

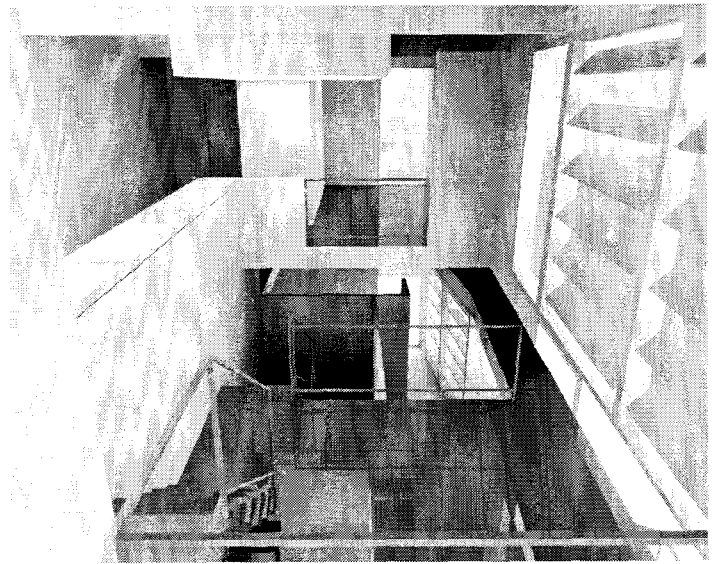
The 2-Way House

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The house is located on the south side of Bernal Hill, a neighborhood in San Francisco that is rapidly transforming from a loosely arranged network of partially paved roads and randomly placed stucco and T-111 clad houses, to a more uniform collection of large scale new homes. While most of the new homes in the area tend to be bigger than any pre-existing structures, it was the wish of the client to build a home that was responsive to the scale of extant building fabric, but without replicating prevalent material or stylistic typologies.

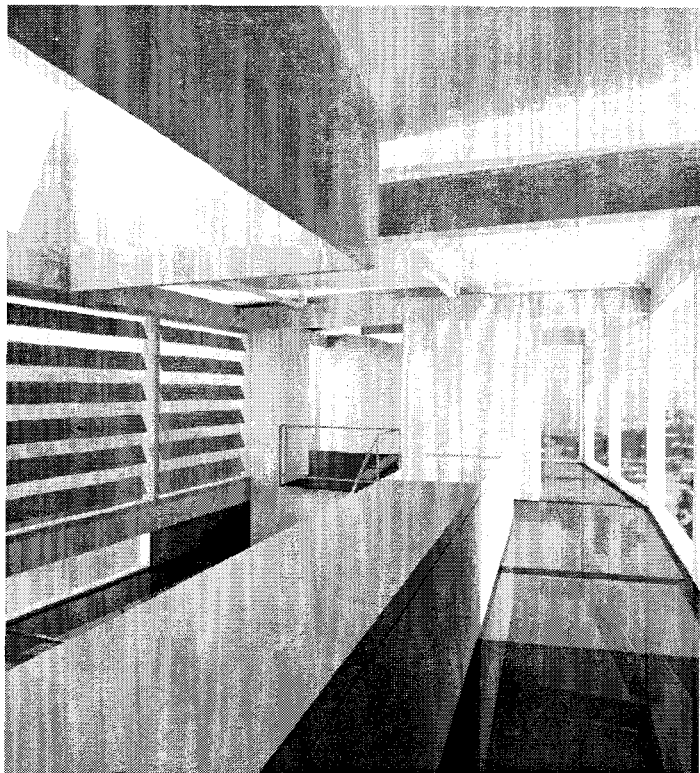


As the site is positioned just below the crest of a hill that hovers above the rest of the city, the building straddles two very different spatial scales: that of the narrow street and densely arranged houses on the upside, and the extended views over the tops of buildings towards the Bay and cityscape on the downside. For this reason, the 2-Way House can be seen as a threshold across which these two scales merge, and the architecture has been conceived with the aim to frame and promote different aspects of this intersection.



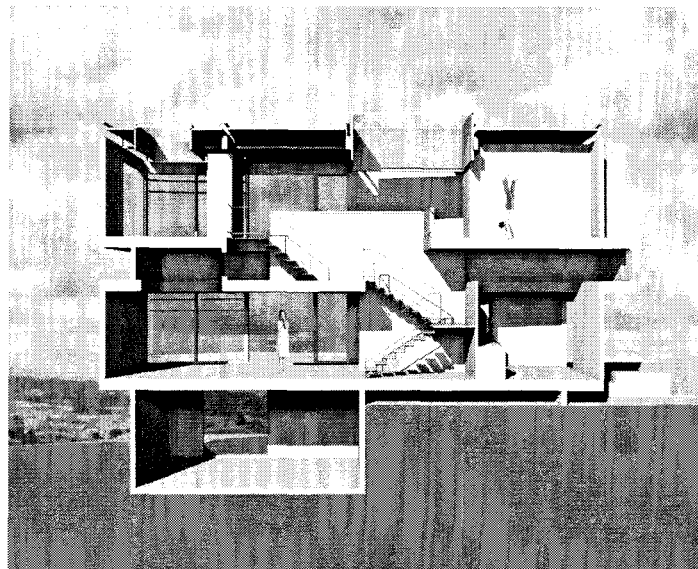
The form of the 2-Way House comes from the juxtaposition of tectonic and abstract formal languages divided along a common perimeter wall. By maintaining a clear distinction between the structural assembly on the outside and the more homogenized surfaces of the inside, the 2-Way frames something of the conventional dichotomy by which interior and exterior have been traditionally distinguished by codes of materiality and construction. In this case, the structure is apparent on the exterior, while inside the scale of interiority is transgressed through the diminishment of material difference and extended views of the city beyond.

The expression of structure and construction has long stood as an emblem for the individual through the circumscription of the human body in the scaling of materials and the disclosure of the construction processes. The 2-Way House prompts a dialectics between the more typically exclusive styles of abstracted surfaces and craft construction. On the inside materiality has been bracketed away to produce a network of smooth and continuous white planes, while on the exterior the "kit of parts" façade makes an image of the economy we have



come to associate with pre-fab and modular construction (despite the fact that the revelation of construction usually costs more than the suppression of it).

By juxtaposing these two contrasting languages, the 2-Way House takes for its subject the representational dynamics of the contextual and the universal. Through the arrangement of varying shades of "off-white" paint, It provides a graphic representation of materiality intended to counter the neutralizing figure of abstracted white walls that we have come to associate with most interiors. On the exterior it alludes to an image of technology that is disjointed from the interior: an



inversion of the more pervasive linkage of abstraction with a public face, or façade and the tectonic with the more intimate, or private interior realm. The 2-Way House amplifies the symbolic aspects of the house typology by joining together and confusing two usually polarized languages into one form.

The sectional form comes from the arrangement of three horizontal ribbons of space that shift along common axes, creating diverse floor to ceiling heights on the inside that are obscured on the exterior. This intentional disconnect between the disposition of interior space and the externalized logic of the form amplifies the dialectical relationship between the two realms by precluding an obvious and immediate comprehension of the form. As one crosses the many thresholds between inside and outside, and across the vertically stacked striations, the play between the two languages is made evident in the different ways that they are brought up against one another.



The spaces that comprise the house are assembled as distinct programmatic territories with a high degree of visual transparency between them. On the inside the bedroom areas are positioned with views towards one another across the landing/studio that is suspended between them, and views to the different scales of the city beyond are framed through large geometric figures of glass on the southern side and by strips of louvered panels on the closer more pedestrian side. Between the form and arrangement of the spaces, and the dissimilar language of interior and exterior, the 2-Way House becomes a meditation upon the complex dynamics of interior, exterior and the figuration of changing scales of extended volume framed by the varied proximities and apertures produced by a single building.

