

SPACE

DEFINING THE LUXURY SPACES IN OUR LIVES

PEOPLE PLACES PROPERTY
ORANGE COUNTY

FEB 2008 \$4.95



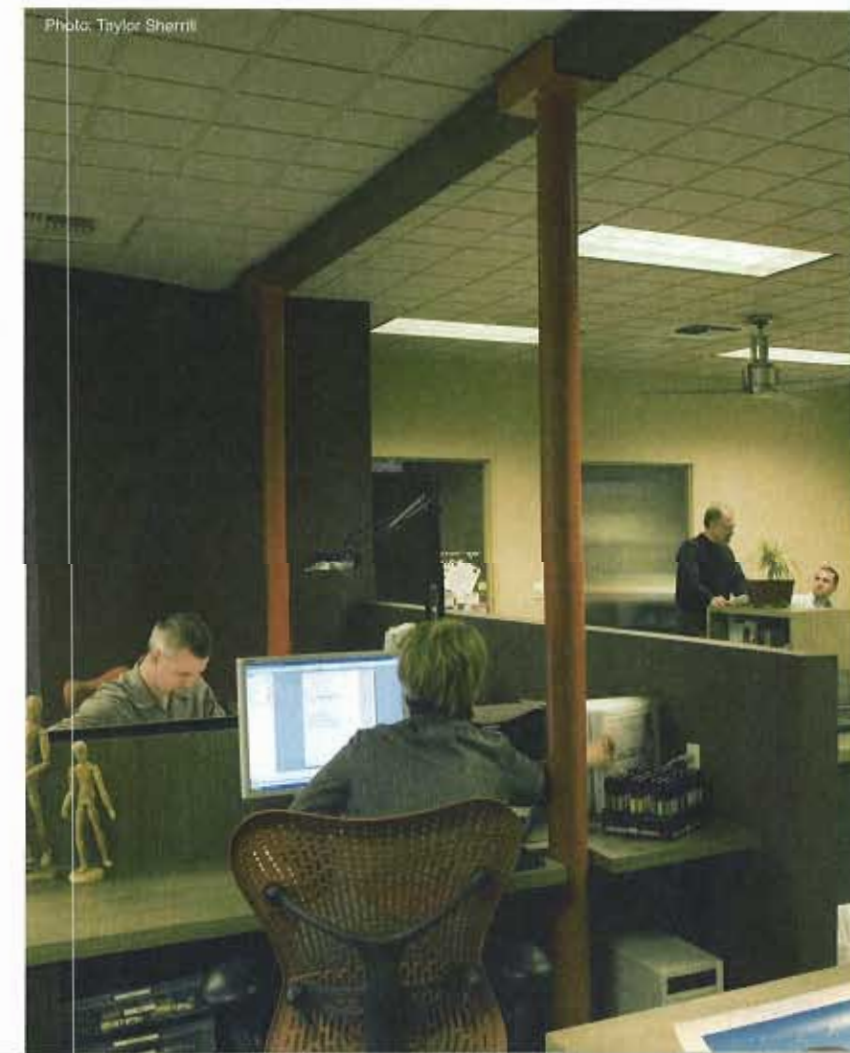
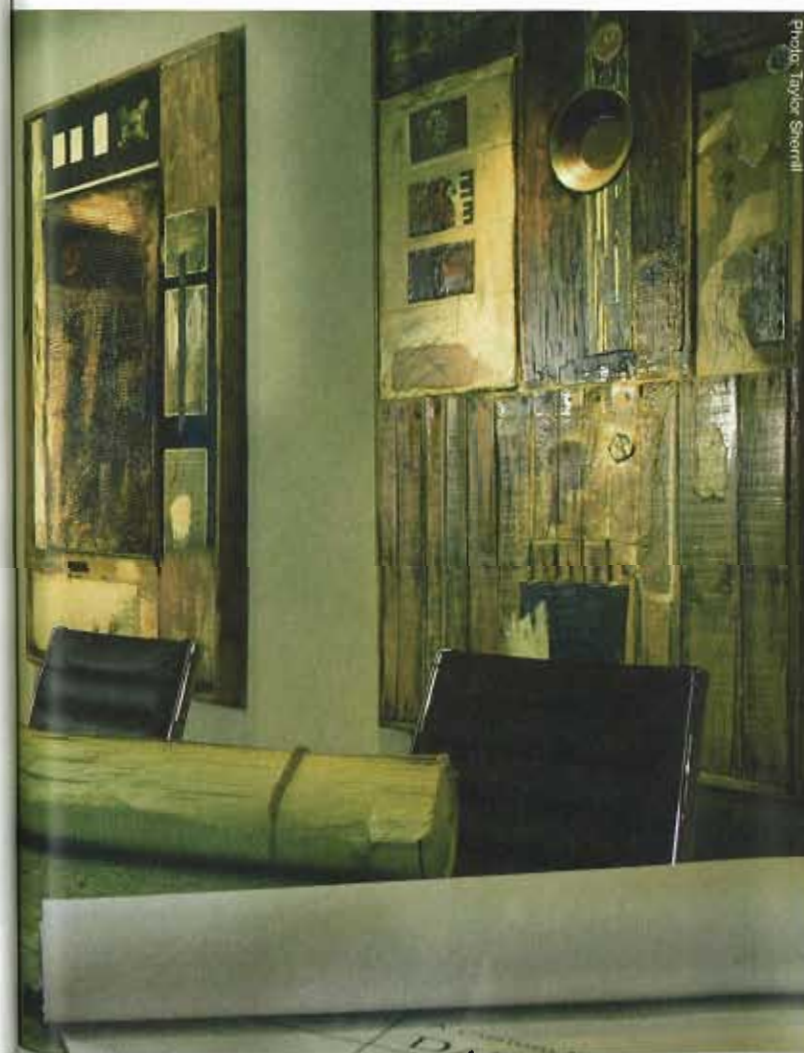
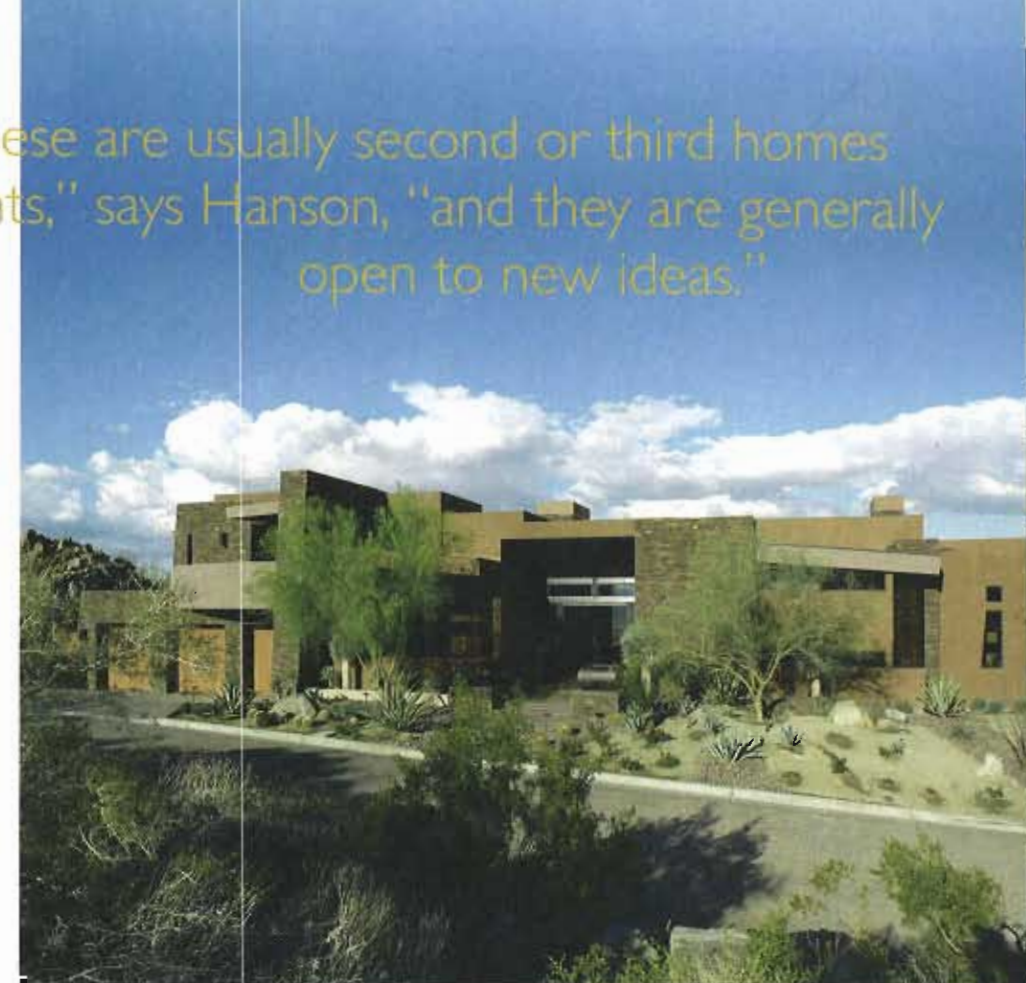
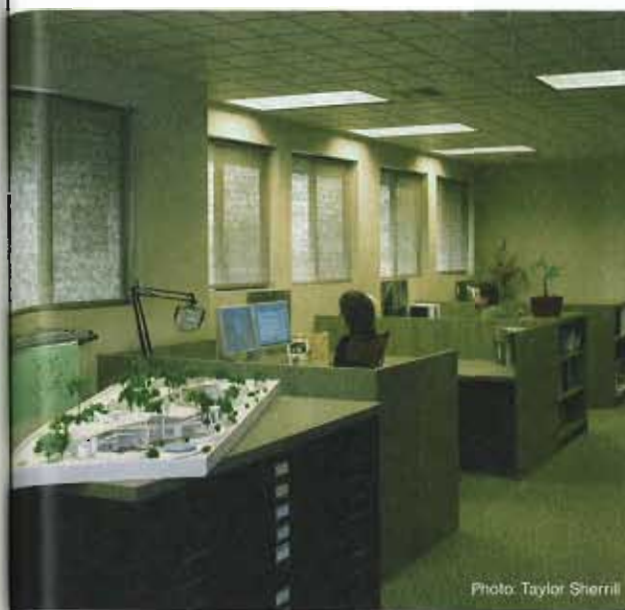
Set in Stone

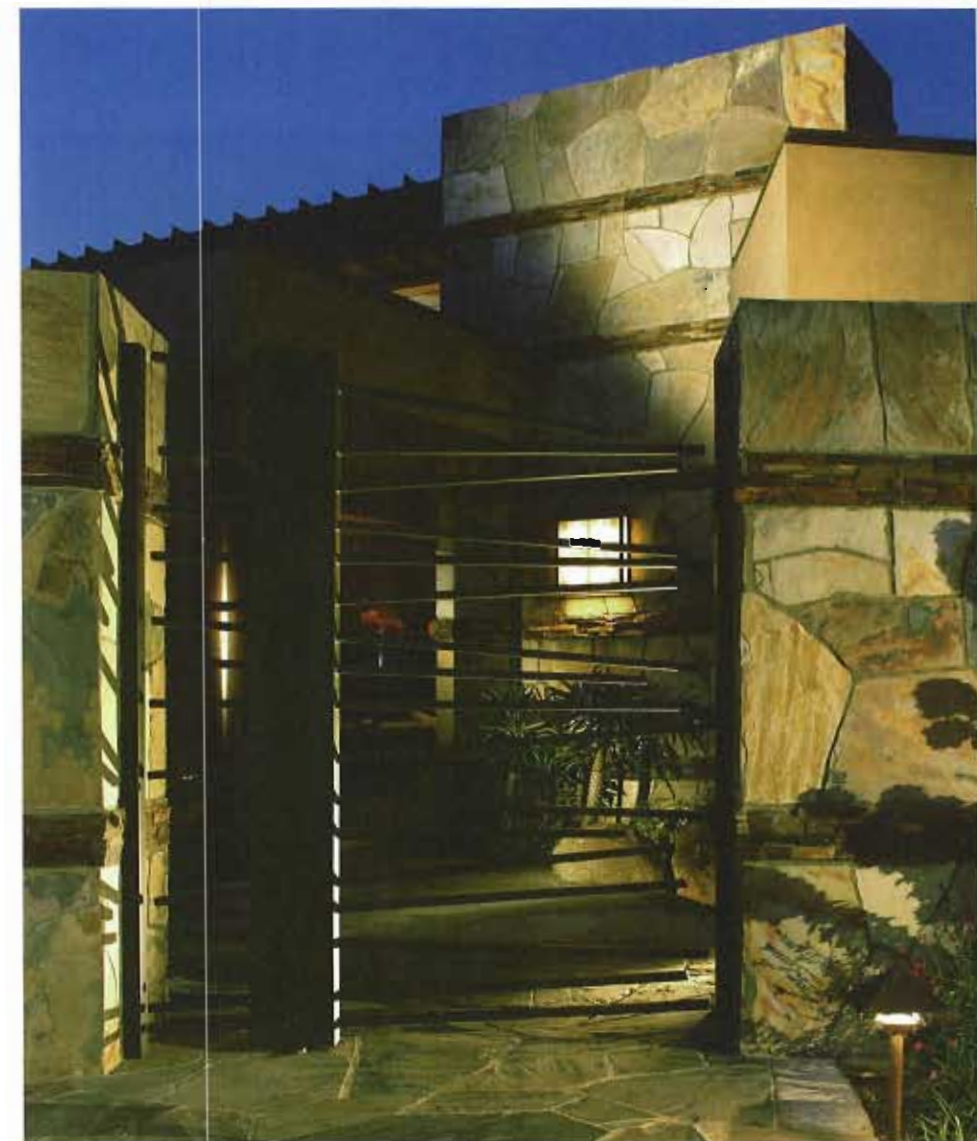
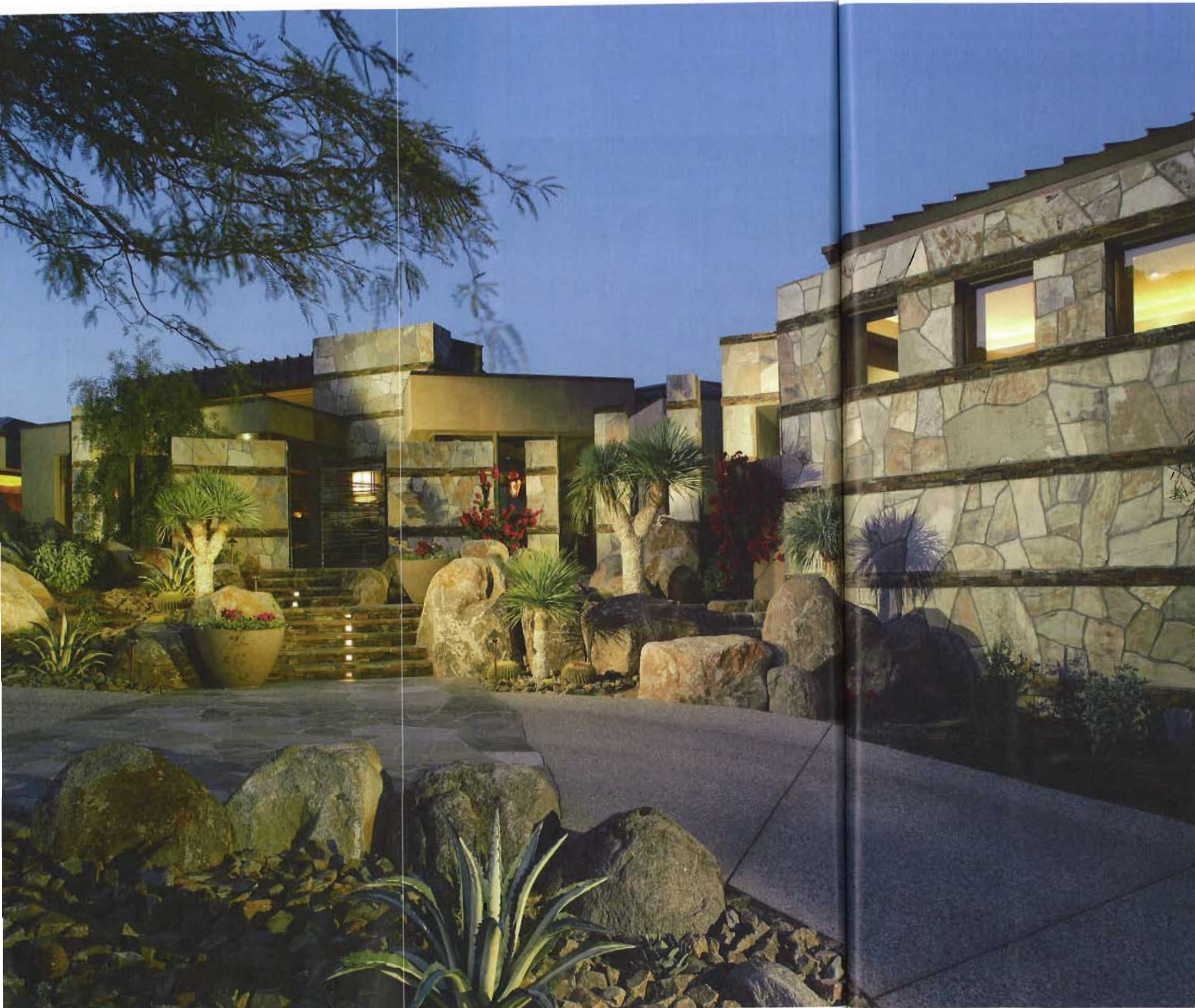


ARCHITECT
KRISTI HANSON'S
SCULPTURAL
FINESSE WITH
ROCK FORMATIONS
BRINGS A STOIC
BEAUTY TO
THE DESERT

By Laurie McLaughlin
Photography by Ethan Kaminsky

"These are usually second or third homes for clients," says Hanson, "and they are generally open to new ideas."





When she set out for the desert from North Dakota one month after graduating for college, architect Kristi Hanson was thinking about the climate. "It was definitely a change from one extreme to the other," says Hanson. "But I'm much happier in the heat." For two decades, she's made the Coachella Valley her home and has designed dozens of luxury residential and commercial properties, including more than 30 homes within Bighorn Golf Club.

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There are very few similarities in style between the grand manses Hanson knew in North Dakota and the open, modern homes she designs now. "In the Midwest, the 'front' of the house is the street side. Here, most clients refer to the back as the front because it's facing the golf course," she says. "I would say good flow within a home would be the same either here or in North Dakota, but otherwise, the needs are completely different, especially with the desert's indoor-outdoor living." ▸



Inspiration, says Hanson, could be almost anything. "Sometimes, I see a tree branch, and it will be a shape that I need for an area. I am always looking, trying to drive the same street as if it's the first time I was on it. It opens your eyes to things you've never seen before."

While each of the homes she designs is decidedly different than the one before it, she does admit to one favorite architectural detail that finds its way into many of her projects: "I don't have a signature style because an architect should be the master of all styles, but I do like big fireplaces," she laughs. "They are not the same in every house I design, but mine are larger than most."

At Bighorn, the 8,308-square-foot home on Suuwat Way designed by Hanson also showcases her ability to gracefully incorporate the natural hillside surroundings into the house itself. "It's tucked into a mountain, and we left many of the natural rock outcroppings in place. Moving large boulders is not a good idea," she says. She also designed stone-covered walls, seen most dramatically in the master wing hallway and main dining area. ▷

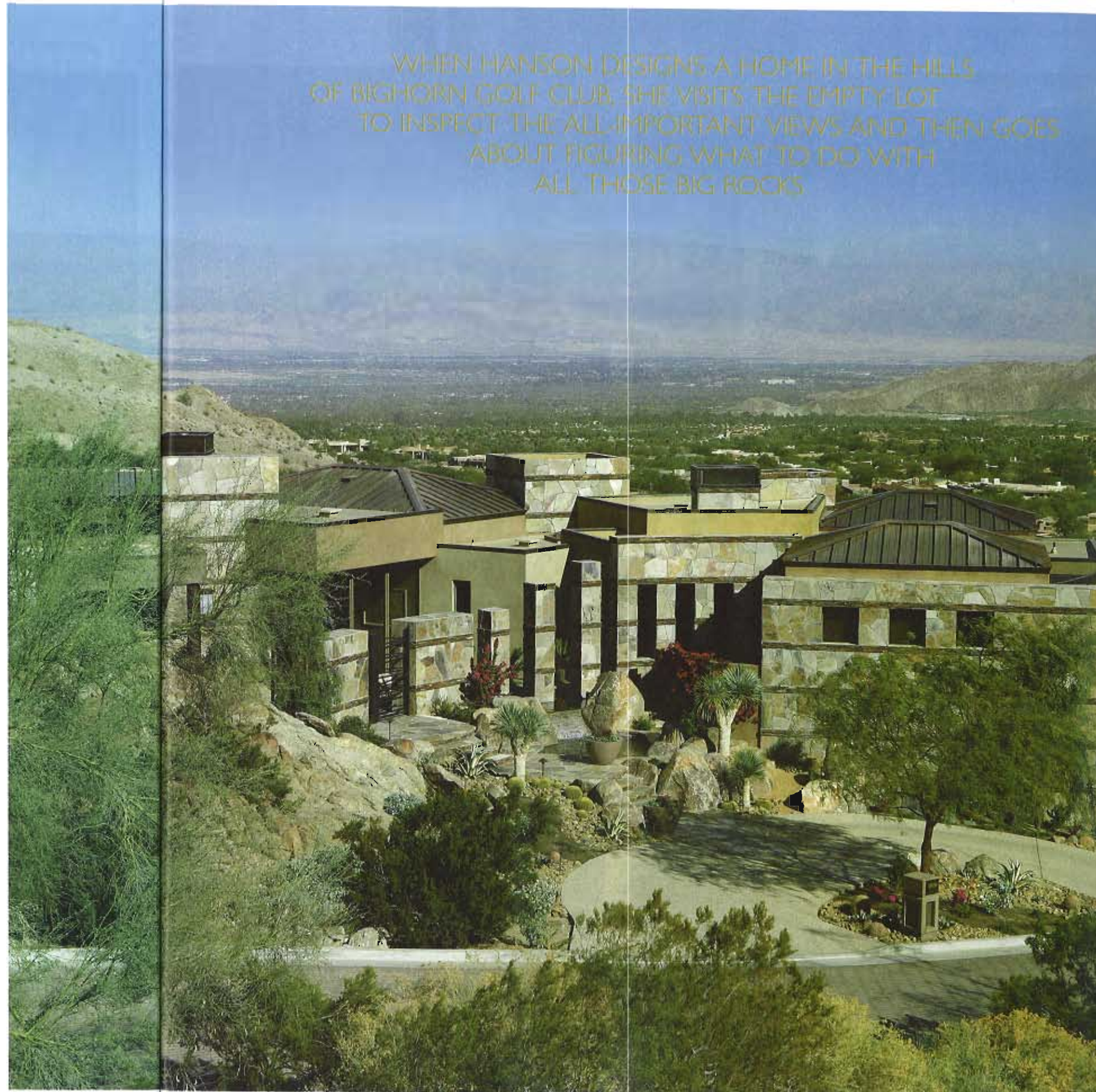




"I was looking for something architectural and chose colors that relate to the mountains."

"Usually when I design a home, I stand out on the vacant lot and see the views and then angle the rooms to catch the view better," says Hanson, whose home state is known for its flat, open plains. "I also want to create a sense of livability. This comes from materials used, forms and the views. I want the house to flow one room to the next . . . there shouldn't be one thing that makes you stop and stare during that initial walk into a room."

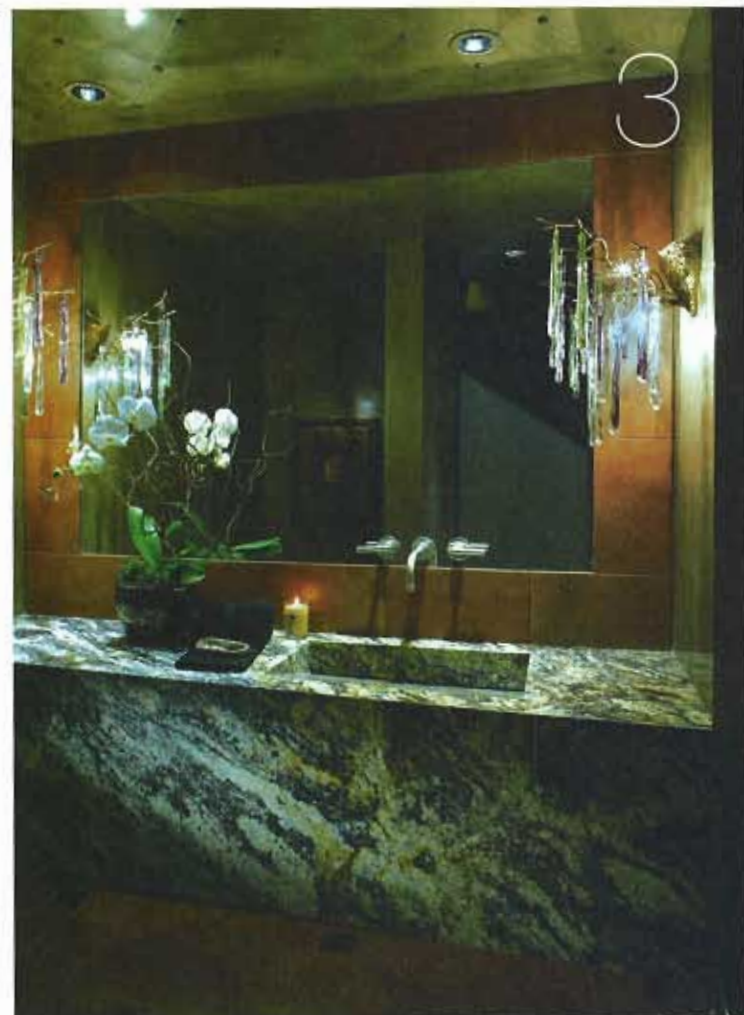
In the Suuwat Way home, her favorite room is the bedroom, she says, "because of the view down the valley, the mountains and the city lights." She also cops to one other part of the room she is drawn to: "Yes, the fireplace in the bedroom is majorly large, so it's very visible." ▸



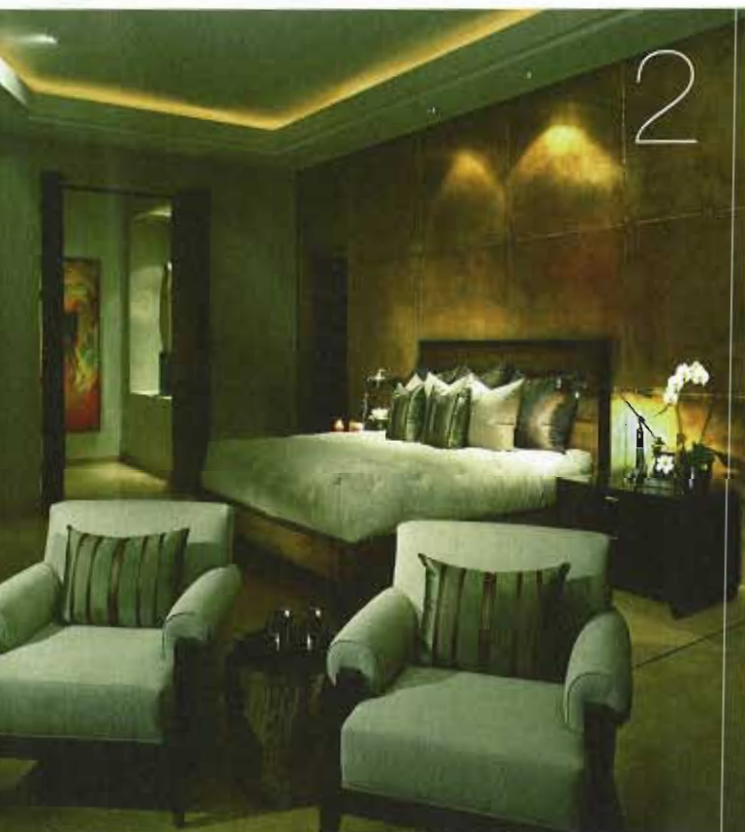
WHEN HANSON DESIGNS A HOME IN THE HILLS OF BIGHORN GOLF CLUB, SHE VISITS THE EMPTY LOT TO INSPECT THE ALL-IMPORTANT VIEWS AND THEN GOES ABOUT FIGURING WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THOSE BIG ROCKS.



1



3



2



4



Photo: Taylor Sherrill

ARCHITECT KRISTI HANSON HAS DESIGNED MORE THAN 30 HOMES IN THE BIGHORN GOLF CLUB, INCLUDING THE 7,759-SQUARE-FOOT TEKIS PLACE HOUSE SET HIGH ON A HILL. "THIS HOME IS ON A VERY SHORT LOT—FROM FRONT TO BACK—SO, IT'S A VERY NARROW HOUSE," SAYS HANSON, AND SHE DESCRIBES HER USE OF NATURAL MATERIALS COMPLEMENTING THE HOME'S NATURAL DESERT SURROUNDINGS AS WELL AS THE NEED TO ACCOMMODATE BOTH THE LOT SIZE AND THE CLIENTS' DESIRE FOR A SPACE TO RELAX AND ENTERTAIN:

architect's vision

1 "There was not a lot of space in the great room because of the depth of the lot," says Hanson. So, the television is placed above the fireplace. A corner pocket door opens into an outdoor living room. "The concept is to create as much living space as possible."

2 The chairs in the corner of the master bedroom are arranged as a look-out for the view through a corner window. "From the bed, you can see the mountains and beyond," says Hanson. "We added interest to the ceiling without a lot of additional cost by using creative lighting."

3 Hanson designed the sink and vanity in the powder room. "It's the one room everyone goes into, and the one place you can go crazy with design and materials," she says. "There are some really great powder rooms in Bighorn." In this instance, Hanson's dramatic granite sink appears to be one large slab with the sink carved out.

4 The kitchen's back wall is faced with cabinetry, but Hanson wanted to preserve the view on that side of the home. "These are such beautiful mountains, and we captured the view by putting windows above and below the cabinets."

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