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Star Valley Ranch Wyoming, USA Sparano + Mooney

Set within a remote mountain site in the western United States, this 5,500sq-ft house incorporates natural materials of stone, concrete and wood with state-of-the-art building systems and technologies. The house is sensitively integrated, and designed to minimise excavation, in a naturally evolved protected area. The terraces, generous glazing and indoor/outdoor rooms act to extend the living spaces into the surrounding landscape. Open panoramic views from the great room frames the Bridger National Forest to the east and an inside/outside informal piano concert space to the west.

The design concept, inspired by the owner's passion for classical music, is developed as a study of the interdependence of the right and left sides of the brain; music and maths. The architecture reflects the interdependence of the natural and built environments, the incorporation of musical structure and the tools of a composer in generating architecture.

A major theme is the slicing of various elements of the house including public and private wings, stair and piano concert space, indoor and outdoor spaces and spaces of silence and sound. Separate wings for the dwellers and guests are joined by the dramatic central gathering space. The 'walls' of this room change with the seasons; from snow-covered pastures in winter to green fields with grazing livestock in the summer. The master suite is designed to capture both the mountain views and the experience of being nestled within an aspen grove. This working ranch manifests itself as a diamond in the rough of the Wild West.

