



ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

SEEING AND BEING SEEN

LIVING LIKE IN A JAMES BOND MOVIE: THE SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE "GOLDEN EYE" ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR NOT ONLY FASCINATES WITH THE VIEW OF THE AZURE SEA. EXTRAORDINARY ARCHITECTURE FROM AUSTRIA

TERRACING HIGH ABOVE MONACO: THE VILLA GOLDEN EYE IN BEAUSOLEIL - ARCHITECTS ANYLIS

BEAUSOLEIL IS A FRENCH TOWN WHOSE NAME PROMISES EVERYTHING ONE DREAMS OF ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR: BEAUTIFUL AND SUNNY, POSSIBLY ON THE ROCKY COAST OVERLOOKING THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA - WHAT MORE COULD AN ASSOCIATIVE IMAGE WANT? WHAT THOSE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE AREA DO NOT KNOW IS THAT BEAUSOLEIL IS THE CITY TWIN OF PRINCIPATU DE MUNEGU, BETTER KNOWN AS MONACO, WHICH ALSO PHYSICALLY LIES PARTLY IN THE SHADOW OF THE HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS OF THE PRINCIPALITY. RIGHT THROUGH THE EXTREMELY DENSE CITY OF AROUND 40,000 INHABITANTS RUNS THE BORDER THAT SEPARATES THE CITY-STATE ON THE COAST FROM FRANCE. THE GRIMALDIS' PALACE SITS ATOP ROCHER CANON, AT WHOSE FOOT LIES THE MARINA OF THE RICH AND BEAUTIFUL OF THIS WORLD, WHERE A LONG MOLE POINTS THE WAY TO THE OPEN GLITTERING SEA. IMMEDIATELY BEHIND THE HIGH-RISE CITY, A ROCKY MOUNTAIN MASSIF LIMITS THE NARROW COASTAL STRIP AND HAS OBVIOUSLY BEEN OFFERING ITSELF AS A BUILDING GROUND FOR A MULTITUDE OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES FOR DECADES. A GOOD REASON TO BUILD IS THE FANTASTIC VIEW THAT OFFERS ITSELF FROM HERE, OVER THE CITY AND BEYOND ITS ROOFS TO THE ACTUALLY AZURE SEA.

WHAT ARCHITECT WOULD NOT DREAM OF BEING ABLE TO BUILD IN SUCH AN EXCEPTIONAL PLACE, TO BE INSPIRED BY THE GENIUS LOCI, AND TO TRANSLATE THIS INTO VOLUME? IN VIEW OF EILEEN GRAY'S MODERNIST MASTERPIECE, E.1027 - MAISON EN BORD DE MER, LOCATED ON THE SOUTHWEST SHORE OF CAP MARTIN FOUR KILOMETERS AWAY WITH A VIEW OF MONACO, IT SEEMS ALMOST UNREACHABLE TO BE ABLE TO MANIFEST ARCHITECTURALLY IN THIS AREA. THAT PRECISELY AN AUSTRIAN ARCHITECTURAL FIRM WAS GRANTED THIS HONOR IS REMARKABLE, FOR THE VILLA "GOLDEN EYE" IS A TRUE EYE-CATCHER.

THE CLIENTS ARE AUSTRIANS WHO ALSO HAVE A RESIDENCE IN VIENNA. A FEW YEARS AGO, FOLLOWING A CONSULTING ON HOW TO IMPROVE THE LIVING SITUATION, THE COMMISSION WAS GIVEN TO ANILIN ARCHITECTS, MARION KUZMANY AND MICHAEL LISNER, TO REMODEL THE HOUSE - AND THE RESULT MET THE RESIDENTS' EXPECTATIONS. AFTER THE CLIENTS HAD MOVED TO THE CÔTE D'AZUR, THEY WANTED TO BUILD THEIR OWN HOUSE THERE. THE RIGHT PLOT OF LAND WAS PURCHASED AFTER A LONG SEARCH, BUT FINDING A SUITABLE ARCHITECT ON SITE PROVED TO BE MORE DIFFICULT THAN THOUGHT. SO, THEY TURNED TO THEIR VIENNA-BASED ARCHITECTS MARION KUZMANY AND MICHAEL LISNER, FULLY TRUSTING THAT THEY WOULD ONCE AGAIN SHAPE THEIR LIVING DESIRES INTO THE RIGHT FORM. AS EXCEPTIONAL AS THE BUILDING GROUND WAS, SO SHOULD THE ARCHITECTURE BE, ANTICIPATING THE NEEDS OF THE RESIDENTS AT THE SAME TIME. ENTRUSTED WITH THIS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, THE ARCHITECT DUO SET TO WORK. THERE WERE DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED: APART FROM A DEFINED SPACE PROGRAM, A FIREPLACE SHOULD BE THE CENTRAL ELEMENT, BESIDE WHICH THE UNOBSTRUCTED TRANSITION TO THE OUTDOOR AREA IS ENSURED.

SINCE THE PLOT WAS ALREADY SELECTED FOR ITS HILLSIDE LOCATION, THE UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW OF MONACO WAS JUST AS MUCH A "MUST" - EVEN WHEN SWIMMING IN THE INFINITY POOL. IT WAS TO BE A REFUGE THAT FUNCTIONS BOTH AS A LOOKOUT AND AS AN EYE-CATCHER AND CAN BE ENJOYED DAILY. TO BE ABLE TO CONSTRUCTIVELY APPROACH THE WISHES FOR THE VOLUME, THE ROCKY SLOPE HAD TO BE DEMONSTRATED AND TERRACED ANEW IN ADVANCE. A BASE FLOOR INTEGRATED INTO THE SLOPE WITH TWO GUEST APARTMENTS AND STORAGE ROOMS AND AN UNDERGROUND GARAGE BELOW FORMS THE BASE HELD IN ANTHRACITE FIBER CEMENT PANELS, ABOVE WHICH THE ACTUAL HOUSE RISES AS AN INDEPENDENT, IN THE FLOOR PLAN DONATED BUILDING BODY. ON THE MAIN LEVEL, LIVING ROOM, TERRACE, AND GARDEN WITH THE LONG POOL ARE ONLY SEPARATED BY A LAYER OF GLASS; THE CHIMNEY BLOCK, WHICH ALSO SERVES AS A TECHNICAL SHAFT AND BUILT-IN FURNITURE, IS THE STABILIZING PILLAR THAT EXTENDS OVER BOTH FLOORS AT THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING. ATTACHED TO IT, AND THUS LARGELY SUPPORT-FREE, IS THE GRAND GESTURE OF THIS BUILDING THAT FORMALLY DISTINGUISHES IT FROM OTHER VILLAS: THE HORIZONTALITY OF THE TERRACING IS ADOPTED AND TRANSLATED INTO A FAR-CANTILEVERED, SUN-ORIENTED CEILING CONSTRUCTION THAT ENSURES THE SHADING OF THE GLASS SURFACES.

INGENIOUSLY AND STATICALLY EXPLOITED, THE CEILING CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE GROUND AND UPPER FLOORS EXTEND UP TO SEVEN METERS VALLEYWARD, FORMING LOGGIAS ON THREE SIDES OF THE HOUSE AND COVERING AN AREA THREE TIMES AS LARGE AS THE FLOOR AREA OF THE ACTUAL HOUSE. THE TWO LAYERS COVERED WITH WHITE PLATES ARE ONE METER HIGH TO COVER THE STEEL CONSTRUCTION AND AT THE SAME TIME ACCOMMODATE THE HOUSE TECHNOLOGY; DUE TO THEIR LARGE DIMENSIONING, THEY BECOME THE FORMALLY DEFINING ELEMENT. THE CEILING UNDERSIDE RUNNING THROUGH ONE LEVEL WITH INTEGRATED LIGHT STRIPS AND VENTILATION SLOTS IN THE JOINT DIVISION AND THE FLOOR COVERING MADE OF WHITE TERRAZZO WITH SHIMMERING SHELL INCLUSIONS MAKE THE SEAMLESS TRANSITION BETWEEN INDOOR AND COVERED OUTDOOR SPACE AS A MATTER OF COURSE. A LEVEL IN THE SWIMMING POOL THAT CAN BE LOCKED AT DIFFERENT HEIGHTS, OR A BOLLARD THAT CAN BE SUNK INTO THE GROUND, ARE AMONG THOSE ASSETS THAT CAN CERTAINLY BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE SET DESIGN OF A JAMES BOND MOVIE. THE NAME "GOLDEN EYE" PLAYS WITH THIS ASSOCIATION, AND THE ARCHITECT DUO ANYLIS HAS SUCCEEDED IN HIGHLIGHTING PRECISELY THIS QUALITY OF THE BUILDING SITE: TO BE LIVED IN AND OBSERVED AS A LUXURY VILLA WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY LOOKING INTO THE DISTANCE, WHERE THE WATER SURFACE OF THE POOL AND THE MEDITERRANEAN ARE SEPARATED ONLY BY A FINE LINE AND MERGE INTO THE AZURE SKY ON THE HORIZON. BEAUTIFUL AND SUNNY - WHAT MORE COULD ONE WANT THAN TO BE ABLE TO BUILD A HOUSE IN SUCH A BEAUTIFUL, SUNNY PLACE?

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