

STORY **RICHA MITCHELL**

PHOTOS **AUDREY HALL**

OLD BECOMES NEW

JLF ARCHITECTS THOUGHTFULLY CRAFTED LIVING ENVIRONMENTS
CAPTURED IN WORDS AND PHOTOS IN NEW BOOK

An abandoned creamery constructed in the 1880s was rebuilt into a custom residence in central Montana. The timeless design of the structure effortlessly blends into the surrounding terrain.



It all started more than four decades ago with a cabin on a Montana ranch. JLF Architects design

principal Paul Bertelli crafted a log cabin that matched existing nearly century-old log structures on the property, sourcing time-worn timbers and reclaimed building materials found throughout the ranch. Since then, JLF earned a reputation as pioneers in building with authentic antique timber and stacked stone. In their newest book, *Foundations*, years of architectural mastery are chronicled, featuring extraordinary homes built in the mountains, forests and foothills that imbue the unique terrain they gently sit upon.

Established in 1979 in a log farmhouse on the banks of the Yellowstone River, the intimate two-person office grew into a staff of more than 20 members working from

JLF Architects' Bozeman, Montana, office. Although most of the firm's residential projects are centered in the intermountain West, it holds a national presence spanning both coasts.

In more than 250 pages, the new book highlights JLF's mission to create sustainable legacy homes that will withstand the test of time (\$55, Rizzoli).

We met with principals Paul Bertelli and Logan Leachman to find out more about their design approach, their future and what their legacy will be. >>

Stepped into the hillside, this contemporary home is designed with a primary single-level floor plan and multiple rooflines. Glass, steel, concrete and stone span the exterior, connecting to the mountain setting. A calming water feature ensconces the house in privacy.

What inspired you to write this book?

Logan: Our first book, *The Work of Art*, told our story and process and the design-build delivery method in a very deliberate way, while providing voice to the work and the people that bring our designs to life. In the eight years since that book, we focus on what has transpired since the first book was released.

Paul: It's surprising to look up from one's work from time to time to see the nuance and evolution of any art form. This next book is a way to mark a point in time.

Why do you think it's important to use reclaimed wood, timber and stone in your design?

Paul: Reclaimed materials are the key to timelessness—they are durable, they keep changing with time. These materials are a living finish that only get better with age.

Logan: The use of reclaimed wood and stone offers us a way to work with time-worn elements as an offset to more contemporary materials such as steel and glass. Mixing materials maintains a warmth and comfort found with reclaimed wood while at the same time providing the lightness and sleek feel against the more angular and harder materials.

Why do you think it is important to build homes rooted within regional context?

Paul: All houses should look like the place where they are built. Regional context gives a place its soul; without it we lose culture, we lose our identity. >>

In the spa-like primary bath, a freestanding tub rests in front of oversize windows, offering unobstructed views of the wintry forest. Earthy materials blend with contemporary elements to create a calm respite.





A whitewashed ceiling draws the eye upward in this cozy primary bedroom. A window wall maximizes views of the Snake River valley.

What kind of innovative techniques are used in your design?

Logan: We have been long users and supporters of energy-efficient systems and materials. We are fortunate to work with clients and budgets that allow us to explore the latest construction methods and sustainable materials.

You create timeless homes, not trendy.

What is a timeless home?

Paul: Timelessness is perfect proportion, human scale and materials that are rigorous and honest; old or new. Steel is steel, stone is stone. Materials cannot pretend

to be something they are not. Timeless is the Aran sweater passed down through generations.

Twenty-five years from now, what will JLF Architects' legacy be?

Paul: Our future is beyond expectation. Our legacy is in this book—these houses are our next foundations; our past will always be part of our future. ○

Situated along a meandering seasonal creek, the backside of this Wyoming retreat boasts an outdoor spa and cold-plunge swimming hole, accessible from the patio during the warm months.

jlfarchitects.com



Foundations: Houses by JLF Architects (Rizzoli) is available for purchase at rizzoliusa.com. \$55