

architecture & design

O F T H E W E S T

Beautiful spaces and the people who design, live and work in them



Spaces

where we live, work & play

In this issue of Architecture & Design of the West, we check in with inspired craftspeople and the buildings and homes that they inhabit. Learn more about an extraordinary high-country home, a designer whose world travels inform her work,



PHOTO: RAUL GARCIA/ASTULA

an award-winning architectural firm that specializes in client satisfaction, and we get a closer look at a marketing firm's retrofit of a 1960s-era building. Whether they are using their entrepreneurial energy to create new projects

or revisit existing ones, it's clear that the spirit of creativity is alive and well in

Colorado.—Terry Vitale, publisher



This extraordinary house connects its inhabitants with the surrounding landscape

A HOME FOR ALL SEASONS

A

unique project near the historic resort town of Aspen integrates a flair for the dramatic with an understated sense of elegance. The home was designed by internationally recognized, Basalt-based CCY Architects; the almost Asian serenity of this extraordinary house works perfectly for its owners who, not surprisingly, spend much of their time in Japan. A home for all seasons, it appears to be the perfect marriage of East and West, connecting its family of users to the spectacular surrounding landscape.

The firm, led by partners John Cottle and Rich Carr, has earned kudos for place-based architecture inspired by natural elements. They've made significant architectural contributions to the Aspen area over the last few decades, as well as to other destinations defined by exceptional natural environments, from the mountain and desert regions of the American West to the Pacific Northwest, Southeast, Asia, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

Their signature brand of inventive regionalism, explained partner and principal architect, Carr, "exemplifies the belief that authentic, inspirational architecture results from interpretations of local lifestyle, regional history and the particulars of each client and site." These factors define CCY's award-winning designs of boutique hotels and lodges, clubs and resorts, as well as custom homes and community landmarks in Colorado and around the world.

by **CORINNE JOY BROWN**
photography by **RAUL GARCIA/ASTULA**





INVENTIVE DESIGN

This particular residence, built adjacent to a flowing stream, was governed by clear parameters. The envelope created specific challenges, since the house nestles between a creek and an embankment. As a result, the public entrance had to be accessed by a pedestrian foot bridge connecting its uppermost level to an existing bluff. This accommodation became an inspirational jumping-off point for the rest of the design, a “cause célèbre” for the concept development, one also framed by an unpredictable roof line that seems to meander in space. From there, the structure descends following the creek, maintaining visual and acoustic proximity to the water. (After all, who wouldn’t want to hear the soothing sounds of a mountain stream from every level?) Fortunately, these very restrictions set the inventive, cascading design in motion.

An unobstructed view through the interior lures the viewer, thanks to the placement of windows front and back, all triple-glazed for maximum thermal performance. Once past the main entry, the upper floor’s formal living space offers a dazzling, bird’s-eye view into the canopies of the cottonwoods, as well as an enticing peek down to the creek below. Again, most eye-catching and unexpected about the structure has to be the home’s tilting, origami-inspired roof, cleverly animated through a series of shifting, folding planes. By so doing, the roof re-inforces the descending circulation within the house, and offers variety when viewed from different exterior angles.

Once inside, the interior ceiling also reflects the dynamic play necessary to accommodate the shift in space and levels as the structure steps down the hill. Warm bamboo wood floors and western red cedar ceilings stained a rich mahogany hue add continuity, wrapping the home in natural warmth while gently absorbing and reflecting light. The repeated use of rough-cut, Oklahoma-hewn Farmer’s stone on the fireplaces and lower decks help to further integrate the plan. “This handsome stone,” explained Simon Elliot, project architect, “stacks cleanly and pairs well with the honed Colorado sandstone we used for the hearth.”

Heading down another third of a level, the kitchen and dining area come into view as the house ‘unfolds,’ continuing the intriguing flow that leads to the lowest level family room and its spacious walkout decks. The final step-down to the ground level terrace offers even more leisure space, replete with an indoor-outdoor fireplace. Deck access is flanked by accordion window walls that fold back completely, allowing the outside and inside to merge.

AN IDEAL GETAWAY

Appearing efficient and intimate, the home is a deceptive 5,200 square feet on five luxurious acres, with four bedrooms and 3 1/2 baths. In one exceptional bath, a rectangular Japanese-inspired sit-tub gives view to the trees, perfect for a soaking meditation. The unique floor plan seems to suit this family of five, providing an ideal getaway for two growing sons and a daughter to hike or ski, depending on the season. Naturally, each bedroom has direct access to the outside, and all windows open to the soothing babble of the creek. For convenience, the boys share a Jack-and-Jill bath between their separate rooms.

Finish materials, furnishings, and space planning were overseen by California interior designer Luis Ortega. "This is the fourth project we've collaborated on together," explained Carr. "Ortega, a Cuban-American, has always shared a modern sensibility with our firm. These particular clients enjoyed working with him, providing some of the key accent pieces brought over from Japan used to define the primary spaces. The clients love the house and say that they're excited just to be back inside it every time they return." Although not visible in photographs, the home also has an important sustainable energy feature, pulling wattage from a 48 panel solar-ray installation built elsewhere on the property. It's a significant system that has drastically reduced the energy bill.

This mountain residence won the American Institute of Architects Colorado West Merit Award in 2016. Previous successes by CCY have garnered over 100 design awards, many of which have been featured in publications such as Architectural Digest, Architectural Record, Western Interiors and Design and others. The project speaks to the ability to artfully integrate buildings into the environment, exemplifying the firm's own goal of seeking an architecture that, in their own words, reconciles the rational and the intuitive plus the expected and the experimental while exploring new relationships between convention and innovation. Clearly, that's a mission that sets this firm apart. 🏡

Corinne Brown, freelance writer, award-winning author and a native Coloradan, has watched Aspen change and grow from the laid back resort it was in the sixties and seventies to the posh exclusive town it's become. She celebrates environmentally sensitive design; a gift to the future.

