

# METROPOLIS



ARCHITECTURE AND  
DESIGN AT ALL SCALES  
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**Mixed Reality**  
The Tech Issue

# At All Scales



COURTESY ATELIER XYZ

In suburban Turin, Italy, architecture studio Elastico Farm has created a pair of homes made of similar materials deployed divergently. In contrast to the orthogonal Cat House, the Dog House stacks and joins its slabs at irregular angles.

# SPECTRUM

## An essential survey of architecture and design today



A dual project by Italy- and Canada-based architecture studio Elastico Farm includes two houses (left) made of the same Sardinian granite slabs, fragments of which condition the interiors (below middle). Slabs and panels are also the basis of the residences' formal differences: The Cat House (below) is rectilinear, while the Dog House (bottom) coils inward and radiates out.

### RESIDENTIAL

#### Houses of Cards

Fronting bland rows of generic suburban houses in northwestern Italy, the Cat and Dog Houses were designed for two sisters, a cat person and a dog lover. The two-level, 2,153-square-foot residences share the same DNA but are distinct; by deploying identical elements to opposite effects, they indict the uniformity around them.

Both houses are composed of the same number of the same components: 20 Sardinian granite slabs collaged with colored concrete slabs. Although granite is often relegated to decor or trim in Italy, architecture firm Elastico Farm used it structurally here. The prefabricated slabs, each just under eight feet long, slot together via interlocking cuts and are anchored with metal dowels. Shipped directly from the quarry and then craned into place, they extend variously beyond the houses' facades and also extend inward.

How the houses diverge is compositionally. The extroverted Cat House was built to orthogonally frame its surrounding exterior space, while the introverted Dog House spirals inward even as it appears to burst outward, coiling around its courtyard and creating complex spaces.

"When you enter the Dog House, the slabs are right there. You touch them. You follow them," Stefano Pujatti, architect and Elastico cofounder, says. "In the Cat House, you find yourself confronted by the slabs and have to turn, which creates the views." With a dearth of pleasant vistas nearby, however, even those openings are unusual: "In each house, most of the windows look toward the other house, making it feel like one big house," Pujatti says. "One big house composed in two very different ways."

—Shonquis Moreno

