



Hidden away in a remote location of the Tobacco Root Mountains, this Kane-designed cabin is as solid and integrated into the landscape as the granite outcrops surrounding it.

DEB KANE, AIA

EYE-CATCHING DESIGNS AND CREATIVE DETAILS

Drenched in natural light, Kane Architecture's work space looks and feels more like an artist's studio than an office. It's the morning after Deborah Kane has completed the construction documents for the third in a series of beautiful commercial buildings set in the Meadow at Big Sky and there are papers strewn about the room: blueprints, renderings and sketches so lovely they could easily hang on the wall in any Bozeman gallery. Kane talks fervently, not about how her designs look, but how they work, function and feel. Five minutes don't pass but that her passion for the art of architecture becomes readily apparent. Architect Deb Kane is indeed an artist.

A native Montanan—Kane grew up in Havre—



Deb Kane has been practicing architecture for more than 23 years. Her reputation for exquisite talent and unwavering dedication is widely known throughout the region and Kane has been offered positions over the years by a number of other architecture firms. With her artistic, independent spirit though, Kane has repeatedly chosen to maintain her own practice—with a number of successful collaborations—since 1989. At Kane Architecture, she works with architect Bob May, an old college chum, and likes the pace and focus of a two-person office. Though it means she limits the amount of work she accepts, each of Kane's projects reflects the benefit of being her sole focus for the duration.



With Lone Peak towering behind them, the Crail Ranch Condos in the Meadow at Big Sky make perfect family getaways, designed with plenty of room for skis and guests.



Dick Walter Audi...the jewel in Main Street Bozeman's crown.

From high-profile institutional and commercial buildings—including the Sacajawea Middle School in Bozeman and the elegant, lakeside Crail Ranch Town Homes in Big Sky—to high-end private residences across the region, Kane has both the ability and the desire to tackle a vast array of projects. She prides herself on the fact that each one is as different from the next as the clients she works for. Though the structures vary dramatically, Kane’s mission is unwavering: to create structures based on a deep understanding of place, purpose and the people that will inhabit them.

Though her projects do not bear any stylistic similarities, Kane does acknowledge that she

approaches each project with a consistent desire to be creative, site-specific and efficient while minimizing waste. To that end, Kane uses top-of-the-line technology like the three-dimensional ArchiCAD in an industry where most still use AutoCAD.

Mirroring the woman she is, Kane’s creativity tends towards fun, whimsical elements like bridges, walkways, rec rooms and bunk rooms. Even her commercial buildings offer uncommonly imaginative features. The sleek Audi dealership in Bozeman, for example—the only one worldwide in a city of less than 1 million people—boasts a glass-and-steel frame that curves towards the street. When asked by the local newspaper about the design and why it leans at an angle toward Main Street, Kane was famously quoted as saying, “It’s cool. And we can do it.”

Aside from the eye-catching designs and creative details that appeal to the clients’ sense of aesthetics, for Kane there is always the same bottom line. “They have to be well built, period,” she explains. For Kane, that means well-insulated, energy-efficient, minimal waste, and high quality materials all the way around. It also means that the structure has to function beautifully, improving the lives of the people within it. “I like windows,” she says, matter-of-factly, as if the entire glass block wall behind her drawing table didn’t say enough. Kane’s buildings—both commercial and residential—are known to have abundant natural light.



Even the spacious great room has a cozy, intimate feel. This Big Sky lodge incorporates conventional frame construction with load bearing log post-and-beam features.

Kane's involvement in her projects often goes much further than the design; she frequently oversees the entire construction process. Because of her proximity, Kane has an exceptional record for completing projects on time and within budget. Additionally, her lifelong knowledge of Montana geology and climate—and her 23 years experience within the building community—enable her to build sound structures efficiently and painlessly, even for clients who live out of state and are unable to be present for the construction process.

From historical renovations and new commercial construction to the creation of someone's mountaintop dream house, Deb Kane is a woman in motion. Always imagining. Always finding solutions. Always creating structures that are, like the woman herself, timeless. ■

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