Project

Detached House in Zurich

Facing south, the hexagonal volume of the detached house in Zurich is inscribed within a trapezoid-shaped plot on a steep incline. An inclined volume with a slanted roof was conceived, which resulted from going to the maximum building height possible at all six corners of the building.

The main entry to the house is located on the north side underneath a large cantilever that provides a sheltered exterior space. Inside, the entrance area is arranged into zones by "space-containing" walls with an integrated wardrobe, cabinets, and guest bathroom. This allows the adjoining bedroom and study to be separated off via sliding walls, or alternatively connected into one continuous space. The children's bedrooms are located on the lower ground floor. They are accessed via a central space that merges into the “garden room”, which can also be utilized as a guest room, playroom, or study. On the upper floor, under the slanted roof, is the main living area with an exceptionally high ceiling that rises from 2.4 to 5.2 meters. This room is also organized around a "space-containing" central wall in order to allow these zones of varying height and breadth to be utilized for living, cooking, work, and play.

On the ground floor, colored surfaces of dark green and light orange accentuate the lighting effects in each room. On the upper floor, a new color concept for the main wall is to be devised periodically. The general interplay of color and space can be observed and experienced during the course of daily life, almost as if it were an ongoing experiment. The first concept was for a bright yellow-green that reacted strongly to the light, while the second was a bright raspberry, and the current incarnation is a sprayed-on high-gloss color gradient with iridescent pigments.

The exterior walls and roof consist of load-bearing concrete. The large windows are opened by sliding them into a recess between the outer concrete and inner brick wall. To the north the windows have wide frames and are mounted flush with the wall. The concrete of the roof and the outer walls is a dark gray and a mossy green-yellow. The crossover from colored to uncolored doesn't occur at the corners, but on the faces. Dense vegetation of blooming shrubs and berry bushes lines the borders of the property and forms a ‘clearing’ in which the green/gray building is set.

G/G, December 2011
Credits

Project: Detached House, Zurich, Switzerland

Spatial Programme: Single-Family House

Commission: 2001


Client: Private

Architecture: Annette Gigon / Mike Guyer, Architects, Zurich

Collaborators: Markus Seiler (Project Manager), Pieter Rabijns

Construction Management: Annette Gigon / Mike Guyer, Architects, Zurich

Collaborator: Markus Seiler

Gross Floor Area (SIA 416): 408 m²

Landscape Architecture: Zulauf Seippel Schweingruber, Landschaftsarchitekten, Baden

Structural Engineer: Dr. Lüchinger + Meyer Bauingenieure AG, Zurich

Building Services Engineer: 3-Plan Haustechnik AG, Winterthur

Colours: Adrian Schiess, Zurich and Mouans-Sartoux, France

Photography: Maurice Haas, Zurich

Heinrich Helfenstein, Zurich

Lucas Peters, Zurich