature no right angles exist and therefore, none are found in this schematic.

Earthbound as it is, Hamberg reassures that the house was built as sustainably as possible, relying on geothermal energy. Roof overhangs provide natural shade and cooling while radiant, heated floors warm the air throughout, regardless of the extreme variations in outdoor temperature. Further considerations in shape and form were based on the fact that in nature, according to Hamberg, no right angles exist and therefore, none are found in this schematic as well. Various structural and finish materials were guided by the clients' preference for lighter tones, therefore the abundance of clear, vertical grain Douglas fir planking and pale limestone floors.



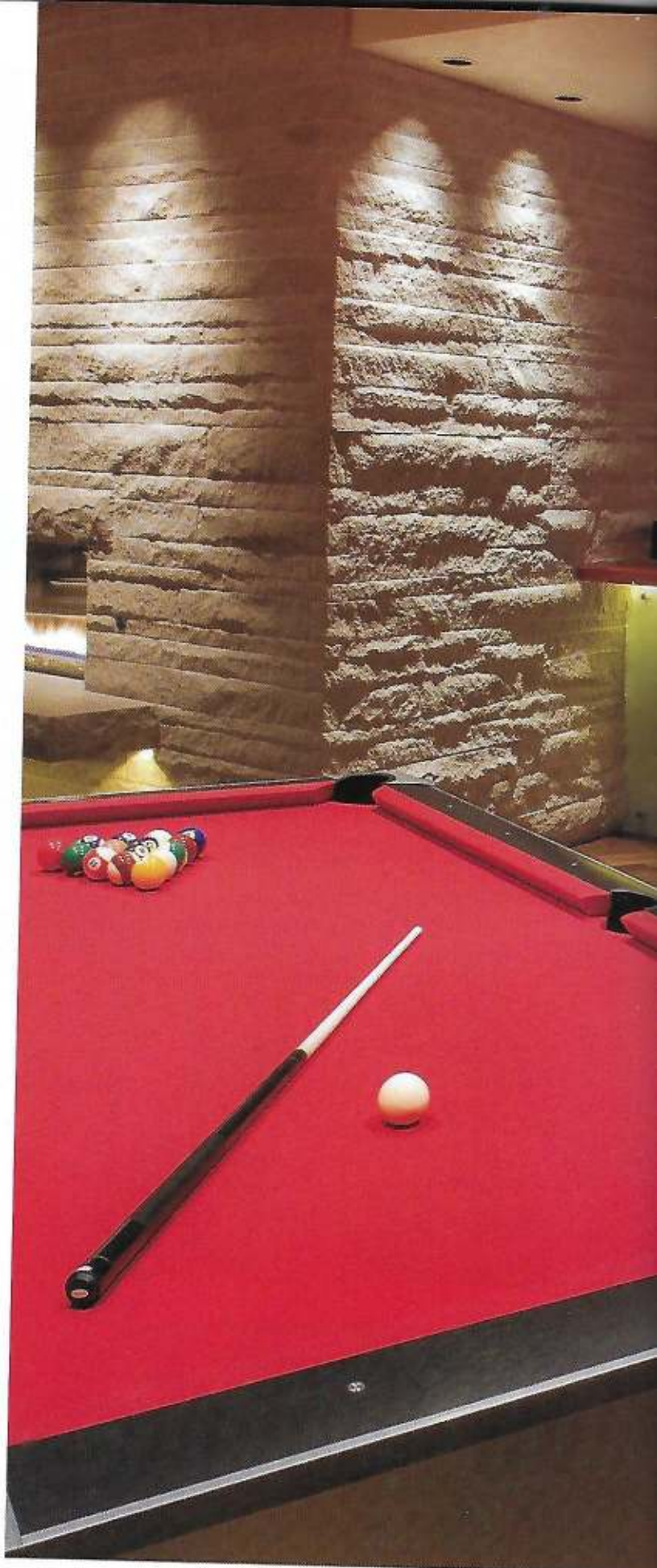
Above left: A partial height, stone wall adds texture and privacy to the dramatic dining room, flanked on one side by a walnut console buffet with backlit glass cabinets. Adjacent is the living room, connected in part by a three-sided glass fireplace, the perfect transition between dining and lounging. Reminiscent of floating milkweed pods, the trio of chandeliers appear to be a gift of nature.

Above: Seek and efficient, this walnut-veneered, European-style kitchen offers full views of the dramatic mountain setting in every direction. Clean surfaces complement stainless steel fixtures, while a custom worktop/breakfast bar with base lighting adds ease and convenience, plus an unexpected glow.

Because of the home's distance from town, multiple recreational options were essential, a way to entertain friends and family beyond options like hiking and skiing.

The tiered floor plan is full of surprises, such as floating walls that stop short of the ceiling creating both openness and unification, and intriguing stairways to upper levels. On the ground level, a bar with a luminous, backlit glass front previews backlit, etched shelves that showcase glassware and spirits. Because of the home's distance from town, multiple recreational options were essential, a way to entertain friends and family beyond options like hiking and skiing. So, in addition to a spacious kitchen and dining area plus six bedrooms and private baths, guests might gather before the three-sided fireplace in the living room, watch the sunset from the lower-level family room, or entertain themselves with the adjacent table tennis or pool table. In addition, there is always the home theater and spa.

Lighthearted, cheerful and fun, this dazzling bar and recreation space invites a party atmosphere and a place to linger and talk. The bar's glass panel is lit from behind, topped by a lacquered red counter that adds a pop of color right where it's needed. The wrap-around plan allows space for all kinds of recreation.







Winner of the 2017 coveted AIA Colorado Honor Award, the home's abundant luxury offers unexpected warmth and comfort in a bracing environment and will hopefully do so for generations to come. ✦

Above: With its sumptuous free-standing tub, wave-paneled shower and rich mix of stone, wood and glass, the inviting master bath offers a sybaritic, spa-like environment.



Left: Understated and simple, the beauty of this bedroom lies in the view. Thanks to the remote location, privacy isn't an issue. Motorized shades are hidden in the window head molding however, to provide light control if desired. The rich mix of textures, natural materials and cove lighting provides a restful setting.