

Mies van der Rohe disse "*less is more*" ed effettivamente questo aforisma riassume quello che è il minimalismo in architettura e nell'arredamento.

Uno stile che lavora con i volumi, le proporzioni e la luce.

I principali esponenti di questo modo di pensare e realizzare l'architettura sono [Alberto Campo Baeza](#), [Michael Gabellini](#) ed [Eduardo Souto de Moura](#) - sia l'approccio più equilibrato di [Claudio Silvestrin](#) che la maggiore astrazione concettuale di [John Pawson](#), la concretezza materica di [Peter Zumthor](#) come la sospesa spiritualità di Tadao Ando, la solarità cromatica di [Luis Barragàn](#) come l'asciutta, scabra eleganza di [A. G. Fronzoni](#).



Barragàn



Silvestrin



Pawson



Pawson

Nel volume *Architettura minimalista*, Franco Bertoni, attraverso un'accurata analisi, narra e difende una scelta estetica che presenta perentorie motivazioni etiche, da opporre alla straordinaria "voracità" dell'immaginario contemporaneo, che, alla continua ricerca di stimoli e novità, ha spesso confuso con una moda transitoria, inondando città e riviste di epigoni e copie, quella che appare, piuttosto, come una fondamentale esigenza di dignità e chiarezza, una specie di silenzioso "richiamo all'ordine" per quanti hanno fatto dell'architettura il palcoscenico privilegiato del proprio narcisismo e della propria auto-celebrazione.

Bertoni- partendo dal suggestivo assunto che "minimaliste", per la propria rigorosa essenza, fossero già l'architettura cistercense e quella tradizionale giapponese- spinge molto lontano la propria analisi, rintracciandone le origini nel [razionalismo del XX secolo](#) e nel [funzionalismo di Boullée e di Schinkel](#), oltre che facendo riferimento a filosofie recenti e passate.



Barragàn



Silvestrin



Tadao Ando, giapponese (Osaka, 1941) conduce all'inizio una vita molto varia, lavorando come camionista e pugile. Il suo approccio all'Architettura richiama i principi dell'estetica minimalista. Fortemente influenzato dal **Movimento Moderno e in particolar modo da Le Corbusier** ma allo stesso modo legato all'architettura tradizionale giapponese, alle sue opere conferisce un carattere quasi "artigianale" nella definizione dei dettagli. Utilizza quasi esclusivamente il cemento a vista, (con casseforme che si basano sulla dimensione del *tatami* giapponese), associandolo spesso al legno e alla pietra. Si è detto che Ando voglia creare un effetto "haiku" enfatizzando lo spazio vuoto per rappresentare la bellezza che deriva dalla semplicità.



La Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, 2001



Modern Art Museum a Fort Worth, 2002



La Langen Foundation a Neuss, Germania, 2004

2 must della cultura giapponese

Il tatami (畳) è una tradizionale pavimentazione composta da pannelli rettangolari affiancati fatti con [paglia di riso](#) intrecciata e pressata. Può anche avere diversi spessori che mediamente raggiungono i 6 cm. Le dimensioni non sono fisse variando da zona a zona. Orientativamente il tatami è lo spazio occupato da una persona sdraiata. Le misure più frequenti sono 90 [cm](#) × 180 [cm](#) oppure 85 cm × 180 cm. Vi sono anche i mezzi tatami di 90 × 90 oppure 85 × 85. Il tatami è utilizzato come unità di misura degli ambienti, così se si dice che una stanza è di dieci tatami, o di quattro, l'interlocutore ha ben chiara la dimensione. I margini sono squadrati e i due lati più lunghi sono orlati con una [fettuccia](#) larga di [lino](#) nero o [cotone](#); quelli delle case nobiliari hanno, intessuti nella fettuccia, dei motivi ornamentali in bianco e nero. In [Giappone](#) il tatami accompagna tutta la vita familiare: il sonno, i pasti, l'amore e anche la morte. Il tatami viene poggiato su una struttura di [legno](#) incrociata.

L'haiku è un breve componimento poetico, tradizionale, di 5-7-5 sillabe

Matsuo Bashou (1644-1694) uno dei più importanti poeti giapponesi:

*furu ike ya
kawazu tobikomu
mizu no oto*

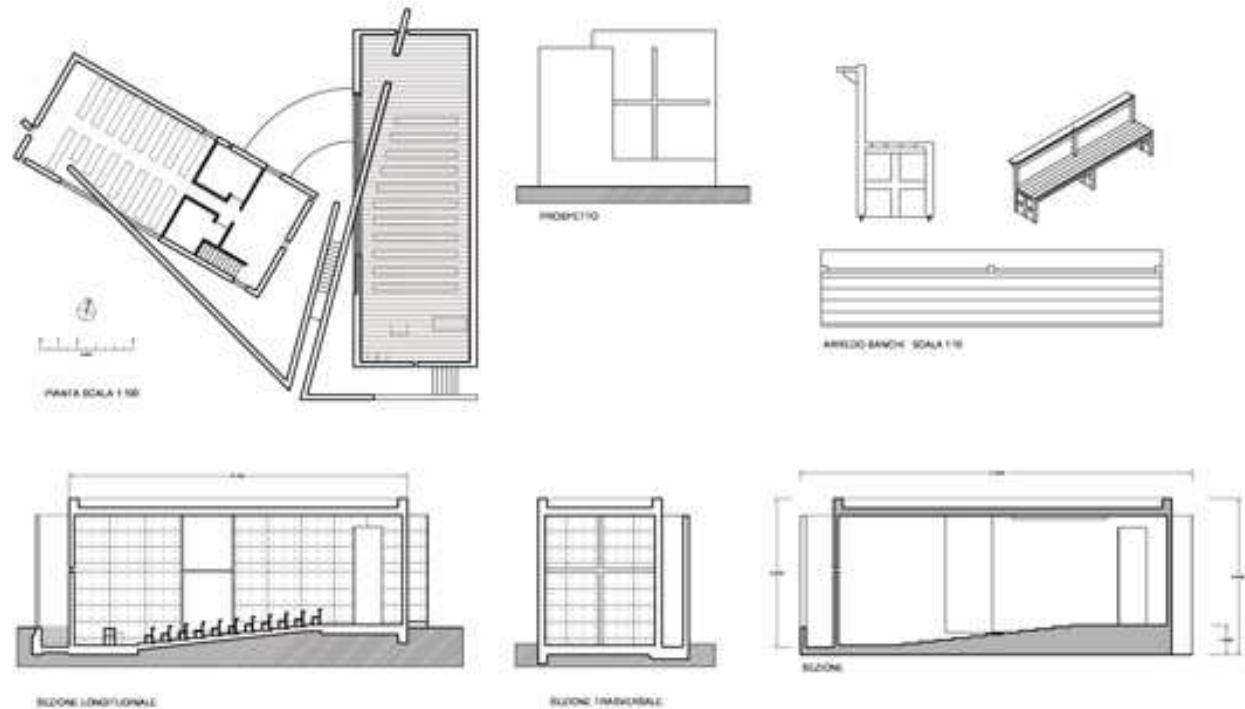
Un vecchio stagno – balza dentro una rana – rumore d'acqua

*shizukesa ya
iwa ni shimiiru
semi no koe*

Nulla si muove – penetra le rocce – canto di cicale

Ando è noto per **uno stile esemplare che evoca in modo tipicamente giapponese** la materialità, il collegamento e la lettura degli spazi, attraverso la comparazione estetica col modernismo internazionale. I suoi edifici sono spesso caratterizzati da volumi stereometrici attraversati da complessi percorsi tridimensionali, che si incrociano tra spazi interni ed esterni. **Elemento fondamentale è sempre la luce, che contribuisce a definire il carattere degli spazi.**

"Io creo un ordine architettonico sulla base della geometria: quadrati, cerchi, triangoli e rettangoli. Tento di usare forze nell'area dove sto costruendo, per ripristinare l'unità tra la casa e la natura"

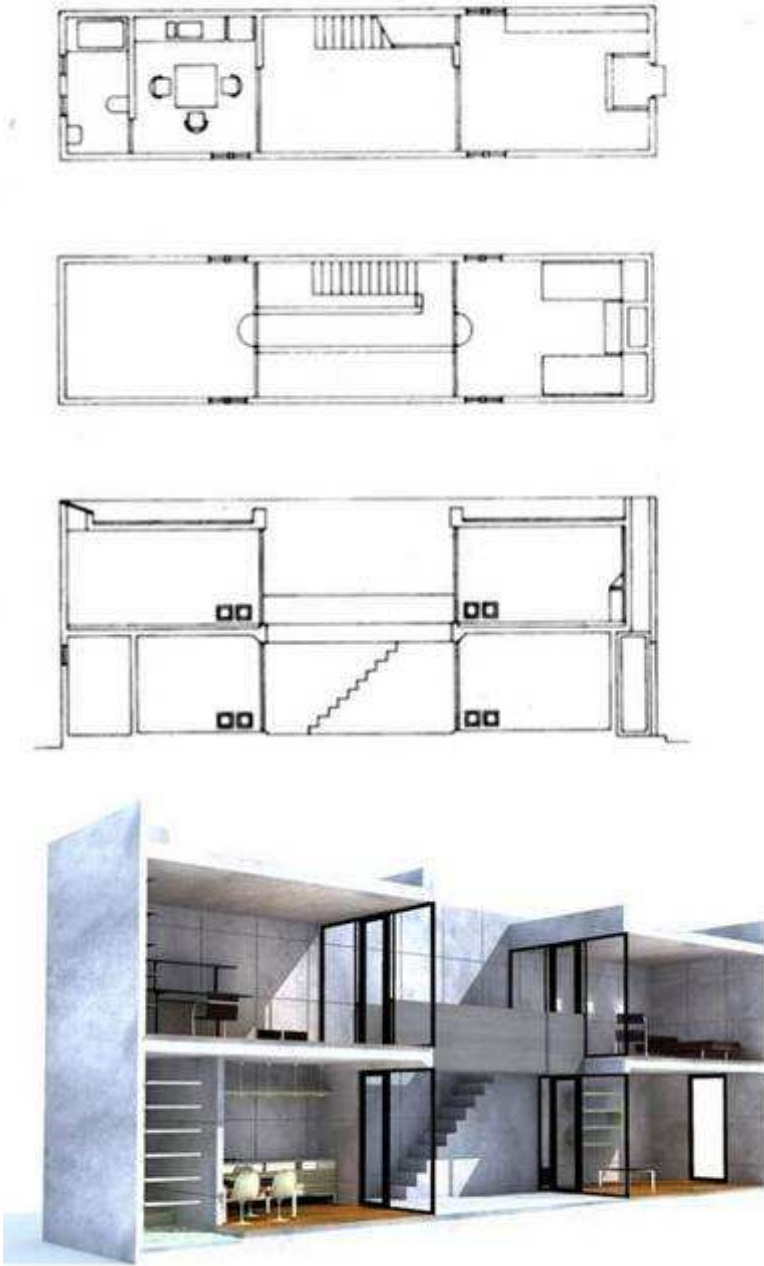


Nel 1969 ha aperto lo studio *Tadao Ando Architects & Associates*.
La sua *Row House in Sumiyoshi* ([Azuma House](#)), una piccola casa a due piani in getto di cemento completata nel 1976, gli valse il Premio annuale dell'*Architectural Institute of Japan*.
Anticipatrice di quello che diventerà il suo stile, consiste in tre volumi rettangolari di uguali dimensioni: due elementi di spazi interni, separati da un cortile aperto. Per la sua posizione, il cortile interno diventa parte integrale del sistema di circolazione della casa.

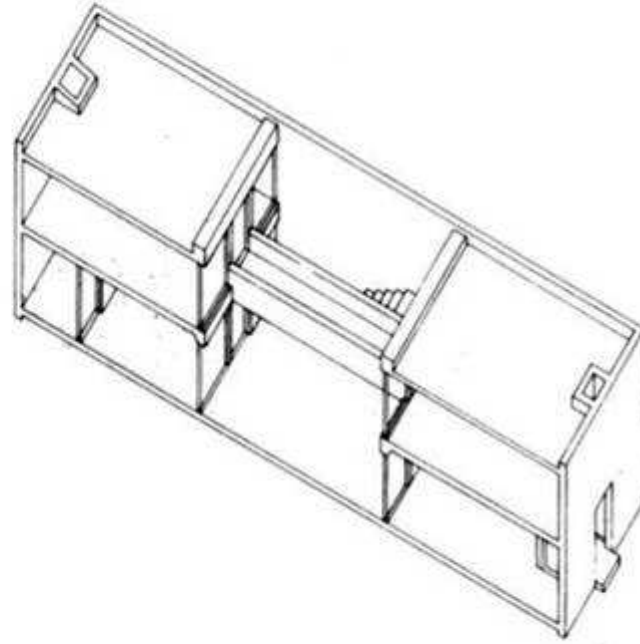


[Azuma House, Sumiyoshi-ku, Osaka, Japan 1975-76](#)





Azuma House, Sumiyoshi-ku, Osaka, Japan 1975-76



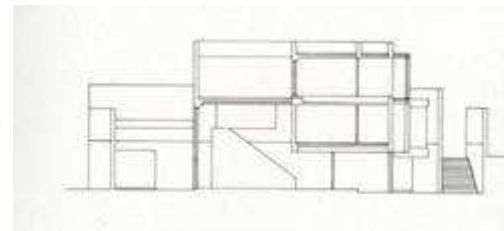
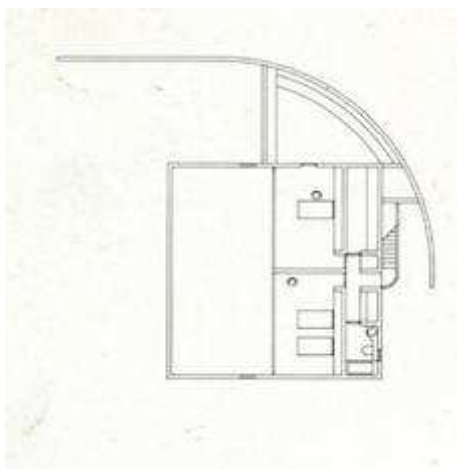
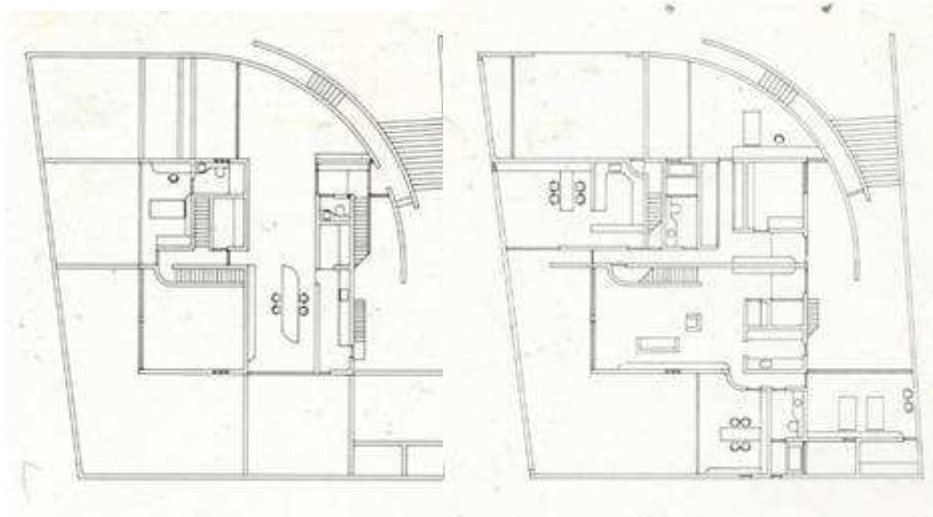
Ando has strong culture backgrounds in Japan, where he was raised and also currently lives. Japanese religion and style of life strongly influenced his architecture and design. **Ando's architectural style is said to create a "haiku" effect, emphasizing nothingness and empty space to represent the beauty of simplicity.** He favors designing complex spatial circulation while maintaining the appearance of simplicity. As a self-taught architect, he keeps his Japanese culture and language tightly in his mind while he travels around Europe for learning experience. As an architect, he believes that architecture can change the society--"to change the dwelling is to change the city and to reform society".["Reform society" could be a promotion of a place or a change of the identity of that place. According to Werner Blaser, "Good buildings by Tadao Ando create memorable identity and therefore publicity, which in turn attracts the public and promotes market penetration".

The simplicity of his architecture emphasizes the concept of sensation and physical experiences, mainly influenced by the Japanese culture. The religious term, Zen, focuses on the concept of simplicity and concentrates on the inner feeling rather than the appearance. The theory has vividly shown on Ando's work and definitely become his style that distinguishes other outstanding architects in the world. In order to practice the idea of simplicity, Ando's architecture is mostly constructed with concrete, which provides his architecture a sense of cleanness and weightiness at the same time. Due to the simplicity of the exterior, the construction and organization of the space are relatively potential in order to represent the aesthetic from sensation.

Unlike most of the religious architecture that mainly focusing on the preservation of history, one of his works, the Komyo-ji Temple in Saijo, Ehime, is made out of wood, which requires maintenance and repair on a regular basis. However, in the perspective of Japanese culture, the most significant concept of the shrine is to be able to spread the divine spirit from the interior and being able to eternalize it through the architecture. Besides Japanese religious architecture, Ando also designs Christian Churches, such as the Church of Light (1989) and the Church in Tarumi (1993). Although there are different characteristic between Japanese and Christian churches, Ando treats them with the similar strategy. In fact, there should be no difference for designing religious architecture and houses. He explains, "we do not need to differentiate one from the other. Dwelling in a house is not only a functional issue, but also a spiritual one. The house is the locus of mind ([kokoro](#)), and the mind is the locus of god. Dwelling in a house is a search for the mind ([kokoro](#)) as the locus of god, just as one goes to church to search for god. An important role of the church is to enhance this sense of the spiritual. In a spiritual place, people find peace in their mind ([kokoro](#)), as in their homeland". Besides speaking the spirit of the architecture, the association between the nature and the architecture is also his architecture strategy. As an architect, Ando makes his architecture become a way for people to easily experience the spirit and the beauty of the nature through the architecture. He thinks architecture is responsible for performing the attitude of the site and then turning it into visible perceptions. This not only represents his theory of the role of architecture in the society but also shows the reason that he spends so much time studying architecture from his physical experience.



Kidosaki House, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, Japan, 1982-86





Kidosaki House, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, Japan, 1982-86

This spacious house was built as a home for **three families**: a newlywed couple and both sets of parents. In actuality, there are three homes, one on each floor. It's located in an exclusive residential area of Setagaya.

The main goal of the project was to maintain the independence of each house and each family. The entire project consists of a cube, 12 meters per side, in the center of the plot and a curved wall in front near the entrance.

The blind wall of the front facade follows the profile of the street, curving inward to introduce the entrance to the house. A split entry features two staircases, one up to the second floor "home" and the second down below street level to a garden, through which access to the other two floors is obtained. This interior courtyard helps to maintain the independence of each living space.

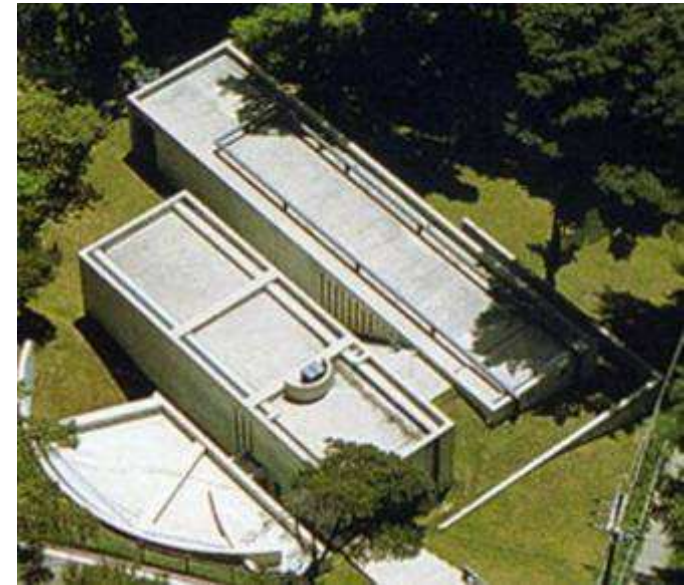
Reinforced concrete *sans ornamentation*.

Tadao Ando's design for the **Koshino House** features two parallel concrete rectangular confines. The forms are partially buried into the sloping ground of a national park and become a compositional addition to the landscape. Placed carefully as to **not disrupt the pre-existing trees** on the site, the structure responds to the adjacent ecosystem while the concrete forms address a more general nature through a playful manipulation of light.

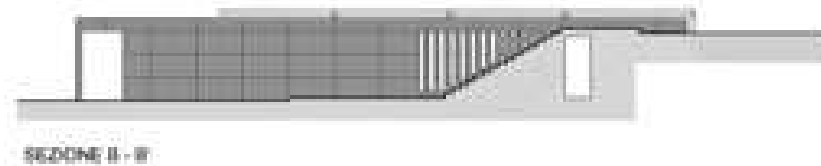
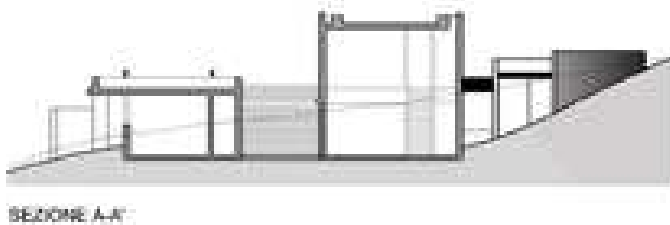
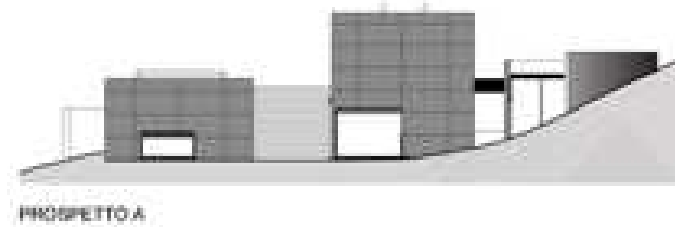
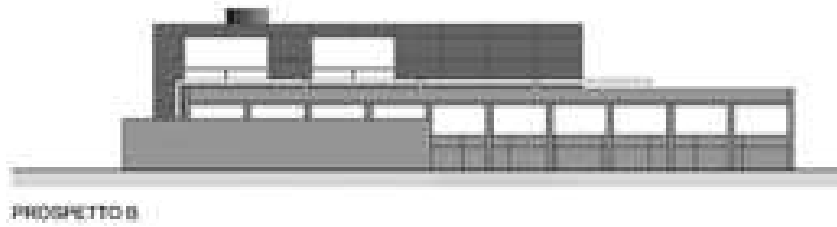
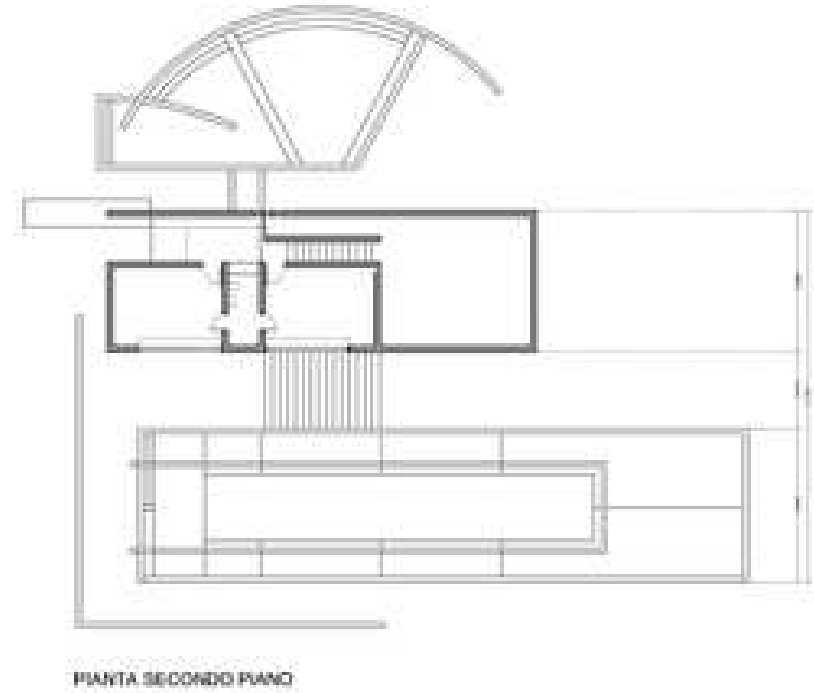
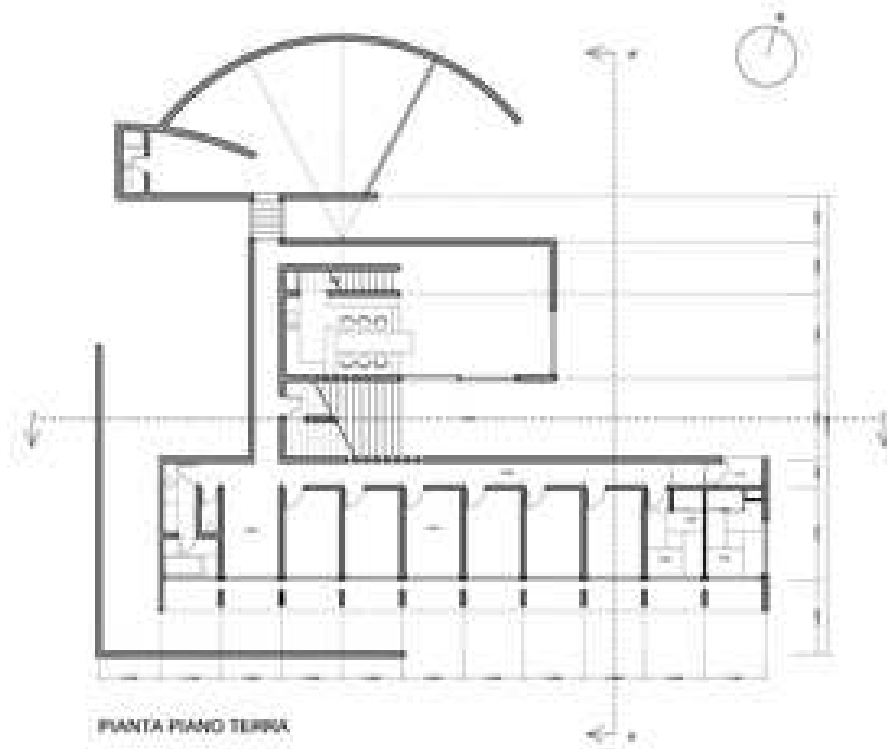
The northern volume consists of a two-storey height containing a double height living room, a kitchen and a dining room on the first floor with the master bedroom and a study on the second floor. The southern mass then consists of six linearly organized children's bedrooms, a bathroom and a lobby. Connecting the two spaces is a below grade tunnel that lies beneath the exterior stairs of the courtyard.

Ando **used the space within the two rectangular prisms as a way to express the fundamental nature of the site**. This space reveals a courtyard that drapes over and contours to the natural topography. A wide set of stairs follows the sloping land into the enclosed exterior space and allows the light that penetrates through the canopy of trees into the sunken courtyard. This self-governing space represents the fold of nature that has been bound by the conditioned structures and become synthetic.

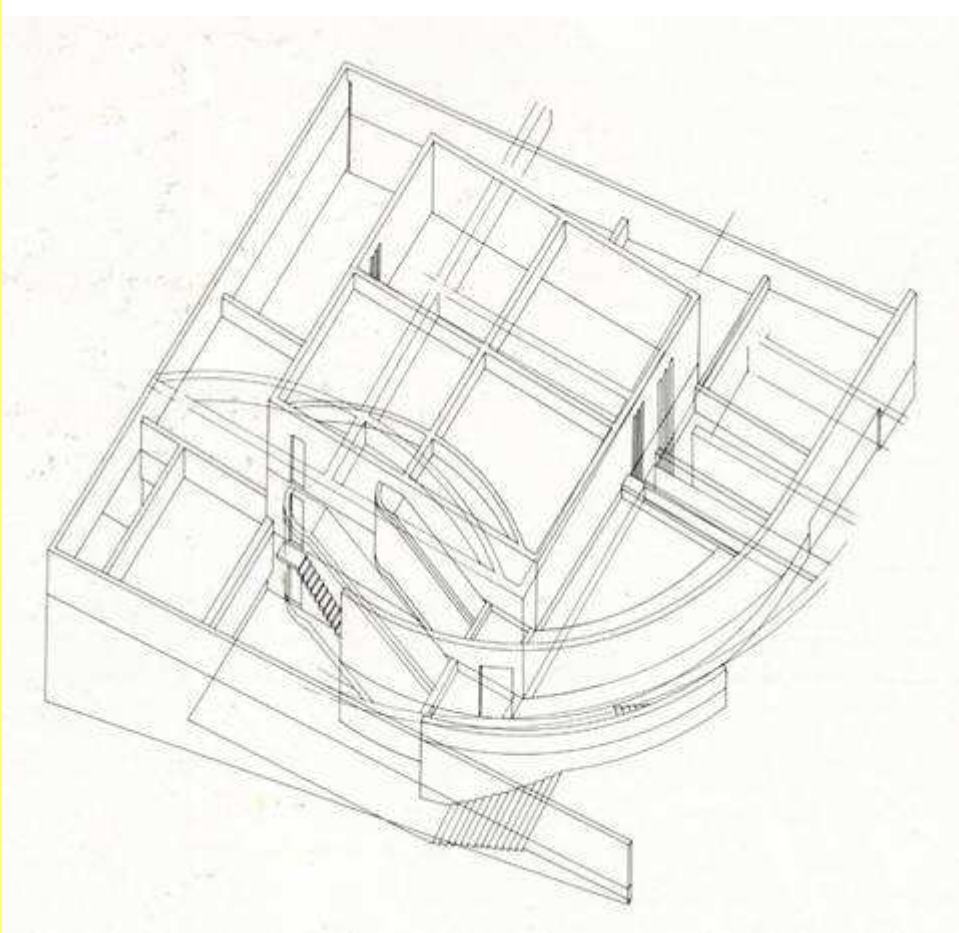
Narrow apertures have been punched through the façades adjacent to the exterior staircase and manipulate complex crossings of natural light and shadow into the interior spaces. The patterns provide the only amount of ornament to the simple rooms. Other slots are cut from various planes of the two modules to produce the same effect of complexity throughout the entire house.



Koshino House, Ashiya, Hyogo, Japan, 1979-81/1983-84

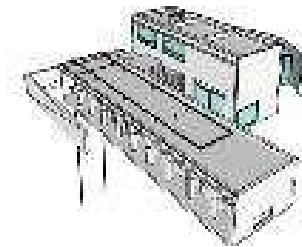


Kidosaki House, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, Japan, 1982-86





**Koshino House, Ashiya, Hyogo,
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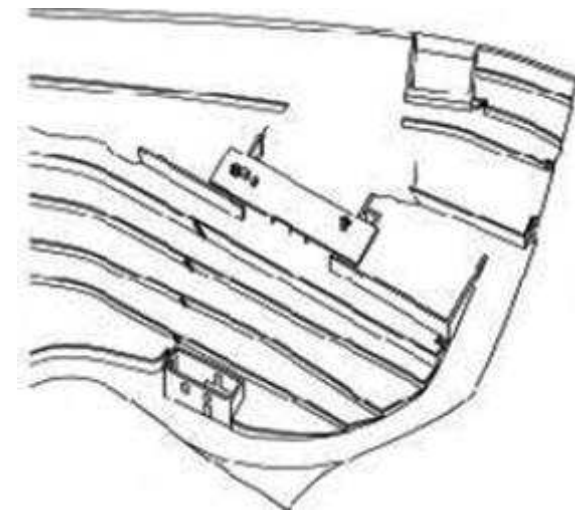
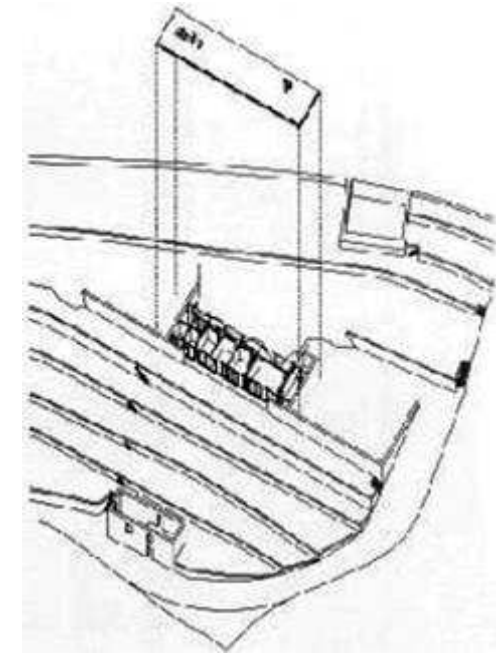


Eduardo Souto de Moura is associated with the school called Oporto Portuguese architects, headed by Alvaro Siza. In fact, he was a student of Siza and worked in his office from 1974 to 1979. It is, therefore, heir to a particular branch of the modern movement, the nature of the region that remained faithful to the cause, even during the years of the postmodern movement, to be re-discovered and celebrated internationally during the 1990s.

Its architecture is simple, clear and abstract, but they were less interested in the special qualities of the site. Their homes can be interpreted as a set of variations on a theme. This aspect of his work has much to do with Mies van der Rohe, but also has influences from other artists followed, and the American sculptor Donald Judd. The house is simple in Moledo to minimalism, but the true simplicity is not easy to achieve. It is the result of a long and arduous process of analysis, refinement, selection and decision making difficult. The house was built on land that was formerly farmland, with a good view over the Atlantic Ocean in a small town in northern Portugal, Moledo do Minho, belonging to the municipality of Caminha.

To Souto de Moura, site characteristics are more important than the customer's requirements, especially where, as in Moledo, the program needs is a conventional list of rooms and the place is highly demanding: a vast expanse of a steep hillside overlooking the Atlantic coastline, terraced agricultural banks by an approximate height of 1.5 m, supported by the containment walls of stone. **Souto de Moura was already addressed before a similar spot in a house in Baiao**, but Moledo, the terraces were very close, with narrow stairs and too low to provide a comfortable platform on which to build. Therefore, convinced the client of the desirability of completely re-shape the slope, with fewer beds and wider. This process was delayed several years and finally was more expensive than the house itself.

E. Souto de Moura: Casa a Moledo



The recovery of the house is a topic investigated by Souto de Moura for many years. By observing the evolution of his research seems obvious that constantly come to a kind of pattern based on a floor of a rectangular shape with two or three sides and a blind forehead, usually formed by a wall of stained glass whose elements are aligned with the facade main house. The space distribution and service areas occupy the interior generated.

This typology is derived from the idea of a release with a series of enclosed spaces that generate functionally hierarchical. In Moledo is in the front facade where are the best visual (the city, ocean, etc.), But Souto de Moura using an outcropping of rock in the back of the house as an extra visual reaffirming further the link between the environment and the interior of the house, which also gives the feeling of shelter. This is accompanied by the construction of reinforced concrete walls coated in stone, physically introducing the existence of this element and imposing rough. At the front between two blind walls lies a large sliding glass overlooking the ocean, behind which lie the different areas of the house: a terrace, kitchen, dining room, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a cloakroom, dressing room, patio and a service corridor that runs across the building facade that faces the mountain.

Eduardo Souto de Moura: Casa a Moledo



Structure and Materials

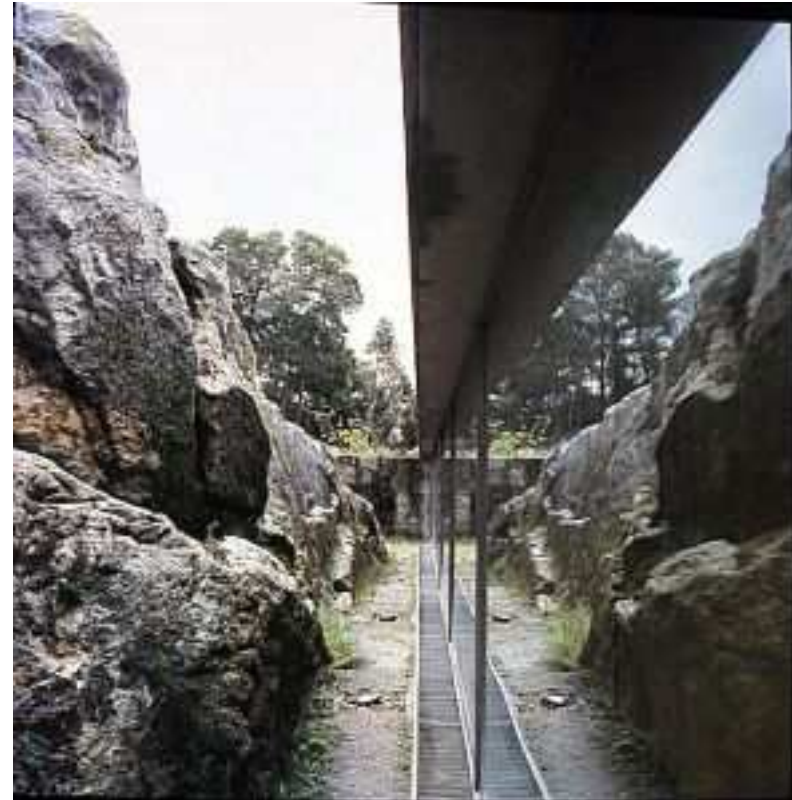
Redo platforms to develop a ground was laborious and resulted in a lot of work and material, master masons and six truckloads of stone to help do.

Blind side walls are erected with irregular blocks of granite, are anchored in dry as well as the sides that frame the front glass wall. These walls are generated by two parallel stone walls whose area of 4 cm has been completed by insulation, the conductivity of the rock is generally high and it was necessary to isolate the cold and heat. Above it is displayed flat roof. The interior walls that divide the various rooms are concrete and plaster and wood furniture is fixed, as part of the original construction. Some walls, like the fireplace or some corner of the kitchen was left before the stone wall.

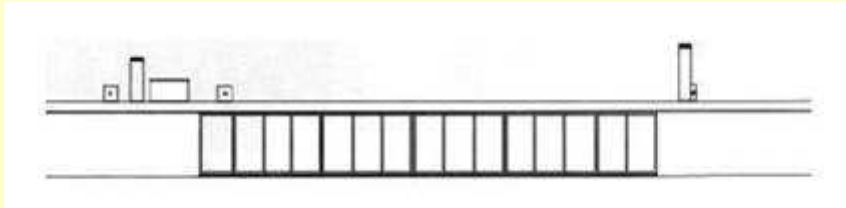
The roof is composed of a porous concrete floor, covered with an insulating layer formed by an impermeable material and a layer of crushed rock. The funnels gutters and water collection are of stainless steel sheet, like the skylights that vent out of it. It also highlights the vent of the chimney which is in the living room. The windows are sliding glass front of a camera and woodworks. Those that give to the mountain but the camera also trim are aluminum and glass mirrors.

The interior floors are of wooden slats and the outer shelf is also made of wood slats with one inch of distance between themselves and set a strip orthogonal.

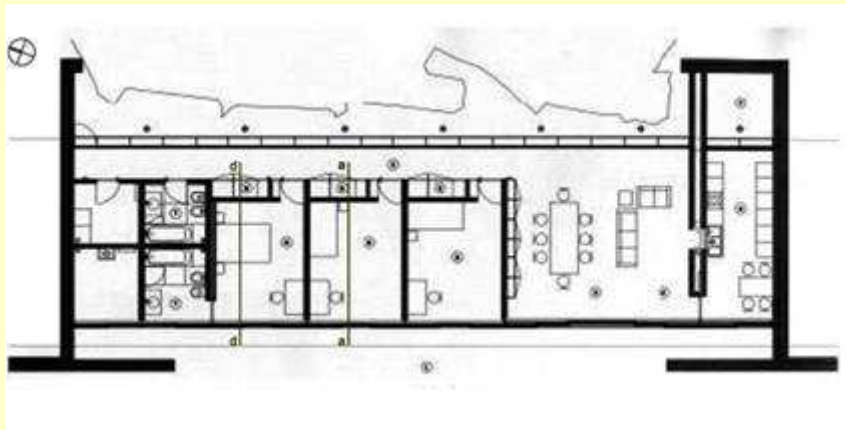
Eduardo Souto de Moura: Casa a Moledo



Eduardo Souto de Moura: Casa a Moledo



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