

# METRO

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## THE DESIGN ISSUE



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# GENUINE ARTICLE

— Bill Corsello

Award-winning interior designer David Michael Miller brings his mid-western sensibilities and his allegiance to nature's forms and colors to his work.

"I like honesty in everything," says interior designer David Michael Miller, "In materials particularly." Akin to his chief influence, architect Frank Lloyd Wright, Miller demands "truth in materials" in his designs for the sprawling country homes, beach houses and mountain hideaways that have earned him notoriety.

"Wood for wood, concrete for concrete, metal for metal. Not a lot of synthetic materials, not a lot of slickness." Miller brings Southwestern and Midwestern design into the 21st century, mixing a love of nature, organic materials and simplicity with contemporary touches, creating residential and commercial spaces that are bold without being overpowering, bathed in natural, warm colors inspired by and complementing the natural environment.

David Michael Miller Associates, the Arizona-based firm that he has owned and acted as principal designer for since 1989, has been featured in major publications and design books and won multiple awards, most notably the grand prize from the American Society of Interior Designers and *Southern Accents Magazine's* National

Residential Design Competition three years running. Miller's successful style can be traced to his Midwestern upbringing, and not only in terms of aesthetic philosophy. Growing up gay in farm country in the "way west suburbs of Chicago" compelled Miller to be more sensitive and analytical of his surroundings. "I think that if I weren't gay, if I hadn't grown up where I grew up, and I was more part of the mainstream and had to think less about the 'who, what, why and where,' I'd be a completely different person. I think I'd be much less observant and sensitive to environment had I not gone through that."

Today, Miller is out and proud, making a name for himself in the world of design, and doing his own part in promoting tolerance in the Phoenix/Scottsdale area. "Since I first addressed my sexuality, I never wanted to hide it," he says. I think it's very important to be visible." That same lack of artifice is reflected in his designs. "I want it to be truthful. Enjoy what's real, touch it, feel it. There's something really beautiful about that — not burying it under 20 layers of finish."

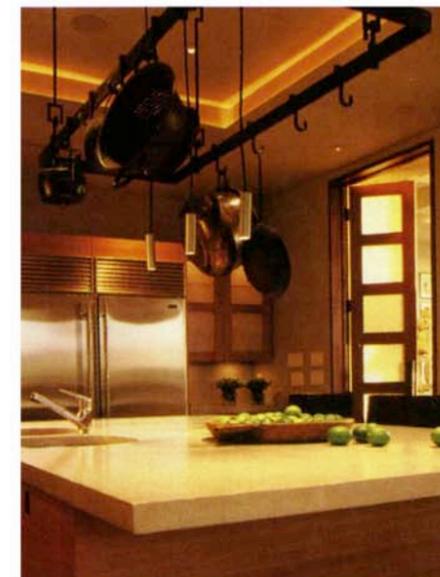


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