RESTLESS LIVING

"... restlessly dedicated to contemporary living."



VOLUME **29**





HOUSE OM1

Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico

Almost jungle-like, House OM1 is a contemporary home combining modern living with an incredible intimate experience of nature. Taking advantage of glazed interior walls and sliding doors, the house seeks to both display and bring in nature as a decorative and calming element. We had the opportunity to talk to Andrés Escobar, Founder of AE Arquitectos.

House OM1 is situated in the capital of the Jalisco state, Guadalajara, in the western part of Mexico; a city that is known for tequila and mariachi music; a place with historic colonial landmarks and beautiful contemporary houses. It was this heritage combined with modernity that inspired Andrés and his team for the design. Andrés says: “House OM1 was conceived as a solution that balances two different concepts. Initially, there was a need to create a space where modern-day activities such as intimacy or leisure are sufficed. Another requirement was for the house to have an old-fashioned aesthetic where wood and stone were the main materials used.” The idea to how the house should be placed on the site is a bit atypical, as the house is in fact placed below the street level – shielded away from the buzz of the city. Yet, there is a very logical reason for this solution: “The plot conditions were distinctive. It had a pronounced slope that culminated in cliffs several meters high. It was built one level below the street level and the entrance was designed as a stairway transitioning from the street noise to the quiet beauty of the house which

is slowly revealed as one walks down", Andrés explains. Walking down this stairway entrance, one is met with a beautiful sight of an internal courtyard that brings life and energy to the place; a courtyard which the interior spaces surround. In addition, the variety of vegetation creates different perceptions depending on the view point creating an urge to explore and discover. Andrés says: "We managed to find the balance between the relationship between the built space and the empty gardens, generating an atmosphere in which all its inhabitants can experience the transparency and openness of the spaces, allowing the vegetation to be the veil that covers and protects you, granting warmth and protection in each of the inhabited spaces", Andrés explains.

When we asked what Andrés finds most satisfying upon the project completion, he mentions: "I am most proud about having achieved the objective proposed together with our clients; a comfortable, harmonious and warm home in which they can enjoy a modern urban house with a country house essence reminiscent of the »patios« of the old Mexican »haciendas« or »homestead«", Andrés mentions. Combining an old idea with a contemporary context makes this house an interesting experience. As Andrés says: "It stands out as a unique project »from the ground up«", and we can only agree!

Architecture by **AE Arquitectos** Photography by **Lorena Darquea**



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“We fully restored the exterior of the original house including new cedar sheathing, copper flashing, roofing and restored jalousie windows.”

– Andrew Franz, Principal Architect

FIRE ISLAND HOUSE

Fire Island, New York

In the sand dunes on Fire Island, one will find the Fire Island House originally designed by Horace Gifford back in 1965. Over time, old houses may need a brush-stroke or a full-on restoration to maintain its aesthetics and functionality. In this specific case, the latter was the objective: A restoration.

The architect in charge, Andrew Franz, begins: “The house was in need of extensive restoration, and the client also wished to add a pool and another bedroom to comfortably accommodate overnight guests. Along with famed interior designer Peter Dunham, designer Jamie Bush, and landscape architect Tania Compton we collaborated for 18 months to create this historic residential expansion and restoration.” The result of this collaboration has created a beautiful renewal of the existing house while respectfully maintaining the original features but at the same time add a few new ones. Andrew explains: “To accommodate additional overnight guests while maintaining the integrity of the original landmark, a new guest house was designed and added to the property as part of a master plan that included a pool, relocated entry with new entry pavilion and new decking and circulation paths”, and he continues: “Our greatest goal along with our dear friend, the homeowner, was to ensure the additions would not distract and were also clearly distinguished from the original.”

The design team ensured that the new guest house was carefully sited to create a courtyard acting both as a connector between the old and new as well as an extension of the indoor-outdoor living space. “The scale of this and other additions was studied so as not to overwhelm the original house or relationship of the house to the landscape. The addition references the original building in geometry, cedar siding and jalousie windows, but without mimicking Gifford’s details. Though, a simple palette of materials was used to remain consistent with the original”, Andrew concludes.

Architecture by **Andrew Franz Architect**

Photography by **Albert Vecerka-Esto**











VILLA CRISS-CROSS ENVELOPE

Ljubljana, Slovenia

With a strong focus on patterns and textures, Villa Criss-Cross Envelope is a contemporary home situated in the Mirje suburbs within the city center of Ljubljana. We spoke to Rok Oman and Špela Videčnik, who are the founders of the Slovenian studio, OFIS Architects.

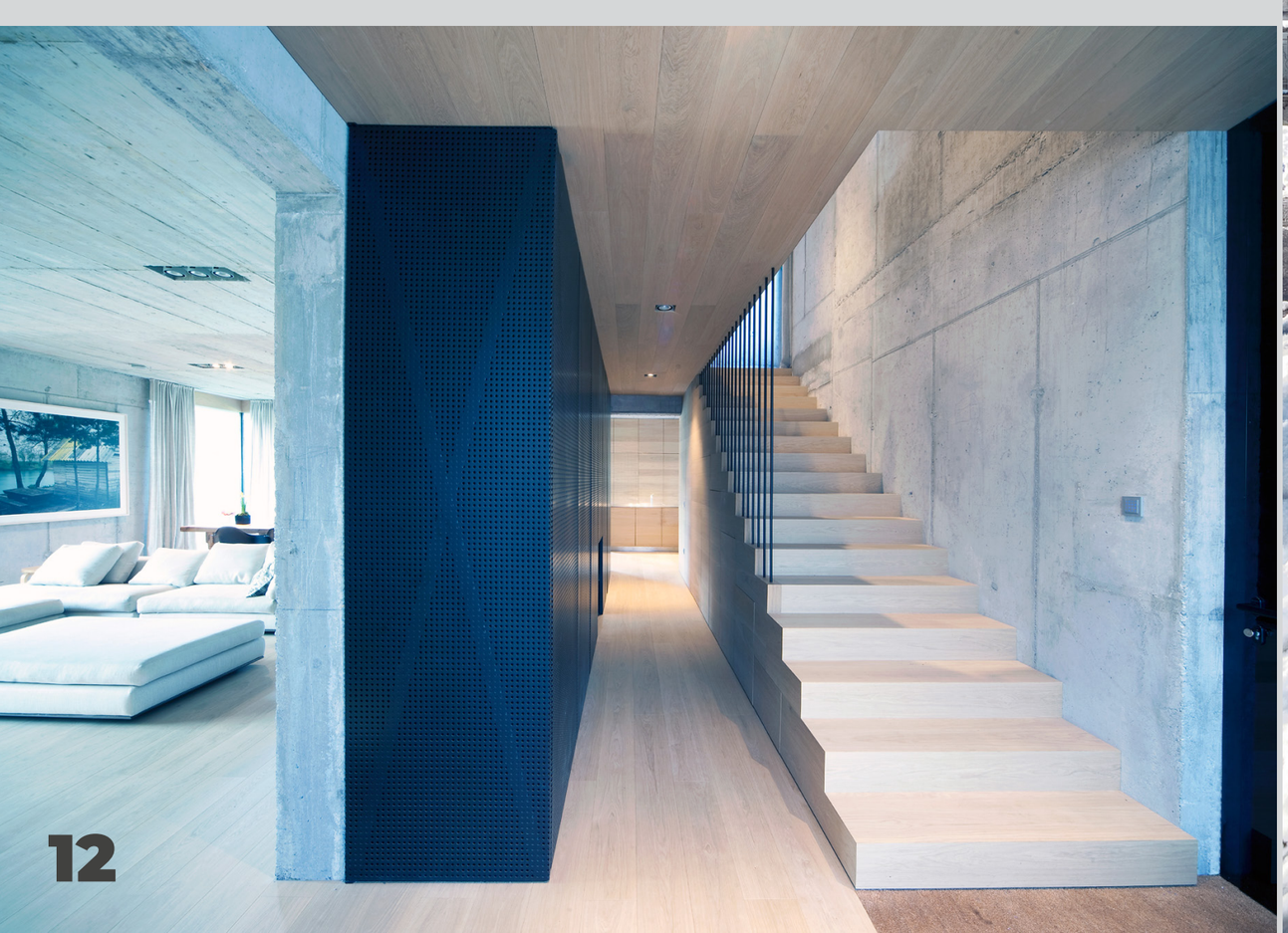
The concept of this single-family villa was developed around an urge to provide sufficient space for the client family. “The project required a residence for a single family with three children. The brief was to maximize living area with minimum of the service space. The concept divides space based on distinct program by separating function not by walls but floor levels: ground floor is living and communal space, first floor is the children’s area and second floor is the parents’ area”, Rok mentions. Space maximization was indeed one of the key features of the design to which Špela explains: “With no cellar or basement, the shell is integral to provide all of the space for storage. The flush walls fold out to house cupboards, shelves and drawers throughout the living areas and furniture such as beds, seating and counters are built into the floor in order to optimize space and provide easy maintenance. This connects dif-



ferent spaces in the house by giving a common function to partitions.” By integrating the storage space directly into the villa’s walls, Rok and Špela freed up a significant amount of space and created an extremely stream-lined interior without disruptions.

With its somewhat peculiar project name »Villa Criss-Cross Envelope«, Rok and Špela refer to the unique three-dimensional façade of straight intersecting lines moving vertically and horizontally. Rok explains: “The external structure is composed of a cube volume and perforated metal envelope. The volume extracts cut-outs to create pockets of space that provide a pyramidical stepping down along the roof, a void along the entrance and private glass patios with terraces for living areas of the house”, and Špela concludes: “The task was to achieve texture through the illusion of depth which allows a light presence and enhances the shadows and reflections off a palette of beige tints The three-dimensional texture creates a dynamic abstraction while encapsulating its coherent volume. Diagonal crosses act as a functional and graphic representation. The crosses brace the frames of panels and create an identity like façade ornaments on historical citizen villas.” Despite its distinctive façade design, the villa still seeks to blend in with the surrounding buildings by using similar color nuances; hence essentially trying to unite the now and tomorrow.

Architecture by **OFIS Architects** Photography by **Tomaz Gregoric**













RIDGE HOUSE

Sunshine Coast, Australia

Set on a bluff on a 25 acre (~10 hectare) property with views towards the Baroon Pocket Dam, the Ridge House is beautifully secluded with lots of outdoor space to explore and a design thought out to frame the overwhelmingly astounding landscape. Dan Sparks takes us around his project.

“The brief called for a large program and a desire for the building to maximize the site’s amenity and views whilst reflecting the clients’ respective cultural aesthetics – the couple being from a rural property in western Queensland and the mountains of Colorado”, Dan says. As a kind of symbol for this union between these two diverse backgrounds, the house consists of two united pavilions. Dan explains: “The solution is realized through two pavilions that slide against each other and one slightly skewed against the other in plan. The composition also allows the brief to be split into the primary private needs of the owners and those of guests – connected via the public outdoor room”, before he further elaborates: “The simple move of skewing the two pavilions and careful consideration in the micro planning of the building relative to site constraints and opportunities, allows for a diverse range of experiences and views within the individual rooms.” Yet, these experiences are not limited to the interior but extends to the outdoor. As Dan further explains: “The space created between the two pavilions becomes the primary outdoor room and also facilitates circulation between the pavilions, pool and decks. It is a celebration of the buildings’ context and views.”

By using rammed earth for the walls, the house blends in well with the site while providing a natural aesthetic. On top of this, the thermal glazing and automated external sun shades programmed to lower during the afternoon of the hotter months ensure that the climate is effectively addressed to provide the clients with a comfortable living experience – without compromising the landscaped vistas.

Architecture by **Sparks Architects**

Photography by **Christopher Frederick Jones**

"The incredible views of Baroon Pocket Dam to the west are addressed climatically through the incorporation of thermal glazing and automated external sun shades."

– Dan Sparks, Sparks Architects





CATALONIAN FARMHOUSE

Cruilles, Baix Emporda, Spain

Old farmhouses oftentimes present immense design opportunities due to their rustic nature. This Catalonian farmhouse in the Baix Emporda region is no exception. We reached out to Joan Lao and his daughter, Africa Lao, to learn about their transformation of this 17th century building.

“15 years ago, we decided that it was very important to live and create in a healthy and sustainable way in the middle of nature; surrounded by sea and mountains. We need this connection to feel good as people and as creatives. Nature is fundamental as a source of inspiration and energy in our creations. The cities seem interesting to us from a commercial point of view; of exchange and cultural transmission but not as a space to live in continuously”, Joan begins. Following this mantra, Joan Lao wanted to create an iconic creative space in a great location. “After analyzing locations in different parts of the world, we decided the Baix Emporda region in the town of Cruilles and in the natural park of Les Gavarres, surrounded by historic towns of great cultural heritage. Artists such as Dali, Cuixart and Pla lived and created in this area with a very friendly climate both in summer and winter; surrounded by a natural environment of sea and mountain – absolutely idyllic”, Joan explains and continues: “We found this 17th century building that had been the typical Catalan farmhouse, which allowed us to create all the spaces we needed with the original textures of the time that offered us a backdrop difficult to achieve with the techniques of current construction. Everything was intact and built with the techniques of the

time using stone, lime mortar, clay, wood and iron.” Therefore, the concept of the design takes its roots from the idea of taking advantage of the original structural elements, materials and textures but then introducing technological elements to provide a great level of comfort – without distorting the original nuances of the project. This has created a very interesting spatial experience adhering to the purpose of the house. Joan says: “Our project is based on the idea of creating a unique space of life, art, painting, design, meetings, and presentations in one place.” Due to its size of 800 m², the farmhouse has plenty of space to not only include habitable areas but also to provide these creative work spaces that Joan indicates. Besides the creative studio of Joan Lao and Africa Lao, the house accommodates the painting studio of Adalina Coromines whose creative work has had a great impact on the place. In fact, all the paintings that are adding an amazing contemporary touch to the old farmhouse were painted by Adalina Coromines. In terms of energy, the house is totally autonomous and self-sufficient as electricity is produced through solar panels, the water is from the subsoil of an original well of the farm and the heating system with wood boiler. “The house has been built with totally ecological techniques and materials, for us, respect for nature, physical, mental and emotional health is very important”, Joan concludes. With this in mind, the result of the project is not only aesthetically pleasing. It is a moral response to sustainable living and what it entails.

Architecture by **Joan Lao Design Studio**

Artistic work by **Adalina Coromines**

Photography by **Eugeni Pons**







Words of the Week



»Revealing« or the moment of surprise is one of my favorite elements in architecture. I love standing in front of a house or a building, creating an expectation, and then being surprised when entering – whether it is due to an amazing view being revealed or an unanticipated design concept. Personally, I feel like I cherish a design even more when I am taken »off guard« in a moment where the reality does not meet my expectation. The same goes for landscaped sites where a house is nestled between trees and slowly reveals itself when one approaches from a specific angle. In this week's issue, I was trying to give some examples of this feeling – from the revealed cave-like concept of the Catalonian Farmhouse to the spectacular views revealed at the Ridge House. Regardless of what is being revealed and how it is being revealed, the unpredictability makes a house interesting to explore while the experience is being enhanced through all these »wow moments«.

I hope you enjoyed reading about the houses of this week's Restless Living. See you again next Friday!

CHRISTIAN TRAMPEDACH
FOUNDER, RESTLESS