

SEAMLESS

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SALLY RICH BRAINERD



INTEGRATION

WATERSTONE RESIDENCE COMBINES NATURAL MATERIALS WITH INTERCONNECTED SCULPTURAL ELEMENTS

When RKD Architects was hired to build a family compound on a dramatic 70-acre site near Edwards, Colo., the only real direction given by the owners

was to design a home that communicated with the outdoors.

“I realized that my client was paying me to dream for him,” said Jack Snow, AIA, RKD principal and the project architect.

Upon visiting the site, Snow discovered he had an incredible palette to turn his dreams into reality. The large parcel included high desert-red canyon walls for privacy, along with natural springs, creek beds and uninterrupted views of the 13,000-ft New York Range. These surreal natural features quickly became the catalysts in the design process.

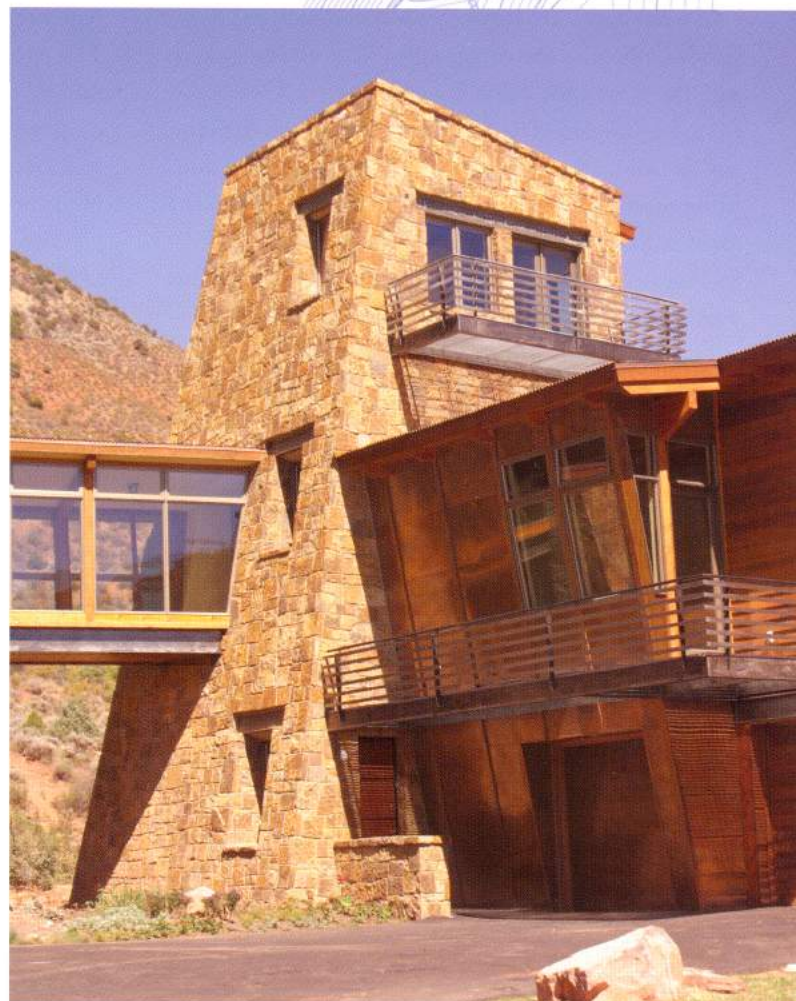
“We wanted the feel of a mountain home without repeating architectural styles that have already been done and overdone,” said Snow.

ORGANIC & PERMANENT

As a result, the dominant features of the site – water and stone – work together seamlessly to connect the home’s owners with both architecture and the environment. It seemed only natural that the home would be given the name Waterstone.

“I have been getting further and further away from the archetypal ‘house’ with gables and ridge lines,” Snow said, referring to the evolution of his design process. “This design grows from the place. It is organic in that sense; it is sculpture on the specific landscape – on display in nature.”

Standing on the hillside at the site, Snow sketched a stone tower that would become the genesis for the project. Then the idea to supplement the natural springs and creek beds took form, along with the concept of the “interlinking living pods.”





In what Snow envisioned as a functional and structural response to the topography, Waterstone nestles into the side of the canyon with three pods interconnected by angled glass bridges that span the streams and ponds below. The arrangement of the pods and bridges prompts more communication with the land, and the bridges allow for more outside walls and unobstructed views. The occupants are sheltered but a part of the landscape.

The architectural forms are battered, curved and overhanging to evoke the geology of the site. A corrugated metal roof tops massive stone forms intersected by timber beams, weathered steel and

patinated copper. The effect is dramatic, yet warm. The extensive use of stone enhances the natural setting and grounds the home to its site with permanence. Snow combined contemporary curves and slopes with traditional materials to give the house warmth.

Stone and patinated copper used on the exterior carry to the inside and further reinforce the connection to the site. A slate and stone waterfall flows through the main stair area to a pool in the entry area below. Outdoors, an extensive red stone pathway system interlocks the pods, encircles the garden areas and bridges the streams and ponds.

“I realized that my client was paying me to dream for him.”

— Jack Snow, AIA
RKD Architects



INTERIOR WARMTH

The kitchen is the centerpiece of the home. Walls of outward-sloping glass meet granite counters, which sit atop curved, custom-built steamed beach cabinets. The windows overhang the pond and stream below and invite the occupant to be part of the red-walled canyon surroundings.

Patinated copper forms one large wall of the kitchen and encases the stainless steel appliances, art display areas and island. A pantry, two work areas with two sinks, two dishwashers, a 48-in. refrigerator, wine chiller, warming drawers, built-in sound system and bar seating add to the functional yet warm kitchen.

Just beside the kitchen, a slate fireplace and stone and copper walls create a dramatic but cozy breakfast area. The jaw-dropping views and inside/outside effect created by walls of angled glass are what make this kitchen a one-of-a-kind experience.

“Mountain property is a very special gift,” said the home’s owner. “I believe that if you build a house in the mountains, you should be able to feel the grandeur of the landscape at any time.”

A SCULPTURAL EMPHASIS

“At RKD, we put a high priority on the sculptural nature of a project,” Snow said.

His desire to design and build more contemporary and site-specific architecture is shared by his business partners Sally Rich Brainerd and Renato Jose.

“We believe that in order to create great architecture, our expertise should go beyond that of most present-day architects,” said Brainerd. “We have decided to return, in part, to the original role of architects – to become master builders by building many of our own designs.”



WATERSTONE (a private residence)

LOCATION Red Canyon Ranch, 75-acre estate in Edwards, Colo.
CONSTRUCTION COST Confidential
SCOPE 8,000 sq ft
COMPLETION Jan. 2005
PRIMARY MATERIALS Stone, patinated copper, weathered steel

OWNER Withheld by request
ARCHITECT RKD Architects Inc., Jack K. Snow, AIA
CONSULTANTS Monroe & Newell Engineers Inc.,
Land Designs by Ellison
CONTRACTOR RKD Architects Inc.
TRIM Gore Range Carpentry
MASONRY Gore Range Masonry
DECORATIVE METALS Miller Interpretive Design
LANDSCAPE & WATER FEATURES Land Designs by Ellison

OTHER NOTABLE PROJECTS BY RKD ARCHITECTS

- > Mexico Restaurant, Dillon
- > Masthead Commercial Building, Dillon
- > Capitol Theatre, Eagle

PREVIOUS Waterstone’s materials, slopes, curves and angles echo the surrounding geology. **OPPOSITE** The home’s massive stone forms appear to grow out of the canyon walls. Glass bridges interconnect the three living pods and span the natural topography below. **BELOW LEFT** The kitchen’s radial, outward-sloping windows overlook red canyon walls and a pond below. **BELOW** The great room — an area of resolution for a number of angles and sloped elements — remains a tranquil retreat.

