

INTERNI

Il più importante e più interessante
periodico di cultura italiana

N° 5 MAGGIO
ANNO 2000

Spettacolo e cultura in Italia e nel mondo
Letteratura, cinema, teatro, arte
L'800 e il 900: storia e cronaca

Contributo del libro italiano al
cinema internazionale

A. M. M. M. M.



ITALIAN culture
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international.english issue

THE FORMER BARN, BUILT AT THE END OF THE 1800S BUT RESTRUCTURED IN THE 1980S, STANDS IN THE GREENERY OF A LARGE AGE-OLD GARDEN. FACING PAGE, VIEW OF THE LIVING ROOM FROM THE MASTER BEDROOM, WITH FLOORS IN EBONIZED OAK. TO THE RIGHT OF THE DOOR, NOTE THE OLD SAFE CONVERTED FOR USE AS A CABINET.

U.S. Neo-Folk style:
a rural building FROM
THE 1800S, HALF STALL,
HALF HAYLOFT, BECOMES
AN ELEGANT *cottage*
for vacations, recycling
local materials
AND *techniques*
WITH A TYPICALLY
EUROPEAN TOUCH
OF CLASS



Time, rediscovered

project
BONETTI/KOZERSKI STUDIO

photos Luca Pioltelli
text Alessandro Rocca

When Shawn Levy, a director of many successful films, including the "Night at the Museum" series with Ben Stiller, has purchased a typical restructured barn, a typology that has become the ideal vacation home for New Yorkers, realizing that he could transform it completely. Reinventing tradition is not just a fascinating idea, after all, but also an obligatory choice when – as in this case – the rural structure had already been heavily revised, about thirty years ago, in a renovation done without any particular ability or style.



THE REDESIGNED FACADE WITH THE LARGE FRENCH WINDOWS, EXTENDING TOWARDS THE SWIMMING POOL, UNDERLINES THE CONTINUITY OF THE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SPACES WITH A UNIFORM FLOORING IN HAMMERED ISTRIA STONE.



VIEW OF THE LIVING ROOM. HERE THE ISTRIA STONE FLOORING FORMS A CONTRAST WITH THE RUGGED ORIGINAL STRUCTURE OF THE SPACE, MARKED BY SQUARED PILLARS OF RAW WOOD THAT HAVE BEEN REVEALED AND, WHEN NECESSARY, REPAIRED WITH WOOD RECYCLED FROM OTHER BARNES IN THE VICINITY. COFFEE TABLE AND DIVAN IN LEATHER BY **RESTORATION HARDWARE**, CHAIRS IN WOOD AND LEATHER FROM SERGIO RODRIGUEZ BY ESPASSO NY, PADDED BENCH BY BONETTI KOZERSKI COVERED IN NATURAL FABRIC BY **MADDALENA FORCELLA**, CHIAPAS. CUSTOM FLOOR LAMP.

As the architects report, “the internal spaces had been divided into a quantity of spaces bordered by plasterboard partitions, and almost nothing had remained visible of the original materials. A external deck with a swimming pool had been clumsily connected to the house, and was separated from the countryside by a tall hedge”. The challenge, then, was to backtrack, to rediscover the material and sensorial qualities of the old barn, while avoiding a stylistic reconstruction that would inevitably have seemed kitsch. The project follows the path of reproduction or, more exactly, reinvention of the material and sensory qualities of a very folk domestic interior, using and mixing materials and furnishings of different epochs and origins. A syncretic ability that seems to be a natural gift of this studio based in Lower Manhattan, composed of Enrico Bonetti, born in Bologna and trained in Venice, and the Londoner Dominic Kozerski. The result of the mixture is anything but a pastiche, as might have been expected; it is a work of architecture with a clear identity, in which the different components are assembled in a new, warm, welcoming order. The sturdiness of the original structure is enhanced, especially on the entrance level, partially below ground, and in the living area.



The natural materials bring out the sensory qualities and the psychological and physical comfort of a warm atmosphere. A facade redesigned with large French windows nonchalantly coexists, for example, with interiors dominated by the rugged original framework of raw wood pillars. On the ground floor, the stone walls bordering the long entrance space reflect local techniques, but also take on a monumental presence that makes them look like an installation of concrete art. Climbing the stairs to the upper level, the walls encounter Venetian stucco surfaces, without any problems. The solutions for the different parts of the house are quite pragmatic: for example, in the living area the original structure has been revealed, and the missing parts replaced with wooden members recovered from other barns in the area. In other cases materials extraneous to the local reality have been selected, to increase the constructive and functional quality and to add a touch of European class. This is the case of the flooring in hammered Istria stone of the first floor, which extends to cover the deck of the swimming pool as well. The same mixture of tradition and modernity is seen in the furnishings. The designers explain: "the desire of the clients to lean towards a casual, comfortable look has led to a mixture of pieces of our own design, along with classics and found objects".

VIEW FROM THE LIVING AREA TOWARDS THE BEDROOM AND BATH ZONE. AT THE CENTER, BEHIND THE CHEST OF DRAWERS BY **RESTORATION HARDWARE**, THE STAIRCASE BLOCK CONNECTING THE LEVELS. IN THE FOREGROUND, RUG IN WOOL AND COTTON BY **SACCO CARPET**, NEW YORK, CHAIR IN WOOD AND LEATHER FROM SERGIO RODRIGUEZ BY ESPASSO NY, TABLE IN GOLD-PLATED STEEL FROM AUTOBAN BY **DE LA ESPADA**.

THE KITCHEN FEATURES FURNISHINGS IN PAINTED WOOD WITH WHITE STATUARY MARBLE TOPS. STOOLS BY **TOLIX**.

FACING PAGE, THE DINING AREA SEEN FROM THE OPEN SPACE OF THE LIVING ROOM. RECYCLED OAK TABLE BY BONETTI KOZERSKI, CHAIRS BY **TOLIX**.