

Maison Germanier

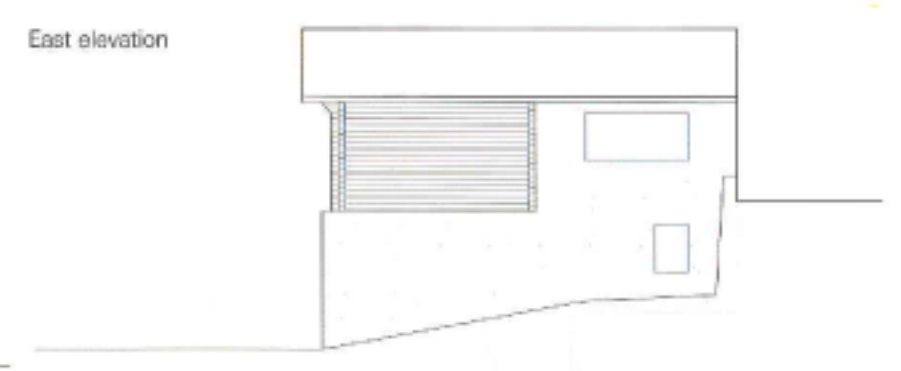
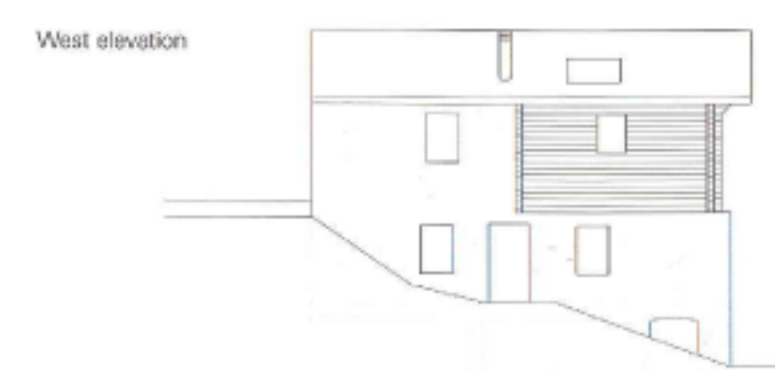
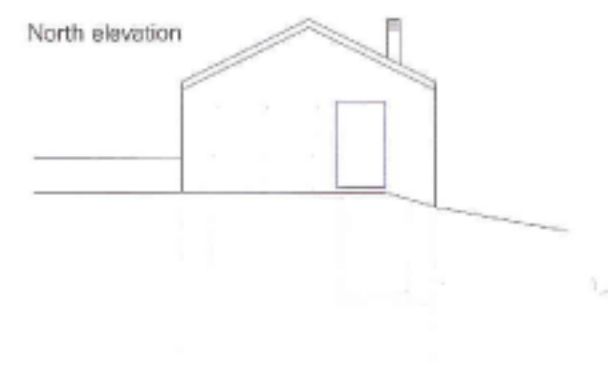
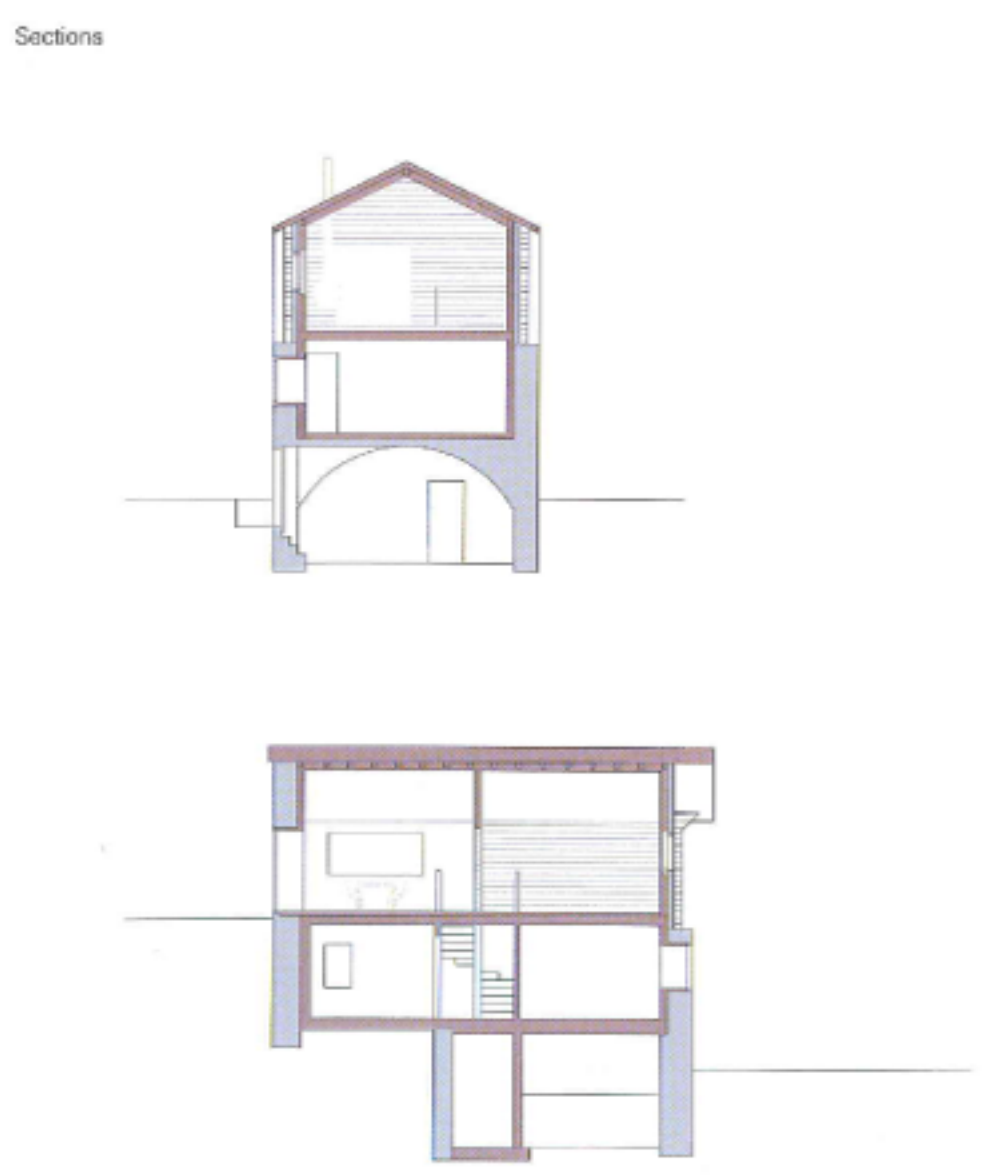
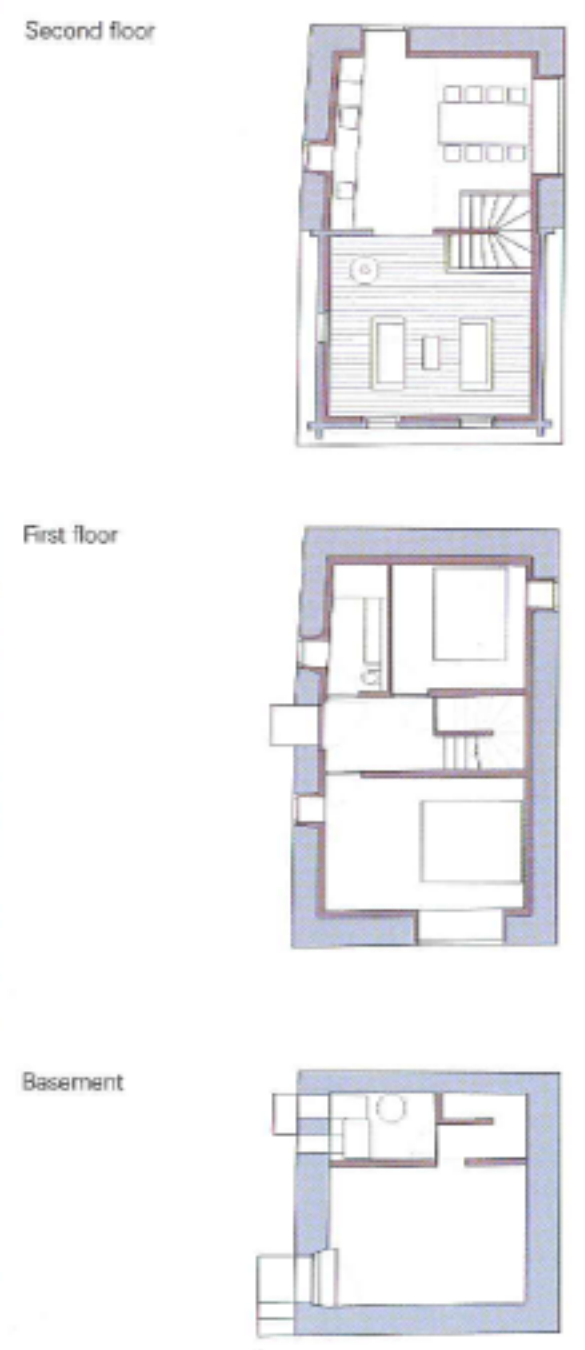


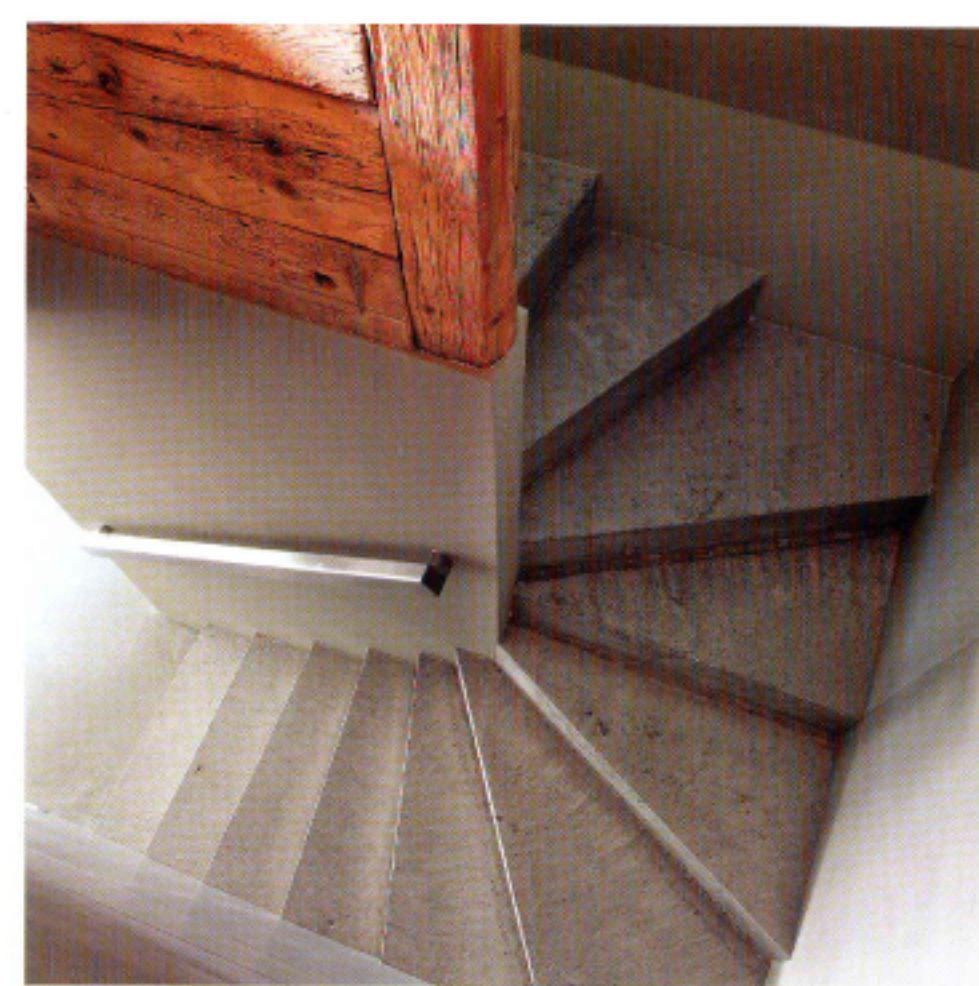
Savioz Fabrizzi Architectes
Vétroz, Switzerland
2009

In the Swiss canton of Valais, noted for its ancient Amigne white grape cultivation, architects Laurent Savioz and Claude Fabrizzi were commissioned to renovate a house dating from the 1850s that served as the original winegrower's residence on this 170-acre vineyard. The architects satisfied the relatively straightforward program by arranging two bedrooms and a bathroom on the ground level and the living room and spacious kitchen and dining space on the house's upper level.

If the layout for the house is straightforward and perfectly appropriate in its antiquated shell, the materials employed within that shell are what make this project distinctive. From the exterior, the house maintains a highly traditional profile, at least at first glance. On the ground level, the rusticated walls are constructed of the same local stone that composes countless wine cellars in the region. However, apertures of sleek, single-plate glazing hint at a decidedly less traditional treatment for the house's interior. The stone construction is carried to the part of the house's upper level that contains the kitchen and dining area, while the adjacent living room is ensconced behind walls constructed of traditional wood planks.

This wood construction also constitutes the interior wall separating the living room from the kitchen, making the living space a sort of elevated cabin completely articulated in wood, including original planks of knotty larch on the floor—though its three interior perimeter walls are highly finished in contrast to the house's rough-hewn exterior. Polished exposed concrete floors and cement-coated panels on the ceilings and certain walls add yet another level of twenty-first-century refinement to this small-scaled yet ambitious example of adaptive reuse.





Left: Polished, exposed concrete treads on the staircase lead up to the kitchen and dining space, so featuring concrete floors.

Opposite, top: The bedrooms are clad in cement-coated panels.

Opposite, bottom: The kitchen, also featuring a cement-coated wall panel, is a boldly contemporary space with more than century-old stone.

Following pages: The kitchen's concrete floors add a twenty-first-century counterpoint to the rough-hewn wood walls and planks of knotty larch on the floor.

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