



The visionary architect for tailored dwellings

Empathic listening and creative ability are the distinctive features of **Dolores Vicini**



Dolores Vicini is a visionary. An architect, but also somewhat of a psychologist. She understands the soul, the essence of the client and sees beyond. Beyond the expectations of the clients, beyond what reality shows her. She has made Gae Aulenti's motto her own: 'Architecture is a man's job, but I have always pretended that it isn't'. And so, a few years after graduating from the Politecnico of Milano, she courageously opened her studio in Domodossola relying on an all-female team, with her colleagues, Elisa Fracei and Benedetta Sciaraffa. She deals with architectural design, renovation, interior design, installations and much more. Her professional journey is long and complex. From road and urban planning projects in Central America to the creation or renovation of public and private buildings, including nurseries, tourist accommodation facilities and facilities for disadvantaged groups, up to commercial buildings where she expresses a vein of minimal chic with essential lines. She uses black and white, glass and steel.

Precision and elegance, with meticulous attention to detail and finishes. "I focus a great deal on renovations - she says -, often also to bring back to life very old buildings. Every project always starts from listening to the client and from understanding needs and desires. It sometimes happens



PH. FRANCESCA FALCIOLO

that I steer clients to choices different to those they had in mind. And they are usually enthusiastic about the result." Then the works follow one another at a rapid pace. Luxury residences on the Côte d'Azur, Switzerland, Liguria, on the Maggiore and Orta lakes, but also historic buildings that the architect enhances with a painstaking search for original materials to integrate with existing ones. "When I accept a job - she says - I immediately see how the final result will be, instantly. Then it is just a matter of

transferring my visionary sensations into projects to make the client also grasp them. Project management is essential. I follow every site from the foundations to the furnishings and sometimes the accessories. Finishes and accessories are those aspects that make a home unique, suggesting the owner's style." Eclectic, sports lover, AIS sommelier, half Spanish and half Italian, a woman of a thousand interests, she reads and explores infinite themes, absorbs new perspectives, new points of view that

somehow manage to transfer into her work. Because architecture is a bit like a magician's hat, from which wonders can emerge. However, this requires great professionalism and a desire to stir emotions. Dolores Vicini has turned her passion into her job. This is something very fortunate for her and her clients. The projects are tailored, expressing the soul and the essence of the client. A comfortable but elegant design is built around the latter. Beautiful to look at. And beautiful does not necessarily mean expensive. ■

New life and minimal look for Fra' Dolcino's Tower

In Val d'Ossola, the ancient signalling building has been revived thanks to architect Dolores Vicini. Creggio is a hamlet in the municipality of Trontano (Verbania). Part of its territory lies within the Parco Nazionale della Val Grande. Out of all of Trontano's various historical buildings, there is one that always draws the attention of tourists and the curious. It is Fra' Dolcino's Tower, the heretic who also appeared in Dante's Divine Comedy. The thirteenth century tower was one of the signalling buildings for monitoring the territory against possible incursions. Damaged in the 15th century, it was later restored by Ludovico il Moro after the battle of Crevola in 1487. The tower with its appurtenances is now owned by the entrepreneur Michele Rondoni who decided to turn to architect Vicini to recover the building and reconvert it into a small but very charming accommodation facility. It is precisely the ability to recover forms and materials that convinced the client. Vicini is already at an advanced stage of the implementation of a project that develops vertically with minimal but very neat spaces, with a spectacular view over the valley. Right in front of the tower passes the characteristic foliage train, which runs from Domodossola through the picturesque Valle Vigezzo to Locarno in Switzerland.

