

WITH BARE FEET

House in Comporta de Aires Mateus

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House in Comporta de Aires Mateus

Rome, May 5, 2010 at 14.25.

I am writing this text at Fiumicino Airport drinking a limoncello with ice and with my bare feet stuck in the sand on the floor of the Casa na Comporta de Aires Mateus. And smelling the sea.

I must admit that I have always been surprised by the precise and beautiful architecture of Aires Mateus. And with this house he has surprised me again.

The house is composed of four pre-existing, very beautiful pieces in wood and alvenaria. The pieces are so strong, so radical, so well arranged that it is hard for me, at this "Roman" moment, to imagine living inside them.

Contemporary architects insist on going off in search of new ways of architecture. Instead of looking inward. Other architects like Aires Mateus, and myself with them, try to look inward. To go to the root, to the origin, to try to understand in depth what are the principles of Architecture. And then, always, to take flight again.

This house, wonderful, primitive and future at the same time, works on the spatial continuity outside inside from the most basic, the most fundamental, the ground. With the sand that outside and inside caresses our bare feet. As if it were the most luxurious carpet.

A house that seems to take us out of time. It would seem that the sand on its floor has been taken from many hourglasses. Or, on the contrary, that with that sand the clocks that will mark the time of our life will be filled.

Or perhaps, surely, it is the same sand of Paradise that Adam and Eve walked on and that this house is nothing more than a mechanism of our architect to return to the lost paradise. How can it not seem right to me that the relationship space of these four rooms is the open sky, also with that ancestral sand floor?

This house, wonderful, ancient and modern at the same time, works with a primitive structure of exposed wood, with a clear order, with its gable roofs, why not? demonstrating once again how the structure establishes the order of space. As if it were the hut of Abbé Laugier himself.

And although in the memory the architect says that the project responds to very particular conditions, I think the answer, and that is the great success of this house, is its universality. This house is a universal house

I saw again these days in Rome, once more, Persephone abducted by Bernini's Neptune in the Borghese Gallery. Both with bare feet. And I was thinking how much I would like to be with them, also with bare feet, in the Casa na Comporta by Aires Mateus. We would

also invite Sophia de Mello, who would gladly accept. And with her would come Homer and Plato. And Álvaro and Eduardo and Paulo. And we would talk about Poetry and life.