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MoDusArchitects

ICARO HOTEL:  
a wooden colonnade frames  
the Dolomite mountains,  
blending art, design and architecture  
with an alpine heritage landscape

At the foothills of the Dolomite Mountains and nestled within a web of ski slopes and hiking trails, MoDusArchitects [www.modusarchitects.com](http://www.modusarchitects.com) has revamped Icaro Hotel [www.hotelicaro.com](http://www.hotelicaro.com) as a stereometric volume in wood that quietly adds a new fragment to the built heritage of hospitality architecture of this unique protected area.

Positioned on the Alpe di Siusi (Seiser Alm) plateau at 1.900m above sea level and set within South Tyrol's Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage site, the hotel's humble origins date back to a simple 1930s mountain lodge. Granddaughter to the founder of the original Icaro lodge, Angelika Sattler commissioned MoDusArchitects to overhaul the structure and reimagine its identity. The various interventions include an underground parking extension, the separate staff quarters, a guest room addition, the reorganization of all of the common spaces including the pool area, and the sweeping, giant order colonnade of wood along the main façade that intercepts the breathtaking mountain views.

In plan, the new addition mirrors the existing west wing along the axis of the original lodge to forge a symmetry of parts to the whole relationship. On the outside, the thickened saw-toothed larch-wood skin, together with the large pitched wooden roof and the timber columns, constitute an ordering system that subsumes the myriad of past modifications into a cohesive architectural body. The 13 branching wood columns 7.5 meters high that march down the 55m length of the south-facing facade and span over the two upper floors are structural elements that tie the roof into place and serve as a middle-ground frame through which guests measure themselves up against the architecture and the landscape. The first floor terrace draws a straight line across the two far corners of the building to define an airy, double-height loggia that extends the interior spaces of the guest rooms outwards.

At the ground level, down the length of the building, a clearly defined throughway unravels a succession of common areas: entry, reception, shop, lounge, bar and dining hall all participate in the colorful exchange between guests, visitors, outdoor enthusiasts and the Sattler family. The eclectic convergence of materials, textures and fixed furniture elements string the programs together and rescripts the collective memory of traditional alpine interior spaces. While the wood lined dining alcoves with banquette seating conjure up the hospitality of long-established lodge interiors, the monolithic, cloudy-grey marble of the buffet table and bar counter anchor the defining moments of gastronomical delight at the center of this spatial continuum. Similarly, the characteristic coffering of the alpine wood *stube* (the traditional, stove heated farmhouse living room) is revisited with an all-enveloping surface of acoustic-felt panels partitioned by notched, intersecting yellow moulding profile. In tandem with the overhead paneling, the braided texture of the oak

planked flooring weaves together the mirrored angles of the hotel's footprint in a subtle *tête-à-tête* between old and new.

Embedded within the interiors of the hotel lie stories, family heirlooms, and a celebration of contemporary artistic endeavors and artisanal know-how. The reception, shop and lounge area are designed as a full-height, thickened wainscoting of oak panels and deep blue recesses that collect a disparate range of subjects much like a cabinet of curiosities. The juxtaposition of people, animals, books, art, objects and hospitality accoutrements explore the folkloric *otherness* of the local culture. In this ethos of collection and display, and in occasion of the re-opening, Icaro Hotel has launched a new exhibition series curated by the artist Hubert Kostner (whose house-atelier has also been designed by MoDusArchitects) whereby authors are invited to present their work to the international guests.

From the main staircase at the circulation core of the hotel, visitors access the guest rooms, including the four new rooms distributed on each of the two upper levels of the East wing. As evidenced by their names, the Monocular and Telescope rooms are viewing devices that inextricably link the intimacy of the rooms to the expanse of the landscape beyond; the rooms are shaped by angled cabinetry elmwood walls that contain wardrobes, upholstered niches, powder rooms and hidden shower rooms. At either ends of these two rooms lie the Lux and Grandangolo whose wider scope settings accommodate up to four guests and feature custom made beds facing the floor to ceiling windows overlooking Alpe di Siusi. Several suites on the second level were adapted to accommodate the new roof while a new massage area with a sheltered yoga terrace was added to this level.

At the lower level, the swimming pool area makes the most of the change in grade and is entirely reconfigured to accommodate a new pool in direct connection with the outdoor spaces. The numerous, existing structural supports found at this level are regimented into a robust procession of tiled columns that transform a formerly compromised space into one of tranquility. Between the existing sauna and the new pool, a portion of the relaxation zone is redesigned to afford a higher level of privacy with a cast in place concrete wall clad in the recognizable frames of wooden profiles that feature insertions of “crying”, melted wax—an artistic installation by Hubert Kostner in an interpretation of the mythological story of Icarus. The lower level is a labyrinthine plan of service functions that support the workings of the hotel above but with the addition of the underground garage, this level also becomes a new point of entry. MoDusArchitects worked to carve out a clear circulation route from the parking to the vertical circulation core with the requested programs of ski room and e-bike charging stations along the way. The

new garage not only makes for a car free arrival area for the hotel, but also mitigates the visual impact of the hotel within the landscape. Lastly at this basement level, MoDusArchitects has drawn up a whole new 2-story volume for the staff accommodations that takes on the tones of the main house, in continuity with the gray plastered facade of the original ground floor elevation.

An eclectic and lively place, Icaro Hotel is an alchemy of contemporary architecture, design, hospitality, tradition, art, craftsmanship and heritage. Each space is framed to bring forth all of the goodness and imagination that comes out of travel and to bolster the sense of discovery and freedom that alpine landscapes emote.

#### MORE INFORMATION

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##### MODUSARCHITECTS' PRESS OFFICE

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Giulia Milza,  
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#### CREDITS

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##### PROJECT NAME LOCATION

Icaro Hotel  
Piz 18/1, Alpe di Siusi, Castelrotto  
(Bolzano, Italy)

##### ARCHITECT

MoDusArchitects  
(Sandy Attia, Matteo Scagnol)

##### PROJECT TEAM

Sandy Attia, Matteo Scagnol, Filippo Pesavento

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##### CLIENT

Angelika Sattler

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##### COMPETITION

2018

##### DESIGN PHASE

2018 – 2020

##### CONSTRUCTION PHASE 1

2020 (staff building, swimming pool, underground parking garage)

##### CONSTRUCTION PHASE 2

2021 (east wing with 8 guest rooms, ground floor interiors renovation, new roof and facade)

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##### COMPLETION

August 2021

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##### GFA

Hotel total (5.040sqm); new addition total  
(underground level 1.360sqm, upper levels 550sqm)

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STRUCTURAL ENGINEER	Ing. Ulrich Kauer (KS Engineering)
MECHANICAL ENGINEER	Ing. Kurt Tröbinger (KTB Engineering)
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER	Ing. Mirko Beikircher (KTB Engineering)
SAFETY ENGINEER	Ing. Ulrich Kauer (KS Engineering)
LIGHTING CONSULTANT	Lichtstudio Eisenkeil
COST AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT	HGV - Unternehmensberatung
HOTEL VISUAL IDENTITY	Camuffolab, Venezia
HOTEL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY	Anna Quinz and Kunigunde Weissenegger franzLAB, Bolzano
GENERAL CONTRACTOR	Mahlknechtbau AB GmbH
SITE WORK AND EXCAVATION	Kritzinger Srl
MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING INSTALLATION	Mulser Karl
ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION	Elektro Nicolussi KG

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## SUPPLIERS

Sheet metal work and cladding: Spenglerei Messner KG  
Metalsmith: Frener Paul Stahlbau  
Resin flooring (kitchen): Debowa KG  
Drywall and paint works: Maler Kritzinger GmbH  
Resin finish work (guest bathrooms) and specialized interior finishes: Moling Srl  
Wood flooring: Simonazzi GmbH  
Stone works: Nikolaus Bagnara Spa  
Tiles flooring : Fliesenservice KG  
Linoleum/Carpet flooring: Simonazzi GmbH  
Wooden Windows: Tip Top Fenster GmbH  
Metal windows: Metek GmbH  
Automated doors: Metek GmbH  
Inner doors: Rubner Türen  
Wooden carpentry: Ludwig Rabanser SAS & CO  
Custom-built furniture: Tischlerei Malfertheiner OHG  
Custom-built furniture (guest rooms): Tischlerei Malfertheiner OHG - Poltrona Frau Spa  
Standard Furnishings: Trias OHG – Firma Sedis GmbH  
Upholstery and window coverings: Firma Sedis GmbH  
Kitchen and bar equipment: Winkler Gastro Solution  
Audio-video equipment: Elektro Nicolussi KG  
Lighting solutions: XAL Lights (lower level), Lichtstudio Eisenkeil GmbH

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## FURNITURE

See image captions

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## PHOTOGRAPHER PHOTO STYLIST

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Anna Quinz