Reinventing architecture

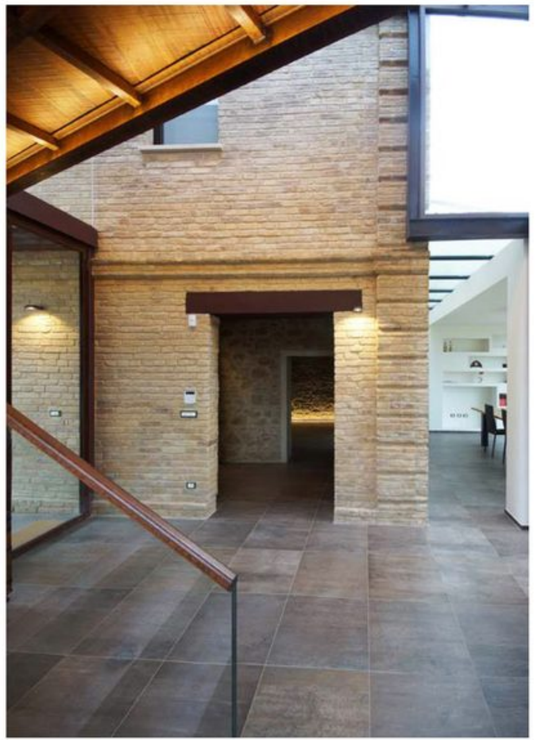
CONVERTED



LANNOO

PRIVATE HOUSE

Rocco Valentini Architecture
Chieti, Italy 2015



This late 19th century house in Chieti, Italy, was built of brick. Originally built as a combination of a residence and a mill, over the following decades, it gradually became surrounded by other buildings. Rocco Valentini Architecture was commissioned to bring this charming house back to life, which started with the demolition of the encompassing additions. The goal of the restoration was not merely to get rid of the structures blocking the light and obstructing the view of the historical buildings. The contemporary architectural language plays a role that is equally as important as the historical walls. The architects envisioned a twist in the form of a new structure inserted between the two existing buildings. The space of this hinge, which functions as a hall and creates a vertical communication between the levels, is made of steel and glass. These materials were selected as a reference to the machines used for the processing of agricultural products at the time the house was constructed. The dynamic geometric shape stands out against the bright brick and brings the mix of old and new inside the house. This powerful juxtaposition is shocking yet fascinating for the eye. The two elements from various architectural epochs could not be more different. However, the architects made sure that their intervention, though visually contrasting, is perfectly adjusted to the original volumes. This new part improves the communication within the historical house and, thanks to numerous glazed surfaces, lets in plenty of natural light. The dynamic shape of the entrance volume is repeated inside in the net of passages and stairs linking the two buildings both vertically and horizontally.



Another addition is a new dining room in the west part of the house. Here, too, there is a clear visual division between the pre-existing and modern structures. "The cuts of top light divide the old structures from contemporary ones," state the architects. They suggest that entering "the box steel and glass is like going through a time portal" which "heralds the old buildings" through the colours and materials used. Nothing is left to chance in this project and each aspect of the restoration cherishes the beauty of original building. The modern additions enrich the structure without destroying its historical charm.

