

100 Country Houses

NEW RURAL ARCHITECTURE

edited by Beth Browne



CARABBIA HOUSE

TICINO, SWITZERLAND

DAVIDE MACULLO ARCHITETTO

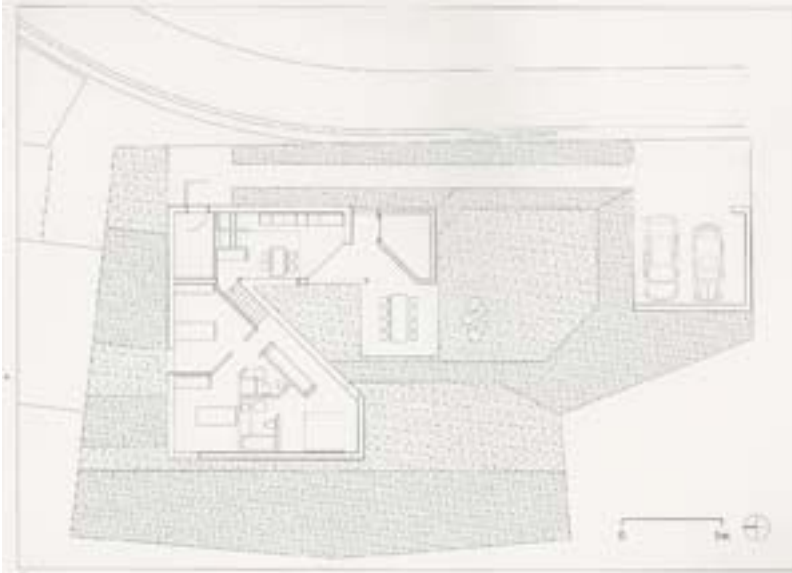
Carabbia is a small village of approximately 600 inhabitants. It sits in a beautiful bowl on the western slope of Mount San Salvatore. The owner wished to live in an intimate space, as if in a shell. This 13- by 13-metre house offers privileged views of its beautiful surrounds, simultaneously providing a sense of protection and a sense of being projected into the landscape. Carved in a clear square geometry, the spaces meet the slope and extend in a spiral, fluent movement that constantly changes the inhabitant's perception of the interior space and its relation with the exterior.

The sloped roof follows the land's natural incline, presenting an organic rather than urban vernacular. Because the site slopes approximately 30 degrees facing west the volume was designed to adhere as closely as possible so that no earth was displaced from the construction site. The home's three main storeys are set on the site at shifted levels, providing a direct relationship to the outside from all parts of the house. Upon entering, the entire interior space and the related outdoor space become visible, enhancing perception of the house's volume. This relationship is continued throughout all parts of the building, making the outdoor space always part of the indoor experience and the volume appear larger than it actually is.

The functional areas are located on three main levels. An entrance mezzanine (with wardrobe storage) is set between the upper level (living) and the middle level (kitchen and dining), and the three bedrooms are located on the lower level. All levels are visually connected while maintaining their own characteristics.

This house was shortlisted for the WAN (World Architecture News) House of the Year in 2007.





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- 7. First photo
 - 7. View to courtyard
 - 8. Master's kitchen
 - 5. Hall
 - 6. Living room
 - 7.8. Dining room
- Photography: Peter Drexler



COMANO HOUSE

TICINO, SWITZERLAND

DAVIDE MACULLO E MARCO STORZZI ARCHITETTI

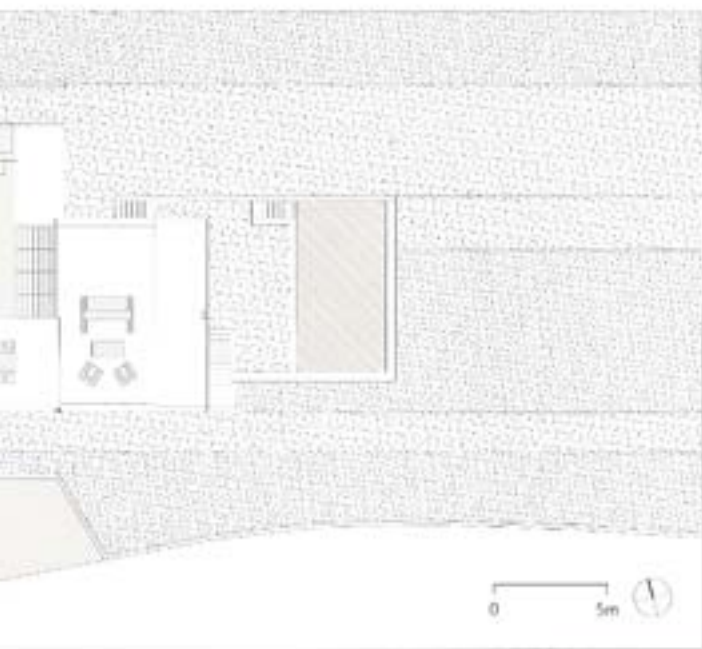
Comano is a small village at the foot of a hill 5 kilometres north of Lugano in Ticino. The steeply sloped site inspired the architect to treat the land as a built volume, so that it became part of the architecture of the house.

The construction stands on the lower part of the steep slope, its two vertical volumes organically integrating with the landscape. These volumes were built according to strict regulations regarding building height in order to preserve the view of the historic village on top of the hill. The arrangement of the levels links every room, visually and physically, and enhances the feeling of being continually at ground level. The huge entrance porch, which also functions as covered car park, is carved, cave-like, into the hill leaving the upper volume 'floating' in the green landscape. The void between the main volumes hosts the stairs, which link the shifted levels at different heights and offer the feeling of walking on the natural slope.

The house is composed of three concrete boxes with flat roofs and one glass box for the patio. Each level is shifted by half a storey allowing rational adherence to the land's slope and reducing the excavation required. All indoor spaces are directly linked to their outdoor counterparts, enhancing the perception of being constantly in touch with nature. Exterior spaces of concrete, grass and water are treated as a continuation of the interior via clear geometric lines.

This house was planned to ensure intimacy and privacy, allowing the inhabitants to enjoy the beautiful surrounding landscape without being visible from outside. The design affords shadowed spaces in summer and glazed winter gardens, which absorb radiant heat from the sun in winter to save energy.





floor plan
 view from north
 view from east
 view from living room from dining room
 view from dining room and lower landing
 architect: Piretti, Piretti, Enrie, Cane





TICINO HOUSE

TICINO, SWITZERLAND

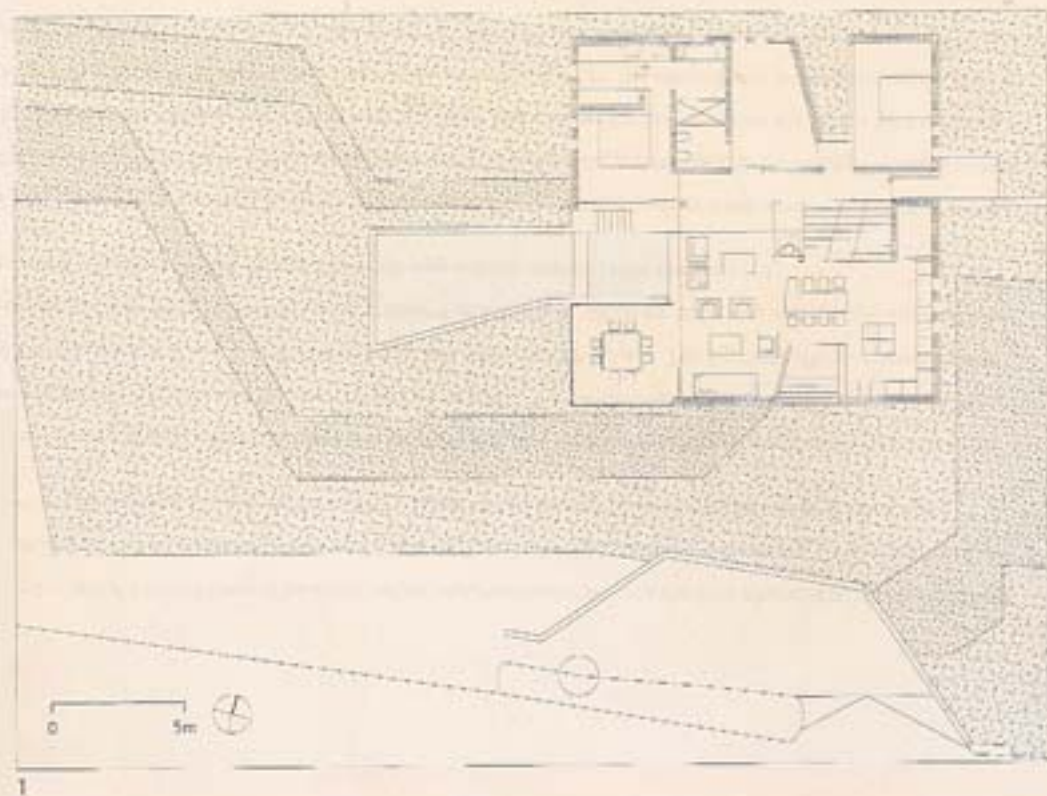
DAVIDE MACULLO ARCHITETTO

Located in one of sunniest areas of southern Switzerland, this house rises on a site once inhabited by old rural buildings. The structure's four solid volumes stand on the natural slope of the land, surrounded by nature. They follow the edges of the original building site and each has a carved roof reminiscent of those of the site's original buildings.

The landscape appears to flow through these volumes as if they are a continuation of the green environment. The cave-like entrance, surrounded by lawn, enhances this effect. The plan follows the contours of slope in an organic and fluent sequence of spaces that relate to each other and stretch outside. This typology offers an alternative to the ubiquitous box-shaped construction so prevalent on these hills, which are becoming increasingly urbanised - their unique qualities spoiled by aggressive building without respect to the environment.

The entire house has been built using eco-friendly construction materials such as Steko wooden blocks for the walls, TECU Classic and TECU Net for cladding, natural wood for flooring and gypsum board for the ceiling. The Steko system, utilised also for the internal partitions, is fully recyclable and reduces the time spent on site, with a corresponding reduction in noise, dust, site traffic and other environmental nuisances. The external skin is made of a copper screen, another natural and fully recyclable building material that protects the wooden internal envelope from overheating. In the House in Ticino, all these features combine with a high standard of living to define a new concept of comfort.

This project won the 2007 International TECU Award for the use of copper in architecture.





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- 1 Floor plan
- 2 View from east
- 3 View from west
- 4 Balustrade detail
- 5 TECU net screen detail

Photography: Enrico Carli