



Home with a beachfront view
in the south of île of Ré

Description

Where the ocean invites itself into each space to create an enchanting setting

July 14, 2022

Anchored on a beachfront dune in the south of île of Ré, located on the west coast of France, this traditional house opens entirely onto the ocean. The ocean invites itself into each of these spaces, creating an enchanting setting that invites rest and contemplation.



In this house, the inhabited space is revealed through the views that change with the winds and tides, like a living postcard. It is in the capture of these moments that the project emerges, where each new fragment of architecture performs in its context.

When the interior invites itself outside

The owners wanted to renovate this house to make it more suitable for their lifestyle, more comfortable and above all in keeping with their tastes. The renovation involved a total overhaul of the interior and a redefinition of the openings to the outside, the link between the inside and the outside being at the heart of the project.



This founding element completely modifies the apprehension of the inhabited space. With a very strong context, the challenge of this renovation was to create a new living environment by relying on an existing building that was ageing but with incredible potential.

The link between the interior and the exterior is at the heart of the project, and is a founding element that completely modifies the apprehension of the living space.

The interior fittings were designed to create new identities for these spaces, but also to establish privileged relationships with the outside. The aim was to create sequences defined and highlighted by the use of wood in contrast with the mineral floor. These materials establish a common thread between the different rooms of the house and continuity with the exterior.



This house has been designed to be lived in by two people and to remain just as pleasant and relaxing when the whole family is present. For this reason, the relaxation area, at the heart of the house, connects the dining room/kitchen/living room and the bedrooms, through a ribbon of oak, in which the different accesses are located. The rooms, hidden behind this ribbon, disappear from the living space of the house.

'This house was designed to be lived in by two people and to be just as pleasant and relaxing when the whole family is in it.'

This gives the impression of living in a place with an adaptable scale, adapted to a lifestyle without superfluities. Certain passages and storage spaces are hidden, forming an integral part of the furnished units, such as the bathroom, which can be accessed from the living room cupboard, or the laundry room from the mirrored back doors of the office.



In the same spirit, a staircase allowing access to an additional bed in one of the bedrooms was designed with a play of volumes, in Japanese steps, in order to limit its size, creating at the same time a multitude of storage spaces in each step. The other staircase was designed with a wooden balustrade, behind which are hidden the storage units.

Numerous details punctuate these pure spaces with nuanced white lines, sometimes matt, sometimes satin, or even glossy. These details are emphasised by materials such as brass and granite, or by the careful use of oak, as in the creation of under-cabinet doors and sliding doors, as well as all the hollow joints allowing a finer dialogue with the existing. This allows spaces to be adapted to suit different uses.



The master bedroom alone represents and sums up the conceptual culmination for the use of the clients in a small space. This area is a succession of planes, views and hidden spaces, starting with the entrance followed by the entirety of the storage space up to the toilet. In the centre of the room, the headboard sits like a sculpted stele. Behind it is the large shower, accessible from both sides and offering a view of the ocean through the glass panel. A



new layer then closes this wellness space.



A vast, single-piece glass wall separates the shower from the washbasins, between which is a gap, like a crevice that opens onto a custom-made bathtub, like an undulating ribbon draped with a mosaic of honed black marble, giving it a hammam atmosphere, conducive to relaxation.

A more intimate shower room, entirely adorned with a white mosaic shaded with mother-of-pearl, creates a soothing atmosphere, with particular attention to detail in the curved shapes.

Other details define the spaces, highlighting the uses, like a stage set. Everything has been designed in detail so that each architectural element finds its place.



The central island in the kitchen is one of the key elements of

the house, like a sculpture of black granite and aged brass, which creates the connection between the kitchen, dining room and living room. This block, anchored in the living room furniture, extends into the void, supported only by a glass base. The striking contrast of seeing a block of stone against the notion of lightness surprises as much as it impresses. This massive aspect is reinforced by the bevelled joints and treatments of the granite, which accommodate the brass doors.

Technical data

- Location: Sainte-Marie-de-Ré, France
- Completion date : June 2020
- Surface area: 135 m²

About the design studio

The studio created by Mickaël Martins Afonso in 2016 is the reflection of a multi-disciplinary career, cradled by studies in plastic arts, applied arts, space design and then architecture, thus concluding a career rich in human and intellectual experiences.



The studio works on different forms and scales of design, such as interior architecture, the creation of furniture, up to the creation of object. During a new project, the idea is to reflect on the uses and to develop a global thought of the inhabited space, in order to respond as precisely as possible to the demands of each client and thus to be able to create unique places, adapted to each individual desire and to each way of living and inhabiting the architecture.

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