

**A HOUSE WHERE TIME STANDS STILL**

**House in Moreira by architect Paulo H. Durao**

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## A HOUSE WHERE TIME STANDS STILL

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The house that Paulo H. Durao has built in Moreira is very beautiful. So beautiful that time stops there, in it.

Heidegger writes that for Aristotle being means presence, present. And how in the light of this concept of being, the future is the not-yet-being, while the past is the not-more-being.

This radical house in Moreira by Paulo H. Durao is a house of the present, the past and the future. A house out of time, above time, capable of stopping time. So radically beautiful it is.

There are houses, there are works that go down in the immediate history of architects for their spectacular character. They display so much spectacle that the relentless passage of time soon makes them obsolete. Fatuous fires, flower of a day.

On the contrary, other houses, other works, go down in the History of Architecture for their rigor and their depth, for their truth and their beauty. Time passes in their favor and they remain in the memory of men. Like this house in Moreira.

### SUBTRACTION MECHANISMS

The house, mysterious and hermetic, appears before us as an impressive closed box of reinforced concrete. One would think that he would have put into practice the advice of Berthold Lubetkin, the great Russian architect who, at the end of his life, said that he had only made concrete shoeboxes.

In this box Paulo H. Durao, with great wisdom, has excavated the precise slits to allow light to enter in such a way that the space inside is very well tensioned. From the subtraction in the northeast corner to create the entrance, to the two slits, like courtyards, on the east façade.

And once the pathways through which the light reaches and crosses the architectural instrument have been opened, the architect seeks and finds the mechanisms for this light to make the interior spaces of the box sound, as if it were a musical instrument. And when the light arrives, the box becomes a boîte a miracles, as Le Corbusier proposed.

### TUNING MECHANISMS

The architect has practiced here exercises of proportion and disproportion, combining compressed horizontal spaces with double-height vertical spaces that, conveniently crossed by light, produce effective spatial effects of diagonality.

### SERVERS, SERVED

The plan, canonical, is impeccable. The band of servant elements on one side, at the back, leaves free the larger served spaces, on the other side, open to the garden through the openings, the patios, open in the box. The house is so well proportioned that, being small, it seems large.

## PROLOGOMEN

This is the third house that Paulo H. Durao has built, after Pedrogao and Liteiros. And being the previous two splendid, this is perhaps the most radical: a mature, masterful work, which proves the quality of the architect and summarizes very well the ideas of its author about Architecture. A house that wants, and succeeds, to stop time.

## TIME

The author, Paulo H. Durao, is about to read his Doctoral Thesis on Time in Architecture, at the UPM in Madrid where for several years he has been a professor in the Department of Architectural Projects. And this house could be read as a logical consequence of that doctoral thesis. As the materialization of many of the themes that are analyzed there around Time in artistic creation.

Once again, we are before an Architecture that starts from truth and develops with truth, and from its hand reaches beauty, as Plato proposes: Beauty as splendor of Truth, the dream of every creator. Radical beauty of this radical house built in Moreira by Paulo H. Durao.