

Steven Holl Architects

Swiss Embassy Residence, Washington, D.C., USA

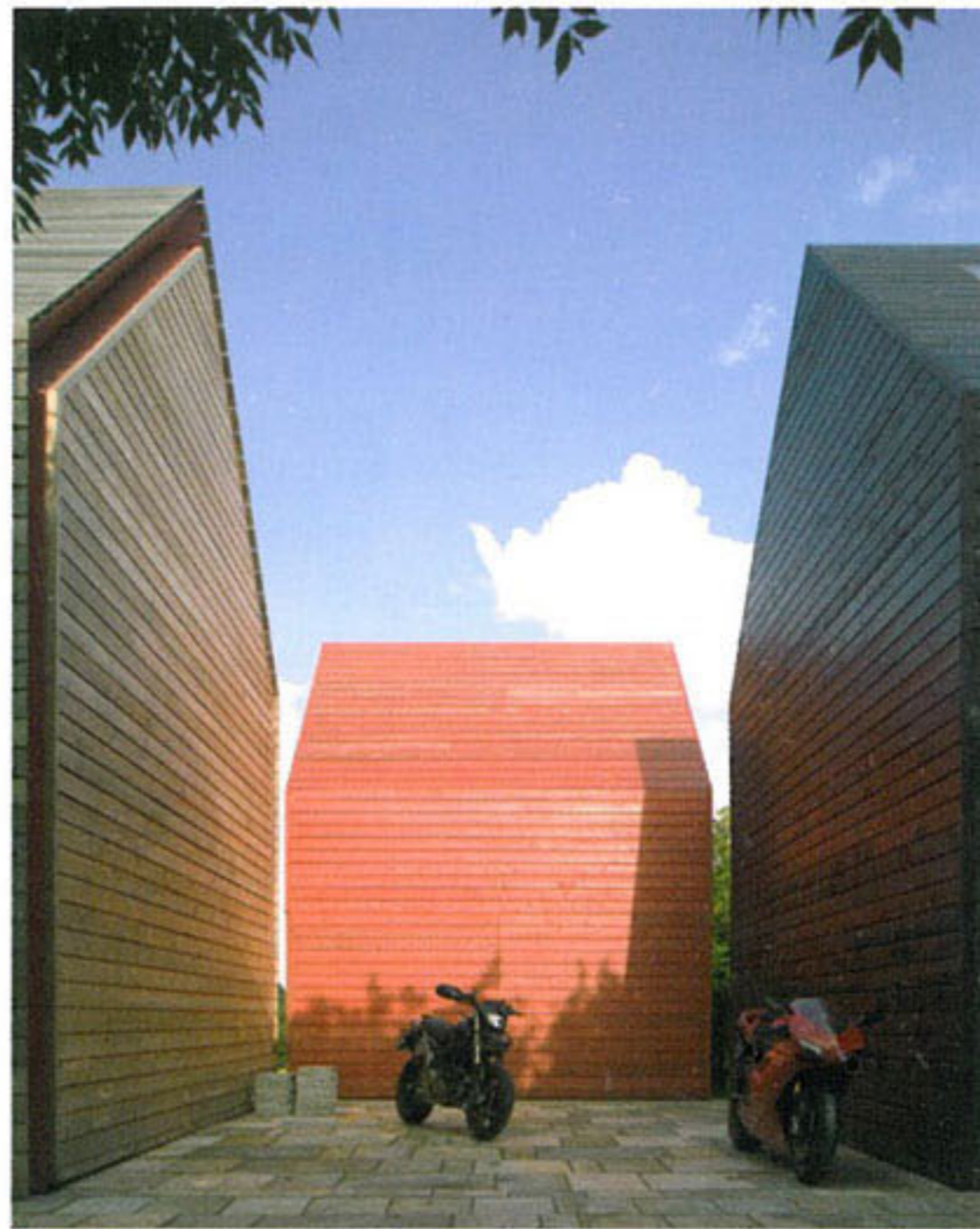


This scheme was placed first in a competition between ten Swiss-American architectural teams to design a replacement for the Washington, D.C. residence of the Swiss Ambassador. It is a private house as well as a cultural gathering place on which the standards and self-image of its country are measured. Sited on a hill with a direct view through the trees to the Washington monument in the distance, the concept is derived from a diagonal line of overlapping spaces drawn through a cruciform courtyard plan. Official arrival and ceremonial spaces are connected along this diagonal line on the first level, while private living quarters are on the level above. Materials are charcoal coloured concrete trimmed in local slate and sandblasted structural glass planks. Constructed according to the Swiss 'Minergie Standard', the south facades use passive solar energy. The existing natural landscape has been clarified with new walkways and trees, while the plateau of the residence defines an arrival square and a reception courtyard.

Walls **1.016 1.048**
 Windows **3.026 3.027 3.112**
 Doors **4.077**
 Landscape **7.014**

dRMM (de Rijke Marsh Morgan Architects)

Sliding House, Suffolk, England, UK



The brief for this unusual residence was for a house where the owners could grow food, entertain friends and enjoy the landscape. An appreciation of vernacular farm buildings shared by architect and client led to the design of three apparently conventional timber 'sheds'. The linear arrangement includes three programmes – house, garage and annexe. The garage is pulled off axis to create a courtyard between the three. The composition is further defined by material and colour – red rubber membrane, glass and red-and-black stained larch. Almost shockingly, the separated forms can be transformed by a 20 ton mobile enclosure which traverses the site, creating combinations of enclosure, open-air living and attractive framing of views. This is an autonomous structure constructed from steel, timber, insulation and unstained larch and runs along recessed railway tracks. Movement is powered by hidden electric motors on wheels integrated into the wall thickness. The tracks can be extended in the future should the client wish to build a swimming pool, which may need occasional shelter.

Walls **1.008 1.022 1.067**
 Floors **2.054**
 Roofs **5.028**

MacGabhann Architects

Tuath na Mara, Lough Swilly, County Donegal, Ireland



This project concerns itself with the specifics of the site and putting the personal and particular above the powerful and the public. The site is hidden from the road and is accessed from high ground, where the first experience is of an elevated view of the site and the sea beyond. Therefore the importance of the roof, or fifth facade, dictated a metal zinc cladding which is used for both the walls and roof. The plan is inspired by traditional narrow cottages and contains three sleeping cells and auxiliary spaces in the middle, with two living areas, one at each end, connected by a library. The roof of both living areas is flipped and directed in opposite directions towards particular points in the landscape. Both living areas are fully glazed. By way of contrast, the sloped slit windows of the bedrooms act as a counterpoint to the absolute horizontal of the ocean horizon. The roof rainwater is drained by gargoyles, making one aware of the elements even in the lightest of showers, thus reinforcing the connection between inhabitant and nature.

Walls **1.045**
 Floors **2.089**
 Windows **3.012 3.013 3.139**
 Roofs **5.064 5.065**