

The result of an effort to create affordable family apartments in Lugano, the six-storey building perched on a steep hillside has separate entrances and an unpretentious design. For economic and construction grounds, but also for ecological reasons, the architect Lorenzo Felder selected wood construction and an envelope of cement composite panels.



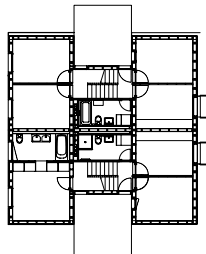
Casa Montarina, Lugano, Switzerland

SIMPLICITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

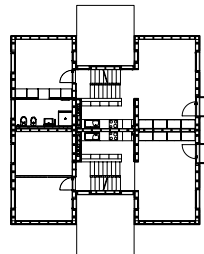




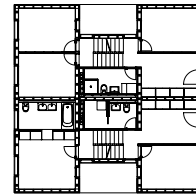
With a height of 2.7 meters, all the windows are ceiling high and based on the inner room divisions, are distributed fairly regularly over the façade.



Ground floor 1:500



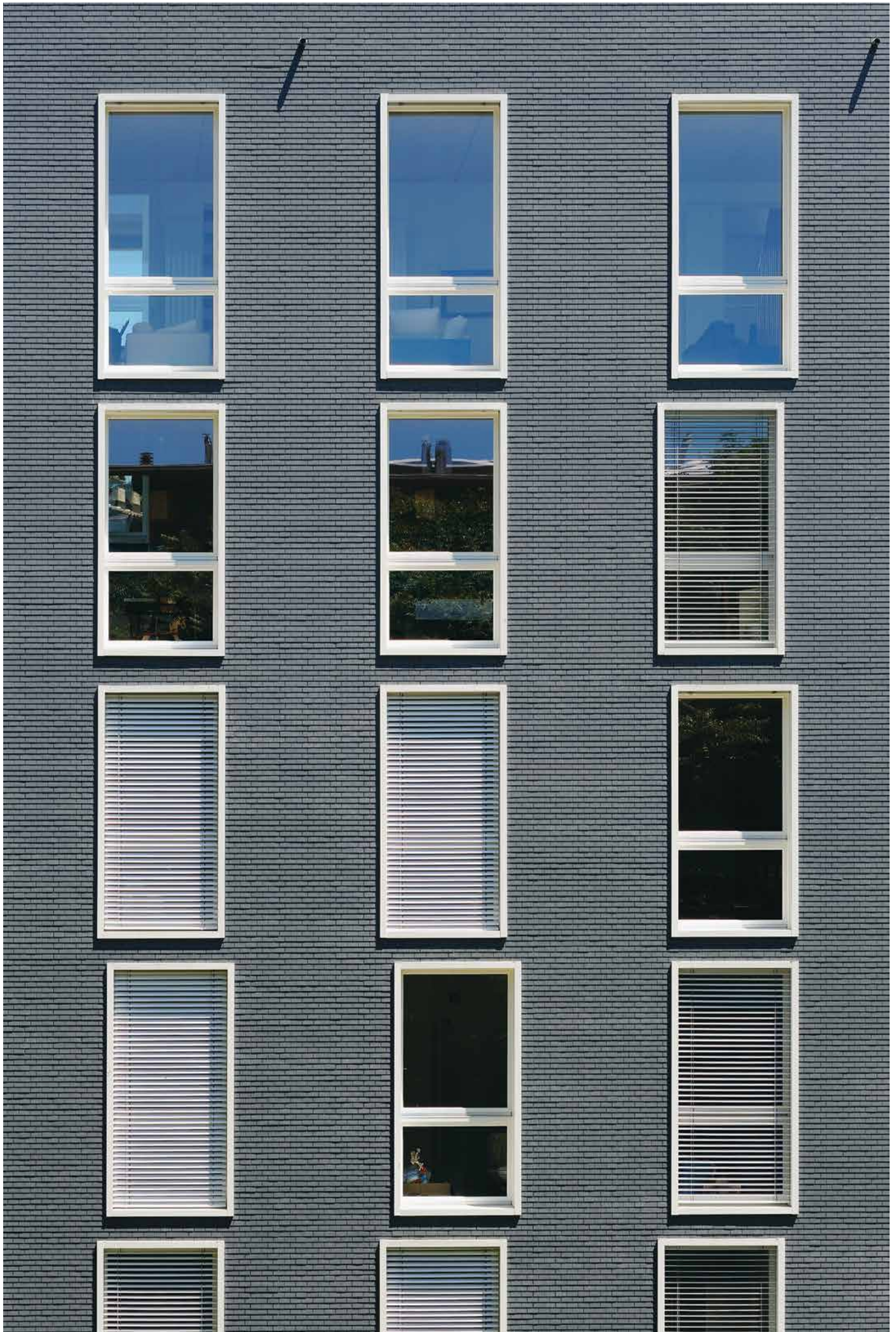
First floor



Third floor

“The building is oriented toward people who are critical of the consumer society and unconditional progress – to the benefit of the environment.” Architect Lorenzo Felder tells us animatedly that for him, it is not simply about designing ecological architecture, it is about a deep awareness of our habitat. He stated this to us while standing in front of the building, which stands on a slope in a small valley in the middle of Lugano, the largest city in southern Switzerland. It is a multi-family residence with four 5½-room apartments, where the architect and his family also live. The location marks the border between city and nature. Access is along a quiet street in the residential neighbourhood behind the railway station. Behind the house, wild natural growth stretches out into the notch valley, which has been preserved here in the middle of expanding settlement growth.

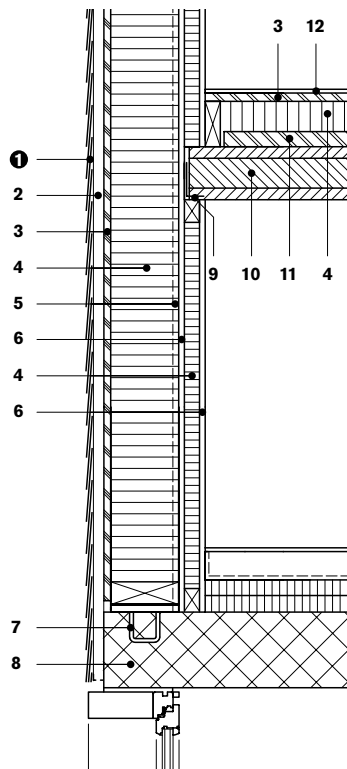
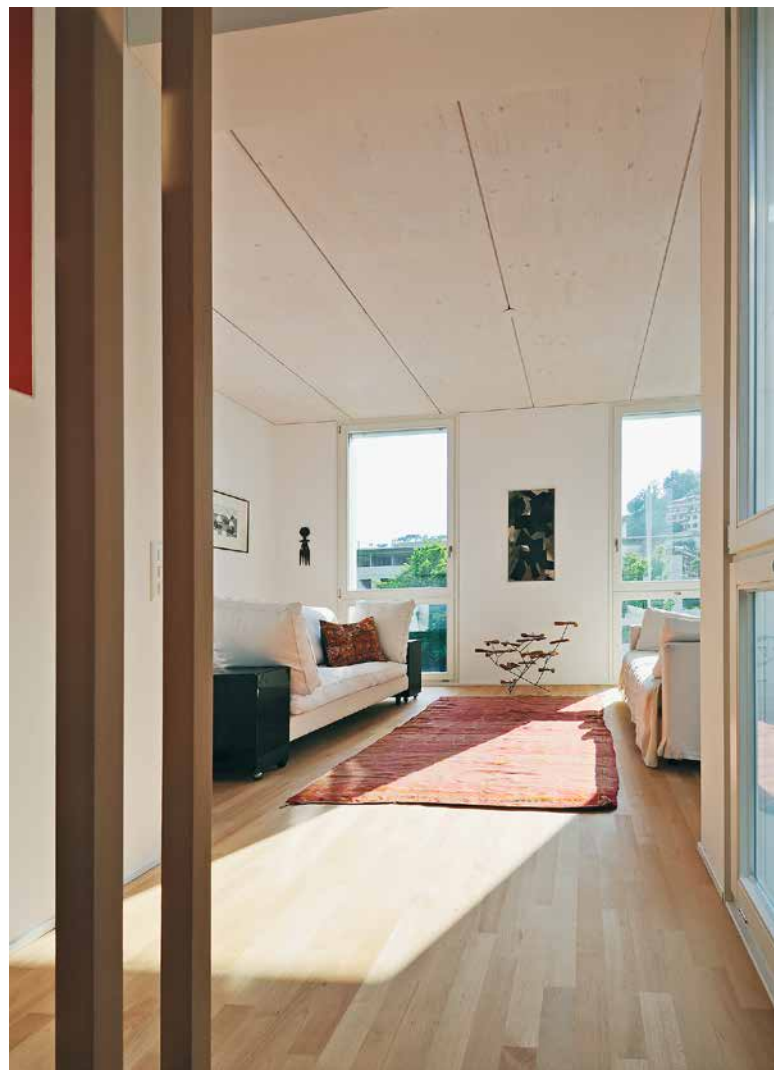
As if hewn from the steep hillside, the architect has placed the four units in pairs one upon the other as triplex apartments, meaning each is three storeys high. The rooms on the front and back are set back a half a storey so the eye is drawn to the near view of the greenery or the distant view of the sky. Thanks to the vertical recesses in the structure, there are diverse sight lines, such as from the children’s room over into the dining room. In the centre of the apartment, the kitchen and bathroom are arranged next to the stairwell. A second bathroom is directly off the parent’s bedroom. The lower apartments have a garden patio, the upper apartments a balcony or roof terrace. The tenants could also participate in the decisions on spatial distribution and interior design.





Location Via Aprica 30, Lugano, Switzerland
Client Mimi Lepori Bonetti, Lorenzo Felder, Lugano, Switzerland
Architects Lorenzo Felder, Lugano, Switzerland
Building period 2007 – 2008
General contractor/Engineers Borlini & Zanini SA, Pambio-Noranco, Switzerland
Wood construction and façade construction Laube SA, Biasca, Switzerland
Façade material SWISSPEARL® NOBILIS, Black N 012

The apartment house could be constructed as a wood building, even with six floors, because that is now the maximum permitted height – and a challenge for the wood construction company as well as a pioneer project in southern Switzerland. The usual concrete stairwell could be dispensed with as the apartment entrances are each separate, following the line of the slope. Swisspearl was selected for the façade skin for reasons, among others, of its lighter weight and its fire security. Because of the well-insulated construction techniques and heating provided by heat pumps and earth probes, the building meets the Minergie Eco Standard – also an innovation in the canton of Ticino. In order to avoid grout patterns in the simplest possible façade, Lorenzo Felder selected small-format roof slates, which are drawn over the living spaces like a mantle. *Michael Hanak*



Vertical section 1:20

- 1 Swisspearl® cement composite panel 6 mm, double layer
- 2 ventilation cavity
- 3 oriented strand board
- 4 thermal insulation
- 5 vapour barrier
- 6 gypsum board
- 7 steel anchor
- 8 concrete slab over basement
- 9 steel angle support
- 10 timber structural slab
- 11 cementitious board, sound insulation
- 12 parquet flooring

