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# Sky High

This spectacular year-round mountain retreat soars above Telluride.

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Architecture: Steve Morton, Morton Architects, Inc. Interior Design: Kimille Taylor, Kimille Taylor, Inc.  
Home Builder: Paul Ricks, Fortenberry & Ricks

**I**n a house like this, everything is in service to nature and that view, and informed by it as well," says designer Kimille Taylor of the Telluride abode she and architect Steve Morton, who also happens to be her husband, recently completed for a couple

who divide their time between Colorado and Arizona. Together with general contractor Paul Ricks, Taylor and Morton crafted a residence that respects its extraordinary setting and frames mountain vistas from every room. Inside, spaces are airy yet cozy and cater to the owners' favorite pastimes: painting, woodworking, reading and cooking.

"The clients wanted an exciting plan for a clean, contemporary dwelling with glass walls that open to the outdoors," notes Morton. Situated on the north side of the valley, it made sense to extend the house wide, like outstretched wings, to take in southerly views and sunshine. The resulting shape "felt like it wanted to take flight," says the architect, who nicknamed the house "Soaring Eagle." "The home's forms mimic a large wingspan and a tail section, and the raised center intersection can be viewed as the head," he explains. "The perspective and views afforded by the site feel like soaring above the ground below." Without knowing it, he tapped into a spirit already captured in the couple's art collection. Serendipitously, hanging in their Arizona home was a large Rebecca Kinkead painting of a soaring bald eagle. "Needless to say, it's been relocated to Telluride," adds Morton.

"The house has low-slung, horizontal lines—it's bold in its simplicity," the architect continues. "I tend to pare down ornamentation and create something more poetic and understated." Morton is also driven by "a responsibility to respect nature," and wrapped the home in silvery-hued stone and cedar siding. Adding integrated planters around the structure offered additional thermal benefits, and tufted-grass plantings visually nestle the dwelling into the land. "It treads lightly, and it has a quiet strength," he says. Because the clients wanted "an edited style,"

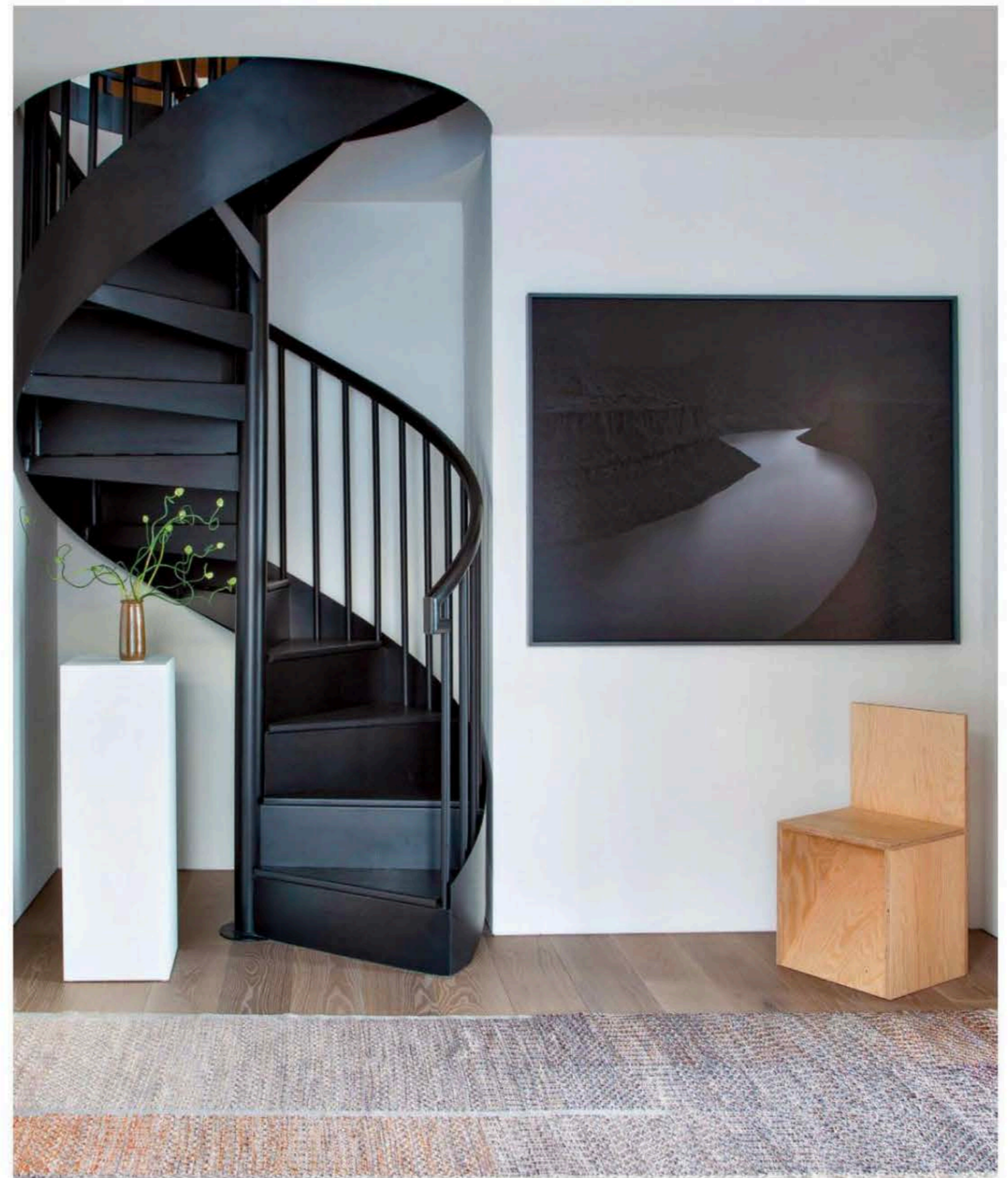
Morton worked closely with Taylor to select exterior materials that could continue inside for a cohesive feel. "The result is a soft, warm materiality," he notes.

"These clients didn't want to be limited by anything cliché," says Taylor, who divides her practice between Manhattan and Telluride. "You see a lot of the same things in the mountain decorating world, so we wanted something fresh." For an element of fun, she found a living room coffee table composed of a glass top that rests on cedar "boulders," some of which are movable. "It brings a bit of wit to the space," she says. Organic forms also inspired the table Taylor created for the dining room. "It's sculptural and breaks up the rectilinear forms of that main living area," the designer explains.

More uncommon pieces were discovered during marathon shopping trips in Manhattan. "They'd come to New York, and I'd take them out from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. We spent many days like that, and it was such fun," says Taylor. As a result, the home contains pieces from Liaigre and Apparatus mixed with unique finds from local shops. All these pieces exist against a varied palette. "There are probably 15 different colors present—shades of blue, gray, stone, cream, parchment, camel, brown, taupe and a little maroon," notes the designer. "This complexity is what makes it successful, along with a lot of textural layering."

To fulfill the couple's wish list, Taylor and Morton created two primary suites flanking the public areas (one for the clients and one for his daughter) and additional guest rooms downstairs. They also designed an art studio and a woodshop, as well as a library loft. But it's the kitchen that anchors the house. "It had to work," stresses Taylor. "They love to cook, bake and entertain, so we took a long time perfecting the space's functionality." An exposed stone wall not only creates continuity with the exterior, but also imbues the space with a sense of age—the kind the designer says you find in old Italian dwellings.

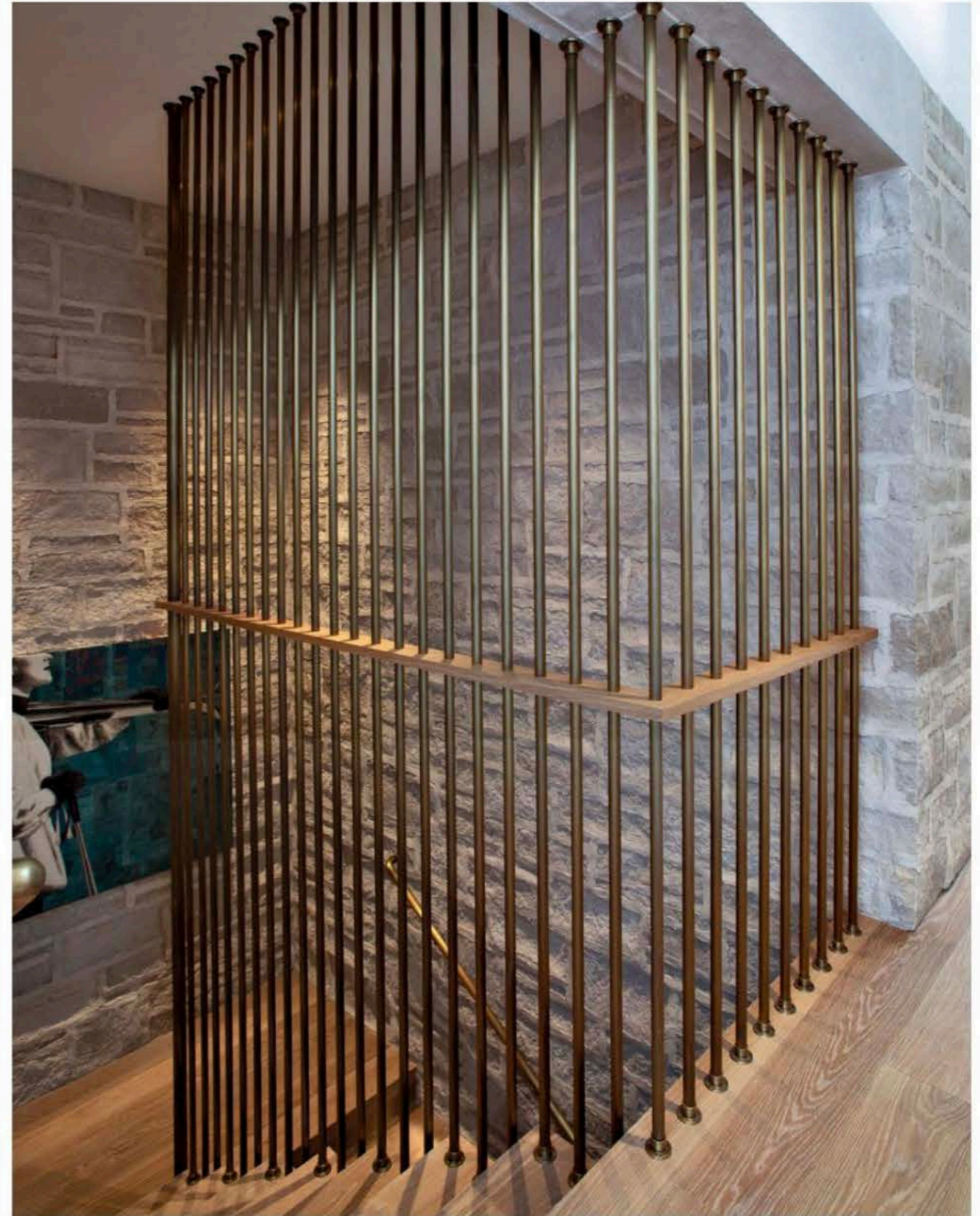
"Everything adds up to their overall quality of life here," Taylor observes. And when the glass doors open to the fresh air and sunshine—even in winter—the house truly does seem to soar. ■



A sculptural quality defines the entryway of this Telluride home by architect Steve Morton and designer Kimille Taylor. The rug is from FJ Hakimian and the photograph by Adam Katseff is "one of my favorite pieces in the house," says Taylor. The spiral staircase leads to the library loft.

The dining area centers the great room. The chandelier above the custom table is by Apparatus. The upholstered dining chairs are by Liaigre and the metal Diamond chair designed by Harry Bertoia is from Knoll. Above the fireplace is a painting by Ed Moses, found at the Telluride Gallery of Fine Art.





**Above:** "The main stairwell's cantilevered oak treads are accented by vertical brass tubing that acts as a guardrail while bringing in pattern and interest," says Morton.

**Opposite:** Taylor and Morton worked with Henrybuilt to craft a walnut kitchen that pairs comfortably with the stonework carried in from the exterior. "It was important that we add texture to give the home a sense of age and place," explains Taylor. The barstools are by McGuire and the owners brought the small cabinet by James Krenov to the project.

In a secondary main suite for the homeowner's daughter, Taylor paired an RH bed with a CB2 chair and a rug from Azadi Fine Rugs. Lighting pieces include the Greta Magnusson Grossman-designed floor lamp from Design Within Reach and a ceiling fixture by Brooklyn design studio Workstead. Taylor found the downhill ski prints at Sage House Designs.





**Above:** The bathroom adjoining the homeowners' bedroom suite is designed for warming, post-ski soaks. The chair is from Gestalt in Hudson, New York.

**Opposite:** A bubble-like chandelier by Apparatus draws eyes upward in the main bathroom. The freestanding tub is by Kohler and the shower fittings are by Vola. The vintage rug from Azadi Fine Rugs brings texture underfoot.

