



COMMENDED

## HOLZKRISTALL HURST SONG ARCHITEKTEN

LUMBREIN, SWITZERLAND

Around the village of Lumbrein in the eastern Swiss canton of Graubünden (made famous by Peter Zumthor), the Alpine landscape is picture perfect. You half expect to encounter Julie Andrews racing down a hillside trilling 'The Hills are Alive'. On to this bracingly pristine backdrop, the young, Zurich-based partnership of Hurst Song Architekten have grafted a new holiday house for a family. Poised on a verdant slope on the edge of the village, it exhibits the same scale and proportions of a traditional Alpine chalet, but its suspiciously crisp geometry and croopy, black stained cladding gives it an otherworldly intensity, as if it were a habitable version of the obelisk from *Space Odyssey*.

The house is partially embedded in its sloping site. One means of entry is by a staircase leading up from a subterranean garage, which emerges from the hillside to connect with a curving access road. Alternatively, you can walk a short distance up the hill to the main entrance, denoted by a pale concrete frame precisely inserted into the funereal wall planes.

The gabled roof is oriented perpendicular to the hill, in the manner of the region's chalets and farm buildings. The vertical timber cladding, with its dark weatherproof coating, is another allusion to the sober yet sensuous materiality of ancient Alpine barns.

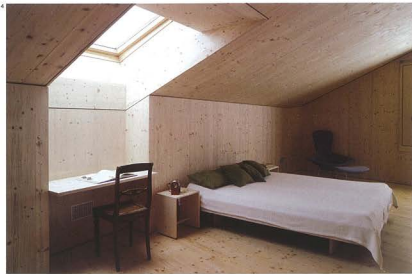
The building volume is rotated slightly to face the road and optimise views, setting up a crystalline geometry that emphasises the dynamic relationship of house to landscape. This reading is enhanced by the lack of roof eaves. The copper roof will eventually weather to the same treacly hue as the walls.

Interiors are a sharply articulated dialogue between concrete and spruce. The surfaces interlock and graduate in proportion from cellar to attic, moving upwards from heavy to light. The bedrooms are airy spruce cabinets, with beds that fold down from the walls. The central staircase is formed from simple spruce planks spanning the concrete partition walls, enabling light to filter down to lower levels. The jury was impressed by the project's formal and material rigour and how this was enhanced by immaculate craftsmanship.



location plan

1. (Previous page) the new house is a crisply lined abstraction of traditional Alpine structures
2. The pitch black cladding recalls the weathered exteriors of ancient barns
3. Main living space with dark concrete floor and spruce-lined walls and spruce-lined walls
4. Bedrooms at the top of the house have a lighter sense of materiality
5. The simple central stair



**Architect**  
Hurst Song Architekten  
**Ironmongery**  
d line  
**Kitchen appliances**  
Y-Zug  
**Photographs**  
Richard Powers

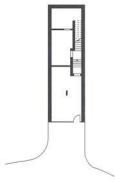
- 1 garage
- 2 main entrance
- 3 guest bedroom
- 4 bathroom
- 5 living
- 6 dining/kitchen
- 7 bedroom



cross section



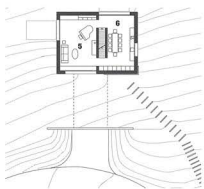
long section



lower ground floor plan



ground floor plan



first floor plan



second floor plan

