



HOUSE D NUGLAR 2009–2011

ARCHITECT HHF Architects

PROGRAM Private house

LOCATION Nuglar, Switzerland

TEAM HERLACH HARTMANN FROMMENWILER

with Markus Leixner, Anna Smorodinsky, Mio Tsuneyama

CLIENT Private

PHOTOS Tom Bisig

The view is one of a kind. You might imagine you're in South America or upstate New York, and it is really hard to believe that Basel is just 25 minutes away. As the last house to be built in Nuglar, in the canton of Solothurn, House D is privileged. It is oriented parallel to the landscape, thereby making the view a matter of prime importance. Across more than 180 degrees, you gaze over unbuilt, verdant land with mature fruit trees. HHF radically exploits this situation, thematizes it, and accentuates it even more with a few simple moves: The main level is an open space – with the kitchen as well as dining and living areas – and alongside a concrete core, the stair to the upper and lower floors. The space is entirely glazed and blends seamlessly with the space outdoors. The outdoor space itself is an oversized terrace. No more but also no less. The client, who lives here since the beginning of 2012, explicitly did not want a garden that he would have to maintain. And so he got a terrace with wood decking and a pool. Because the terrain slopes downward slightly, the wood deck is elevated, which protects the main living space from the curious glances of passers-by.

The large terrace, which is emphasized through a simple gesture, is symbolic for the subtle radicalism with which HHF has approached the building task. The entire house is kept very simple, which is also manifested in the three basic materials: glass, wood and concrete. The simple and straightforward treatment of the outdoor space has its counterpart in an equally uncompromising interior. HHF is interested in working with what is available; they are not bent on developing elaborate details when industrially made products can be tailored to their needs. But they submit to the temptation to develop their own details when the market does not have something suitable available.

The untreated wood of the ceilings and doors exhibits a raw immediacy that you would not expect to see in an exclusive home in a location like this. But any claim that House D is simple would be toying with the word. The house comprises 241 m² of usable floor area on three floors, with three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a gym, an office, and the living spaces mentioned at the outset. A separate garage with space for four cars and direct access into the house completes the list.