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PERFECTLY ORCHESTRATED

IN AN ASPEN HOME, A WORLD-CLASS ART
COLLECTION PLAYS IN CONCERT WITH BEAUTIFUL
MATERIALS AND SCULPTURAL FURNITURE.

WRITTEN BY MINDY PANTIEL / PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRENT MOSS





ARCHITECTURE / SARAH BROUGHTON, ROWLAND+BROUGHTON
ARCHITECTURE/URBAN DESIGN/INTERIOR DESIGN

INTERIOR DESIGN / MANUEL DE SANTAREN,
MANUEL DE SANTAREN, INC.

HOME BUILDER / BRISTON PETERSON, BRIKOR

Somewhere in the process of designing a house that engages with its steep topography while accommodating 60 major pieces of art, architect Sarah Broughton mused that organizing the many elements on such a large project was akin to a conductor leading an orchestra. "Working on this project was like dealing with a complex piece of music, and it's up to the architect to arrange it," says Broughton, who welcomed the challenge. "We like complexity and depth—and we design with proportion, scale, light and materials. As you move through this house, you discover even more layers."

Purchased 11 years ago by a couple who split their time between Aspen and New York, the dated 1970s home in the Starwood community was originally slated for a remodel. "The striking views were unlike any property we looked at, but we bought it knowing we were going to renovate," says the wife, who, along with her husband, has ties to several art institutions and museums. But when the time came to start construction, the reports from general contractor Briston Peterson were not encouraging. "As we started deconstruction of the residence, we found structural issues. After careful analysis, we realized that the building was substandard, and it made more sense to demolish a large portion of the old house rather than remodel it," he says.

From the outset, the wife was an essential member of the design team, which also included designer Manuel de Santaren. "Living in the house gave me a certain aspect that no one else had—and I definitely had a vision of what I wanted," she says. That vision began with siting the new entry. "The old house had walls that blocked the mountain views, but I knew what was behind them," the wife remembers. "From the front door, I wanted to see right through the house to the Aspen Highlands." She also curated the placement of every painting and sculpture, including siting a Wim Botha sculpture in the entry and having a special wall built for a McArthur Binion painting at the top of the stairs. Broughton designed her own brand of sculpture—spaces that

possess a geometry that's bold, but livable and relates to the commanding landscape seen through the large windows.

From the outside, the house is almost unassuming, with barnwood siding that seems to help nestle the large structure into the surroundings and terraced garden beds—designed by landscape designer Arabella Thoyts-Beavers of Busy Beavers Gardening—that gently lead to the entry. Inside, just as the owner intended, the compelling mountain view draws the eye through to the back of the house where floor-to-ceiling glass doors open to an infinity-edge copper pool.

In the main foyer, a wood-and-steel staircase with glass rails wraps the Botha sculpture before stretching to the next level and connecting with a mesh steel bridge, carefully crafted to be sympathetic to everything from high heels to bare feet. "There's a nice balance between the double-height stair and the lower, more intimate ceiling below," says Broughton. "The juxtaposition of the scale further reinforces the layering and depth of the architecture."

The structure's crisp geometry prompted the owner and Boston-based de Santaren to select furnishings that act as counterpoints to the architecture, including contoured Vladimir Kagan sofas in the living room, a quartet of curved chairs and a round rug in the family room, as well as William Haines chairs with graceful bent-metal frames in the master suite. "I always think there should be visual tension in a space," says the wife. "To accomplish that goal, you need pieces that surprise and break the geometry."

Upholstered pieces sport natural fibers like wool and linen in neutral tones that don't detract from the beauty of the surroundings or the artwork. "Overall we decided that the house needed to convey a sense of textural warmth and ease," says de Santaren. "The lack of pattern is intentional, we wanted to give the art room to breathe and be the centerpiece of the visual language."

Throughout the house, the architect took the lead on material selection, which plays out in a variety of shapes and patterns that underscore the fact that this is anything but one-note architecture. The same concrete used on the exterior, for example, repeats in the monumental living room fireplace surround, but here it's scored into large rectangles. The same gray color and form of the concrete is found in the master bedroom's fireplace but expressed with leather squares. Also, in the master bedroom, a raised limestone plinth starts at the base of the steps and continues under the fireplace. A similar feature occurs in the adjoining bath, but this time as a raised marble platform under the sink. "It's important to have continuity of theme and vocabulary but changes in materials," says Broughton.

The intricacies are not lost on the grateful homeowners. "Everyone who worked on this house put in 200 percent and there isn't one person we don't appreciate for their contribution," says the wife. "It was a tremendously fun house to create." ■

"AS YOU MOVE
THROUGH THE HOUSE,
YOU DISCOVER
EVEN MORE LAYERS."

—SARAH BROUGHTON

Inspired by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, architect Sarah Broughton crafted this Aspen home's stair landing with a wire-mesh floor. Ivanka concrete panels and blackened metal define the fireplace in the living room, where designer Manuel de Santaren and the homeowner selected Vladimir Kagan sofas and a coffee table from Cristina Grajales Gallery in New York.



Opposite: A dramatic glass, metal and wood stair winds around a large sculpture by artist Wim Botha. Designing the stair was a work of art itself, with each element carefully considered. "I had to work with the structural engineer on the size and spacing of the stainless-steel connectors," says Broughton. The chairs visible in the family room are by J. Robert Scott.

Below: A photograph by artist Jeff Chien-Hsing Liao marks the entrance to the family room. The same Hakwood European oak used on the floor beneath repeats on the stair treads leading to the space, where a Blatt Billiards table signals the casual intent of the room. A light fixture purchased through 1stdibs illuminates the game table.







Artwork by Diana Al-Hadid is composed of polymer gypsum, fiberglass, steel, plaster and aluminum leaf and hangs above a custom console in the dining room. The latter is a combination of rift-sawn walnut cabinetry by Benchcraft and a zinc-encased resin top by Wüd Furniture Design.

"It looks like ice and it doesn't interfere with the view," says the wife of the Ralph Pucci light fixture in the dining room. French 1940s St. Sabin chairs from Conjeaud & Chappey in New York surround a table by Manuel de Santaren.





In the kitchen, the architect designed the stove hood, backsplash and the cabinets—inset with Bendheim glass panels—to recede into the architecture while the light fixture created by Manuel de Santaren comes into focus. A flamed black-granite countertop surrounds a cooktop by Miele, sinks by Elkay and faucets by Dornbracht.

"Built-ins are our trademark," says Broughton referencing the kitchen's banquette—with a seat cushion crafted from Studio Four's Kvadrat Maharam fabric—and the wall of walnut cabinets that conceal storage. Vintage Arne Jacobsen chairs surround a zinc-and-resin table by Wüd Furniture Design.



A combination of blackened steel and Alphenberg leather define the master bedroom fireplace wall. Midcentury modern upholstered chairs by William Haines are in keeping with the home's neutral color scheme. A sculpture called *Trophy Wife No.8* by David Cole hangs on the wall.



Below, left: In the wife's bathroom a Duravit tub is backed by marble and rests on a slab of the same material.

Below, right: "We didn't want everything to look the same, so we brought the wood floors up the walls," says the architect of the powder room. The vanity is made of limestone, the Oval Maryline mirror is by Sam Baron and the light fixture is by Hubbardton Forge.

