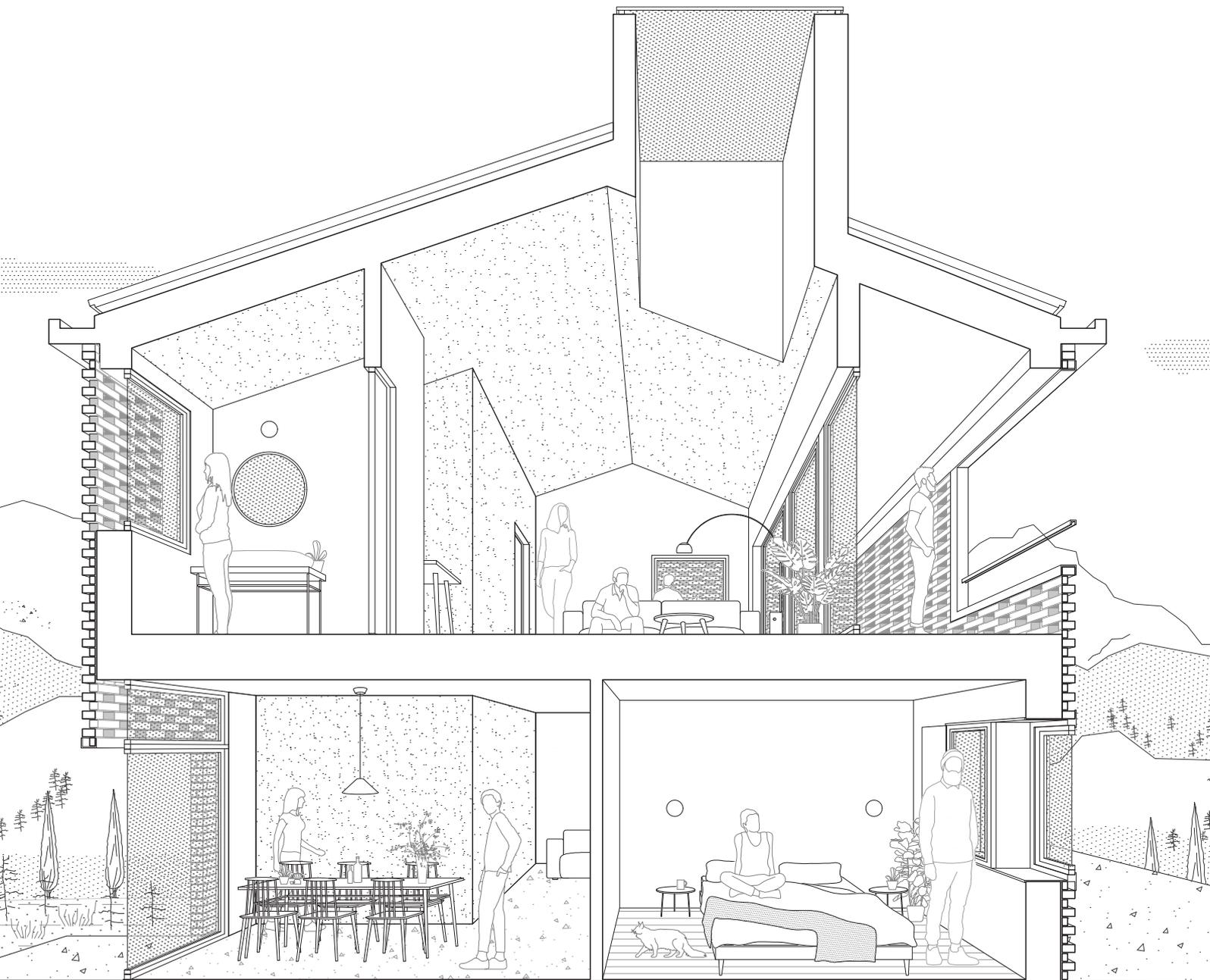


# ATOMAA CATO



#CATO 2021 Brick House

Pistoia, IT

Countryside  
House

390sqm

“Forgetting is a parallel phenomenon to remembering; if you do not empty your head, your memory, you will have a cluttered memory, complicated thoughts... This is why forgetting is as important as remembering, they are complementary. And also in the project we must forget, as in life, to take a direction, to select... forgetting is a way of selecting. Which is a way to remember.” Fernando Tavora in conversation with Giovanni Leoni e Antonio Esposito, Porto 1999

The countryside southwest of Pistoia is flat and after Montecatini it turns into a large nature reserve called Padule di Fucecchio. On the border between the plain and the marshes, the design of the fields follows the orientation of the old ‘casoni’, which stand out against the landscape. They were buildings with mixed functions, partly residential and partly productive, and lay longitudinally with a South-East / North-West trend to allow the sun’s rays to heat both long facades.

The construction materials are typically stone and bricks, artificial elements shaped by the hand of man, but so indivisible from the surrounding landscape. In some buildings, the overlapping of the windows on two sides transforms the material and gives it lightness, so the landscape also changes and from the background it becomes part of the domestic interior. In the old barns, the brick walls are displaced to accommodate natural light and ventilation.

In the old buildings, the different functions take on the forms of simple volumetric additions, as in the existing building, where each volume had its own raison d’être which was reflected in the facades design and in the use of materials. Where closure and protection were needed, while allowing the passing of air and light, the brick was lightened and opened, as is the case in many of the old barns in the region.

The project building replaces the end part of a Casone. The design strategy aims to eliminate the different volumetric figures that have added up over time, and seeks a more abstract volumetric completeness, which manifests itself within the brick envelope. The interiors, on the other hand, are organized by proposing a certain spatial articulation.

The interiors are organized in closed rooms, service nuclei containing bedrooms, bathrooms and laundry, and which are freely composed in the space constituting in fact a new open, free environment, the result of the misalignment of the nuclei. The resulting space is the living space, open to the landscape and passing between the South-East and North-West façades.

The search for openness to the outside builds the project, the living spaces open with full-height glass surfaces, dimensionally included between the service nuclei. The large loggias are placed in continuity with the living areas, to help increase the open space to the outside; where the loggias build a filtered environment, a space in the middle, between the windows of the living rooms and the gelosia brick wall.

Extract from the local legislation: “In rural buildings in the area, the h / l ratio must be a maximum of 1.5 for windows with a maximum height not exceeding 130 cm; and 2.5 for doors with a maximum height not exceeding the 210 cm.”

#### Gelosia

“Facade system with the aim of preventing introspection and, at the same time, able to allow those inside to look outside.”

The project doesn’t want to look new; it is based on traditional materials already existing on the site, such as brick or plaster of certain colours, all under the pitched roof in Tuscan-style tiles.

The facades are clad entirely in brick of traditional format and colour, laid reproducing the traditional texture used in barns: allowing the air to circulate and mediate the extreme heat of summers in the plains, while also modulating the light that filters and flows quietly inside.

Like all rural houses in the area, the volumetric completion takes place with the archetypal shape of the hut.

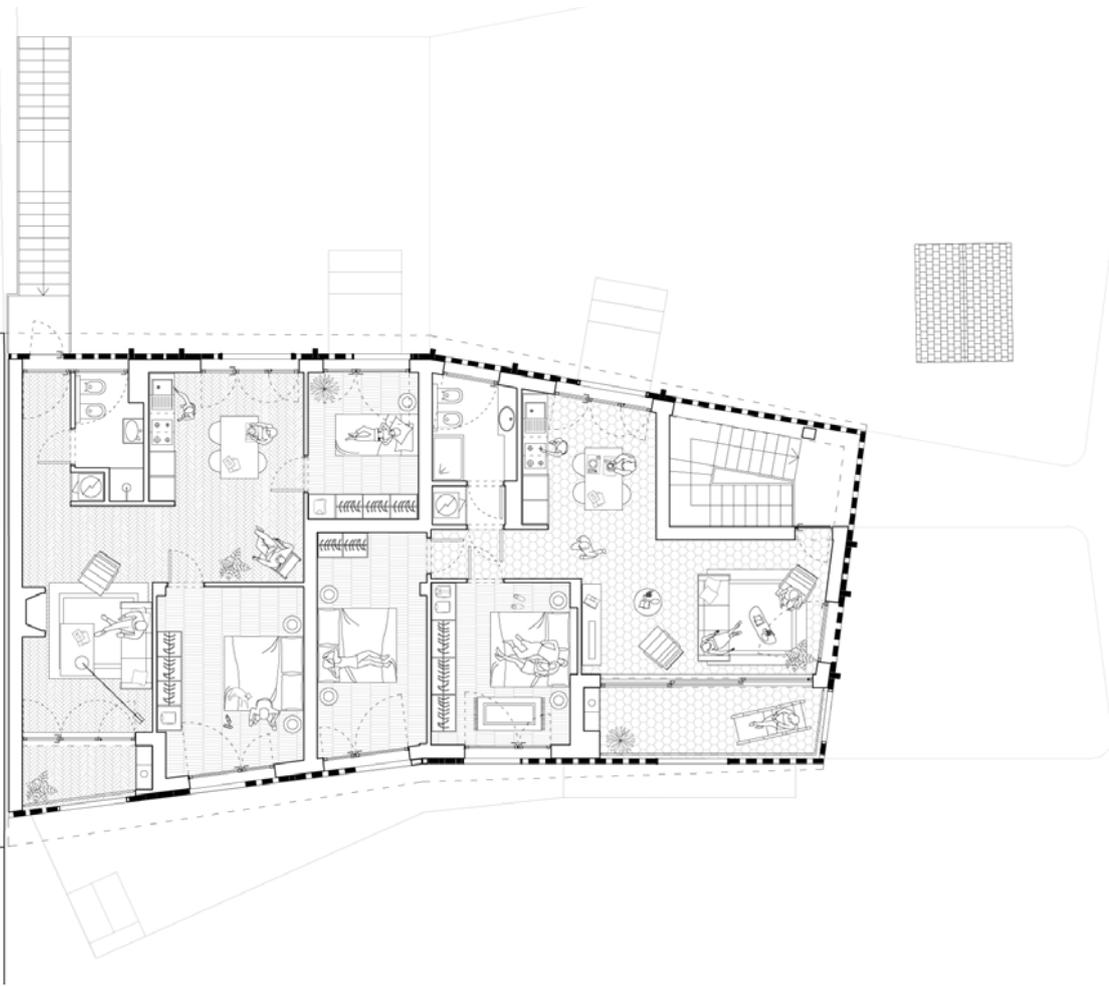
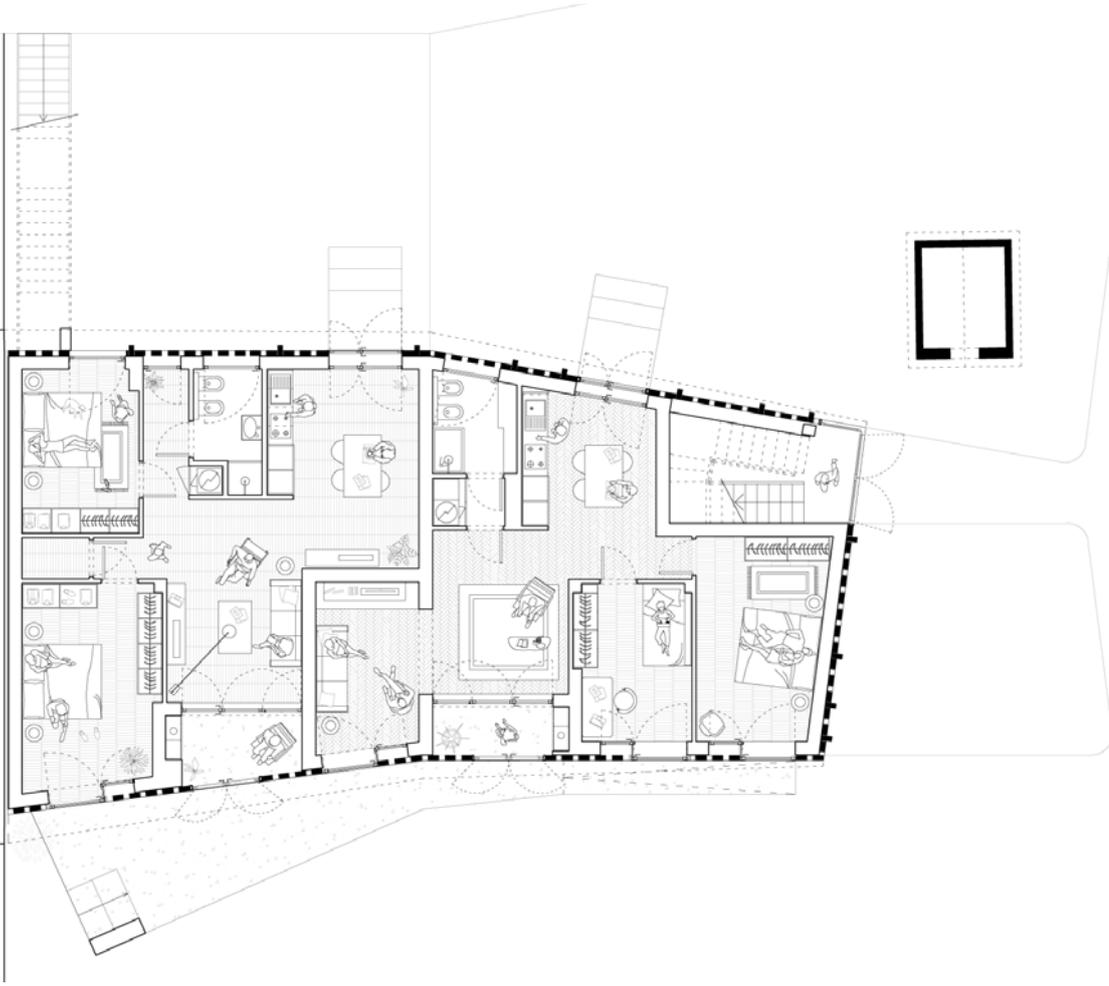
All the internal walls are simply plastered in white, the floors are made of wood in the closed rooms, while in the living areas they are made of ceramic of various sizes. The layout and textures, which differ according to the apartment, play with the dark and light reflections of the light filtering through the perforated walls and large windows.



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## Credits

Client: Private

Typology: Countryside House

Place: Pistoia, Italy

Year: 2021.07

Sqm: 390

Architectural Design: ATOMAA, with Michael Schmidt

Design Team: Paolo Restelli, Danilo Monzani, Daniela Serini, Mauro Atzeni,

Murat Bilen

Photography: ATOMAA Archive

Model photography: Alberto Strada

General contractor: Silvano Ferretti Srl

Structural consultant: Domus Ingegneria (Ingegneri Associati Ducci Monti)

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