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IN ROME,
THE TREASURE CHEST-HOUSE
OF A DIPLOMAT
between contemporary design,
artworks and souvenirs

In the elegant Flaminio district in Rome, a few steps from the MAXXI Museum and the National Gallery of Modern Art, emerging architecture and interior design studio 02A www.02a.it has reimagined the interior of a 130 sqm apartment, on the ground floor of a noble building from the early Twentieth century. Located between the greenery of the East bank of the Tiber river and the urban vegetation of the Parioli Mountains, the project gives rise to a dynamic space, open to the outside thanks to a generous garden.

The traditional apartment was bought by the diplomat Alfonso Tagliaferri, who was stateless for work, but in search of his first private home, to which he could return at the end of each mission.

“The client has given us a wider opportunity to reflect on the concept of home as a place of belonging, even more if not lived in on a daily basis. The mental construction of the project was a journey into his memory and aspirations, through a constant and free dialogue, in search of useful traces to define a thread that guided and contained every choice, every missed connection, every digression, translating the experience into architecture”

— says Marco Rulli, co-founder of the Rome-based studio together with Thomas Grossi.

The client is also the protagonist of a short film showing how to live in his own house. You can watch it at this link: <https://vimeo.com/687064455>.

The new rooms of the apartment reflect the renewed use, no longer a bourgeois family nest but the residence of a diplomat, with totally different social rhythms and needs.

Inside, one can stroll among relics and handicrafts from many countries, including South Africa and the Philippines. The main focus of the project is the sleeping area, a large room conceived as a suite with an open space bathroom characterized by a volume with a smoked mirror surface that expands the domestic landscape and gives maximum diffusion to the natural light coming from the three large windows arranged on the South-West side.

The main entrance opens onto the living area, where a glass wall cuts through the large decorative plaster barrel vaults of the living room and kitchen, painted in Little Greene's Tuscan Red.

The kitchen is characterized by white and ochre yellow wall units that complement the decorative motifs of the 20x20 grit floor, and by the brushed granite surfaces of the central island and the worktop.

Engraved on the plates of the scullery, the phrase in Esperanto: "Noblas tiu, kiu staras signature en siaj ideoj, sed noblas eĉ pli tiu, kiu kapablas ilin ŝanĝi" (He who is firm in his ideas is noble, but he who is able to change them is even more noble).

A restored solid oak parquet floor lines the eclectic lounge, where Bretagne di Frau leather sofas and French Art Deco armchairs from the 1940s interact with an ancient Venetian lantern, and with photographs and sculptures on the walls. Streams of natural light illuminate the environment and denote the opening of the French window towards the large private garden, with direct access from the Tiber, and furnished with deck chairs, shielding vines, lush Monstera Deliciosa and the shade of a large palm tree.

An arched passage with a custom-made bookcase leads to a more intimate dining area. Here, neutral tones on the walls provide a theatrical backdrop to the family's antique furniture and works of art (tapestry by Igshaan Adams; Classroom by Pascale Marthine Tayou), while the Illan birch pendant lamp by Luceplan rests on a glass-surface table with vintage '50s chairs in a continuous dialogue between ancient, modern and contemporary.

A curved wall marks the entrance to the most private area of the house. On the one hand, the service bathroom with its suspended ceramic tub and black marble surfaces resembles a cabinet of curiosities wrapped in Palm Jungle wallpaper by Cole & Son and the sinuous shapes of shells, natural figures, travel treasures and handcrafted Vienna straw scone. On the other hand, the studio with two souls: that which is dedicated to cinematographic art with upholstered vintage theater chairs (projector and motorized cloth hidden in the ceiling) and the other for writing and smart work moments with the Helsinki desk by Desalto and the iconic Serbelloni armchair designed by Vico Magistretti for De Padova.

A cobalt blue velvet curtain reveals the heart of the apartment: the bedroom with a private en suite bathroom divided into several spaces. The horizon of warm colors of Ukiyo wallpaper by Nobilis on the doors of the made-to-measure wardrobe blends with the immaterial cubic volume that hides the bathroom services. Thanks to the layered glazing resin of the decorator Franco Casi Melcarne, the environment finds its own visual and formal unity from which the bathtub and shower area of the bathroom take shape.

"We tried to play with the concept of time, we didn't want a "finished" house, we were interested in giving space to the unfinished, to the imperfection that would contain the vital force of curiosity"

– say the architects.

02A completes an elegant renovation where contemporary design, art and travel treasures blend with natural materials and bold, full-color hues. The luxuriant green of the indoor plants envelops everything, enriching the succession of environments, giving an open and intimate space at the same time for those who, like the owner, live in their home as a citizen of the world.

MORE INFORMATION

02A PRESS OFFICE	MINT LIST Giulia Milza, Maria Azzurra Rossi	press@mintlist.info
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CREDITS

PROJECT NAME ADDRESS	Casa del Diplomatico - Diplomat's House Flaminio Neighborhood, Rome
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ARCHITECT	02A (Thomas Grossi, Marco Rulli)
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PROJECT TEAM	Thomas Grossi, Marco Rulli, Alessandro Fuoti
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CONTRACTOR	Giachini srl owned by Francesco Giachini
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CLIENT	Alfonso Tagliaferri
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DATE	October 2021
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GFA	130 sqm + 60 sqm (garden)
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SUPPLIERS	Water / sanitary material: Edilflaminio Carpentry: Mattia Migliorati Window restoration: Castellarin Painting: Franco Casi Melcarne
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Kitchen worktops and bathroom tops: I frioli marmi
Kitchen and bathroom furniture: Arredamenti Ramundo
Furniture and lighting: Fortuna Roma

FURNITURES

See image captions

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