

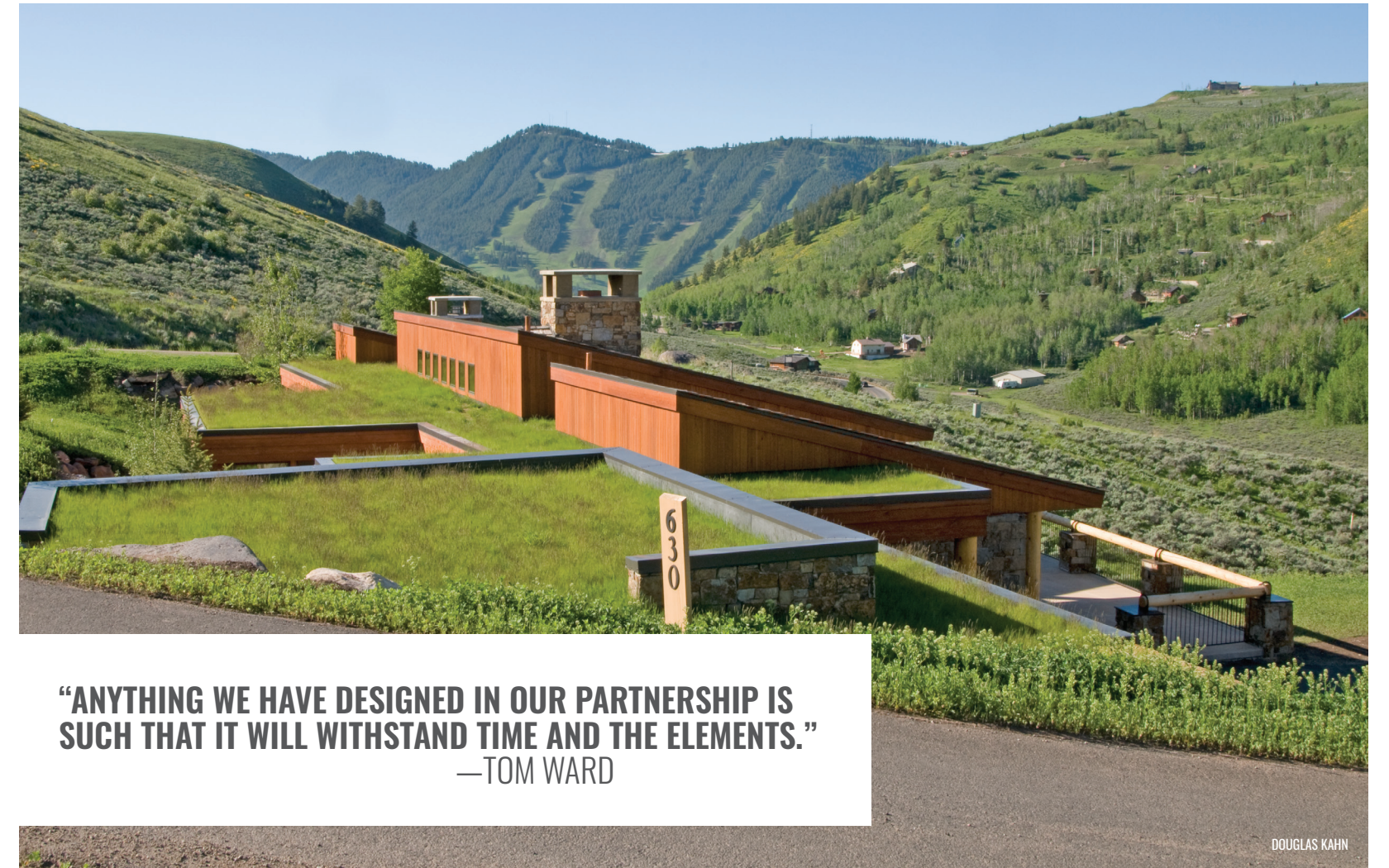
homestead

jackson hole
architecture,
interiors + art





ABOVE
Traditional and progressive styles meld in this updated ranch-style rambler home that is surrounded by reflecting ponds and native trees, grasses, and wildflowers.



“ANYTHING WE HAVE DESIGNED IN OUR PARTNERSHIP IS SUCH THAT IT WILL WITHSTAND TIME AND THE ELEMENTS.”
—TOM WARD

DOUGLAS KAHN

AT HOME ON THE RANGE

STORY **DAVID PORTER**
PHOTOS **DOUGLAS KAHN + ROGER WADE**

WARD | BLAKE
ARCHITECTURE

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ABOVE
Whether from inside the glass enclosure or from the deck, one can observe water fowl, passing wildlife, or the changes in aspen and cottonwood leaves.

Ward | Blake Architects' vision is clear: to sensitively, sustainably, and artistically design homes and buildings that are integral with their locations. Principal Tom Ward says, "At Ward | Blake, we eschew traditional form for organic form. At building sites, we study the view corridors, orientation to the sun and natural contours of the land to design and situate structures. The result is a tangible relationship with the site, and it is an architectural process we can use anywhere in the world."

Founded in Jackson in 1996, Ward | Blake has been designing custom homes, schools, places of worship, and commercial buildings throughout the intermountain West. From the beginning, Tom Ward and Mitch Blake have used a bio-climatically responsible approach. From their lifelong study of architecture, they use fundamental design methods to assure sensitivity to the surrounding environment. They consider how much sun will penetrate the building, which naturally warms and lights its rooms. They study the thermal envelope so that they can reduce heating and cooling of buildings. They ask how large roof overhangs should be to provide shelter from weather. They select building materials that will withstand UV penetration, intense storms, and extreme temperatures.

That is not to say that function trumps form. There is beauty in all of Ward | Blake's work. Tom Ward says that they operate with three pillars of architecture—as art and science—at the forefront: A building must be firm, commodious, and delightful. Ward says, "When you enter any home that we have designed, we want an emotional reaction, one of excitement. The place needs to be cool."

When Ward | Blake opened their firm, Jackson Hole was replete with Old West-style log homes. The principals, nevertheless, insisted on modernist approaches. Mitch Blake says, for instance, "We were among the first in Jackson to integrate sod roofs into homes. The sod allows the house to blend with its surroundings, and it is a beautiful and practical application of sustainability." The turf changes shades with the seasons, so a home looks different from early spring to summer through autumn. Additionally, sod roofs act as a thermal mass and they slow run-off, which reduces erosion from the soil below the drip line.

Tom Ward and Mitch Blake design buildings to last and to a lovely aesthetic. Ward says, "Anything we have designed in our partnership is such that it will withstand time and the elements. And, we assure that it will have been artfully crafted." ■

ABOVE
This home mimics its surroundings with native sod roofing and roof pitches that align with the home site's topography.

RIGHT
Emblematic of Ward | Blake design, a window that frames a stunning view yet does not expose the home to excessive sunlight or heat loss.



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