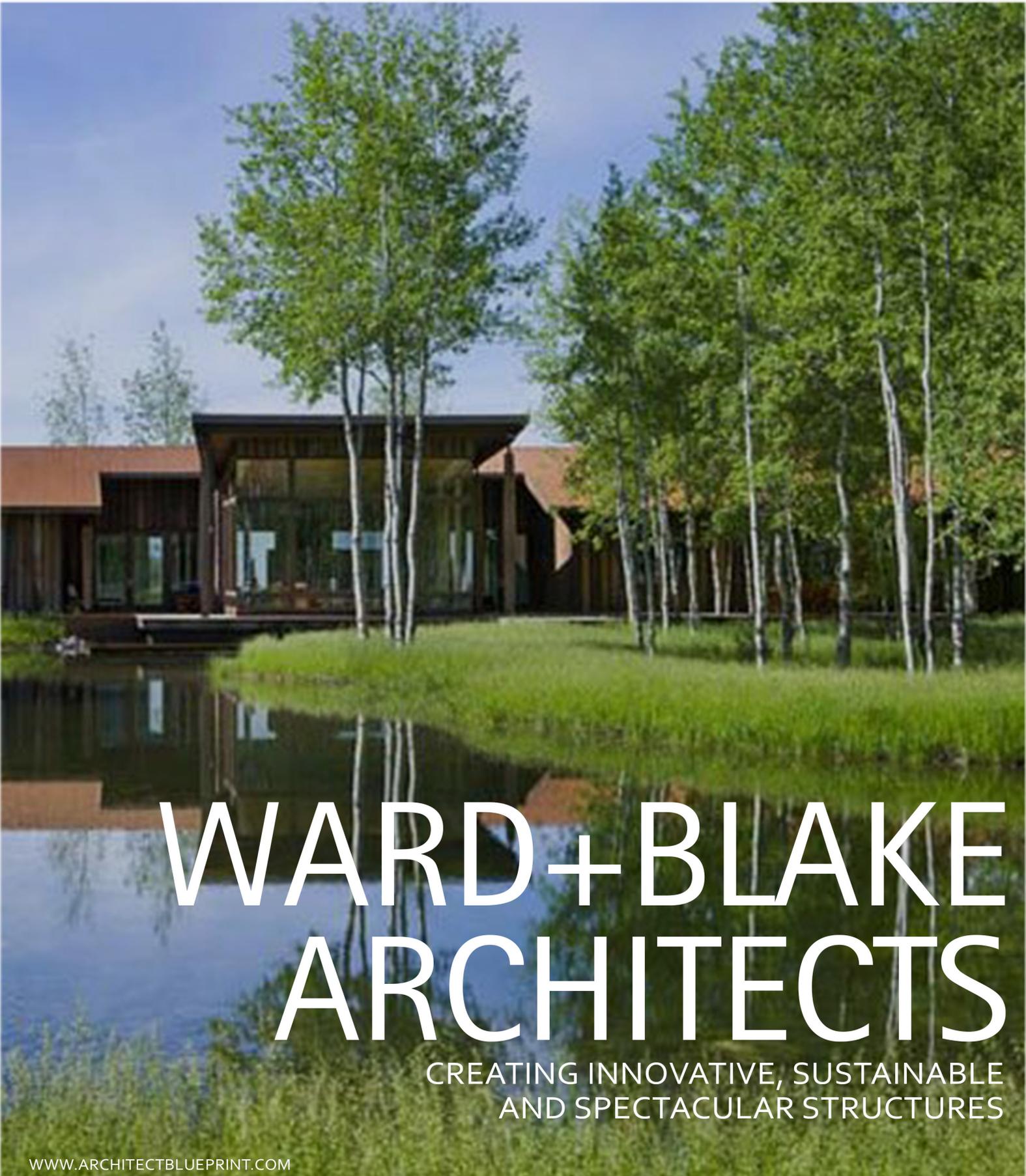


ARCHITECT BLUEPRINT

AWE-INSPIRING STYLE AND DESIGN

SPECIAL ISSUE



WARD+BLAKE ARCHITECTS

CREATING INNOVATIVE, SUSTAINABLE
AND SPECTACULAR STRUCTURES

WARD + BLAKE ARCHITECTS

CREATING SUSTAINABLE AND
SPECTACULAR STRUCTURES

No matter the type, when Ward + Blake Architects take on a project, sustainability goals inspire great innovation - every time.

A Wilson, Wyoming, home presented an excellent opportunity to respect the local ecosystem and immediate site on which the structure sits. By taking into account the resources at hand and environmental preservation, Ward + Blake was recognized with an AIA Wyoming Award of Citation, a Gold Award under the Dream Home Awards for Best Custom Home (7,000 – 8,000 square feet), and an International



Design Awards – Second Prize for New Residential Building. These achievements were accomplished on a site with three structures - a house (3988 sq. ft.), a barn (3346 sq. ft.), and a quest house (650 sq. ft.).

“I’m a big fan of expressing the structure and letting all of the materials be what they are – finished in as natural a state as possible,” says Mitch Blake. “It connects the architecture to the environment in a simple and honest way.”

As expected, Ward + Blake took a holistic eco-friendly approach from the start with purposeful site selection and orientation. The home sits in a low lying lot that is a natural clearing near a huge grove of trees with surrounding jurisdictional wetlands and natural water courses.

Materials emphasizing a low carbon imprint around the property are stone and reclaimed wood. Natural, regionally sourced, materials minimize construction impact while complimenting the surrounding landscape as well.

“The structure always responds to the stimuli in the land,” Tom Ward said. Three of the ponds wrapping around the home are spring-fed by a pond at the front of the property. Sluiceways are setup in such a way as to utilize gravity to move water around the side of the home which naturally creates a serene soundscape. Large windows provide spectacular views of not only the mountains but also wildlife that frequents the ponds which are a



quasi-wetland habitat.

Tom, Mitch, and their client knew it was best to leave every single aspen tree ensconcing the property untouched. Conservation has been a hallmark of Ward + Blake architectural designs where the structure effectively melds into part of the land it's built upon. Great architects know that the best way to promote a healthy planet is to let nature be nature.

The back deck overlooks a pond with Douglas fir logs carved into chairs which are facing a fire pit that includes a decorative metal wind screen.

Sustainability's Early Arrival at Ward + Blake

It takes intuitive initiative, strict planning, and disciplined execution to achieve success with sustainable

architecture. Little did Tom and Mitch realize several decades ago that the very principles they always lived by in the design process would become a worldwide goal. Despite completing “2030 Challenge” courses, they continue their own grassroots efforts supporting sustainability.

Based on new construction, renovation, and demolition trends over the next few decades, up to three quarters of the built environment will be new or renovated. Depending on the study, early design decisions such as location, orientation, massing, form, and fenestration, make up to 90% of the impact of a building. In addition Ward + Blake Architects ensure the shells of structures they design are as efficient as possible. Special exterior walls, cladding and even energy recovery ventilators are

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If to build is to live, then to design a building well is to live beautifully.



TOM WARD

Principal
Ward + Blake Architects



utilized to assist proper “breathing” and ventilation.

At Ward + Blake, beauty and energy efficiency work together. “It’s empowering to be invested in your client’s success which is made possible in part by intelligent architecture” says Mitch. Zero net carbon (ZNC) is the goal of the 2030 Challenge (issued by “Architecture 2030” in 2006) and Ward + Blake Architects have had a long head start.

Following the “ZERO Code”, Ward + Blake utilize as many on-site renewable energy principles and materials resulting in cost-effective energy efficiencies that significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions related to the built environment.

Smart Design: On a Budget

Many times, low-tech solutions offer tremendous cost-benefit results. Opportunities also exist where leveraging both low and high-

tech features produce synergistic advantages. Of course, project specifications and budgets heavily influence numerous planning and construction factors.

Tom stated that low-tech “Window boxes are on all sides of the Teton County School District administrative building allowing for abundant natural light to flood the offices while significantly minimizing glare from the sky above and snow below.” Eight-foot roof overhangs and transom





windows were used to effectively direct daylight into the building. All of these simple low-tech features reduce artificial light usage and in turn save energy.

The energy efficiency of this \$1.1 million, 8,600 square foot facility in Jackson, Wyoming, is also due to high-tech features such as an intelligent building control system.

Leveraging environmentally responsive design techniques and a low-maintenance material palette further contribute to the architectural success of this structure.

An airy working environment came about from birch and complementing light wood finishes covering the interior. Heating, cooling, and maintenance costs are all reduced thanks to galvanized metal cladding the exterior.

Altogether, both low and high-tech design virtually guaranteed environmental stability by reducing energy loads while maintaining an enjoyable work atmosphere. The building also features dimming sensors and an energy-efficient natural gas furnace all for two-thirds of the county's typical cost-per-square-foot.

**Rammed Earth Stabilized
by EarthWall**

“Be provocative in thought, flexible in nature, and disciplined in execution” is the vision Ward + Blake has successfully lived by. Since 1996 they have integrated their architecture to the surroundings while being



sensitive to the environment. Not only are Ward + Blake's architectural creations artfully crafted, they're technologically sound.

Having designed the first EarthWall residence as his home, Tom Ward is also EarthWall's inventor. This system, utilizing reinforced steel rods with post tensioning, takes the rammed earth construction method one step further – making it earthquake-resistant. EarthWall is patented due to its stabilizing effect on the eco-friendly rammed earth building technique.

Notable EarthWall advantages:

- Environmentally friendly
- Efficient to heat and cool
- Uses natural and indigenous materials
- Materials natural coloration

blends with site

- Easy to build - no technically skilled labor required
- Favorable acoustic properties

EarthWall enables both residential and commercial buildings constructed with rammed earth technique to be seismically stable and, best of all, is available to architects around the world.

In Teton County, Ward + Blake applied rammed earth technique in between phase one and two of the construction project. This LEED Gold Learning Center (Jackson, Wyoming) benefits from not only the tactile and visual uniqueness of rammed earth but also its energy, strength and longevity advantages.

This harmonizing with the environment and dedication to

ecological principles is found throughout Ward + Blake projects – their love of nature and intimate connection with the land shows. Tom and Mitch love their “Dirty Modernists” nickname affectionately given to them by peers. It directly relates to their contemporary design solutions rooted in the use of indigenous materials and building techniques such as rammed earth.

Living Beautifully With Nature

As impressive as a 14,342 sq. ft. main house and 6,350 sq. ft. guest house is, that is not the most amazing feature of the Green Knoll Residence in Wilson, Wyoming.

Taking cedar, stone, zinc, sod, and steel, Ward + Blake designed a winning combination as proven by being the recipient of the Custom

“ *It connects the architecture to the environment in a simple and honest way.* ”



MITCH BLAKE

Principal
Ward + Blake Architects



Home Awards: Merit Award for Custom Detail and International Design Awards – Second Prize for New Residential Building. Complementary materials such as limestone, West African Wenge, Brazilian rosewood, gold leaf, and walnut, are found throughout the property.

More than 75% of the 35 acre land was donated by the owner to a scenic easement trust. Less than three acres of the site were used for the building envelope wherein Ward + Blake made great use of low-slung

sod rooflines. Curving datum walls link both the main and guest homes in a yin-yang relationship as nearly interlocking crescent shapes.

Varying between 4,500 to 9,000 sq. ft. are the Amangani Villas (Jackson, Wyoming). The 22 private lots were custom built which presented a challenging 3-D jigsaw puzzle of building covenants, open space parameters and view angles of the Snake River and Teton Range. As you'd expect, Ward + Blake delivered – again.

Working with the surrounding

terrain, both near and far, Ward + Blake dug into the hillsides and provided for sod covered (native grasses of local prairies) roofs as well as created roof pitches to match the sites slope and mountain wedges on the horizon. Vertical boarded exteriors also mimicked the surrounding peaks.

While most treat roofs as an afterthought, Tom and Mitch work to make this once forgotten square feet functional space. Sod (green roofs) cuts down on energy consumption, provides great aesthetics, and

reduces the impact of direct sunlight.

Of course, a plethora of natural materials such as redwood, stone, and log are major elements of the properties along with integral color concrete and floor to ceiling glaze. All together, these villas represent sustainability at its finest which contributes to the structures low-maintenance and long life.

Continuous Flow of Creativity

From residential to commercial, to resort, to institutional, to hospitality, Ward + Blake loves the beauty of architecture across all genres of

structure design. Their open office concept breeds collaboration and creativity. There are no proverbial “easy chairs” in sight when commitment to client projects is job number one.

Needless to say, the entire Ward + Blake staff stays on their toes by keeping things fresh with flowing energy. Clients love their fluid design process including multiple project ideas that consider resources, topography, orientation, bio-climatic characteristics, and a multitude of other factors. Nothing less than

informed client decisions ensure project fruition – every time.

Ward + Blake’s siting, design, natural materials, and construction techniques strictly follow the principles of sustainability to preserve energy, water, and materials.

Minimizing environmental impact is key to respecting the ecosystem. The Ward + Blake portfolio of projects continuously display a representation of true sustainable architecture.

Will you be the next client to enjoy the satisfaction of a well done project with Ward + Blake?

What's Your Architectural Dream?

Convert your thoughts and dreams into reality by taking that first step.

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