

PRIVATE HOUSE  
BETWEEN FOREST AND FIELD  
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By [Caterina Testa](#) - 1 September 2023

Only a two-hour drive from the feverish pace of Manhattan, Stanfordville is a small village in upstate New York in the Hudson Valley, surrounded by forest and farmland dotted with outlying homesteads. The proximity to the Big Apple has understandably made this quiet rural setting the ideal second-home location for New Yorkers.

Which was how nArchitects became involved in a local project, commissioned by a New York family with a plot of land in Stanfordville to design their second home. Accustomed to dealing with public buildings and spaces or collective residences, the designers saw the challenge of a private residence as an opportunity to take on an intimate, private space.

The first elements taken into consideration were site location and topography: at the boundary between forest and farmland.

The underlying design concept was therefore for a massing that would act as a filter – a thin blade – between the two landscapes, combined with interiors whose spatial layout would allow occupants constant views over the landscape through large picture windows. In addition to a master bedroom, the clients’ only other request was that each of their three children have their own space. For all other design features, they put their trust in the architects, eagerly examining the various proposals made.

The final design gradually emerged from a series of concept sketches and ensuing discussions. The initial idea of three different volumes for parents, children and common spaces morphed into the compact footprint of an extremely thin single volume. With three above-grade stories, the house engages with and draws inspiration from the dual landscape in various ways, combining vernacular-style barn-like massing on the exterior with interiors inspired by the spatial organization of a forest.

In fact, while the new house’s steeply pitched roof is reminiscent of the rural buildings of...

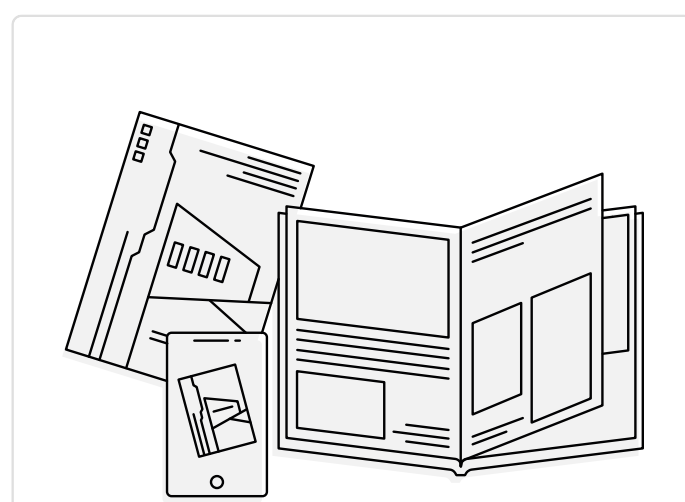
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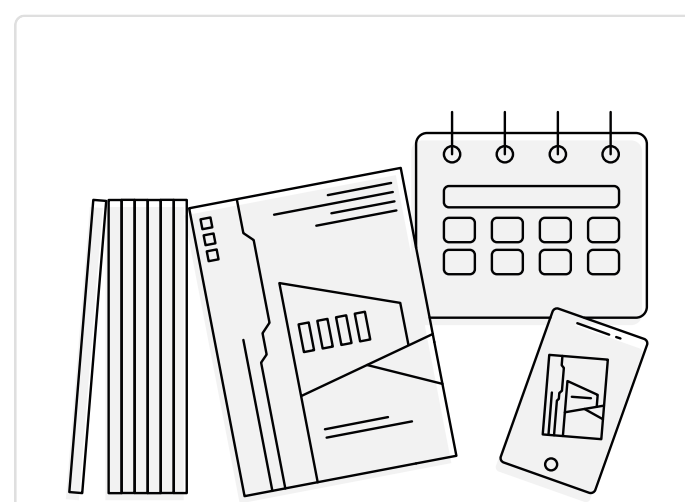
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