

# House/Studio in South Miami, Florida

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## PROJECT

A one-story house /studio for a husband-and-wife design team and their daughter in South Miami, Florida.

## DESIGN ISSUES

The project responds to three major design considerations: 1) the integration and separation of the studio area in relation to the domestic spaces; 2) the experience and suggestion of space through transparency; and 3) the integration of the structure with real, latent and imaginary contexts.

1) The maximum square footage on one floor is produced by a ninety-five by twenty-four foot rectangle. This long "bar" is divided into three areas: the studio towards the east or avenue side; the social area in the middle section; and the sleeping areas towards the west.

Although there is a separate entrance to the studio on the east facade, the main entrance on the street side (north) is designed for visitors to the studio and house. A glass paneled foyer acts as the separation point for the two types of traffic. A glass wall opens the library, living room and dining room to the back-yard on the south side, but the library connects to the back-yard through a semi-enclosed patio that contains two reflecting pools. The dining room and living room connect through a covered terrace, further distinguishing studio and house uses.

2) Three types of transparency are intended in this design. Literal transparency is achieved through clear glass openings on the south side connecting

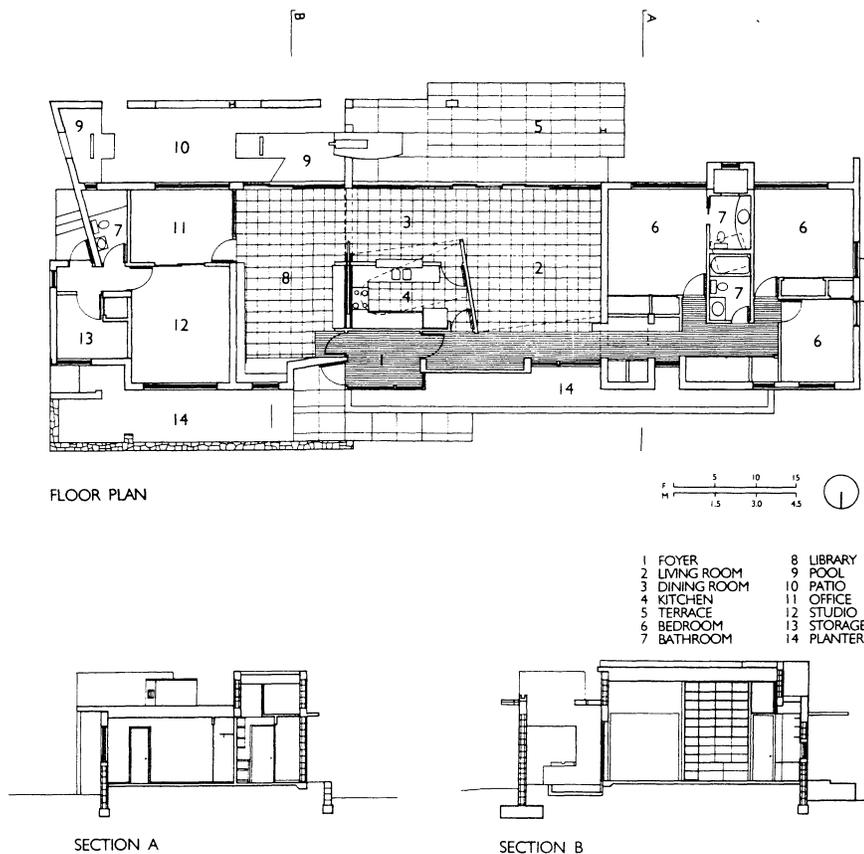


Fig. 1. Plan and Sections

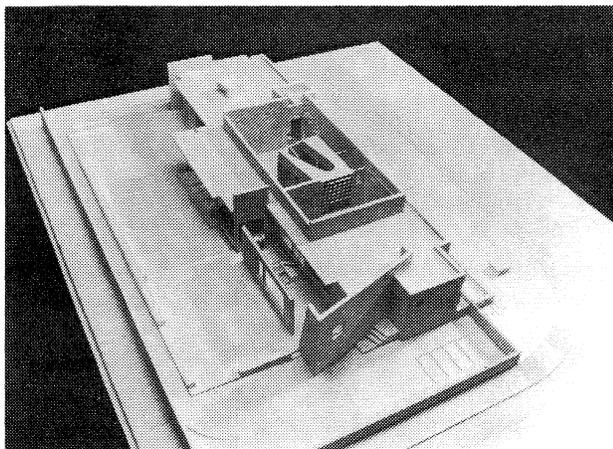


Fig. 2. Model, top view

the house/studio with the back yard. Veiled transparency, through the use of sandblasted glass on the street side (north). Space is only suggested here by the admission of light but not sight. From the interior, the exterior is remembered or imagined, adding mystery to a sense of privacy and detachment from the city. Finally spatial transparency, the quality of looking through openings in a layered space, is enhanced when light is introduced between layers. To achieve spatial transparency, most circulation was organized between layers that run on the long side of the house/studio (east to west). A skylight was located inside the kitchen, tiny skylights illuminate a portion of the long corridor, and light is also introduced by the tall windows mentioned earlier.

3) In Miami's older neighborhoods it is common to find suburban grids shifting along a street or avenue for no apparent reason. The street next to the site is offset along the avenue; the street reconnects diagonally at about fifty feet from the intersection. This latent diagonal and other geometrical traces found next to the site create the circumstances that deform and give final shape to the ideal bar-like form of the house/studio.

Because of flood regulations, the house/studio is lifted three feet from the ground; this actually became an opportunity to attach building to site by means of a series of shallow terraces and coral-rock retaining walls, recalling the flatness and horizontality of the Florida landscape. The subtle variations of the earthworks are also expressed as slight depressions of wall thickness in some elevations.

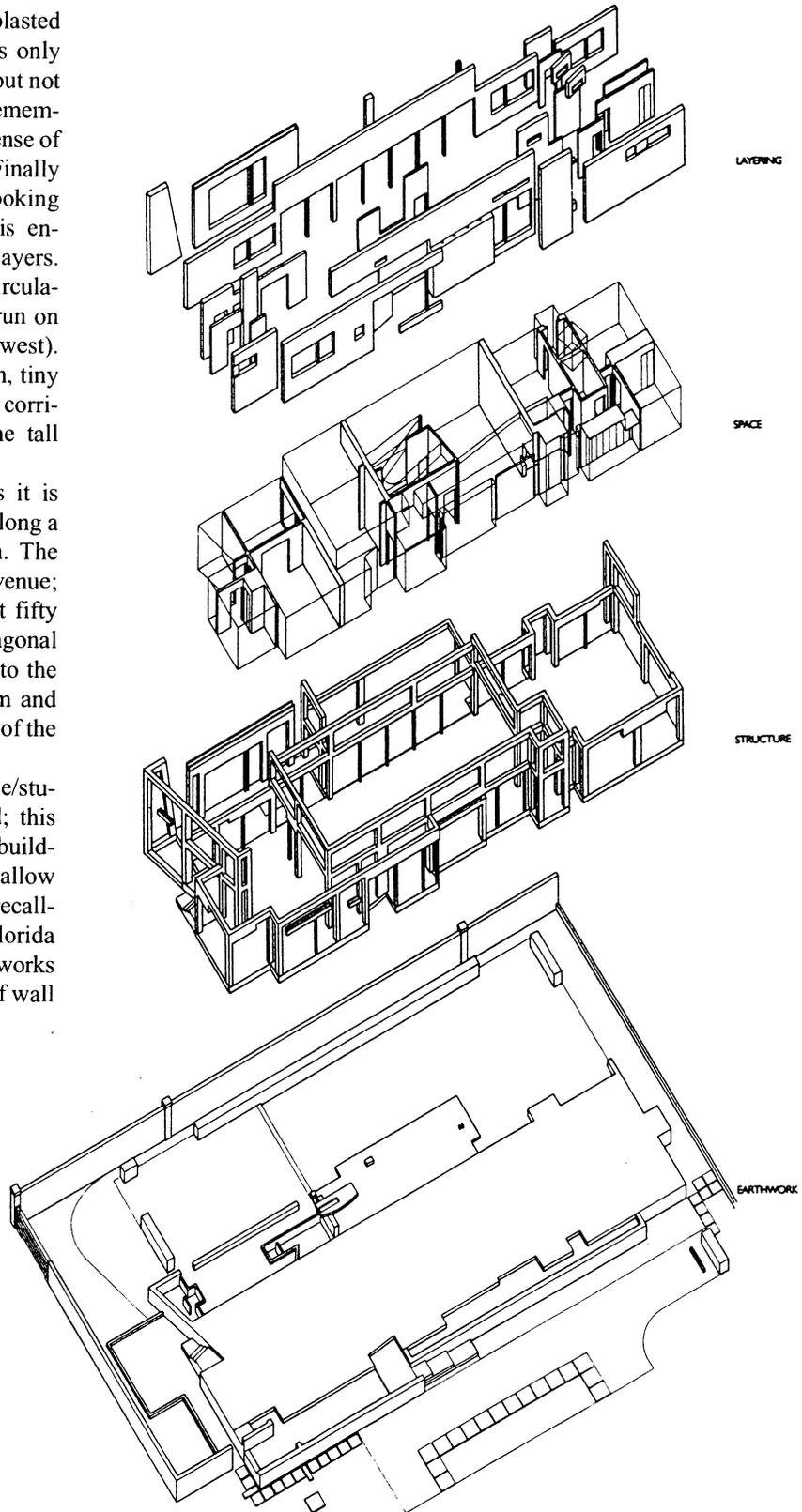


Fig. 3. Exploded isometric