

PURE *Luxury*

WORLD'S BEST HOUSES



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house R

CHRIST.CHRIST. associated architects

Karlsruhe, Germany

The house is located in the Stadtgarten (city park) in the centre of Karlsruhe. The property was once part of a villa. A pavilion that belongs to the historic ensemble forms part of the wall that encloses the property on three sides. The four-storey single family house is reached via a forecourt and a ramp; the main entrance on the northern side and a second entrance via the carport lead to the entrance area.

The storeys are connected by an open stairway and a lift, which facilitates use by the elderly and disabled. On the ground floor are the entrance area, home office, double-height living room and kitchen and dining area. The first floor houses a gallery that serves as a more intimate living area, two children's rooms, a dressing room and two bathrooms. The attic floor, which has a roof terrace on three sides, is reserved for the parents. It is not divided into rooms; instead the individual functional devices – bed, wash basin, bath tub, water closet, shower stall and dressing area – are arranged in a loft-style layout.

In the basement is a swimming pool with a projecting skylight, guest room, bathroom and mechanical room. In order to achieve optimal exposure to light in the basement, the ground floor floats 1 metre (3 feet) above the terrain level, in order to create a window-band 50 centimetres high (20 inches). The window-band and skylight flood the basement with natural light.

Cross-ventilation occurs automatically by controlled louvre windows. The glass areas are equipped with exterior sun protection that screens the residents from public view at the same time. Thanks to night cooling and exterior sun-protection, it was not necessary to install air-conditioning. The thermal mass of the concrete walls functions as a store of cool air and cools rooms throughout the day. By using triple-glazed windows, highly effective insulation and a solar thermal system, an energy-optimised building has been realised.

Photography: Thomas Herrmann







