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MEDITERRANEAN FORUM

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€ 25,00



Il Formichiere



## LGR HOUSE

Giarre (Catania)

collaborator: Perla Flamingo

structural engineer: Carmelo Lanzafame

ph. Moreno Maggi

Lrg House is located in the town of Giarre, at the foot of Etna. It is a single family house on two floors and takes a modern perspective on the traditional courtyard house common in Sicily.

The patio which is dominated by a large olive tree, becomes the heart of the whole house, visible from both the ground floor and the upper floor through the large windows. The house is organized on one level except for a lounge area which is accessible through the master bedroom and the library/study which looks onto the living area.

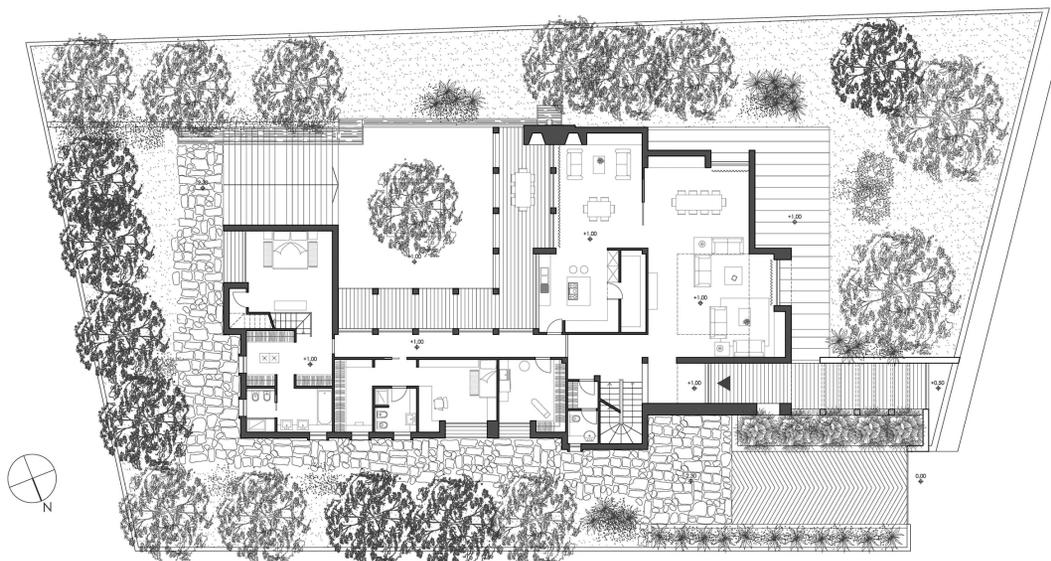
The entrance, is reached from the road, passing through a long pergola within the private garden, the feature of a long, high single pane of glass shows off the height of the day area with its spacious salon.

The kitchen and a part of the sleeping area are covered by a pitched roof which slopes towards the courtyard while the rest of the roofing is flat.

In the basement which is accessible by a ramp there is a large garage, a cellar, a storeroom, a bathroom and a Spa. The external spaces are organized into gardens on different levels, connected together by wide steps with water channels at the sides which follow the fall of the steps.

The materials employed to furnish and refine the building are contrasting in both feel and look and they underline the play between the full and empty spaces.









## CHURCH OF SAINTS COSMA AND DAMIANO

Acireale (Catania)

collaborators: Perla Flamingo, Caterina Piro, Koncita Santo, Antonella Virzi

structural engineer: Carmelo Lanzafame

artists: Alfio Sorbello, Jan Jedlicka

ph. Moreno Maggi

ph. (doors) Fabrizio Ciurcina

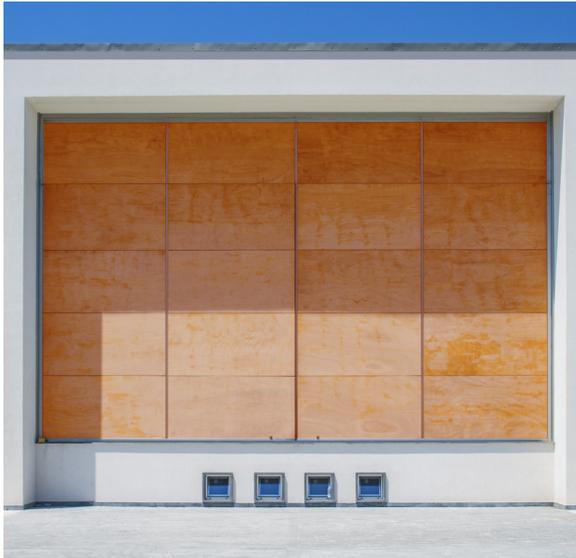
The parish complex in Acireale dedicated to Saints Cosma and Damiano is the outcome of a winning completion entry. Its position on the outskirts of the urban area, makes it a gateway to the hamlet of San Cosmo.

Two Saints: Cosma and Damiano. Like twin drops that merge into one *...inter se congruunt et in una confunduntur...*

The idea behind the project is shaped by dualism rather than unity. The entire parish complex is oriented on a double directional alignment: first on an east-west axis, and the second following the natural shape of the plot of land.

The geometrical matrix which generates the planimetric framework takes shape and converges on the church, which originates from the intersection of two square-based elements rotated on each other, from which two main lines branch off and on which the bell tower rises, symbol of the sacred, reference point of the community.

The parish complex is structured around the cloisters, a sacred quadrangle, representing a pause in the buildings and a place of reflection and reception, enclosed by the two sections of the buildings which are connected by the arcades, but each with its own specific functions. On the



South side lies the parish hall, the rooms for catechesis on the Northwest side, and the church on the East side.

The parish hall is characterized by the double-fronted stage that opens through a large removeable window onto the Cloister offering outside space during summer events. The canonical house has a more sheltered position on the North side of the complex, and it is linked to the sacristy by an external path that emphasizes its private nature.

The church is conceived of as a single space where believers can gather owing both to its layout and the effects obtained by the use of materials and luminous transparency. The block ends in a double, sloping, single-pitch cover that underlines the overall plan. From the inside, the ceiling increases in height and marks the way towards the altar. The longitudinal axis of the hall is positioned according to the traditional east-west orientation from which the poles of liturgy fan out; the Baptistry on the southeast side, place of regeneration; the Confessional chapel on the northwest side, place of conciliation.

The main entrance can be reached through the cloister on the West side; the other entrances are diametrically opposed to each other and located on the North and South sides. The congregation forms a choir around the two central liturgical poles: the altar and the ambo.

On the northeast side, the Chapel of the Adoration is separated from the liturgical area by a sloping, plastered wall and by a second wall faced in lava stone; the two walls are staggered forming theatrical wings. Between them, a walkway leads right into the presbytery of the liturgical hall. Though the Chapel fills a well-defined and intimate space, it allows the faithful to take part in the services.

Special attention has been given to the diffusion of natural light in such a way as to create an impression of space. In

the presbytery from the large, full-length, vertical window that opens to the east and is hidden from sight by a wall curtain, the light comes in and slips through the openings between the walls, and the large cross at the back is illuminated by beams of light. The altar, focal point of the congregation, is lit up from above by a skylight set in the roof. The cylindrical shape, where the Baptismal Font is placed, not only lets the light in from the above, but is also illuminated by high, stained glass windows. Luminous loops have been placed in the points of intersection formed by the rotation of the two basic squares.

The outside has been created to form a continuous processional route starting from the church and leading to the outside altar, back through the cloisters and along the covered way that divides the hall from the sacristy.



## CARNIVAL FOUNDATION OFFICES (Palazzo della Cultura)

Acireale (Catania)

in partnership with Cooprogetti

collaborators: Koncita Santo, Luca D'Urso, Rosa Strano,  
Alfio Cavallaro

structural engineer: Carmelo Lanzafame

ph. Moreno Maggi

Located in the heart of the old town of Acireale, the project to renovate the building as the Offices of the "Fondazione del Carnevale Acese" were undertaken with a view to making it more suitable for public use and to improve access while also recreating the original layout and recovering the historical image of the architectural complex.

The old courtyard has been recovered thanks to the restoration of the arches of the original arcade and refreshed through the design of the paving in lava stone and with contemporary touches which are easily distinguished and help to give an impression of space: the introduction of a canopy roof above the pre-existing first floor balcony has been enlivened by a wooden sunbreak so as to open up the space with a language of purposeful autonomy, or also the aired wall built in lava stone which give a different architectural connotation to the whole building creating a dialogue between the original colours and materials.

Finally the elimination of the additions and extensions on the first floor has permitted the original proportions of the building to emerge, the ceiling vaults are fully visible while the modern open space offices and areas separated by glass panels respect the visual perspectives.









## REPIN

Acicatena (Catania)

collaborator: Maria Cappello

structural engineer: Carmelo Lanzafame

ph. Giovanni Chiaramonte

The building is composed of a long prism-shaped building in which the offices are located, besides this there is another cylinder shaped structure with an elliptic base designed as the waiting room.

This second structure seems to float on the water. The block housing the offices is distributed over two levels with a central corridor off which the technical and commercial offices open on the ground floor, while the management offices are on the upper storey. Here too, the services are concentrated in a structure which is turquoise blue. The whole structure is defined architecturally as a solid with a rectangular base in re enforced concrete, completely emptied of material, and supported by circular pillars and enclosed by large windows protected by a system of wooden sun-blinds. The office block gives the impression that it is floating above the ground. The roof of the block is flat and features two circular holes which open onto two internal gardens in the shape of trapezoids. So the overall image is that of an architectural object completely suspended above a lawn and a water basin backed by the skyline of Etna.



