



SANTALUCIA

A

TRANSFORMING
A SMALL RURAL BUILDING
IN THE ABRUZZO REGIONFAMILY
AFFAIR

I'LL TRY NOT TO BE TOO PERSONAL. When my grandmother decided that that house would be her new home - an uninhabited ruin since the 1950s - I was struck by the ability she had in imagining that tiny vernacular building of 30m² as a habitable house: two rooms, one above the other, connected by a massive and bulky concrete staircase. The bare rock face against which the entire building rests did not worry her at all; her old bones had encountered much more moisture in her lifetime. Upstairs there was still a bed and some rustic furniture, with photos of ancestors hanging on the wall here and there.

The works would last 2 years, during which the building was enlarged and equipped with a bathroom and terrace using an adjacent rocky lot. In order not to spoil the surprise, perhaps, my grandmother decided not to ever visit the site during the restructuring, just wanting to imagine the development of the works from our stories and what we told her, indulging and sometimes shyly objecting to the choices that my father, my mother and I made.

Unfortunately she could not see the result, much less live there.

My whole family is spread between Rome, Montreal (Canada) and Prezza. This unique house is, in fact, located in Prezza, a small town in the province of L'Aquila that has less than a thousand inhabitants. As you can see, the influence of the Abruzzese territory and culture inevitably guided the stylistic choices of the interiors in a very natural way. However, reviving this historical identity, came at the expense of the romantic and nostalgic due to the situation of decay in which it prevailed.

This family project is told through images, in which the human presence is perceived and sometimes stands out. The home is the background and refuge of our intimacy, which is why without us, it would be incomplete.



**No bedroom.**

To better enjoy the spaces of the house, the upper floor changes from living room to bedroom according to daily needs. Just lower the armrests of Karup's Bebob sofas to use them as single beds.

The traditional blanket.

Heavy, woven with real wool in typical colors, the weft draws floral and geometric motifs. The textile art that gave rise to this particular blanket has an ancient history that goes back to the Middle Ages and is linked to the life of the mountain populations who lived on sheep farming.

And there was light.
The double height favors continuity between the two floors, improving both artificial and natural lighting and allowing the rock to characterize both rooms without interruption.

Still rural.

Having survived the earthquake in L'Aquila in 2009, and with no thought of being restored, Casa Borghetto can be considered to be lucky since many of the other buildings and houses are still waiting to be renovated.

The renovation has kept some original and traditional elements of Prezza's architectural landscape, integrating into the context in which it is located without distorting it.





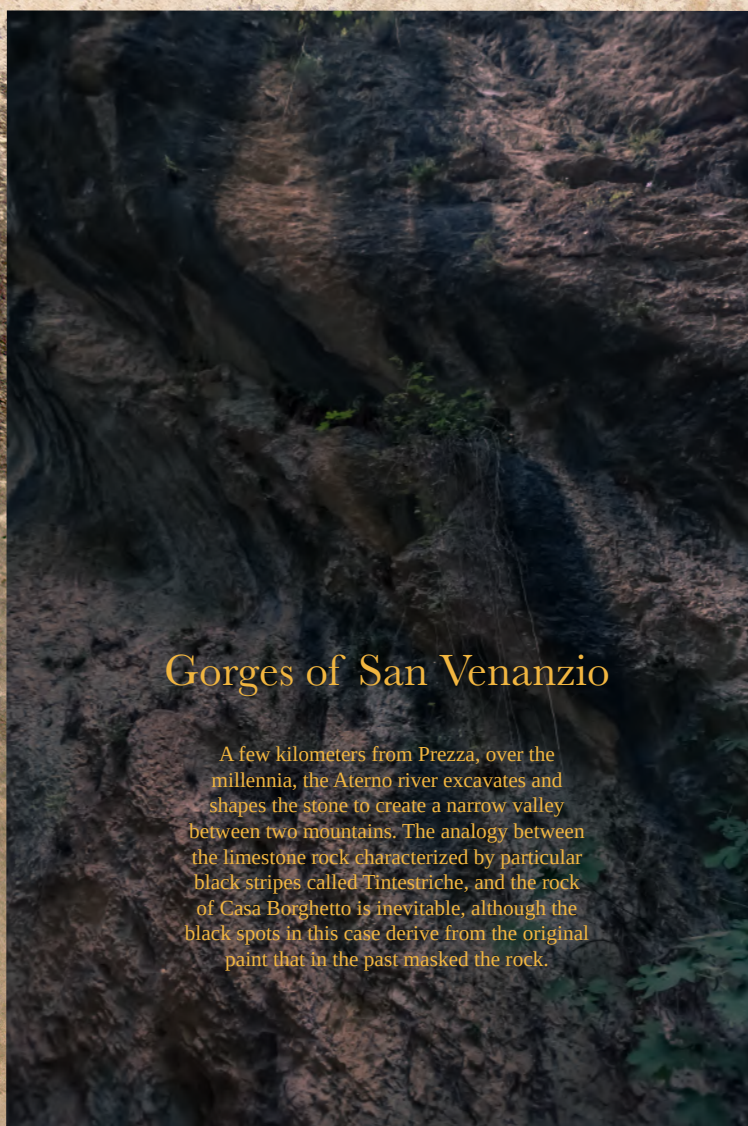


Let the context do the job.

When a territory is so rich in elements - whether they are landscape or cultural - it can be said that half of the work is already done. Let the context make the decisions... just observe how it works, how it naturally influences the choices and insinuates itself into the project.



NUANCE

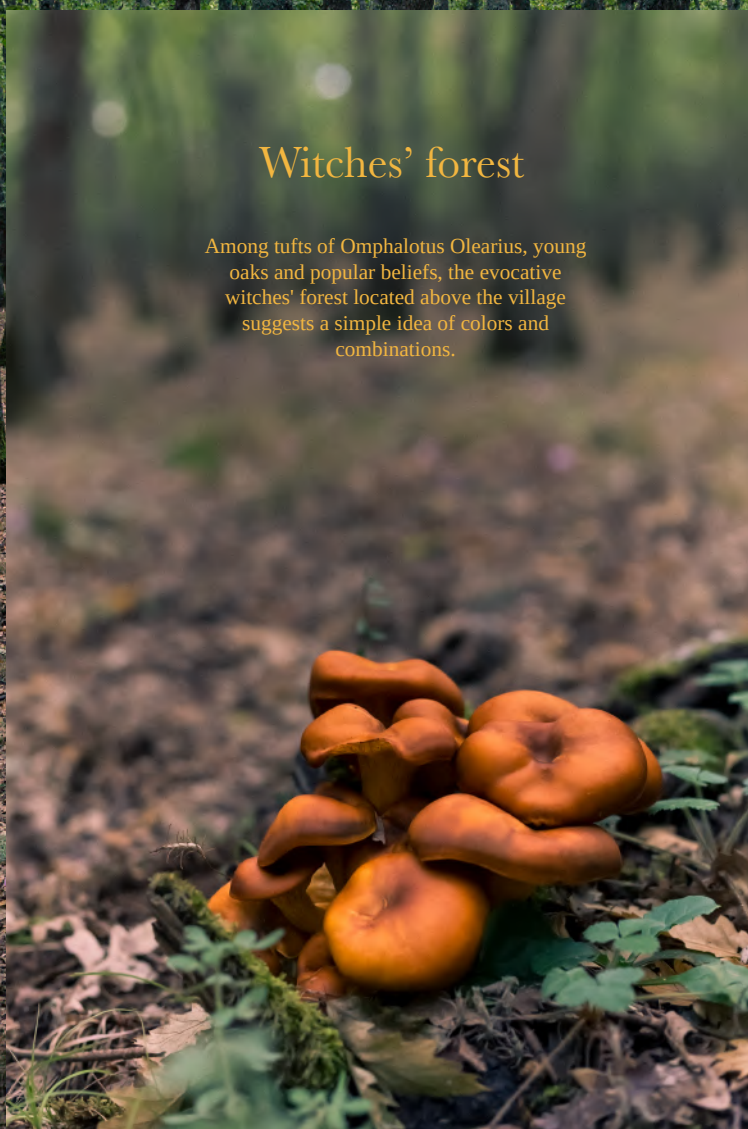


Gorges of San Venanzio

A few kilometers from Prezza, over the millennia, the Aterno river excavates and shapes the stone to create a narrow valley between two mountains. The analogy between the limestone rock characterized by particular black stripes called Tintestriche, and the rock of Casa Borghetto is inevitable, although the black spots in this case derive from the original paint that in the past masked the rock.

Witches' forest

Among tufts of *Omphalotus Olearius*, young oaks and popular beliefs, the evocative witches' forest located above the village suggests a simple idea of colors and combinations.





**References to the landscape.**

The mix of rustic and contemporary furnishings, together with elements of historical and cultural value found, recall the territory and the popular memory of the Abruzzese tradition.

Private landmark.











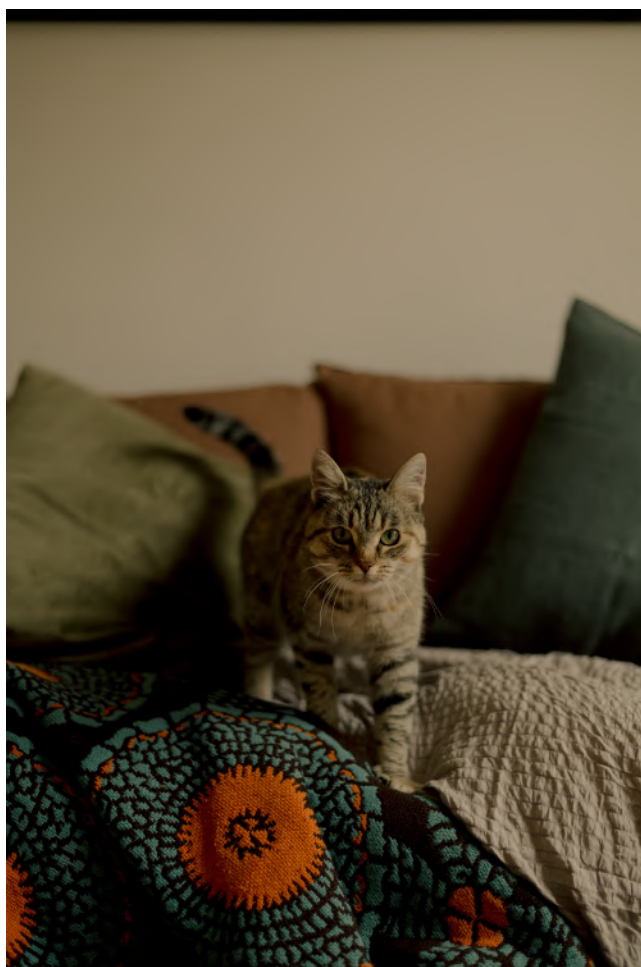












Credits

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Execution of works Ditta Pasquale Sandonato

Thanks Clara Mastrolillo, Lewis Miccinilli