

EVERYTHING IS Illuminated

A minimalist Boulder home designed to **LET THE SUN SHINE IN**, from dawn to sunset

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SOMETIMES WHAT YOU'RE looking for is just across the street. When this Boulder couple discovered the house they looked out at each morning was going to hit the market, they were excited about the possibilities. Their existing Lower Chautauqua house was just fine, the wife says, but the facing lot offered greater opportunity to bring in the magnificent Colorado sunshine. Plus, it featured unparalleled views of the Flatirons and a seasonal stream behind the house, with a forested ravine. In the end, it was an easy decision.

"Our dream was always to have an 'EJ house,'" the wife says, referring to architect EJ Meade, principal at Boulder's Arch11 firm, which also has a Denver office. "We wanted a signature piece." So in 2014, the couple called Meade to walk their new lot and figure out how to build a house that would capitalize on everything the location had to offer. "Arch11's signature design is elegant, with an economy of expression that is incredibly compelling," the wife says. "The quality of light in Colorado is so spectacular, and it's something that Arch11 spends a lot of time considering for window placement and siting of the house." »



▲ Living Room

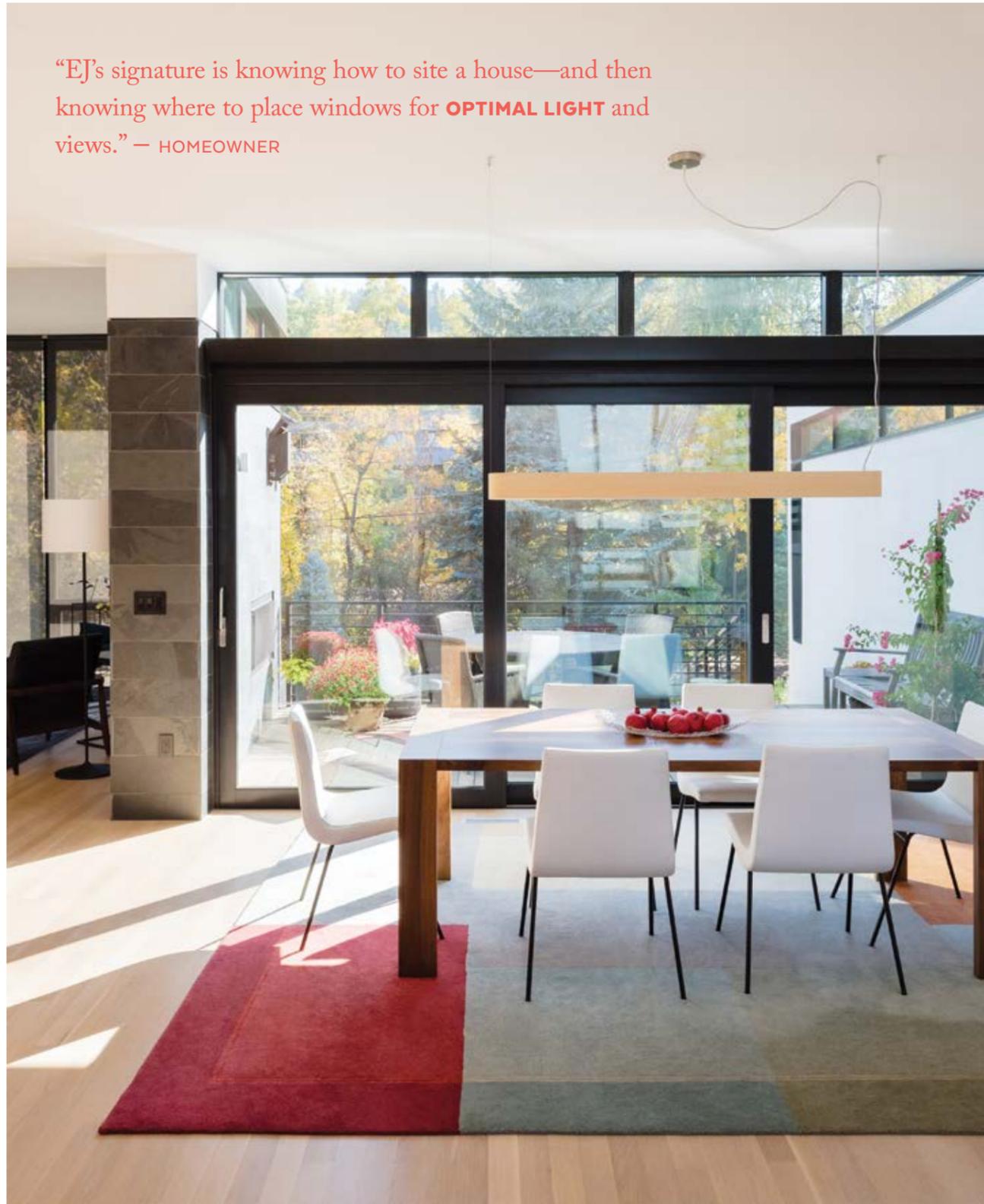
The light-filled room features B&B Italia's Charles sectional, Tobi-Ishi coffee table in gray oak, and Cozy accent table, with a glossy frisé eucalyptus top. The blue cloth chair and ottoman is the Toa by Ligne Roset, with a pillow from Island Farm in Boulder. The black-leather Callan chair, floor lamp and Amira rug are from Room & Board. The painting above the sofa is by Boulder artist Amy Metier, purchased from the William Havu Gallery in Denver. The fireplace tiles are gray slate.

Two years later, Meade delivered, with a 4,200-square-foot home that uses the gradual slope along its horizontal length to show the juxtaposition of the fall of the hill—kind of like a carpenter’s level—while walls of glass in the dining and living areas allow an uninterrupted view. King’s Gulch, the couple’s literal backyard to the south of the house, acts as a highway for wildlife coming through yet offers privacy for the homeowners.

“The intent is that the house is a retreat from the street,” Meade explains. “It presents a subtle, quiet facade, but as you enter the home, you experience the threshold between the life of the street and the feral qualities of the lot. Everything falls away, and all that remains is the light, the ravine and the view of the ridge.”

Meade says that Arch11’s vision for their projects come as a direct response to place. “We view our projects as lenses to understand the place on which they are built. We respond to what the site suggests,” he adds. For this particular site, he and project architect John Clarey decided to incorporate a 4-degree angle to the design to take maximum advantage of the views, light and open feel in the living room and outdoor dining room. Clarey explains: “If there’s an H shape to the house, the legs are splayed out 4 degrees to create expansive yet subtle change, while »

“EJ’s signature is knowing how to site a house—and then knowing where to place windows for **OPTIMAL LIGHT** and **views.**” — HOMEOWNER



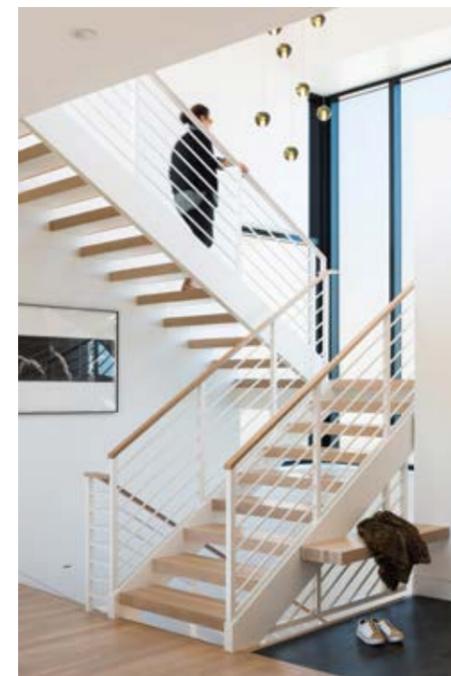
Dining Room ▶

Ligne Roset TV chairs designed by Pierre Paulin flank the Ligne Roset Eaton table. The Tibetan rug is by Mila. The chandelier is by LZF.



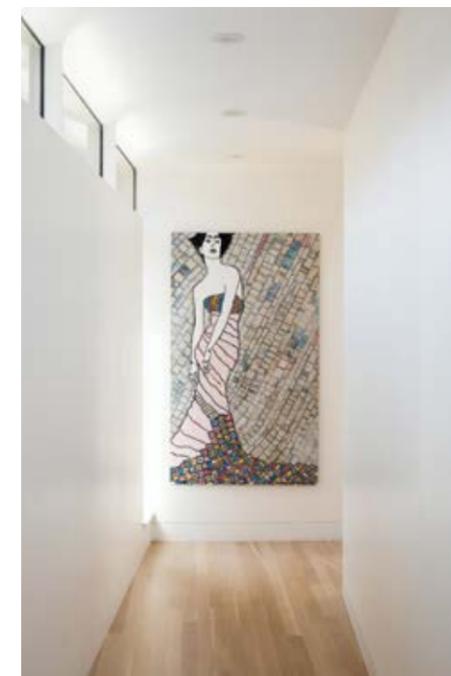
▲ **Kitchen**

Eames Molded Plastic Barstools in Aqua Sky from Design Within Reach face a walnut island with a white-quartz countertop. Michael Brotherton custom-made the white-gloss lacquer and walnut cabinetry.



◀ **Stairway**

A floating staircase features a Bocci light fixture from Studio Como, with gray cast-glass balls. The artwork is by Michele Winkler.



◀ **Hallway**

Artwork by Denver artist Karen Fisher makes a strong statement. Purchased at a Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art auction, the piece is titled *Promised for Thursday* and is made of dry-cleaning tickets and Japanese newspaper. The floors are custom-stained white oak.

also taking advantage of views and distance.”

As for the interior, the couple had to figure out how to furnish the minimalist space so that it felt personal, yet spoke in a language similar to the architecture. “We looked for furniture that was sculptural, but it had to be comfortable, which was much harder to find,” the wife says. “And we wanted the inside to feel like us, so we integrated the art and rugs we’d collected through the years.”

Starting with a quiet palette, the wife says she added more color with time, including pieces from Room & Board and Studio Como in Denver. Arch11 is a full-service firm, so the staff presented the homeowners with ideas for flooring, lighting, window coverings, plumbing and tile. The wife worked closely with design associate Claire Jordan to choose hard finishes that were sleek and modern yet purposeful, while Meade and Clarey focused on other features of the house, such as a “green roof,” an aesthetically pleasing and LEED-equivalent canopy made of succulents and 6 inches of soil, which filters rainwater, provides additional insulation, regulates temperature of the interior and protects the roof membranes for longer life.

Meade also incorporated a unique staircase from the dining deck to the back yard by making the tread length longer and the rise height shorter so it slows down a person’s descent into the ravine. “We did this so you’re not paying attention to what’s underfoot, but instead to what’s around you,” Meade says. “The subtle change heightens your awareness and creates a conscious experience.”

Overall, the couple is extremely satisfied with their serene and quiet home, says the wife, who hikes up Chautauqua’s Four Pines trail weekly with Mango, her 10-year-old Hovawart German herding dog. “Just look at the light. I’ll sit in my chair, and I’ll look at the Flatirons, and it’s so wonderful. I don’t believe in forever houses, but if this was it, I’d be just fine.”

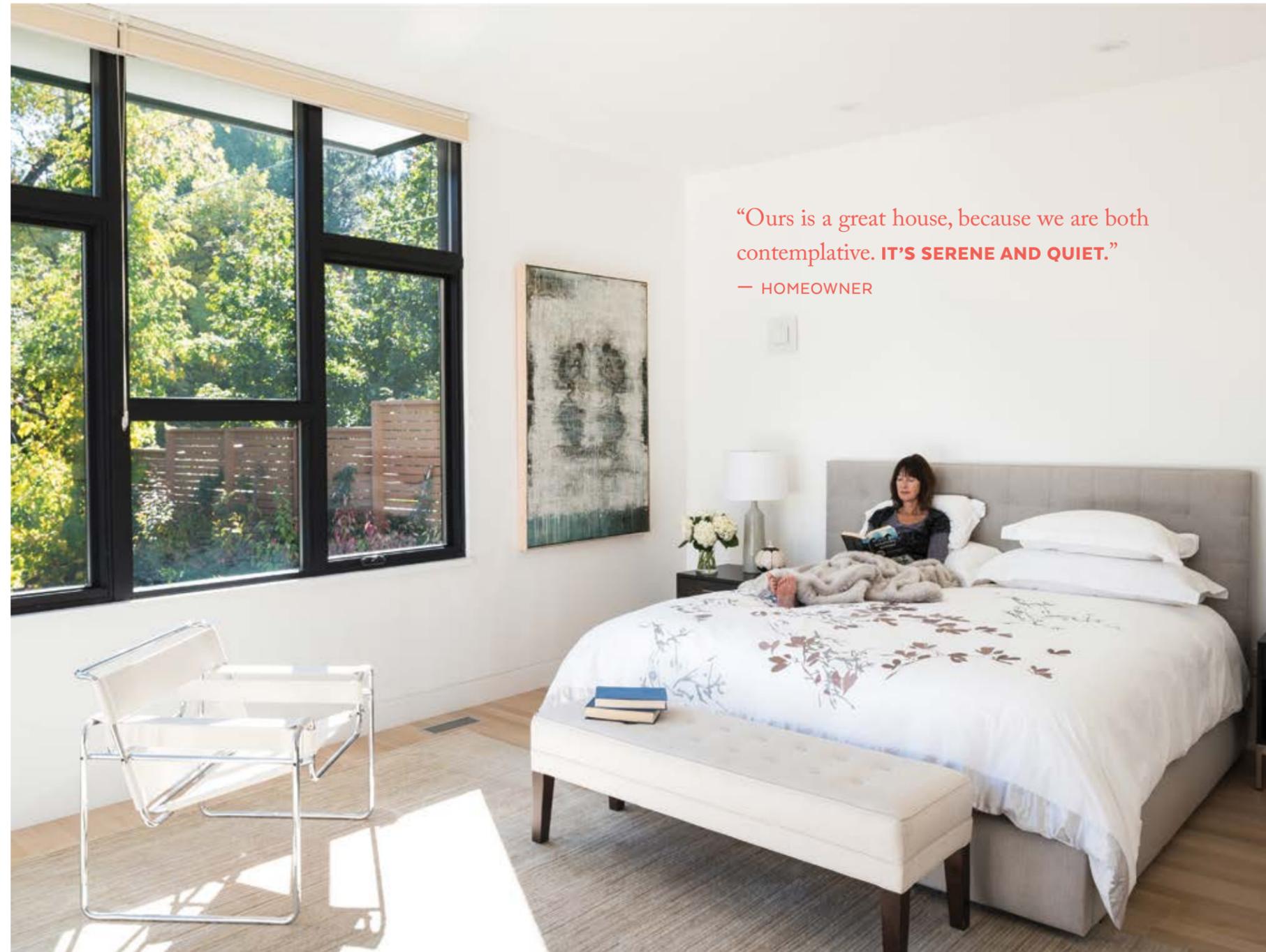
Office ▶

A West Elm sofa and coffee table sit atop a Tibetan rug from Mila. The painting to the left of the window is by local artist Patricia Bramsen, and the print to the right is by Yvonne Jacquette, from 15th Street Gallery in Boulder.



Master Bath ▶

A Weststyle bathtub uses Ann Sacks glass tile. The floors are marble, and the towel is from Marshalls.



“Ours is a great house, because we are both contemplative. **IT’S SERENE AND QUIET.**”

— HOMEOWNER

▲ Master Bedroom

The homeowner chills out on her Avery king bed from Room & Board, accompanied by the Alden end table and table lamp, both also from Room & Board. The bench is from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, and the Knoll Wassily chair is from Design Within Reach. The painting was purchased in Paris. »



◀ *Side Exterior*

The home's structure was conceived as a textural wood volume, hovering on a taut, white stucco base. "The house fits very specifically into the street scape with the hillside and views," says architect John Clarey of Arch11. "The quietness is nice but also concealing."

▼ *Back Exterior*

A slow staircase from the outdoor dining area into the back yard creates a subtly conscious experience as you descend.

"We view our **PROJECTS AS LENSES** to understand the place on which they are built."

— EJ MEADE



▲ *Stairway*

A stairway into the basement level leads to a quiet, light-filled sitting area with the homeowners' existing furniture.

◀ *Master Bedroom*

An 18th-century Burmese stone Buddha sits on a pedestal in the entryway to the master bedroom. ❖

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