



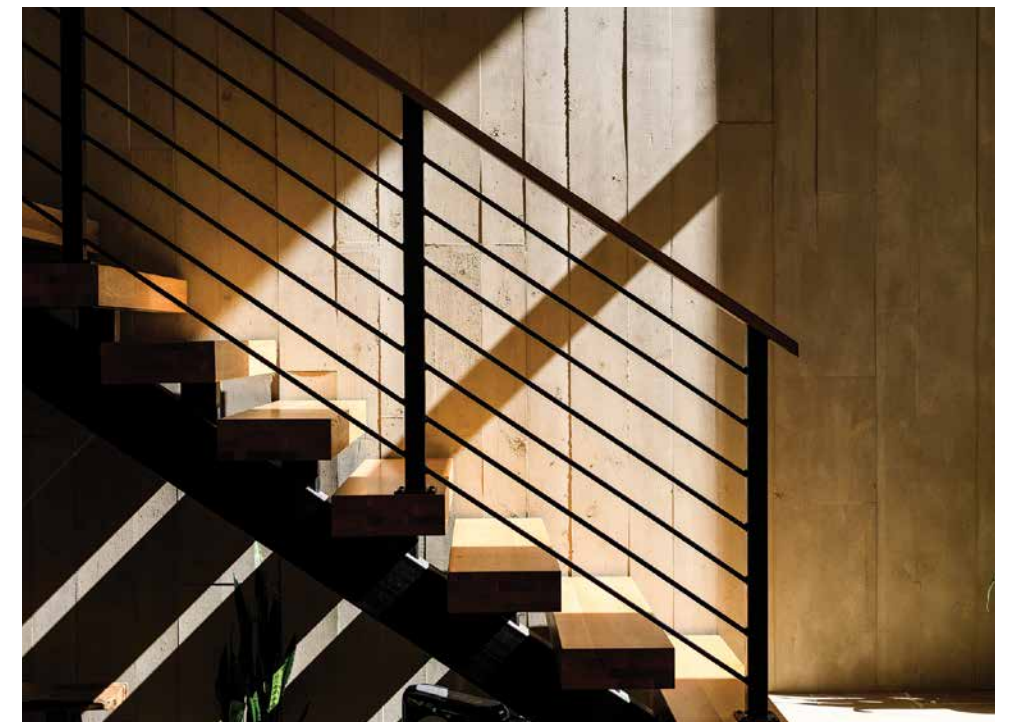
Above: An acoustically tuned music room with 14-foot-high ceilings connects with three bedrooms upstairs. The light fixtures are hand-blown glass.

Right: The dramatic straight-run staircase is a beautiful example of architect Scott Rodwin's interpretation of architecture as frozen music.

SERENADE IN GREEN

A North Boulder home strikes a harmonious balance between sustainability and sophistication.

STORY BY ROBYN GRIGGS LAWRENCE | PHOTOS BY BENJAMIN D. BUREN, ALIVE STUDIOS



IF ARCHITECTURE IS FROZEN MUSIC—as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe famously asserted—the best design is also a dance, between the built environment and the natural world, formality and asymmetry, yin and yang.

When asked to create a bold and modern yet tasteful and reserved home for an audiophile client and his daughter in North Boulder, architect Scott Rodwin took Goethe's words to heart, choreographing a crisp, clean design that flows with all the grace and elegance of a classical ballet.



Top: The ground floor has a sunny, simple open concept floorplan and promotes an easy indoor/outdoor lifestyle.

Bottom: Extensive floor-to-ceiling windows on the ground floor are shaded from summer sun by a cantilever from the second floor.

“The owner said, ‘I don’t want the house to be ostentatious. I want to build an original house, and I want quality over quantity!’ He wanted a space that’s right-sized for his family,” Rodwin says. “He asked that it be warm in its material palette, bold in form, strongly connected to its site and deep green in its performance.”

Rodwin Architecture delivered with a 3,000-square-foot all-electric, near-Net Zero Energy home with a passive solar design that achieved LEED Platinum certification—the highest awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council’s green building rating system. Carefully crafted to capture views of the Flatirons, the sky and a stand of 60-foot-tall Ponderosa pines, the home blurs the line between building and landscape to promote easy indoor-outdoor living.

Built by Skycastle Construction using custom-made insulated board-form concrete, Douglas fir and stucco, the home has ample windows that are protected from overheating by a roof with enormous cantilevered wings. Rodwin says the roof is like a big, broad hat—“a necessary, practical piece we needed if we were going to have this much glass, but I wanted it to have this light, floating, diaphanous feel.”

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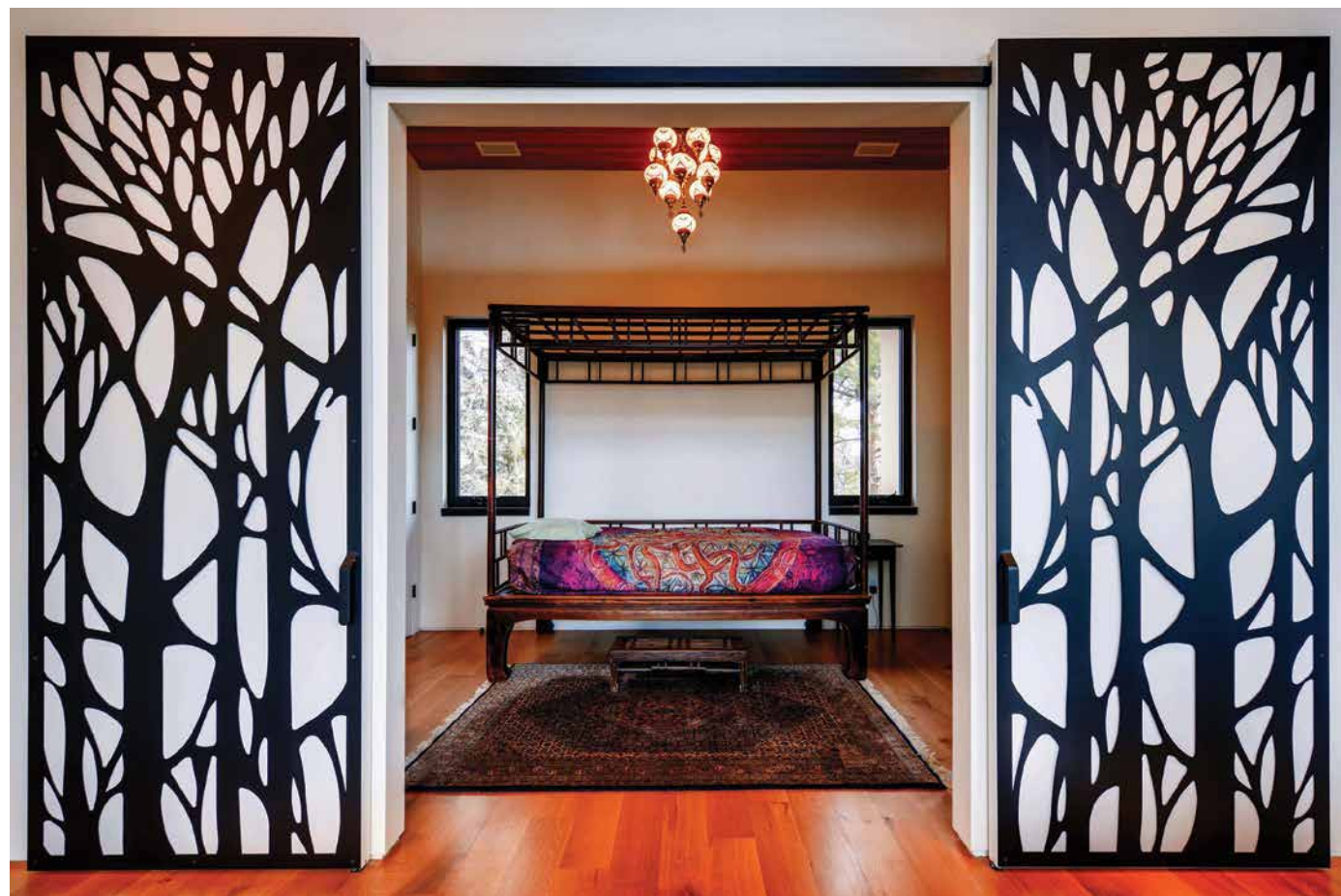
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“IT’S ALMOST LIKE YOU’RE GOING THROUGH THIS **MAGICAL FOREST**, AND YOU OPEN UP THE DOORS, AND THERE’S THIS **SPECIAL ROOM**,” RODWIN SAYS.



Easy Living

On the ground floor, a minimalist kitchen with radiant-heated Travertine tile floors opens through broad sliding doors onto a white concrete patio that dissolves into the landscape. Just beyond, a raised-bed garden and a small orchard provide the homeowners with vegetables as well as peaches, plums, apples and pears.

A floating staircase leads up to the second floor, where floor-to-ceiling glass overlooks a meadow-like “live roof.” A spacious family room with a 14-foot-high wood ceiling and carefully tuned acoustics provides an ideal spot for making and listening to music and is often the setting for house concerts.

Custom barn doors, adorned with a laser-cut metal design inspired by the site’s towering Ponderosa pine trees, open to a guest bedroom with an 18th-century Chinese day bed, a Persian rug and

Turkish light fixtures. “It’s almost like you’re going through this magical forest, and you open up the doors, and there’s this special room,” Rodwin says.

The daughter’s bedroom has a reading loft and a custom-designed mural, and her bathroom features floor-to-ceiling handmade glass mosaic tiles that she hand-picked to evoke a waterfall. “This is something that’s true of all our projects—when there’s a family, we like to ask the children to be involved, particularly in their rooms,” Rodwin says. “We like to personalize them and make them a special art piece that’s just for them.”

Nothing Gratuitous

A band of clerestory windows spills light into all the upper-floor rooms and creates a floating roof effect as the Douglas fir ceilings continue out to form the home’s eaves. “We wanted a lot of light to come into

Custom sliding barn doors leading to the guest room evoke the Ponderosa pines surrounding the home.



“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change”
—Charles Darwin

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Top: The exterior material palette includes board-form concrete, Douglas fir and stucco for a distinctly Colorado contemporary feel.

Bottom: Every mosaic tile in this bathroom was carefully chosen to create a waterfall effect in the daughter's bedroom. She also chose the bird tile by the sink.

the house, but we also wanted to maintain privacy because this is actually a fairly visible house from major roads," Rodwin says. "So, we brought in a lot of the light up high."

Following classic passive solar design principles, Rodwin oriented most of the home's windows toward the south so sunlight warms the home in winter but is blocked by the overhanging roof in the summer. Spectrally selective low-E window films and solar shades also help block unwanted solar gain.

"The house itself—without adding an awning or a trellis or anything like that—provides both weather protection for snow and rain, but also solar protection to make sure both the upper and lower floors have excellent passive solar qualities," Rodwin says.

This effortless integration of high design and sustainability are what make the home stand out—and everyone who visits feels it. The home won the Colorado Green Building Guild's People's Choice Award during the 2019 Green Home Tour and the 2019 Home Builder's Association CARE Award for Best House Under 5,000 Square Feet.

"There were no gratuitous moves," Rodwin says. "We wanted a sophisticated, beautiful, modern design that also happens to achieve the highest levels of sustainability. All these things had to come together and work together to balance the best and highest possible expression." ☺



What Makes This Home Green?

- ☀ 14 HERS Rating, near Net-Zero Energy
- ☀ 10 kWh solar array on the roof
- ☀ Ground-source heat pump and boiler
- ☀ Energy-recovery ventilation HVAC
- ☀ Energy Star windows and appliances
- ☀ Radiant flooring with high thermal mass
- ☀ LED lights
- ☀ Water-conserving plumbing, fixtures and irrigation
- ☀ "Live" green roofs
- ☀ Passive solar design



Top: The minimalist kitchen has a giant leathered granite island, a pair of wine fridges and Travertine tile radiant-heated floors.

Bottom: A custom mural and cozy reading loft make the daughter's bedroom a special place.