

## **Special Mention in the Architecture Category**

**The Young Old House** (Cercedilla, Sierra de Guadarrama – Madrid)

Architects: Enrique Espinosa & Lys Villalba.

Photo: José Hevia.

### **The Young Old House: The extension of a country home to fit in with rur/urban lifestyles**

The Young Old House is an example of an alliance between country people and objects and urban ones. It also brings together the old, the revamped and the new in an innovative contemporary approach to rur/urban living.

In this project, ceramic materials are a star feature of the building's exteriors, differentiating the new extension from the existing part of the house while also bringing colour, texture, durability and a unique appearance to the home.

20x50 custom-made extruded stoneware tiles were used, with a green glaze, a relief pattern (four waves), and a dovetail shape on the back.

#### **01. A landscape shaped by three migrations**

Over the last few decades, Cercedilla (in the Madrid region's Sierra de Guadarrama mountains) has been shaped by migrational flows from the country to the city, from the rural exodus following the Spanish Civil War through to the Land Act of the late 1990s, which liberalized land management.

A new kind of country-cum-urban dweller has recently emerged: people who are returning to the country without actually having left the city. They are "people in transit", creating new alliances that continue to transform the landscape. For instance, in the meadow of Ana and Manolo's house, cows owned by local livestock owner, Luis, graze, hence helping to care for this part of the mountain. Through the coexistence of traditional rural communities and new rur/urban dwellers, hitherto unseen ecological relations can be forged that are fundamental in maintaining a balance and in caring for areas in a process of change.

#### **02. The house that grows in layers**

After they inherited the house, Ana, Manolo and their four daughters decided to extend and adapt the building to fit in with their rur/urban lifestyle. The house, which was built in

the 1970s, did not have any thermal insulation and neither did it open onto the landscape. As a result, a three-fold progressive strategy was designed to extend, thermally insulate and open up the home to the surrounding landscape, taking into account comfort, energy consumption and enjoyment of its rural setting.

The first phase consisted of its extension by adding three roofed volumes, clad in ceramic tiles that differentiate the new part. This section is made up of the extension to the living room, the four daughters' bedroom (in the former garage and woodshed) and a room for the heating system. The walls were shortened and, instead, a metal structure was designed so that the new living room opens out fully onto the surrounding countryside. The roof was replaced, re-using the original materials by transforming them into furniture.

During subsequent phases, Sahari, a former building labourer now employed by the family, took down each of the façades in order to insulate them and put them back during successive summers.

### 03. Objects that were once...but are now...

At the Young Old House, nothing is in its original place. The home's furniture is made of reclaimed materials from the old façade and roof. Now the ceiling is on the table (the tables in the dining room are made of four old cut-down beams), the façade features a long bench made of reclaimed sleepers, the new doors are red reassembled shutters, the slate from the old roof is waiting in the barn to be turned into a future façade, the granite from the woodshed is now the new step leading outside etc. In addition to these old reclaimed materials, other new ones, mainly made of metal, bring the house into closer contact with the landscape: a hidden door leading directly into the countryside, revolving lights to dine in the meadow on summer nights, four removable beds, and two round windows looking out across the landscape from north to south.