

## **Special Mention – Architecture category**

### **Casa Dosmurs / Dosmurs House (Alella, Barcelona)**

#### **Mesura**

Photographs: Maxime Delvaux

## **DESCRIPTION OF DOSMURS HOUSE**

A house can be considered an intermediary between the exterior and the interior; an envelope that determines how its inhabitants interact with the outside world. When designed with a specific site-based approach, architecture deliberately opens and closes on its surroundings, enabling the desired living experience.

Casa Dosmurs is conceived as a peaceful retreat, isolated from its immediate environment, yet which opens up to the sea and a contemplative green courtyard, connected within a single open space. This radical design makes for a constant connection between the inhabitants and their surroundings.

The house fits snugly into the landscape, buried below street level, creating an intimate refuge that opens up to the sky and the horizon. Nestling between two walls that follow the natural slope of the land, the home withdraws from any external noise, allowing light to filter in gently. In this act of concealment, the rooftop becomes the main façade, a white plane that engages in a dialogue with the Mediterranean sky.

It is here where ceramic tiles, in their true essence, take centre stage. More than a covering, they are the soul of this home, a skin that breathes and protects. A piece measuring 14x28x1.3 cm was selected for its texture, its honesty, and its connection to Mediterranean tradition. Ceramic tiles that not only dress the walls, but also capture and reflect the light, creating a play of shadows that varies over the course of the day.

The project is located on the outskirts of Alella, a coastal town in El Maresme, Spain, perched on a hillside featuring a mix of architectural styles that generates a degree of visual discord. Due to the slope and the proximity of the neighbouring houses, the only unobstructed view is towards the sea, while the lower part of the plot, framed by native trees, offers a landscape of rolling hills.

The house, hidden between two walls that follow the slope of the terrain, cannot be seen from the street, creating a more intimate connection with the landscape. The programme is organised on two staggered levels that adapt to the hillside, ensuring the building does not protrude. Two entrances are connected by a staircase, and the opposing facades limit the

views towards the neighbouring houses, with the other facades opening up fully to the exterior.

A large window on the southern facade frames the views from the split-level living room and the upper floor. The roof has a two-metre protrusion that provides shade in summer, while in winter, the concrete façades absorb the sun's heat. The bedrooms are connected to a private garden overlooking the mountain, with modular wooden partition walls for privacy and airflow regulation. A rooftop terrace adds an open-air space.

The construction prioritises spatial quality through a combination of industrialised methods and on-site work. Walls and ceilings made of prefabricated concrete panels make for an open floor plan spanning ten metres. The use of local brick and terracotta mortar, combined with wooden carpentry, creates a warm atmosphere.

Casa Dosmurs combines restraint and austerity in terms of the materials used with a sense of spaciousness. The result is an intimate hideaway that opens up to its surroundings.