



fovea

Text Arthur Wortmann  
Photos Thomas Jantscher

reinterprets rural  
architecture



In the Swiss village of Cudrefin, near Lake Neuchâtel, François Comte and Pierre Sandoz of Fovea have realized an unusual detached private house. It appears as if the rather elongated archetypical house has been rolled onto its side. Sandoz explains: the land surrounding the house will be filled with other villas in the future, so they have tried to create a design which will guarantee privacy while still taking advantage of the southerly orientation. Which is why they created a first storey which leans forward 40 degrees on the southerly garden side. In this way, according to the architects, the house generates 'a feeling of privacy along the entire terrace and offers an introspective bird's-eye view into the garden below. The orientation of each room takes advantage of the full length of the plot, which is the only controlled environmental element.'

The shape of the house is not just intriguing for passers-by and a challenge for the residents – the children were quick to discover other special uses for the forward-leaning window surfaces – but the architects also emphasize that the design involves a reinterpretation of rural architecture in the area. Sandoz: 'The proportions of the object are a reference to the typical tobacco barns built in open fields and the volume recreates the image and function of the eaves of local farmhouses.' The house is erected on a timber frame with plain wooden panels on a raft of reinforced concrete. The façades are finished with painted pine planks and tiles.