



Secular Retreat

Peter Zumthor house for Living Architecture launches



«It has become rare to be able to sit in a house and look out at a beautiful landscape where no trace of another building interrupts the lines of the rolling hills. Quietness, contemplation, pure luxury. I could not resist to try to create this house.»

Peter Zumthor

Living Architecture is delighted to announce the near completion of *Secular Retreat*, Chivelstone, Devon, designed by Pritzker prize-winning architect Peter Zumthor. It will be the architect's first permanent building in the UK, and marks the seventh commission in a visionary series of houses designed by leading artists and architects in distinctive, unique sites across England.

The house is situated on a South Devon hilltop, one mile from the coast above the small Hamlet of Chivelstone. The dramatic layered-concrete and glass design sits horizontally on the site, framing stunning views across the landscape in all directions. Hand-rammed concrete forms both the interior and exterior spaces, to give the building a mass and scale characteristic of Zumthor's work.

Peter Zumthor has been described as one of the greatest architects

at work in the world today. He was awarded the Pritzker Prize in 2009, and the RIBA Gold Medal in 2013. Renowned buildings he designed include the Thermal Baths at Vals in Switzerland, the Bruder Klaus Chapel outside Cologne in Germany and the Kolumba Museum in Cologne. He is currently working on designs for museums in Basel and Los Angeles, alongside many other commissions. In 2011 he designed the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, a black painted structure with internal corridors leading to a courtyard that housed a garden designed by Piet Oudolf.

With *Secular Retreat*, Peter Zumthor continues his tradition of creating thoughtful and timeless architecture. The house sits in the place of a ruined timber house constructed in the 1940's. Links to the original site remain, with a small hexagonal shaped walled area made out of layers of concrete block,

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and the now 20-metre-tall Monterey Pine trees planted to shield the original house. In character with Zumthor's approach, the landscape and garden are central to the concept of the house. The garden is designed with the South Devon based Rathbone Partnership and comprises the planting of some 5,000 local species of trees and shrubs. Terraces and pathways are made of rough-hewn Somerset Blue Lias stone, set on edge.

Zumthor is renowned for his craftsmanship and expertise in the use of materials, which give his buildings an eternal quality. Creating and maintaining the consistency of concrete to produce the hand-rammed walls, and the engineering of both structure and integration of services throughout the main concrete frame, was delivered by a dedicated group of UK architects, consultants and contractors, who have come together with Zumthor's team to produce this exemplary building.

The house will accommodate up to ten people in five bedrooms and is formed of two separate bedroom wings which lead from the large central open-plan living space. The design and construction required a series of exacting processes to be undertaken, from the careful placing amongst the existing trees, the orientation on the site to make the best of the views and natural light, to the creation of new gardens and outside areas.

Internally, the continuous ribbons of layered-concrete are set against stone floors, each slab cut to a different size and shape reflecting the raw material sourced directly from a Somerset quarry. Bedrooms are simple in form – a large carved niche within the concrete fabric, timber Pearwood floors leading to full height and width windows, allowing views onto the gardens and the surrounding valleys. Ensuite bathrooms continue this theme, with a combination of stone

and rammed concrete. Throughout, the carefully crafted joinery of doors, inset shelves, wardrobes and kitchen furniture, all made from apple and cherry woods, bring a warmth and depth of contrast to the handmade concrete walls. With sofas, chairs, tables and lights all designed by Zumthor, *Secular Retreat* is the realisation of his long-held vision for this Devon hillside.



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NOTES TO EDITORS

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Over the last decade, Living Architecture has commissioned carefully designed and thought-provoking domestic houses, available to all for holidays in the best of modern architecture. With a mission to promote, educate and influence discussion, the houses provide an immersive architectural experience, created by some of the most relevant architects and artists working today.

Secular Retreat completes a visionary series that has realised seven landmark projects across England including the award-winning Dune House in Thorpeness, Suffolk (Jarmund/Vignsnaes Architects); Balancing Barn in Thorington, Suffolk (MVRDV); Shingle House, Dungeness, Kent (NORD); Life House, Wales (John Pawson); and A House for Essex (FAT architecture and Grayson Perry). A Room for London (David Kohn Architects with artist Fiona Banner) was commissioned by Living Architecture and Artangel and installed on the rooftop of Queen Elizabeth Hall for the Olympic year of 2012, where it remained until February 2018.

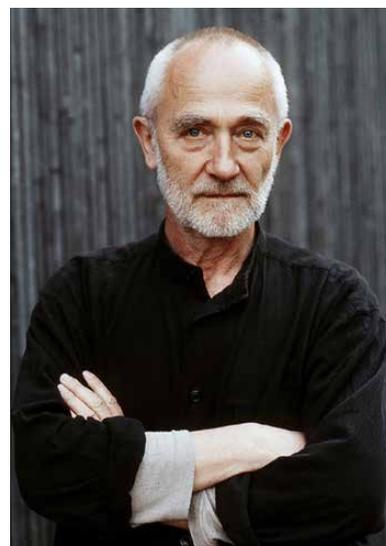
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ATELIER PETER ZUMTHOR PROJECT TEAM

- Peter Zumthor
 - Rainer Weitschies,
Project Architect
 - Duarte Brito
 - Pascal Berchtold
 - Tom Tsapkov
 - Anna Page
- alongside many more of the in-house team

SECULAR RETREAT PROJECT TEAM

- Architect:
Atelier Peter Zumthor
- Executive Architect (phase 1):
Mole Architects
- Local architectural advisor (concept phase): David Sheppard Architects
- Landscape Design and Consultant:
The Rathbone Partnership
- Construction management:
Simon Cannon Ltd
- Concrete frame
Woodmace Concrete Structures Ltd
- Structural Engineer:
Jane Wernick Associates
- Quantity Surveyor:
KM Dimensions
- Environmental Design Engineers:
Transsolar and Integration UK



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