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Milan, I

SS36 Valassina Office Building Built 2001–2004

The project is about the reconfiguration of a building situated along the Superstrada Valassina (SS36). The new program of office spaces required the design of a new façade. The aggressive environment (traffic, pollution, sun) made us think of a thick-walled shelter, perforated only by thin vertical windows (70 x 310 cm) arranged in a precise rhythm. This facade organization enabled the free and easy configuration of the inside office space offered for sale. The elimination of all existing elements such as frames, finishing, roof, and the creation of a new facade with a dark-grey clinker finishing and glass windows as a unified surface gives a new presence to the existing volume: a dark block, strong and resistant. But the perception from the fast-traffic SS36 is ambiguous and dynamic, due to the rhythmical variations of the window line and the staggered facade, one section of which retreats at an angle of 45°.

New Town Hall Seregno, Milan 1999–2003 under construction

The project, developed after a competition in 1999 (now under construction), involves the extension of the old town hall, with 2,200 m² of office space, the council chamber, a new parking lot (300 cars), and the public square in the very center of the city of Seregno (Milan). Public space is ordered in a sequence of interconnected sites: this idea of continuity of the public surface is the principle of the design for the town hall – a suspended building, with an open ground floor as a contemporary “loggia dei mercanti”, a covered space for public activities. This new suspended block, with a very simple shape, is placed in the middle of the space. The position of the block in relation to the context is a very important goal of the project. The connection with the old town hall is solved at level 1 where an exhibition hall and the council chamber are located. A cubic skylight is placed above the square as a symbolic presence.

ST House Bartassina, Milan 2001–2005

The shape of the house is simple and invokes the idea of the pitched-roof house reduced to the essential. The plan design starts from the intersection of two primary figures that constitute the house also in a functional way – night and day. A strict control of the volume, which at the same time is a control of the void, shaped as a labyrinthine sequence, where the inside-outside becomes a constant “staying-in”. Inside, the slopes are effective in plan as well as in section, in the space. Every room has something special and different, as a result of the simple, strictly orthogonal layout of interiors. The exterior is entirely brick-clad with minimum joints. The uniform brickwork mass is cut and carved, then recomposed with glass. The brick pitched roofs are already changing color and are taking on a certain patina, and the ones on the north side already see some moss little by little...

