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A Set of Two



House In Canobbio

Nestled on the Alpine slopes north of Lugano, this house is characterised by a volumetric architecture that emerges from the terrain and follows the natural contour of the land. Its constructed volumes embrace the land in an organic and fluent sequence of spaces, each relating to each other and to the surrounding landscape.

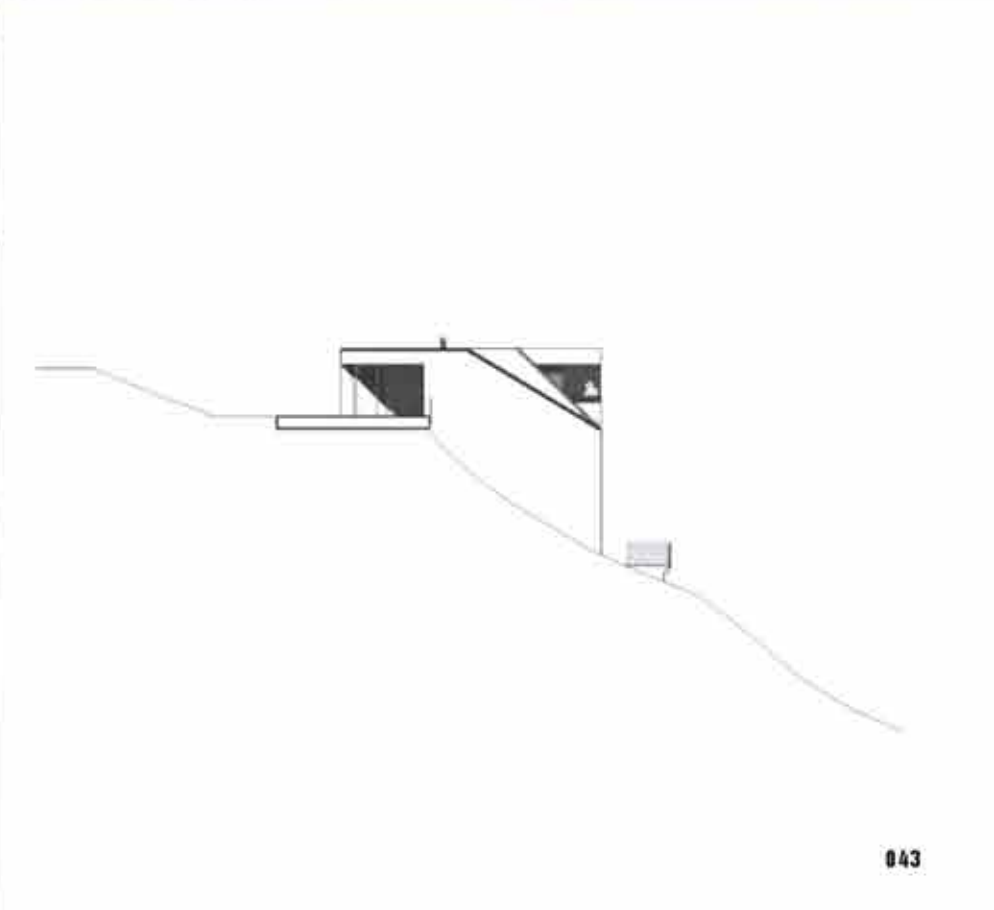
In order to communicate an identity and a language to the inhabitants, the project has a strong and precise form, its clearly identifiable geometric structure delimits an organised development of spaces. Carved in a clear square geometry, the spaces meet the slope and extend in a spiral, fluent movement that continuously changes the perception of the space and its relationship to the exterior, offering striking panoramic views across the hinterland and to Lake Lugano.

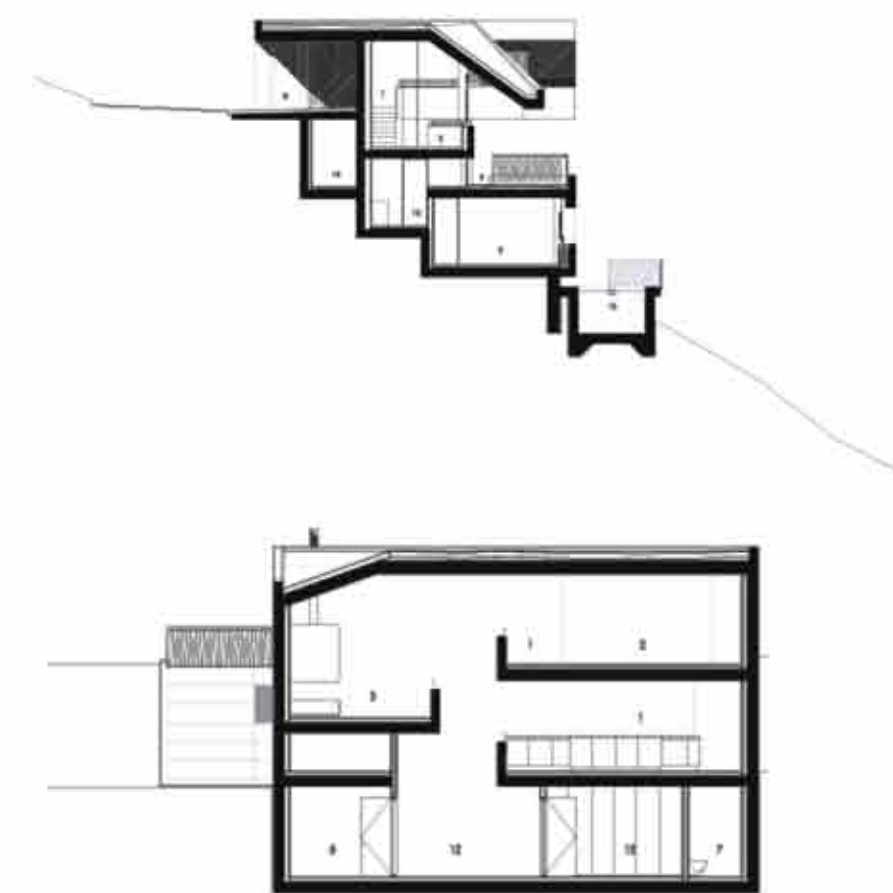
The geometry of the house sensitively treats the various site conditions. To the West, it responds to the urban extension of the village of Canobbio. It folds, follows the slope of the land and opens up to the view of the beautiful distant hills. To the East, the strong angular forms of the house mean that it stands as a marker, announcing the end of the urbanised zone and the beginning of the adjacent wood.

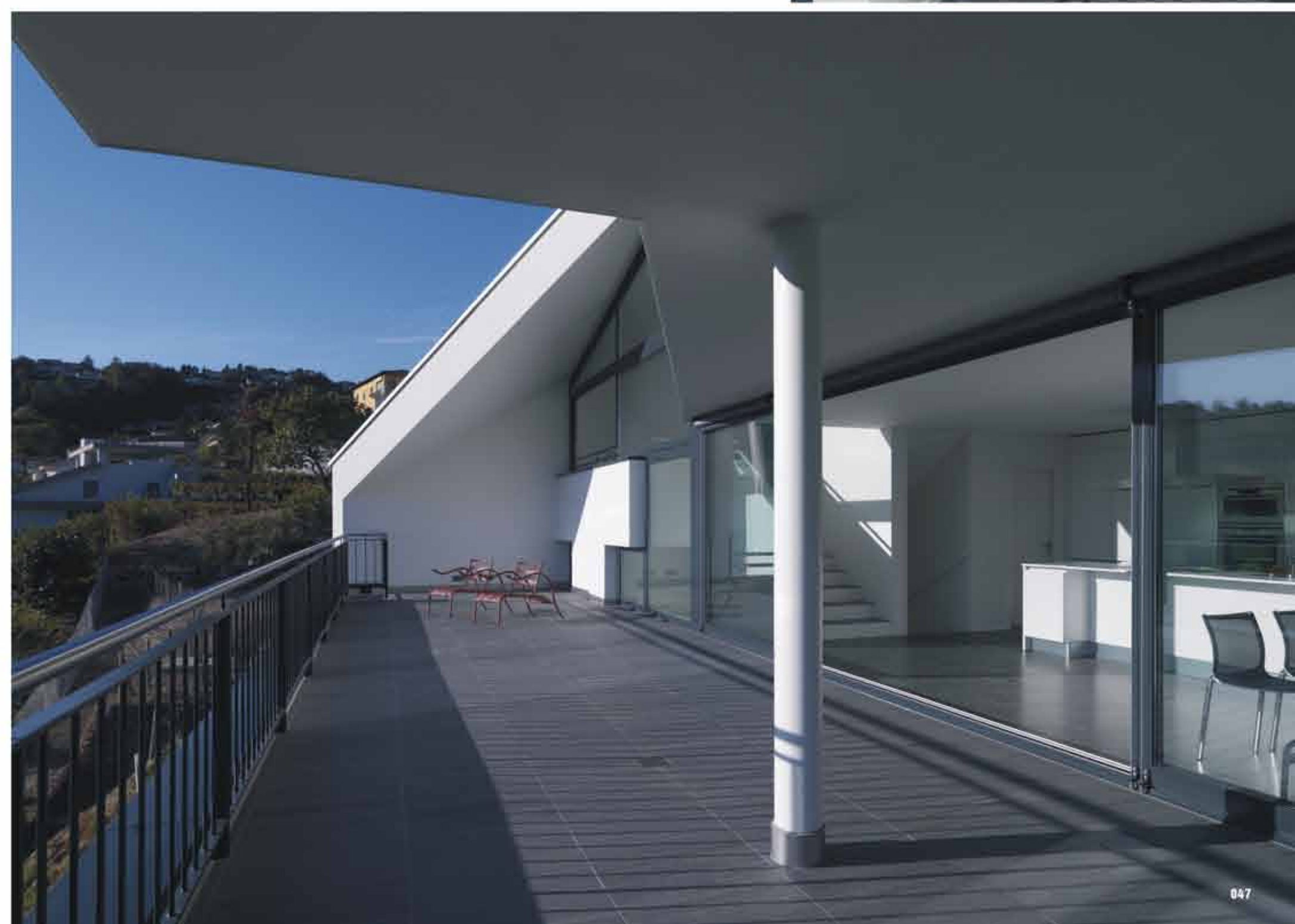
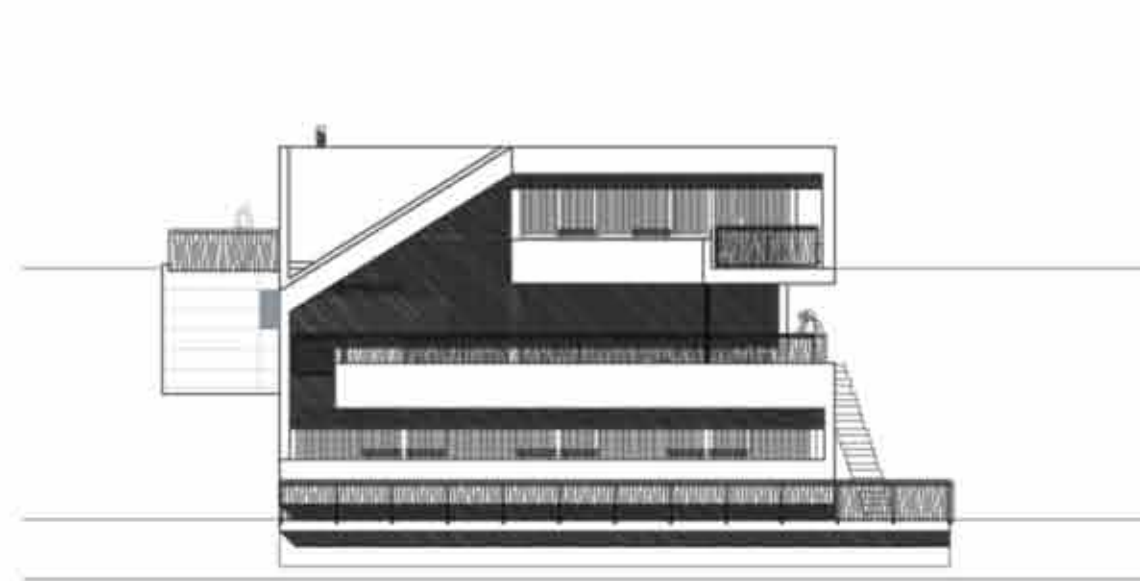
The house, sited on a 30 degree south facing slope, is the final plot of buildable land before meeting the boundaries of the encroaching woodland. The three main storeys of the house have been set on the plot at shifted levels in order to meet the corresponding level of the existing site. This offers a direct relation to the outside from all parts of the house at all levels. One always feels rooted to the ground, yet also has the sensation of being suspended above the landscape.

The aim of the project is to ensure a visual continuity between the internal and external spaces but moreover, to extend the space beyond its physical boundaries and into the surrounding landscape, 'borrowing' the landscape and projecting the idea of space beyond its material limits.

Its prime exposure to the sun affords this house a very efficient energy profile. It takes advantage of the winter sun to absorb and store heat through its dark floors and release it during the evening.









Yacht Club Villas At Elounda Beach



Location: Crete, Greece
Area: 5,000 sqm
Photography: Enrico Cano



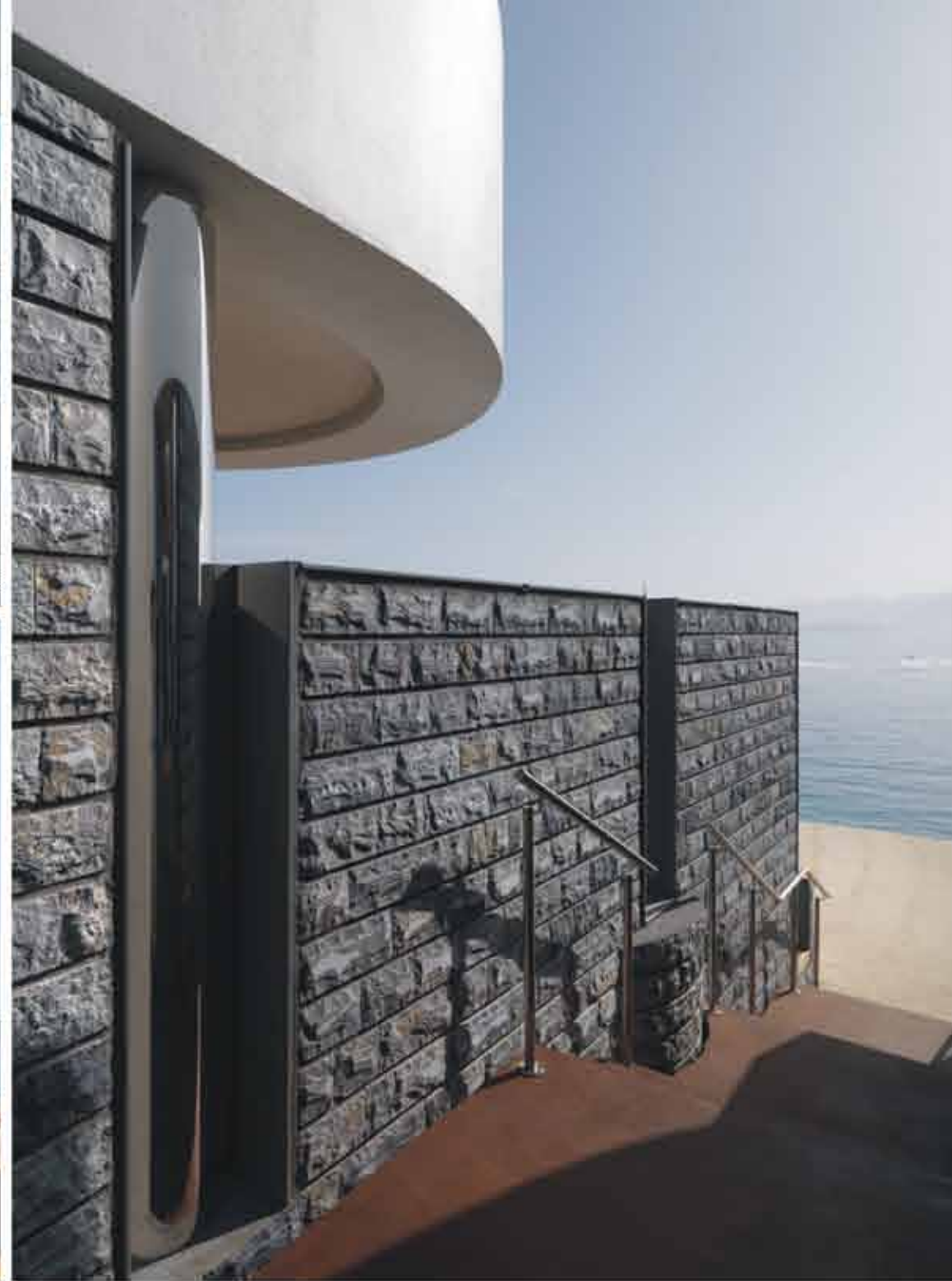
Located on a spectacular sea front site on the Greek island of Crete, Elounda Beach is one of the world's leading hotels. The scale of the site is at once both vast and intimate offering uninterrupted views across the Aegean Sea to the horizon yet still benefiting from the sheltering nature of the embracing bay. The Villas project is a contemporary intervention on the coast and aims to connect these scales, acting as a link and blurring the boundaries between the land and the sea.

Set back on Crete's northeast coast, the row of volumes face the water as anchored yachts towards the sea, while addressing and complementing the urban context on the land side. The newly created pathways between the bungalows afford open views to the sea and have a reduced scale that echo the streets of coastal villages of old in a contemporary way.

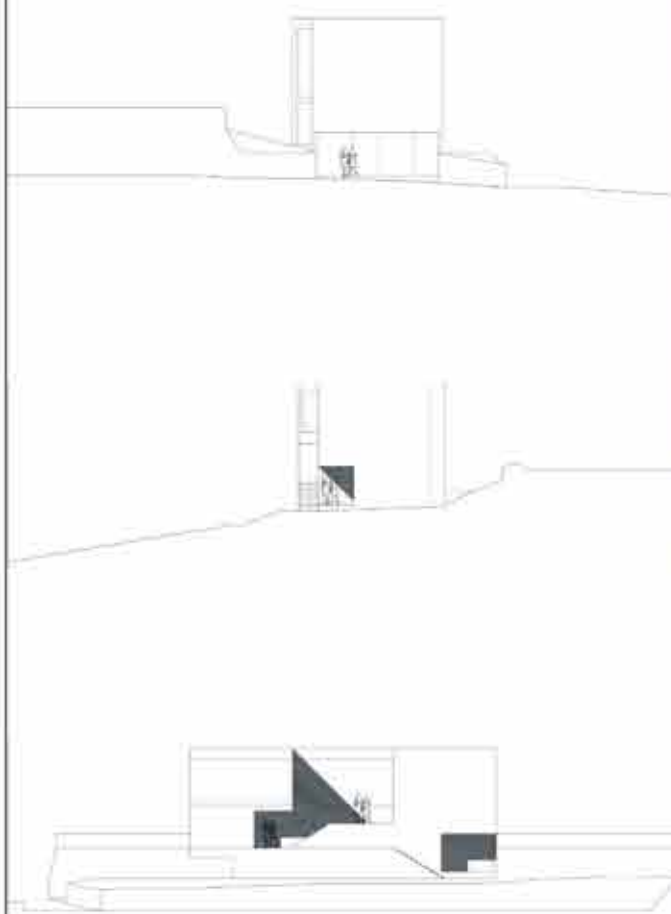
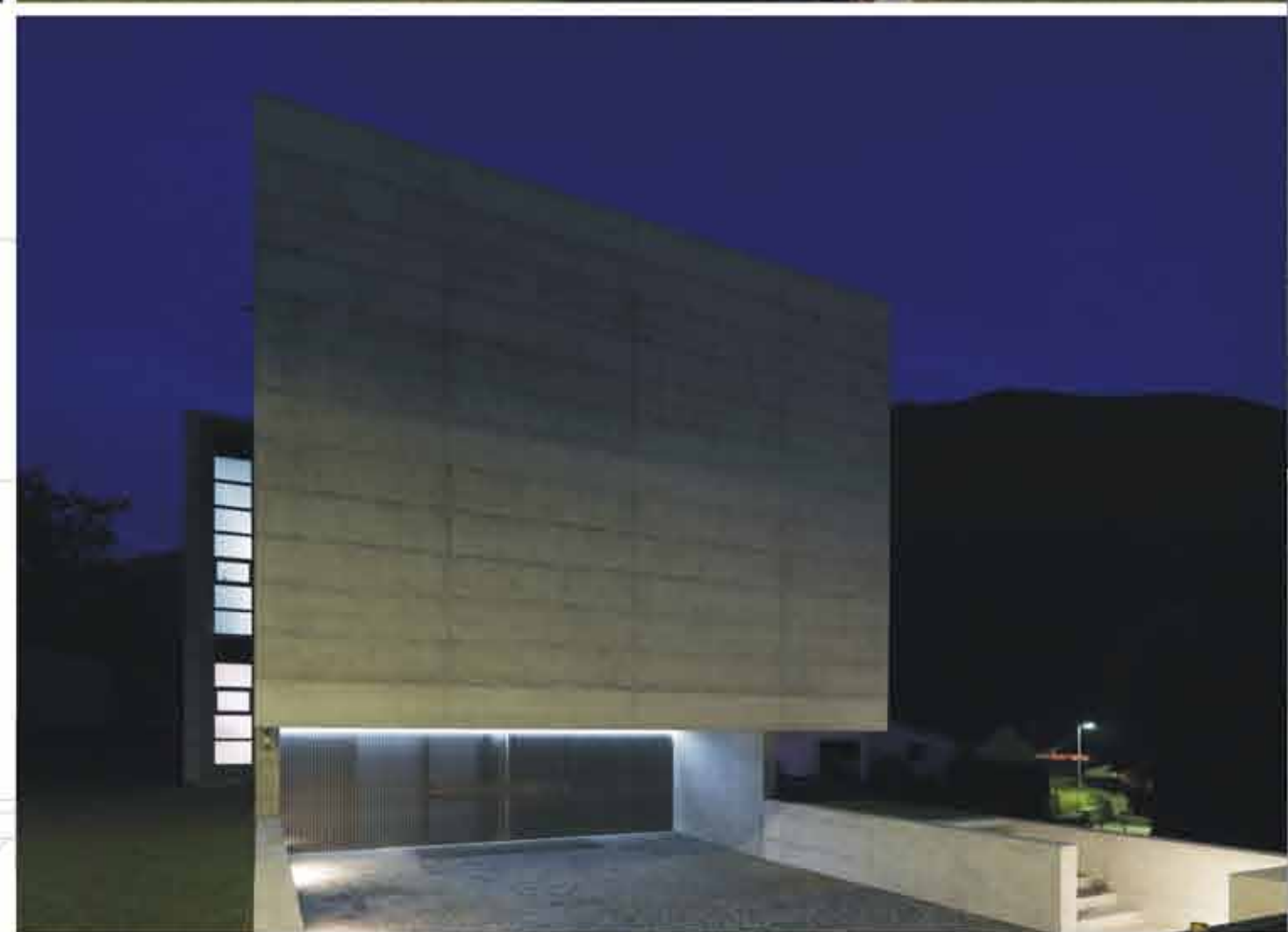
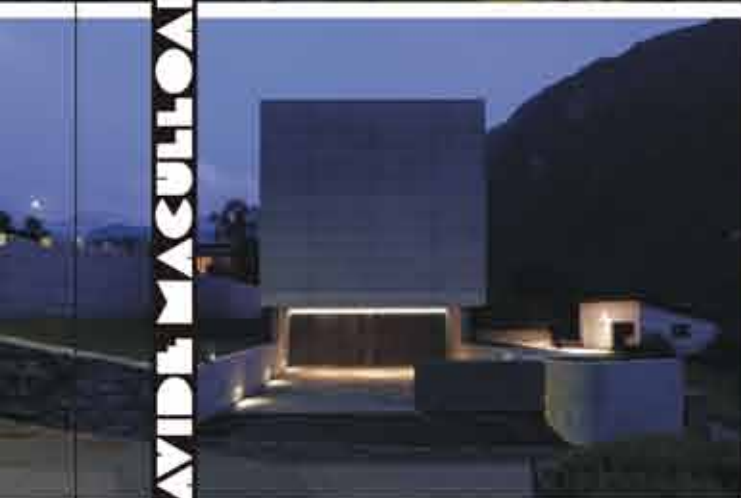
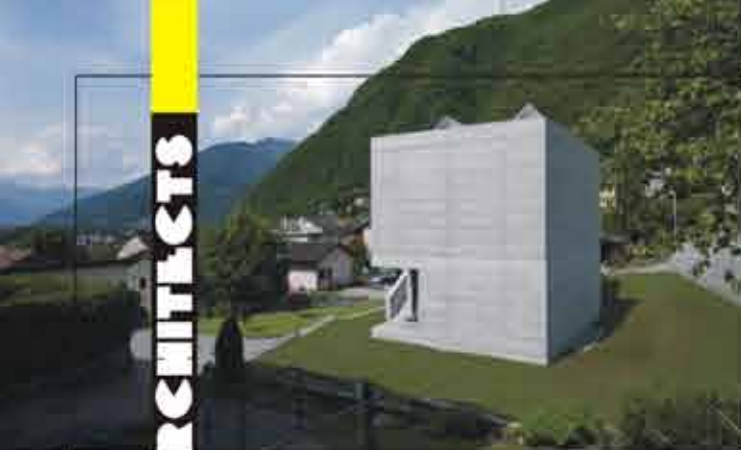
The strong geometry of the individual units is articulated as a fluid coastal landscape by way of the sequence of rounded surfaces and 45 degree wall lines that carve the depths of the volumes. The system emerges as a new artificial landscape relating the two different conditions.

The use of a natural dark grey stone for the exterior wall cladding on the set the new volumes is keeping in harmony with the local environment while the use of natural materials such as wood and leather interiors enwraps the people in a discreetly opulent atmosphere, in balance with the natural surroundings.







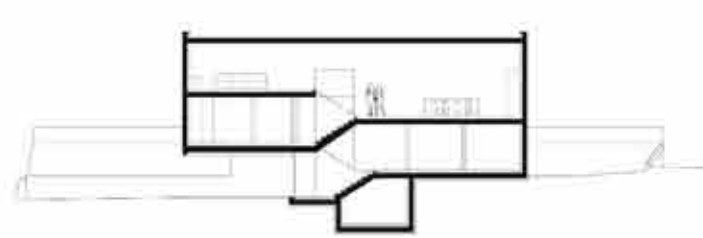


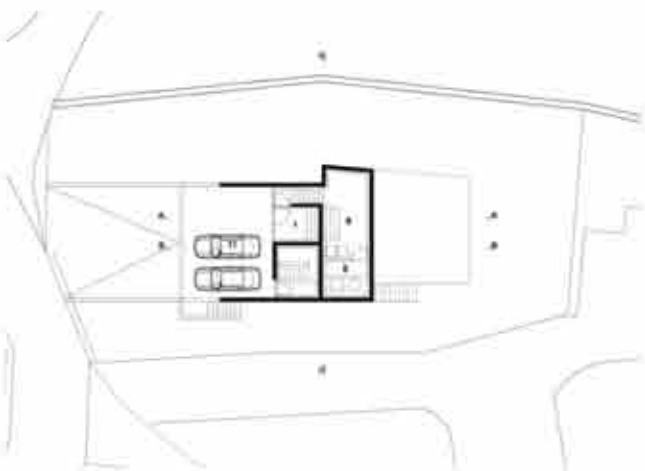
House In Lumino

Located in the Swiss Alpine village of Lumino, just north of Bellinzona, this house stands as a monolithic element, quietly complementing and echoing its context. The surrounding area is characterised by traditional stone built houses, many of which date back centuries and are marked by their use of this single construction material. The new house is intended as a relevant response to and contemporary interpretation of the vernacular; its exposed reinforced concrete form recalls the revered strength and resonates the presence of these old stone houses. The scale of the old buildings is respected and reflected by splitting the main volume in two and the external access staircase is typical of the traditional architecture. Sitting on the edge of the old village, the house acts as a sort of bastion between the old core and the modern residential expansion.

The geometry of the plan is generated by two shifted parallelepipeds and follows the fall of the site while an existing north facing retaining wall is remodelled with the language of the new construction. Both pedestrians and cars enter the house under the porch created by the sliding of the volumes above. This large volume represents the face and spirit of the new house. The game of shifting levels of the house is anchored to the central staircase, which acts as the pivot for the whole composition. The principle of the house is to protect and guarantee an intimacy and privacy for its inhabitants but also, somewhat paradoxically, to represent an air of generosity and an opening up of to the world. As such, each level houses a distinct function; on the lower level where the relationship to the context is more intimate, are the sleeping areas, while the communal living spaces on the upper levels open out to the landscape. The house also needs to be able to transform over time and as such the internal divisions are purposely lightweight. It is above all a shelter, an organism that strengthens the environment through its architecture and accommodates different functions and people over time.

The fortress-like appearance of the north wall of the house contrasts starkly with the welcoming articulation of the south facade that opens to the valley. The external circulation system controls the rhythm of transition, passing from the public to the private areas; with each step up, you are drawn into the more intimate spaces of the house.





The house is a designed landscape and draws its meaning from its natural surroundings. The fractured volumes of the house are inspired by the extraordinary valley landscape of steep slopes and ancient rock. The fissured mountains appear in the carved volumes of the house, preserving the mystery and intimacy of its inhabitants. The concrete is an amorphous contemporary stone and, like the veined rocks, displays the internal tensions on its surface.

Along with gains from the inherent thermal values of concrete, the house's sustainable credentials also benefit from a heat pump and photovoltaic cells placed on the roof. With its southern exposure and the large recessed areas of glass, the house is a highly efficient, low tech, climate machine.

