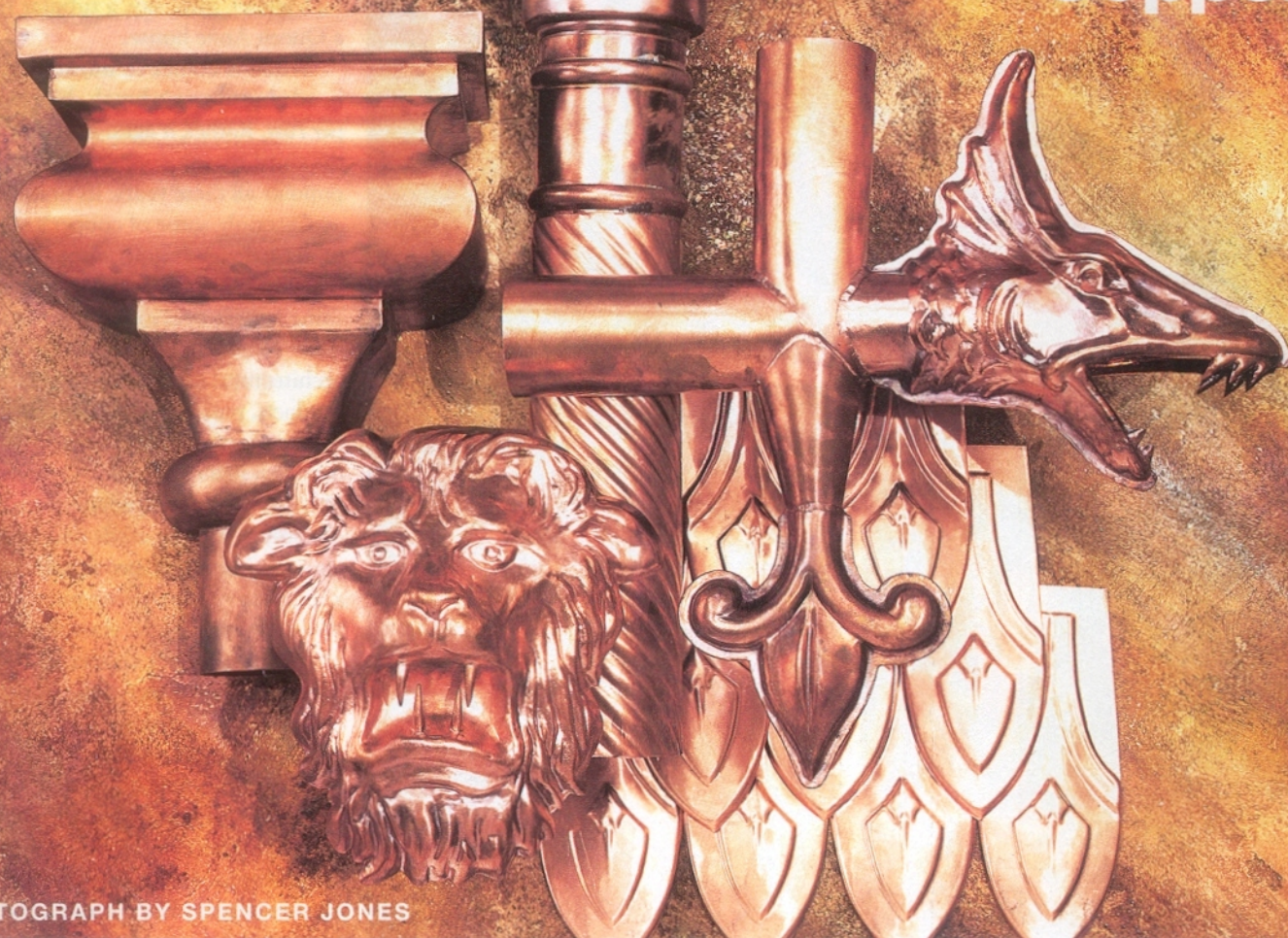


Today's master craftsmen are turning out some extraordinary architectural details

## Over-the-Top Copper



PHOTOGRAPH BY SPENCER JONES

*Copper can be fashioned into fanciful yet functional exterior elements, including (clockwise from top): a half-round downspout leaderhead, a gargoyle downspout elbow, fish-scale roof shingles, a twisted downspout, a lion's-head faceplate for a wall fountain, and a boxed downspout leaderhead.*

BY RYAN ROBBINS

**C**opper has been part of American architecture since the beginning. Federal-style homes were often topped by batten-seamed copper roofs. Victorian residences of the late 1800s featured fancy copper ridge cresting and turrets roofed with copper fish-scale shingles. Today, a handful of master coppersmiths are continuing this tradition, banging out time-tested standards and hammering out some new riffs as well. "Copper, by its nature, invites you to improvise and come up with new designs," says Larry Stearns, owner of Vulcan Supply Corp., in Westford, Vermont.

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OVER-THE-TOP COPPER  
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*Intro—*

"Florentine" leader head for 4-in. downspout (\$2,400), cross-shaped gargoyle elbow for 3-in. downspout (\$580), 9-in. "fishscale" roof shingles for conical roof (\$12 each), 43-in. length of twisted 4-in. downspout (\$270), and lion-head wall fountain ornament (\$480) by Hans Liebscher Custom Copper Works and Sheet Metal, Inc., San Marcos, CA; 760-471-5114; [www.hansliebschercopperwks.com](http://www.hansliebschercopperwks.com). (Boxed leaderhead for 4-in. downspout no longer available.)

All the products from the "By Design" feature from "This Old House" magazine from September 2003 were crafted by my company with exception of the leaderhead on the left. (By the way: I have better ones.)