

# LOGAN

LOCATION  
WYOMING, US

WORDS BY  
NAT TWISS

# PAVILION

PHOTOS BY  
MATTHEW MILLMAN



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resh out of school, architect Eric Logan undertook a challenge that most designers wait decades for: constructing a home for themselves. For many, this affords an opportunity to explore and show off their design intentions with unparalleled clarity, unencumbered from the agony of a client brief, a masterwork of the purest form. For Logan, the circumstance was a little different.

“My dumb little house,” as he lovingly describes it almost immediately on our phone call, was born from limitation. In fact, decades on from its original construction, the lasting interest in it still baffles him. “It’s odd to me. I mean, I should be flattered, but it’s satisfying that this very simple thing that my wife and I built, that I designed when I was 28, is still resonating with people.”

A conversation with Logan is perhaps a surprising exercise in humility. The practice with which he’s a partner, CLB Architects, is one of a small handful of America’s leading architectural offices whose work infuses the most absolute and distinctive luxury with a clear and concise focus on place. Flanked by the monolithic Grand Tetons and Yellowstone at their base in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, it’s a fortuitous location that leaves it impossible not to feel a deep respect for the environment. Simultaneously, a stone’s throw from the town lies some of the United State’s most exclusive skiing and real estate, mega-ranches owned by multi-billionaires, and an influx of post-COVID arrivals who have flocked to the area for its natural beauty. Amongst this—many of whom count themselves amongst the CLB client base—the Logan Pavilion, in its humble stature, feels modest. “The house resonates with people because it’s a simple thing that regular old people who have jobs can relate to. I guess I should be flattered, but I’m just surprised that it still feels relevant.”

Logan and his wife are both Wyoming natives, returning to the remote state after a brief stint in Colorado. “I was out of graduate school,” Logan explains. “It wasn’t a very good time in the economy, but I found a job, then changed jobs, finally going through my internship and getting my architect’s licence. We had purchased a home and decided we were going to start talking about children and wanted to move out of Denver—either to the foothills to Golden or Boulder. I had a contact in Wyoming, specifically here in Jackson, called John Carney. At the time, I wrote him a letter and he said ‘Why don’t you come up and join me?’. He was the principal architect at a design firm in Denver where I had my first job.” That written exchange was the first foundation for the practice that Logan runs today.

“We landed in Jackson after selling our first home in Denver for more money than we were asking. It was very strange, and we arrived with what we thought was a pocketful of money, feeling a little proud, I guess. We started to look for real estate, quite dismayed that everything that we might have been able to afford at the time was really insultingly bad. And so we rented and got to work with the new firm. But eventually, we had to scratch the itch, and we had to do something with these profits from the sale of the place in Denver. So, we bought a piece of property, the one we eventually built on. We chose this flat site in a sagebrush meadow, north of the town of Jackson, with these just unbelievable views of the Teton Range. I mean, they’re right in our face, pretty exquisite.”

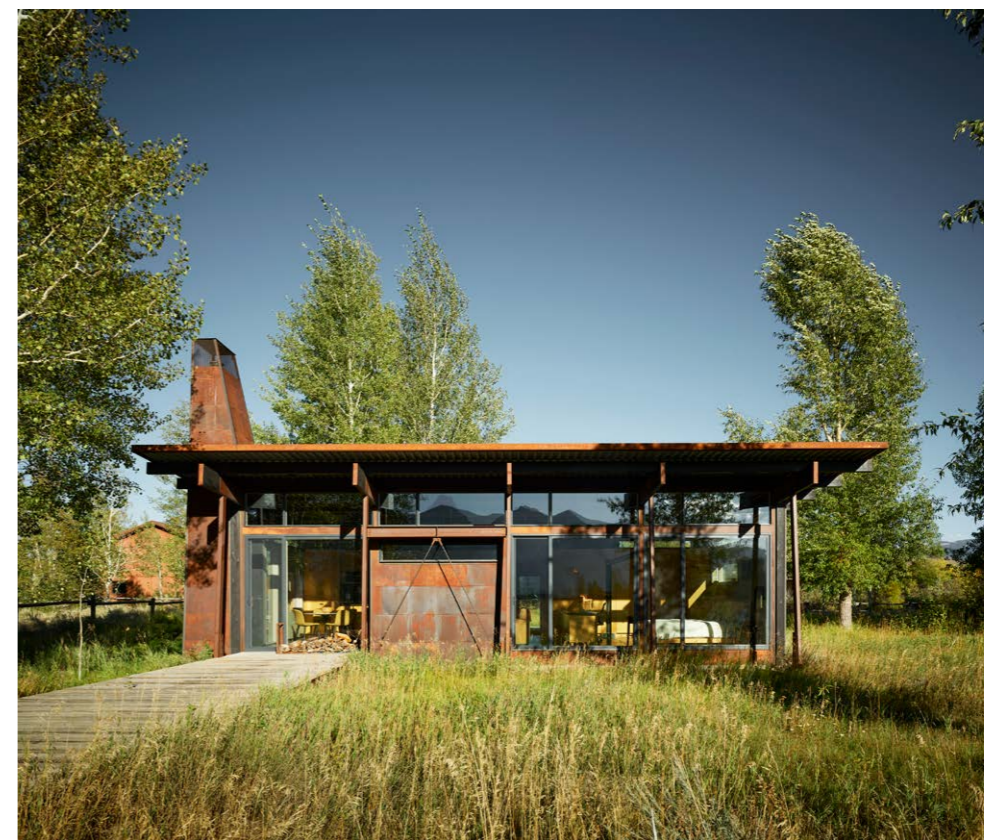
As Logan explains, even finding the plot in this region is an achievement. Only 3 per cent of the land in the county is available for private building. “That really feeds our community character here,” he says. “There’s a deep appreciation in this place for access to views and wildlife and a respect for wildlife and migration corridors—the seasonal things that happen in the environment.”

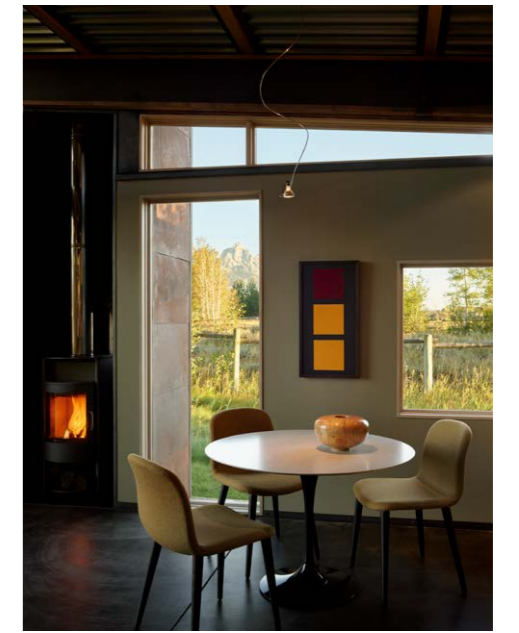
The relationship with nature went on to become a foundational element in the works of CLB, which since its very first days—and through Logan’s designs for his own home, became focused on finding a way to meld architecture with the environment. “There’s just this immersion that is a very different lifestyle than an urban context where we might have an office on one of the coasts. And so it does feed how we think about disturbing a beautiful piece of land, first of all. And then if we’re asked to disturb a beautiful piece of land, how do we do it respectfully? And how do we bring the absolute best out of that experience for whatever we’re doing, whatever kind of building we’re doing?”

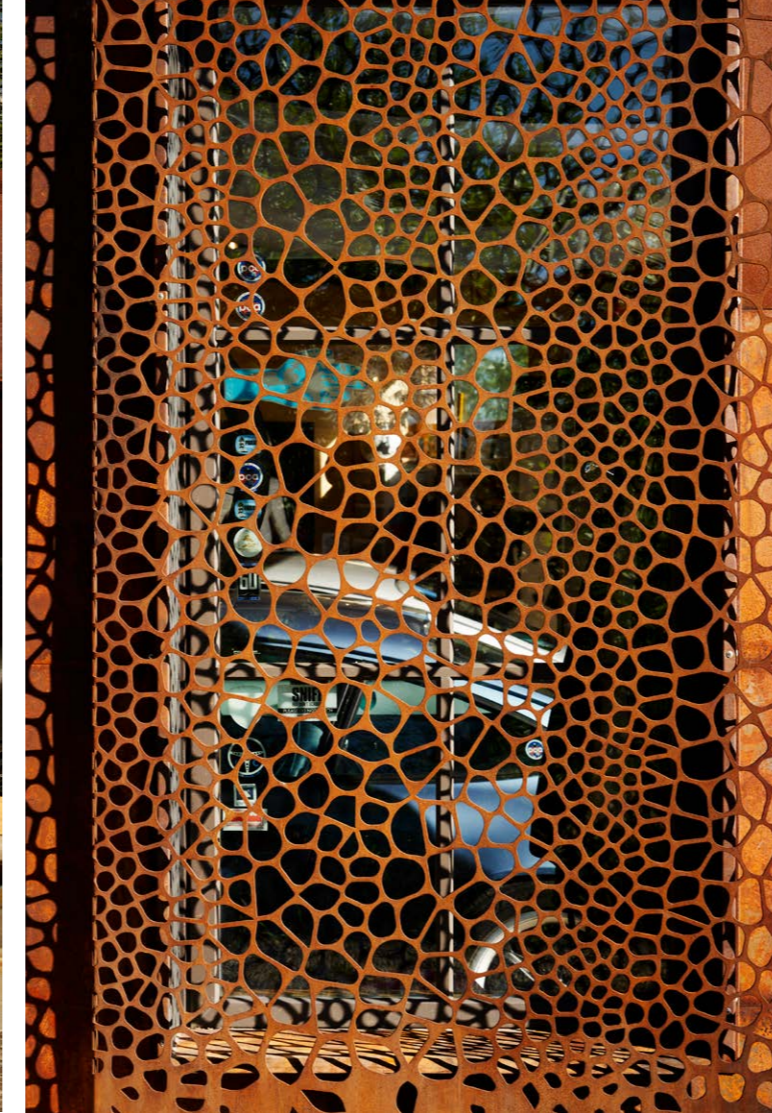
“I was making shit up”, Logan jokingly undercuts the process of building his own home. “The real drivers were, well, number one, there was just no money. And so this thing had to be, frankly, just dead ass simple. But I guess I got enough of it right that we’re having a conversation”.



**right** *The Logan Pavilion in its latest iteration, featuring a host of rusted steel features after a renovation in 2020.*







That's not to say that when Logan put pen to paper he wasn't feeling any pressure. "As a young architect, doing your own house is a big deal. I mean, especially if you're somebody who's engaged and trying to think critically about the work and how you respond to a place, and so I don't think my response was terribly sophisticated. But as it turns out, it made a lasting impression on a number of people, and it still fits the environment and it's worked very well for my family over the 25 years or so that we've lived there." Would he do the same thing today? He's not so certain, explaining that while the fundamental idea still appeals, there's a higher concept at work now. "I don't know if I'm getting more experienced or more sophisticated—probably not sophisticated—but I'm more interested in less literal interpretations of these vernacular forms. We're trying to make buildings that are more about sculpting spaces and making sculpture in the landscape."

The home is remarkably simple in form, referencing vernaculars of barns and rural buildings you see everywhere in the American west, but with a level of refinement that can only

come from the mind of an architect with a higher ideal. "I think its success really relies on its simplicity, that it turns out a simple rectangle was not only really easy to, well I say easy, easier to build, the approach to reference very simple agrarian structures. It's essentially just this roof held a loft on tall columns. There are familiar objects in our landscape, hay barns, et cetera, that we're trying to channel in terms of the form response." Over recent years Logan has been undertaking a series of extensions, adaptations, and renovations to his home, adding a weathered steel roof alongside burned black cladding.

Additionally, a guest wing was created alongside a garage, which houses a small collection of Porsche models that he has collected in recent years after a childhood obsession; "I'd pick up *Road & Track* and *Car and Driver*, and just pour through all of it, especially if there was a Porsche on the cover or a story somewhere...I'm trying to think of a clever Porsche analogy and I'll probably screw it up," he jokes.

"I love my G-body car, and so many of them are hot-rod-

ded. As a baseline, that car, that robust analog, kick-ass piece of engineering has been used as a platform for all kinds of personal interpretation. Maybe all the subsequent things we've layered onto the home or removed from it...we've made a hot rod out of this thing that was 'the barn' at some point."

It's easy to imagine that if Logan had waited until today to build his home, even on the same plot, it would be remarkably different, and yet, it's a masterwork nonetheless—though that's not to say it will ever be complete to him. It marks a change to the works he creates at his office, which eventually, after months of tinkering, have to be signed off and delivered to clients. Instead, with the Logan Pavilion, there remains space - not just in the expansive grounds, but in the ever-shifting philosophy of a true creative's brain - to tweak, adapt, and extend. Capping off our conversation, I ask Logan if he'll ever think of the home as complete.

"I think we'll continue to tinker with it until I'm below the dirt," he says. "It's fun just to have a project."



**above left** Eric Logan pictured in front of his garage, where he keeps his car, music, and BMX collection.

**left** Eric Logan's G-Body 911, one of a small collection of cars which are kept at his home.