THE BEST ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS involve weaving a carefully crafted narrative of vision, style, and place. If a dream home’s walls could speak, they would tell a tale of a family of materials that must blend and communicate to achieve a sum far greater than its individual parts. Pairing years of experience with a unique artistic vision, award-winning architect Stephen Dynia demonstrates the beauty of what’s possible when you combine innovative ideas with cohesive design solutions in modern architecture.

The Language of Texture

From the very start, this home nestled within a mountain community presents an inspiring example of how blending a variety of different textures can add intrigue and interest to a home’s design. As you walk up to the front door, you are greeted by the home’s first board-formed concrete wall. Made by pouring wet concrete into a temporary wood frame acting as a mold, the concrete that is later revealed presents all the natural textures, knots and designs from the boards originally used. Because it’s a concrete surface, you still get the modern, edgy feel, yet with all the appealing variations of a natural wood surface. Functioning like a welcoming sculpture at its entrance, the board-form wall introduces visitors to their first taste of a multitude of rich wood grain textures, found in both rough and refined surfaces throughout the entire home’s design.

Overhead, a charming textured wood ceiling begins and continues in the interior of the home. Varied patterns produced by routed grooves in the wood highlight the way the ceiling rises to the north to capture...
amazing mountain views in the living room. Providing an excellent contrast to the fir’s lighter wood tones on the ceiling, a deep, luxurious mahogany can also be found all around the home. Beautiful mahogany custom cabinetry in the open living areas and kitchen, as well as mahogany inlays into the smooth natural concrete surfaces of the floors, provide even more warmth and richness.

Dynia describes how although his clients were looking to achieve a distinctly modern look, they were also passionate about maintaining the warmth appropriate for a mountain environment. Referring to the successful marriage between the two different wood species, he explains, “The dialog between those materials achieved the sort of comfort that the owner was looking for from a house located in the mountains.”

Messages of Light

From the glass-wrapped master bedroom to expansive windows on the majority of its walls, luminous light streams through this home, then dances across stunning interior designs and furnishings. Inside and out, capturing the most complete views of the mountains and natural light was a huge priority.

On the south side of the home, Dynia performed what he referred to as an interesting “experimentation of light.” Designing a unique “lyrical pattern of windows” on those walls of the home and guest house without the coveted mountain views, he achieved fascinating shadows and patterns of light filtering in from a series of smaller windows presented in unusual, almost whimsical patterns.
Open, airy and light-filled courtyards and patios right outside the door serve to extend their living space and provide additional areas to enjoy breathtaking mountain surroundings.

**Speaking Intimacy**

One architectural motif Dynia loves to explore involves understanding how to create the intimacy and appeal of the romantic mountain cabin with all the openness and luxury of a modern design. Referring to his notion of the “duality of modern space” Dynia achieves just that for many of his clients. He explains, “This house presents a unique sense of intimacy due to its proportions and scale in many ways. As one example, making sure the cabinetry throughout the kitchen and living areas did not touch the ceiling allowed the whole space to read as more open and unbound.” The home’s duality continues as both natural and man-made materials appear to fuse together seamlessly.

Anyone who has experienced the joy of a fireplace in the master bedroom would likely agree that it’s a luxury worth fighting for when designing your home, not only for yourself but also for future resale appeal as well. Wrapped in heavenly windows on three sides, with a cozy fireplace focal point, and unobstructed views of the mountain range, this home’s dreamy master bedroom retreat represents the unforgettable highlight of the second floor.

**Translating Space**

The choice of a metal roof for the house was both practical and aesthetic. In a Mountain West environment, a metal roof can last over a 100 years and is practically maintenance-free. It’s also fireproof, provides great protection from harsh weather and can significantly cut down on energy bills.

In this case, the roof was designed to encourage the metal’s natural process of oxidation to achieve a ruddy color that blends right into its surrounding environment. The home’s landscaping design involves another bridge to the indigenous landscape with an abundance of native wildflowers, sage and brush.

Master architect Frank Lloyd Wright said in his 1932 autobiography, “No house
should ever be on any hill or on anything. It should be of the hill, belonging to it so hill and house could live together each the happier for the other.” Building a relationship between the natural and built environment has become a very important focus in modern architecture today. Its practical applications have made a difference in everything from material selections to design orientation and energy efficiency.

“In what I consider a successful home, as well as in my public works, exploring the idea of how a room takes claim of the landscape has always been important to me,” said Dynia. “Not only should the room share claim of the immediate landscape outside of it, but also to the collective landscape of the mountain. That ability to make it feel like it belongs to you and your home is something for which I continue to experiment.” Combining years of experience with refreshing innovation, this home presents a spectacular example of spotlighting the beauty of its natural surroundings within the comfort of luxurious contemporary style.