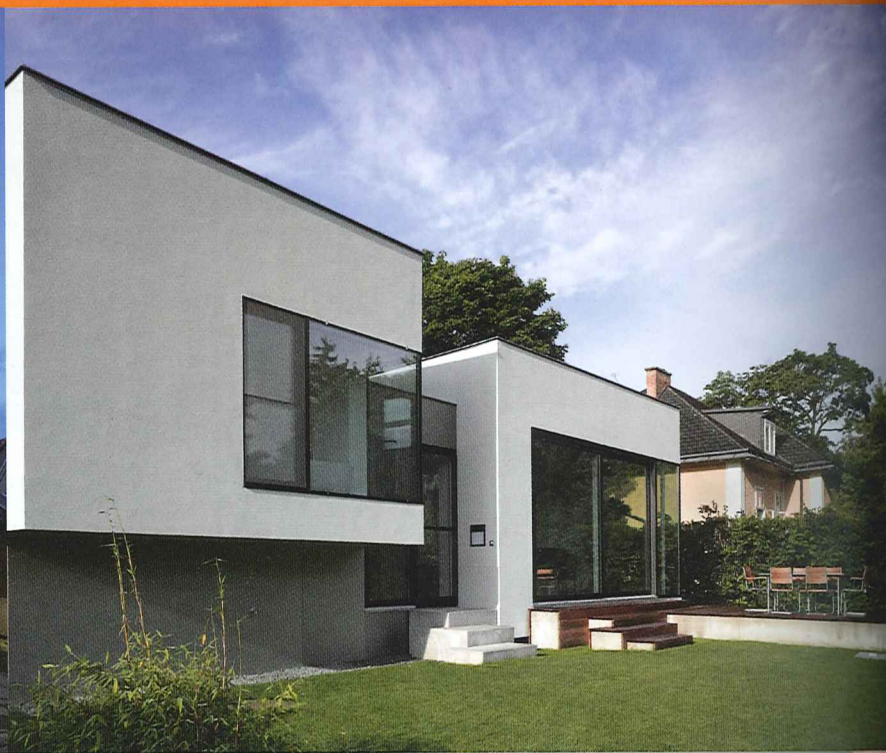
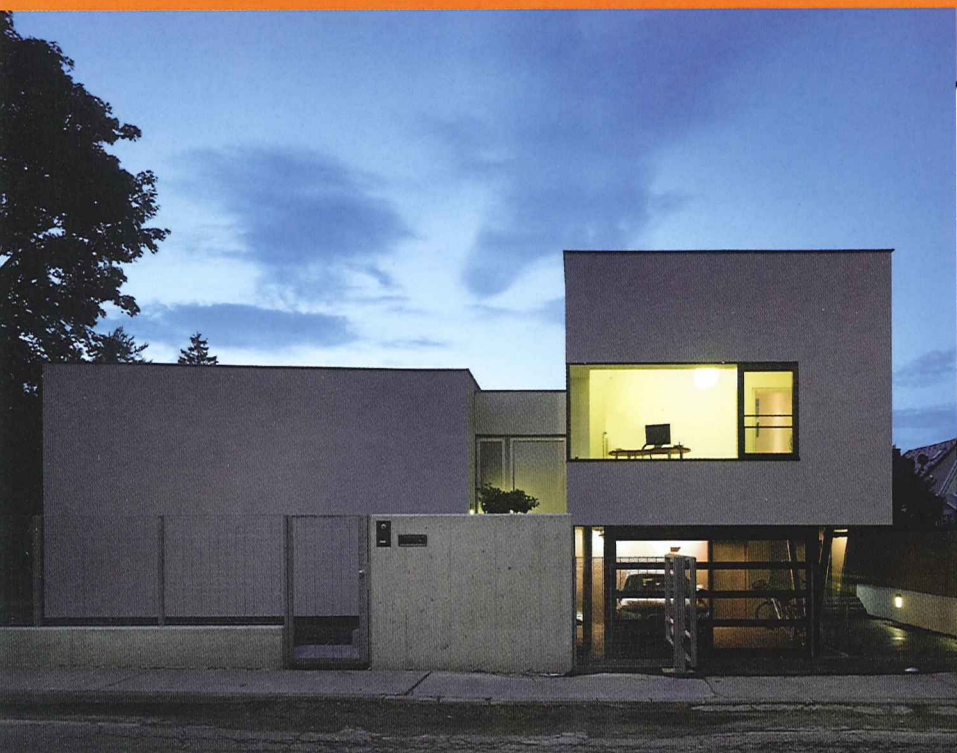


PRIVATISED

Elise House SYNN Architekten

Photography by Daniela Macadden





This lovingly detailed house in Vienna is a cubistic exercise devoted to providing functional divisions for privacy within a tightly unified formal language. Three white boxes interact to set up the parti. Of different proportions and sizes, they accommodate living areas, bedrooms and a children's area. A spine joins these and becomes the central axis of the house. One of the boxes (holding the master and guest bedrooms) is raised half a level to create a sheltered space for cars. A small courtyard off the children's room allows more natural light into the house. The whole building is elevated slightly off grade, to establish a clear differentiation between garden and building, keeping the character of the latter urban and exact, and containing the former unambiguously.

The neighbouring houses are of a more traditional character, and the Elise House certainly stands out. But its precise detailing, absence of decoration, and minimalist profiles do confirm an attitude to quality that will help it 'fit in' over time. This is after all a carefully executed piece of architecture, no matter its size. The house initially

turns inward to its own garden, allowing only the study to face glazing towards the street front – a substantiation of the client's wish for privacy. Windows in the house turn corners, becoming interesting features in the rooms, and orienting many views upwards.

The cubistic approach is taken consistently throughout the interior as well, right down to the furniture. A feature wall in the living room, which incorporates a small fireplace, sports rectangular reveals in a subtle reference to the whole. The interior is generally minimalist but warm, thanks to the thought-through proportions of the rooms, and the careful manipulation of natural light via the apertures. The house feels intimate yet is not overly small, and while it shares a design approach with art galleries or retail spaces, it is completely domestic in personality. Its environmental bona fides include a heat pump using three thermal ground probes, helping keep the building low-energy.

