

This residential building in Tschlin is the most recent work by the Zurich office directed by Caroline Dolenc and Andreas Scheiwiller. The project is located in a small town in the Engadina Valley, an Alpine area of crucial importance for Switzerland's cultural and economic development.

Approximately 100 kilometres in length and located along the Vienna-Milan axis, the valley is also crossed by north-south connections: these geographical and infrastructural conditions – over the course of time – have favoured exchanges with the Mediterranean world, emancipating this region from its initial rural and agricultural vocation.

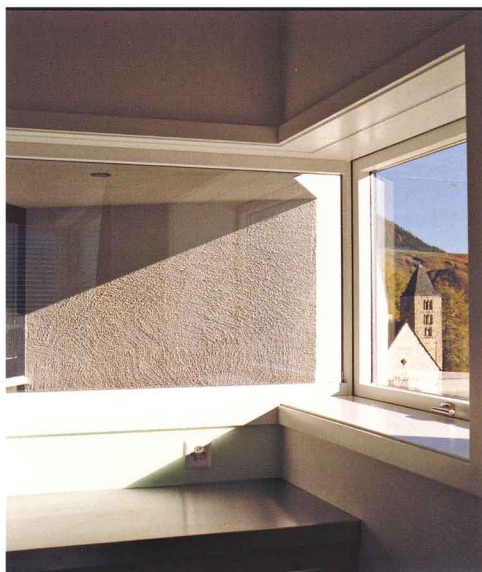
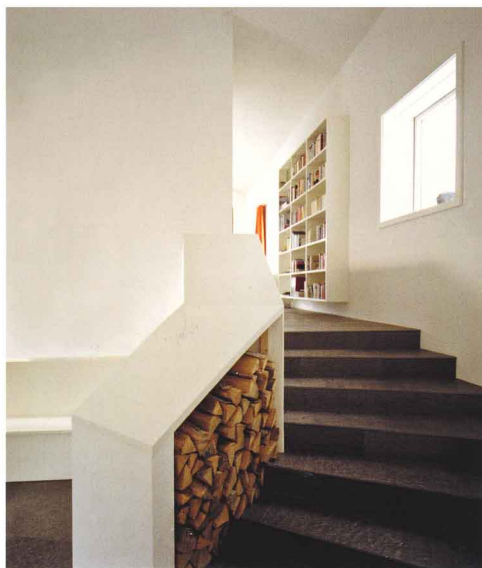
The overall physiognomy of the architectural organism is influenced by the general configuration of the surrounding built environment. The houses of Tschlin are located along the principal road in a longitudinal manner, taking advantage of the level change offered by the slope; the orography allows for the articulation of the internal spaces and circulation systems on overlapping levels: the principal entrance corresponds with another lower level, both of which correspond with the angle generated in plan by the valley.

Similar to traditional constructions in this area, the focus of the house is the marvellous panorama of the surrounding mountains.

The upper level contains the bedrooms and an ample living room/kitchen (Suler), while the lower level, in addition to containing the technical spaces, is developed as an independent living unit, with a separate room and services for guests.

In questa pagina vedute  
interne dell'edificio.  
A fianco, piante del livello  
interrato, del piano terra e  
sezione trasversale

In this page internal views  
of the building.  
Opposite, lower and  
ground floor plans and  
cross section





The spatial concept of the house is also tied to the role of the openings: the principal openings are oriented towards the south, allowing for significant heat gain during the day, while the dispersion is reduced by the construction components of the exterior facades.

The sleeping area is given a more circumscribed, horizontal opening: mounted without an external frame, it offers a view of the historic Romanic bell tower from the bedroom and simultaneously exalts the intimate and private dimension of the interior space. The southern façade of the house is characterised by a significant verticality, though in general the organism is more like a horizontal mass, distributed in a longitudinal manner along the ground.

The roof is composed of four different sloping surfaces that define an "irregular" and evasive roof plan; the overall plastic nature of this building by Dolenc & Scheiwiller hints at a correspondence with the design research of the office of Bearth & Deplazes, such as for example the poetic of the fragment and the study of a geometry that is capable of creating both ambiguity and parallax.

In short, it is the three-dimensional volumes and their various possible configurations that constitute the primary architectural element, highlighted in the synthetic description offered by Andreas Scheiwiller "In this house in Tschlin, the two-dimensional portion exists physically, though it is never an architectural element".

Il concetto spaziale da cui origina la casa è anche legato al ruolo delle aperture: la zona giorno è attraversata da un'ampia finestra panoramica, disposta lungo i due prospetti principali orientati verso sud, mentre alla zona notte corrisponde un'apertura più circoscritta

The spatial concept of the house is also tied to the role of the openings: the living area is enclosed with a wide panoramic window set along the two main façades oriented towards the south, while the sleeping area is given a more circumscribed opening

