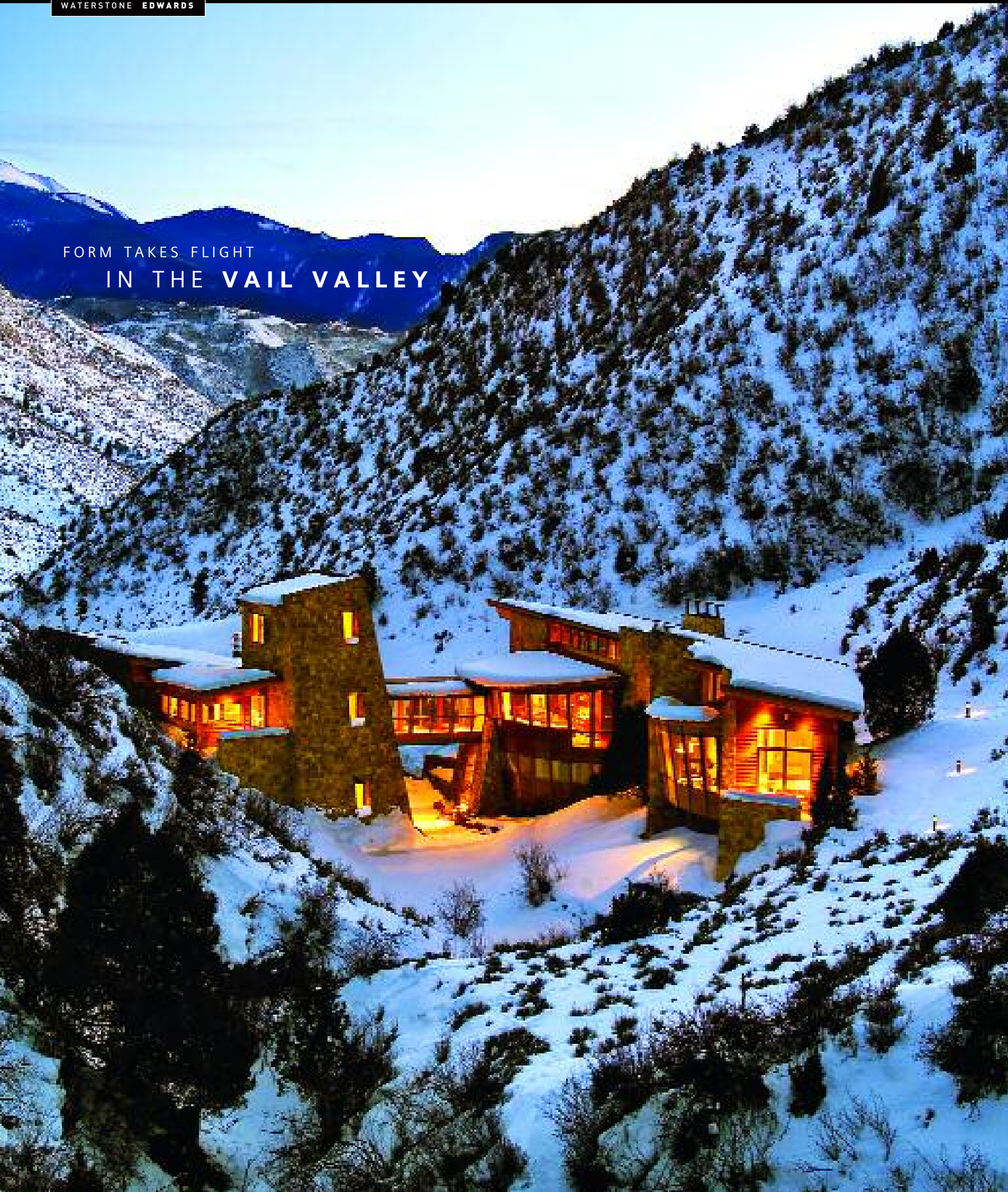


FORM TAKES FLIGHT IN THE VAIL VALLEY



DESERT SCULPTURE

WRITTEN BY ANN LEIBMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RON RUSCIO

THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT THIS HOUSE BELONGS HERE, TUCKED AWAY IN THE ROLLING SAGEBRUSH-COVERED HILLS. Waterstone, as the house is called, with its brown-gray opaline sandstone walls and Chinese slate and pine floors, rises out of a secluded 70-acre site near the town of Edwards in the high desert, west of the Vail Valley.

"The owner's interest was in the relationship between the site, its views and the piece of property," says Vail, Colorado, architect Jack Snow of the 8,000-square-foot residence. A partner at RKD Architects, Snow envisioned the home as sculpture from the outset.

"We wanted to capture and capitalize on the essence of the place in terms of the environment, its colors and textures. I designed it from the outside in so that it would 'sit' on the landscape, as it should," he says.

Remarkable for its design, Waterstone is divided into three forms, connected by covered, glass-walled breezeway bridges. "Instead of one large structure, I designed three smaller ones so that there would be a blurring of the lines between the indoor and outdoor space," says Snow. The bridges offered the owner another interaction with the outside environment, and the configuration allowed for additional external walls and negative spaces in which the architect created various patios and



HOUSE PICK

Japanese designer Soji Yanagi presents a rosewood stool, elegantly, yet simply created from molded plywood and steel. *Butterfly Stool, Rosewood, \$595. MoMA Design Store, 800-447-6662*

ARCHITECT Jack Snow

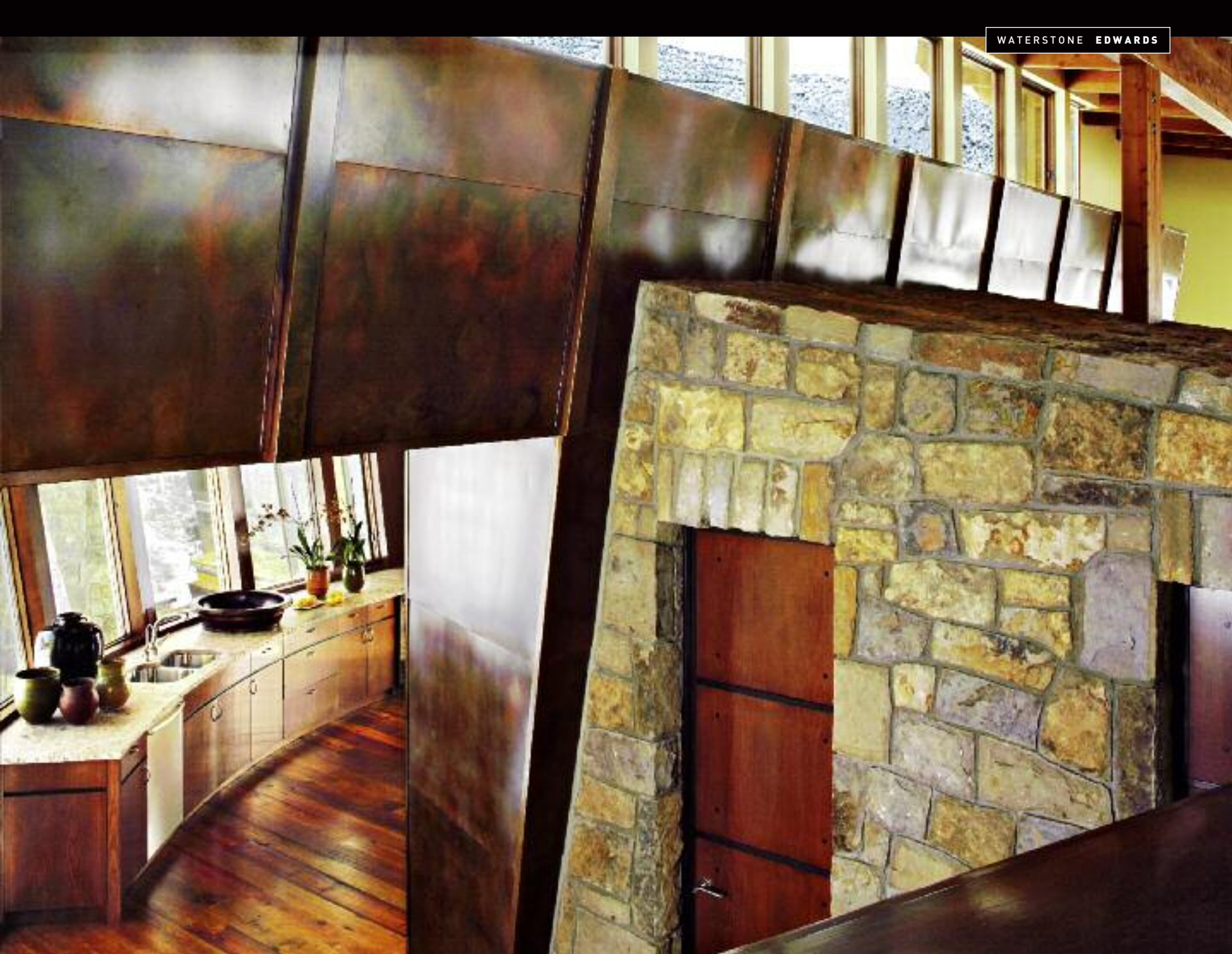
FIRM RKD Architects, Vail

BEDROOMS 5 | **BATHROOMS** 7 | **SQUARE FEET** 8,000



STONE TOWER

Right: Constructed from dense sandstone, the tower studio mimics the strong vertical shapes of the canyon. Opposite: Pine floors and beechwood cabinets define the minimalist palette.



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decks. The main structure houses the living room, dining room and kitchen. A master suite is encapsulated in another structure. And, separate guest suites are in the third wing, featuring a three-story tower studio. “The home needed a strong vertical element,” adds Snow.

The site’s two streams and a pond were incorporated into the house design as well. Snow designed two outward-curved window walls to overlook them. Since the streams don’t naturally flow all year, they were augmented to constantly run, and the pond attracts a variety of local wildlife. Several patios—some covered and some open to the sky—allow occupants to be in or out of the sun, depending on the day and the season.

Sculpturally, the house is contemporary and progressive, evoking Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West home in Scottsdale. “Although the structure



HOUSE PICK

Wooden spokes with a cherry finish were artfully composed by designer Carlo Contin to form a remarkable, dramatic centerpiece bowl. *Satellite Bowl, Small, \$35, MoMA Design Store, 800-447-6662*



OUTSIDE IN

Outdoor materials are brought into the home, which exudes a sense of both openness and intimacy. The neutral tones further ensconce the home in its natural environment.



COZY PLACE
Opposite: The master bedroom features a warm sitting area by a fireplace. This page: A tub with views of the outdoors.

ALTHOUGH THE STRUCTURE IS MODERN, THE OWNER WANTED THE MATERIALS AND COLORS TO REFLECT THE SURROUNDINGS



COOKOUT
Floor-to-ceiling windows run around the perimeter of the kitchen, yielding awesome views.

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is modern, the owner wanted the materials and colors to reflect the surroundings,” says Snow. A simple palette was selected—sandstone, glass, weathered steel, and patinated copper—in keeping with the landscape.

Interior designer Laurel Quint of Q Design in Denver decorated the home for showing. She selected simple furniture and accessories made of natural fibers and materials. “I wanted the stone and wood to stand out on its own,” she says. “To do anything else would have been a detriment to the home’s design.” It was a sentiment much appreciated by Snow, who sees Waterstone as a piece of art rather than a piece of real estate. **L**



UPWARD BOUND
Steel detailing on the railing lends a level of refinement to the wood and stone.