

Vila Vladimír Müller

Merel Garritsen



Abstract

This thesis addresses the notions of interiority and urbanity within the domestic application of Adolf Loos’ Raumplan principles, through an analysis of the Vila Vladimír Müller in Olomouc, Czech Republic. Designed in 1927 by Paul Engelmann, one of Loos’ most accomplished pupils, this medium-sized family home demonstrates a “mini-Raumplan” approach. Interpreting Loos’ three-dimensional spatial planning on a smaller, residential scale. Engelmann’s design balances a layered, dynamic interior that contrasts with its modest cubic exterior.

Referring to the theoretical frameworks of Raumplan theorists like Beatriz Colomina (2008) and Jozef Frank (2013), the precise interpretation of Engelmann’s Raumplan elements can be further understood. The Vila’s interior carefully stages moments of compression and release, directing user movement and experiencing gradients of privacy. Fixed furniture elements, sightlines, and spatial transitions are used to script lived experience, highlighting Engelmann’s lyrical but disciplined architectural language.

Ultimately, this study situates the Vila Vladimír Müller as a critical yet underexamined contribution to interwar Central European modernism. It reveals how Engelmann’s interpretation of the Raumplan fosters a spatial dialogue of introspective domesticity, underscoring the house’s continued relevance in architectural discourse.

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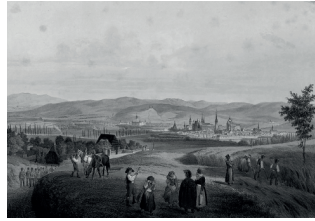
Introduction

This paper aims to address and understand the notions of interiority and urbanity within a Raumplan-style interior through the analysis of a design by Paul Engelmann, one of Adolf Loos' first pupils. The medium-sized family Vila in Olomouc, Czech Republic, was commissioned by Mr. Vladimír Müller in 1927. Engelmann applied a personal interpretation of Loos' Raumplan approach to this residence, creating a mini-Raumplan. His interpretation of the Raumplan principles follows the methods and approaches Loos taught him during his years in the Viennese Bauschule, as well as Engelmann's deep interest in poetry and literature. This Vila, commissioned by Mr. Vladimír Müller in 1927, gained international attention after a large renovation that was finished in 2018 by the Voda family, the current owners of the property (Kratochvíl & Sborwitz Architects, 2019).

The Vila represents a remarkable synthesis of an economical cubic volume and a dynamic interior that expresses the intimacy of family life (Památkový Katalog, 2018). Through comparisons with publications of other Raumplan theorists like Jozef Frank (2013) and Beatriz Colomina (2008), the interpretation of Engelmann's domestic view on Raumplan can be extracted and further understood. Frank uses the city as a metaphor to analyse and understand the order and positionality of the different rooms within the house, while Colomina emphasises the effect of sightlines and feeling seen within the configuration of the interior. Literature-based research will be supported by photographs, drawings and diagrams, visualising the different principles. The dichotomy between architectural interiority and urbanity is addressed through the analysis of these perspectives, which both affect how the family captures and embraces the Vila.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Voda family, who kindly showed us their home and offered valuable insights into its historical and present use.

Introduction



1
Landscape painting of the city of Olomouc by František Kalivoda in 1853.
(František Kalivoda, 1853)



2
Historic map of Olomouc in 1929, one year after the Vladimir Müller Vila was constructed.
(Central archive of land surveying and cadastre, 1929)

Urban Context

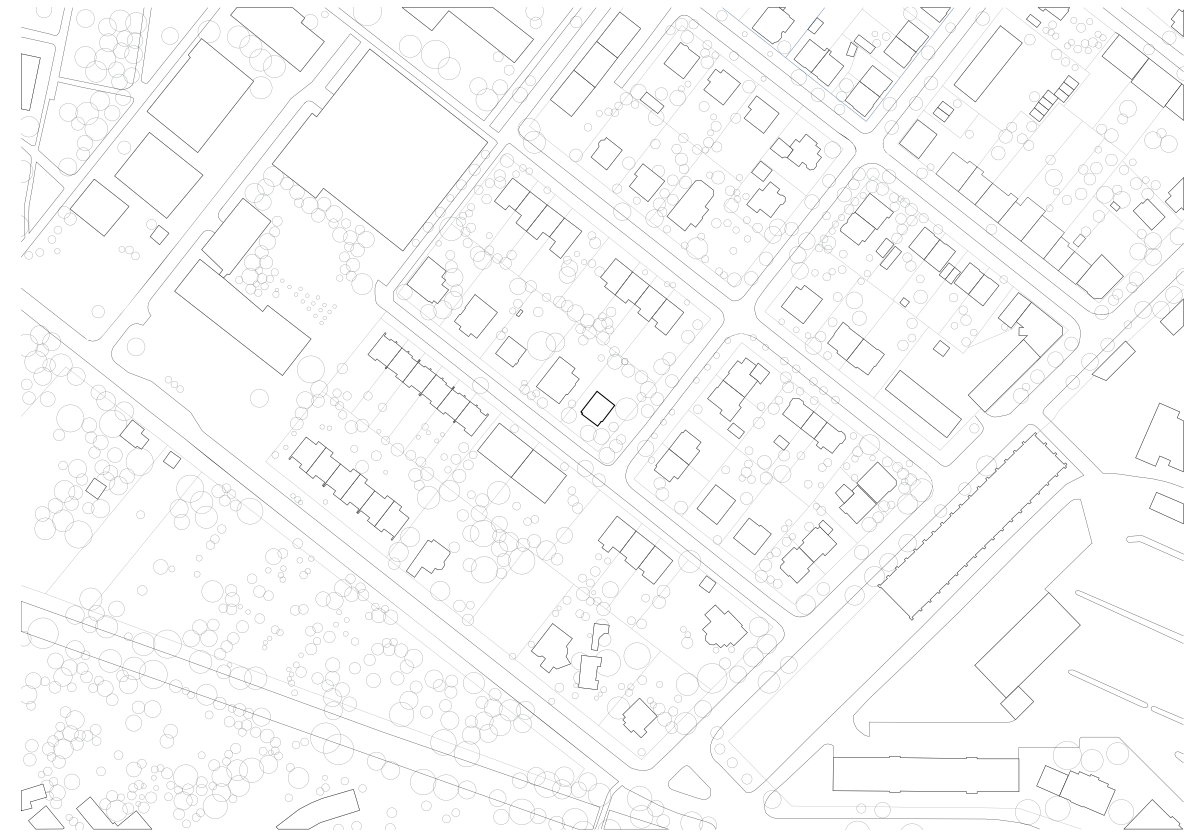
In 1924, the Müller family purchased a plot of land in a nascent villa district just outside the city walls of Olomouc, an area in the early stages of urban development (Voda, 2025). The open, undeveloped landscape encircling the plot offered a beautiful panoramic view of the walled settlement and the hills surrounding it, making it the ideal location for the Müller family to build their family home. An impression of this landscape is visualised in Figure 1. This area known as Lazce, is characterised by being one of the earliest expansions of the city, paving the way for the subsequent process of urban growth and development. Meanwhile, the former capital of Moravia has prospered to become one of the largest cities in the contemporary Czech Republic (VisitOlomouc, n.d.). It still functions as the capital of the Olomouc district. Nowadays, the open view of the landscape has been obstructed by the completion of multiple urban expansions. Resulting in a harmonised composition of streets that form a complete villa district within the urban fabric of Olomouc, where the Müller family house gradually became an integrated part of a whole (Zatloukal, 2019).

The plot is situated on Černochova 148/6, in the middle of the villa district, as highlighted in Figure 3. The orientation of the house is in the Southwestern direction, facing towards the road. The grain size of each plot reveals the single-family housing typology that this neighbourhood is composed of. This valuable strip of land is situated between the walled inner city of Olomouc on the South and the Morava River on the North. The spacious layout fosters a green environment, allowing the villa residents to obtain an organic form of privacy. The neighbourhood is calm and quiet, appealing to families with young children, of which the Müller family was a prime example.

The Müller family

Mr. Vladimír Müller, born in 1889, was a prominent official of the local Land Institute in Olomouc. This job provided him with an extensive network of contacts that he maintained well. He and his wife, Helena Müller, had purchased the plot of land on the outskirts of Olomouc in 1924, with the desire to build a family home and raise their two children there. Mr. Müller was very interested in experimenting in the field of architecture (Bakascsy, n.d.), as he expressed in his search for an appropriate architect in Olomouc's Grand Cafe three years after obtaining the land, in the proximity of his friendly contacts from the Olomouc Jewish community. Architect Paul Engelmann, a fellow member of the Olomouc Jewish community, was recommended to him to design his family home (Potucek, 2012). Engelmann already started the design of the house in the late summer of 1927, the complete construction was finished in June 1928 (Zatloukal, 2019).

After the passing of Mr Müller in 1967, his daughter, Jitka Hynková, inherited the property. She later granted it to her own daughter, Šárka Huser Hynková (Památkový Katalog, n.d.), allowing her to preserve the valuable Raumplan interior. Contrary to most of Engelmann's clients, the Müller family was not Jewish, which allowed them to keep the



3
Urban context map of the neighbourhood in which the Vladimir Müller Vila is situated.
Drawing by Author



Photograph of the garden and the NE facade, 4
taken before the recent renovation.
(Potucek, 2012)

1. Obec Olomouc - LAZCE	2. Okres Olomouc	3. Rodinný dům	4. Počet posl.
5. Název (názvoslovní) památky rodinný dům		6. Objekt, kde je památka uložena čp. 148 parc.č.: 147 ulice (název) Černochova ul.č. 6	
7. Umístění památky v objektu		8. Vlastník (správce, držitel uložení) Jitka Hynková, tamtéž	
9. Popis památky (technika, materiál, rozměry, výčet částí, popř. počet kusů, jedy o součásti) Rodinný dům V. Müllerova. Jednopatrový volně stojící objekt v zahradě s asymetrickým hmotovým členěním. Ve zvýšeném přízemí je předstíněná dvoutřířňová úroveň a zejména prostorově členitá hala s otevřeným schodištěm do 1. patra rovněž se dvěma úrovněmi podlah. Vyšší, jídelní kout, je prosvětlen třemi sdruženými okny jižní fronty, nižší - sezení - je otevřeno dvěma francouzskými okny k východu. V patře jsou ložnice. Kuchlické lhoty průčelí jsou rozčleněny terasou a pergolou a rizalitem východní fronty. Okenní osy jižního a východního průčelí jsou symetrické, v dalších fasádách je rozmístění okenních otvorů podmíněno vnitřním členěním. Objekt je ukončen plochou střechou.			
10. Číslo, číslo a autorství 1997, Turismus. Projektant Paul Engelmann, stavitel T. Šípka.		11. Autor nebo výkonný označení	

5 Registration form for the status of a cultural monument for the Vladimír Müller Vila. Filed by Architect Vladimír Šlapeta, Art Historian Pavel Zatloukal and Jitka Hynková. (Monument Institute in Olomouc & Lukas, 1991)

house occupied during the time of war. This can be classified as one of the main reasons for the exceptional preservation of the house and its interior, as it was not destroyed by German occupation, like many other Raumplan residences. The family was able to preserve most pieces of original furniture, along with the knowledge about the original colour and material use. This enabled the Vila Vladimír Müller to become one of the best-documented houses designed by Engelmann. In 1991, Architect Vladimír Šlapeta and Art Historian Pavel Zatloukal discovered the existence of the Vila and acknowledged its importance by filing a declaration for it to become a registered cultural monument, as shown in Figure 5 (Památkový Katalog, n.d.). It obtained a protected monumental status, which enabled financial resources for the reconstruction of the Vila (Voda, 2025).

In 2012, the granddaughter of Vladimír Müller sold the house to the current owners, David Voda and his wife Sabine, who mostly restored the house and its interior to the original condition (Voda, 2025). During the initial process of renovation, they kept close contact with the granddaughter to obtain information about the interior from a primary source. They removed unoriginal assets that were added during a renovation in the '60s, which included entrance railings, a wooden pergola that was added on the second floor terrace and a glass garage box (Tauberová, 2019). All original pieces of furniture and other remaining household items were kept as part of the complete Raumplan inventory.

Paul Engelmann

Paul Engelmann was born in Olomouc on June 14th 1891, where he spent the first two decades of his life. The Engelmann family resided in an apartment on the Mauritzplatz, in the historical heart of Olomouc, where Paul's father, Max Engelmann, owned and managed a store (Manak, 2009). His mother, Ernestine Engelmann, was known to be a very warm and social person who maintained her contacts well. She came from a family of well-known scholars, but also had an affinity with art. An increasing number of Jews found their way to Olomouc because of the various opportunities in business and education it could offer. A close Jewish Community emerged, of which the Engelmann family was a prominent part (Bakascy, n.d.).

Paul has two younger siblings, Peter and Anny Engelmann. Peter gained recognition as a caricaturist, often addressing themes like antisemitism and German nationalism. Anny established herself as a painter and illustrator who contributed to various German children's books. All three children pursued a creative career in the direction of writing, following the footsteps of their mother's side of the family. Following their father's bankruptcy, the Engelmanns' role in the social network of Olomouc became more distanced. They became isolated from the exclusive bourgeois society, but stayed in close contact with the local community of intellectuals and artists (Bakascy, n.d.).

Paul was offered to attend the local gymnasium, where he followed a general education until he was forced to stop due to the contraction



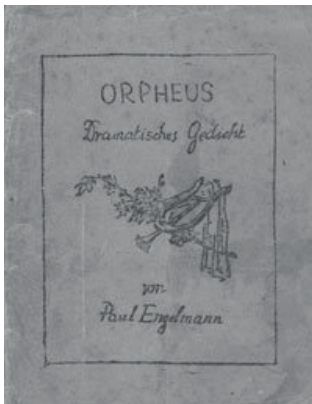
6 Portrait of Paul Engelmann.
(Manak, 2009)



7 Portrait of Paul Engelmann.
(Literarische Landkarte der
Deutschmährischen Autoren, n.d.)



8 Portrait of Paul Engelmann.
(Brenner Archiv, Universität Innsbruck, 2024)



9
Cover of one of Engelmann's works of poetry.
(Brenner Archiv, Universität Innsbruck, 2024)

of tuberculosis, after which he took private lessons (Limam, n.d.). His upbringing in Olomouc formed a fundamental base for the rest of his life, as he never lost touch with his hometown. However, his interest and passion for literature, poetry and architecture led him to Vienna. Vienna exerted an irresistible attraction on the German-speaking community in Olomouc, as it was an important metropolis for central Europe in terms of economic status and development. Smaller urban centres like Olomouc constantly supplied Vienna with new talent, including Engelmann (Bakascy, n.d.).

At the age of twenty-one, in 1911, Engelmann enrolled at the Architecture faculty of the Technische Hochschule in Vienna, where he was soon disappointed by the traditional form of education. He spent most of his time in coffee shops with the community of artists and intellectuals, where he eventually came in contact with Adolf Loos. He and two others shortly became one of Loos' first three students in his new Bauschule in 1912 (Zatloukal, 2019). They worked for Loos in his architectural firm and followed a curriculum of lectures on themes including interior design, art history and knowledge of building materials (Bakascy, n.d.). Loos aimed to teach his students how to think three-dimensionally, in the cube. During his studies, Engelmann contributed to multiple design projects, which he designed together with Loos. After finishing the Bauschule at the beginning of the First World War, Engelmann relocated back to Olomouc and mostly focused on his work as a philosopher and author (Plaisier, 1987) From 1918, Engelmann continued to develop his modern approach to architecture based on Loos' work (Bakascy, n.d.) and would become Loos' closest collaborator in the years before the Second World War. In 1934, Engelmann emigrated to Palestine and Tel Aviv, where he would continue his work as an interior designer and author. He passed away in Tel Aviv on February 5th 1965 (Zatloukal, 2019).

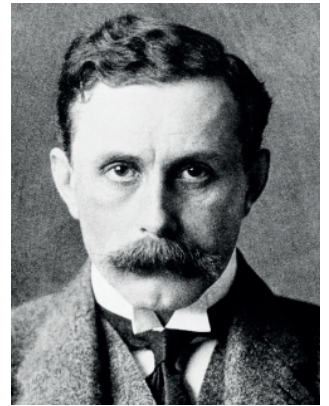
10
Photograph of Vila Vladimír Müller, taken from the Černochova street.
(Potucek, 2012)



On Raumplan

Adolf Loos

Adolf Loos was born in 1870 in Brünn, nowadays known as Brno, Czech Republic. He studied architecture at the Technische Universität Dresden, following the opening of his own architectural firm in Vienna in 1898. As he did not intend to follow in the footsteps of influential architect Otto Wagner, who taught his students at TU Wien, Adolf Loos established an independent architectural course, the Bauschule, in 1912. Three students were accepted after passing the entrance exam, including his favourite pupil, Paul Engelmann. After an impressive architectural career with a diverse range of projects across Central Europe, Loos passed away in Vienna on August 23rd 1933. His pupils continued to honour his legacy in their work.



11
Portrait of Adolf Loos.
(Archipel, 2025)

Adolf Loos approached his architectural designs three-dimensionally, stimulating architects to design in spatial volumes instead of flat surfaces. Rather than using conventional floor plans, Loos designed rooms as volumetric units, with each their own height and placement, resulting in a fluid, multi-level interior. The variation in height allowed him to create a large sense of spatiality within a relatively compact building volume. This enabled certain spaces to be proportioned according to their specific functionality within the house. This resulted in a pattern of fixed seating arrangements with a lower ceiling, creating a sense of domestic cosiness while enabling a different use of the remaining spatial volume that one would not need when sitting down. The illusion of compression and release is often applied in Raumplan interiors through the different floor-to-ceiling ratios, as the light and open main space often is approached from a narrow hallway, emphasising the importance and beauty of the space, directly influencing the user's experience. This approach unfolds a dynamic spatial user experience and reflected Loos' rejection of ornamentation in favour of spatial clarity and functionalism (Loos, 1908). The theatricality of domestic drama is the subject of Loos' interiors (Colomina, 2008). The main seating area, often referred to as the 'theatre box', is described as a female space, providing a structured overview of what happens in the house. The library is referred to as the male space, which represents a public space within the private realm (Colomina, 2008). The practicality of the design particularly assists the swift operation of housemaids and housewives.

Loos argued that this compact method of designing is cost- and material-efficient, reflecting the minimalist and sincere characteristics of modernity. The actual notion of Raumplan has been extracted from the architectural style in the work of Loos by Heinrich Kulka in his 1931 monograph titled: Adolf Loos, Das Werk der Architekten. Many of Loos's clients came from the Jewish bourgeoisie, who often possessed the financial means to commission residences characterised by luxury materials and excellent craftsmanship. While several Raumplan houses were destroyed during the Second World War by German occupation, the residence of the non-Jewish Müller family remained intact.



Merel Garritsen

Mini-Raumplan

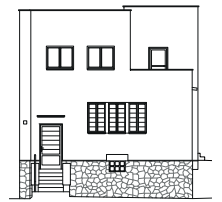
In the design of the Vila, Engelmann was loyal to the classic Loos Raumplan principles, but translated and adjusted them to correspond with a medium-sized family house, significantly smaller than other Raumplan residences designed by Loos. The Vila is placed on a 9 by 11 meter surface. He enriched these Raumplan principles with his lyrical conception (Zatloukal, 2019), as this Vila is the only project Engelmann completely designed on his own (Plaisier, 1987). The final design of the house contains an application of a mini-Raumplan, mostly evident in the configuration of spaces on the ground floor, where the sitting room, dining room, study and kitchen are located at two different floor levels. Raumplan designs are characterised by a modest exterior and a complex, elegant interior, emphasising the purity of materials and the abandonment of ornamentation from the inside out (Zatloukal, 2019). Even though Engelmann was taught by Loos to consider the facade secondary to the interior, he implemented different architectural influences in the facades of the Vladimír Müller Vila, allowing each facade to convey a subtle message.

The Southwest facade, facing Černochova Street, is characterised by the presence of the main entrance of the house. Positioned beside the main entrance, a trio of windows serves as a hallmark of Engelmann's architectural vocabulary. This composed gesture acts as a signature directly from the architect, displaying their work to the public. On the top floor, the simplicity of the cubic volume is disrupted by the presence of a terrace, also oriented towards the street. As the garden is oriented to the Northeast, this terrace provides an opportunity to enjoy the sun.

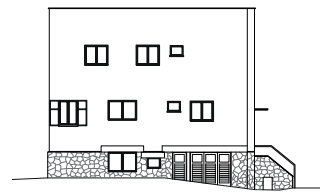
The Northwest facade has been altered during past renovations, which resulted in a glass and iron extension of the garage added in the '60s. The Müller family car was not able to make the turn to enter the garage as Engelmann initially designed it. This extension, visible in the photograph in Figure 21, was removed during the most recent renovation, as it was not part of Engelmann's original design.

The Northeast facade is composed more like a painting, aligning with the orientation towards the garden. The implementation of the Raumplan principles can be derived from this facade, as the windows are placed at different heights.

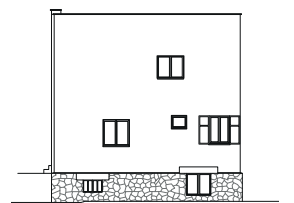
The Southeast façade exhibits a symmetrical composition that evokes the principles of classicism. Two subtle setbacks articulate the facade, creating a balanced backdrop for the centrally positioned French doors. This carefully ordered facade faces Krameriova Street. As a passionate gardener, Mr. Müller valued the connection between the interior and the garden and the placement of the French doors was a deliberate feature that facilitated this relationship. He cared for the flowers he planted on the raised section of the garden, emphasising his engagement with the landscape. During the large renovation, the mineral plaster cladding was reconstructed through thorough research of other modernist Vilas in the neighbourhood (Jan Kratochvíl, n.d.).



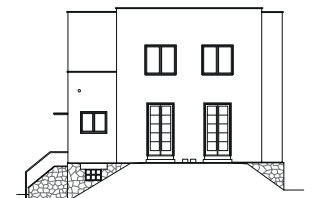
13
Elevation of the SW facade.
(Drawing by Author)



14
Elevation of the NW facade.
(Drawing by Author)



15
Elevation of the NE facade.
(Drawing by Author)



16
Elevation of the SE facade.
(Drawing by Author)

12
Photograph of the French doors
taken from the garden.
(Potucek, 2012)



17 Entrance staircase on the SW facade.
(Photograph by Author)



18 Garden along the SW facade.
(Photograph by Author)



18 SW facade before the 2018 renovation,
including glass garage extension.
(Suchankova, 2021)



19 Facade setback detail on the SW facade.
(Photograph by Author)



20 View on NW and NE facade from the garden,
after the recent renovation.
(Kratochvil & Sborwitz Architects, 2019)



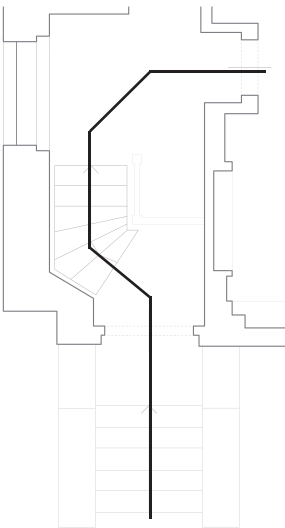
21 Glass garage extension, before the 2018
renovation.
(Kratochvil & Sborwitz Architects, 2019)



22
Material detail of the plinth on which the house is placed.
(Photograph by Author)



23
Restored garage doors that provide direct access to the basement from the garden.
(Photograph by Author)



24
The careful change in directions when entering the Vila.
(Drawing by Author)

The cubic structure of the house is placed on a plinth, which serves as a protective element to protect the residents from potential floods from the nearby Morava River (Bakascy, n.d.). In 1997, the entire basement flooded during the large Central European Flood, but the main functions of the house remained habitable. The rooms in the basement were mostly used by the maid, who possibly was not living in the house full-time, as there would be insufficient space left for her. In most Raumplan residences, having a maid who lived in the house with the family was quite the norm, as it elevated the status of the family. Nowadays, the Voda family has remodelled the basement into a semi-dependent apartment for their eldest son.

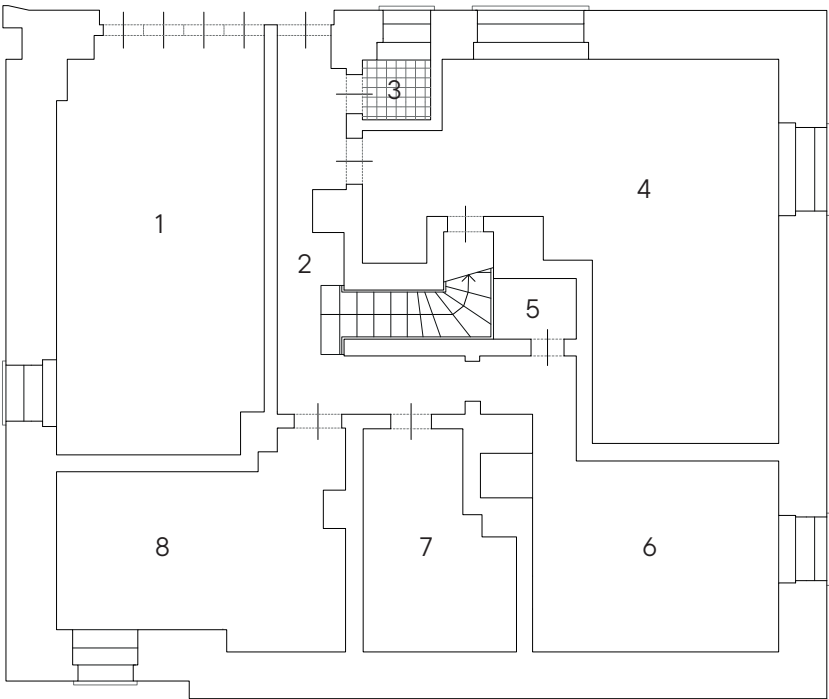
The original configuration of the functions in the basement is depicted in the floor plan in Figure 25.

The process of entering the house with begins the small staircase in front of the main entrance, where the plinth announces itself to the user in these six steps. When opening the door, the stairs directly continue, creating an immediate connection between the interior and exterior. The platform at the top of the stairs, often referred to as the vestibule, provides a welcoming space for greeting guests. During the route from the entrance to the main Raumplan space, Engelmann carefully redirects the user’s direction five times, as explained in the diagram in Figure 24, paying close attention to the lived experience. While ascending the stairs, the feeling of compression becomes evident with the decrease in interior height. This contrasts with the feeling of release upon entering the main Raumplan space. This emphasises the openness of the floor plan layout, composed of various interconnected spaces. For guests, this contrast creates an impressive wow effect, which helps elaborate on the status of the residing family.

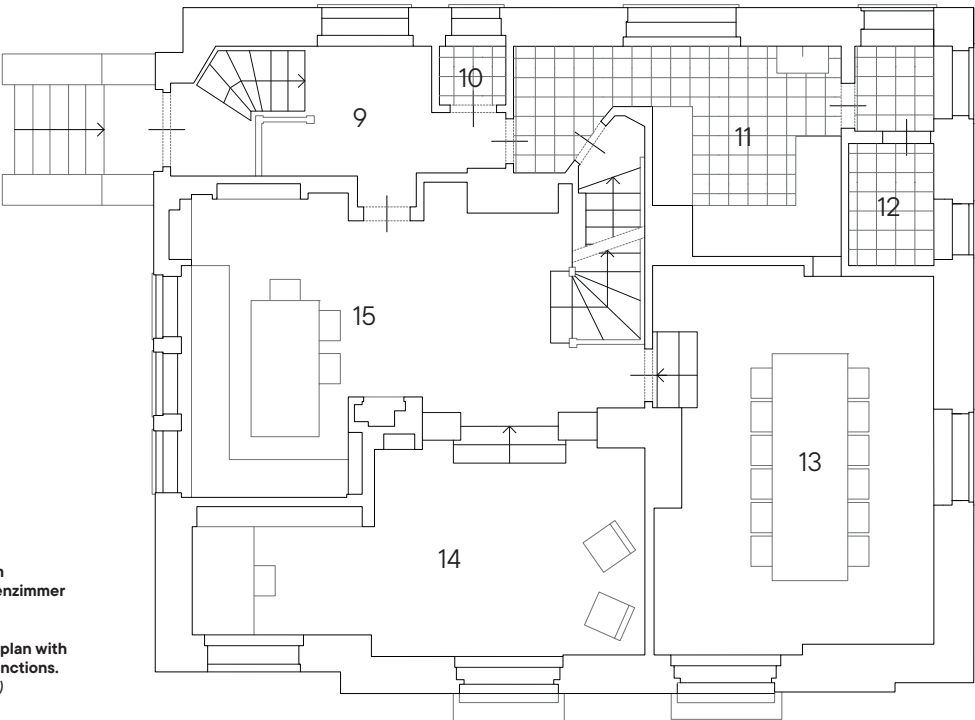
The main Raumplan spaces in this Vila are the living room (15), study (14) and dining room (13), as they are placed and focused around the main staircase. The toilet (10), kitchen (11) and pantry (12) are placed in one corner of the house, near the basement stairs, allowing the maid to move swiftly through her domain. A moment of interaction can be found in the dining room, where a small hatchway in the kitchen opens up to effortlessly serve dinner to the guests in the dining room. This room contained a disproportionately long table, seating up to twelve people (Voda, 2025). Both the dining room and the study are placed at a lower level in relation to the living room. This is where the Raumplan unfolds itself. The study, also referred to as Herrenzimmer, is partly enclosed to isolate oneself from the commotion of family life. The increased interior height emphasises the presence of the French doors, providing an interaction between inside and outside. The seating area in the living room is designed to be a destination where the family can come together informally.

The concept of Raumplan is less evident in the layout of the first floor, which mainly contains bedrooms and the family bathroom. The master bedroom is directly connected to the main bathroom and also has access to a walk-in wardrobe with built-in storage cupboards. This

1 garage
2 hallway
3 toilet
4 storage/pantry
5 storage
6 laundry room
7 pantry
8 boiler room
25
Basement floor plan with configuration of functions.
(Drawing by Author)



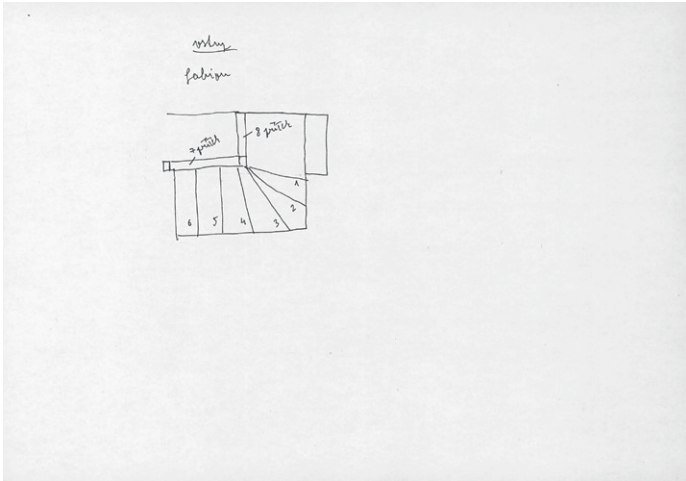
9 vestibule
10 toilet
11 kitchen
12 pantry
13 dining room
14 study/herrenzimmer
15 living room
26
Ground floor floor plan with configuration of functions.
(Drawing by Author)



Vestibule



27 Interior entrance staircase, granting access to the vestibule.
(Photograph by Author)



28 Sketch of vestibule entrance staircase.
(Engelmann, 1928)

Kitchen / Pantry



30 Pantry with a view to the garden.
(Photograph by Author)



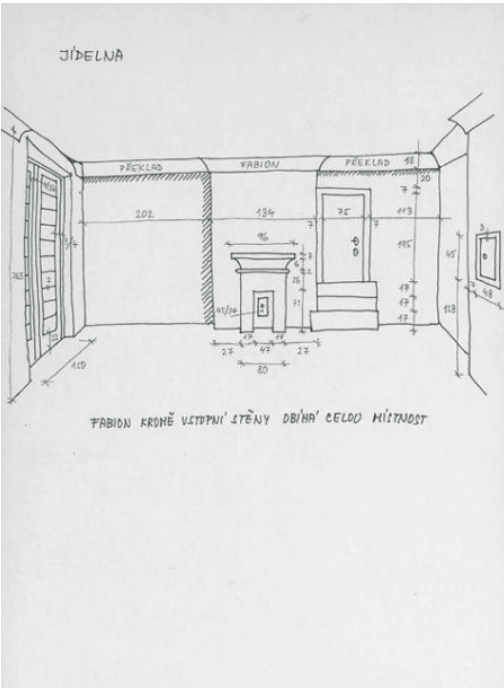
29 Small hatchway from the perspective of the kitchen.
(Photograph by Author)



31 Small hatchway from the perspective of the dining room.
(Photograph by Author)



32 Original dining room, remodelled to to the contemporary standards of a living room. (Photograph by Author)



33 Sketch of the dining room. (Engelmann, 1928)



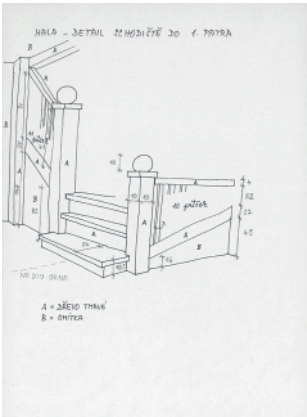
34 View of the central staircase from the lowered study area. (Potucek, 2012)



36 Study corner, including built-in furniture. (Photograph by Author)



35 View of the lowered study area from above. (Photograph by Author)



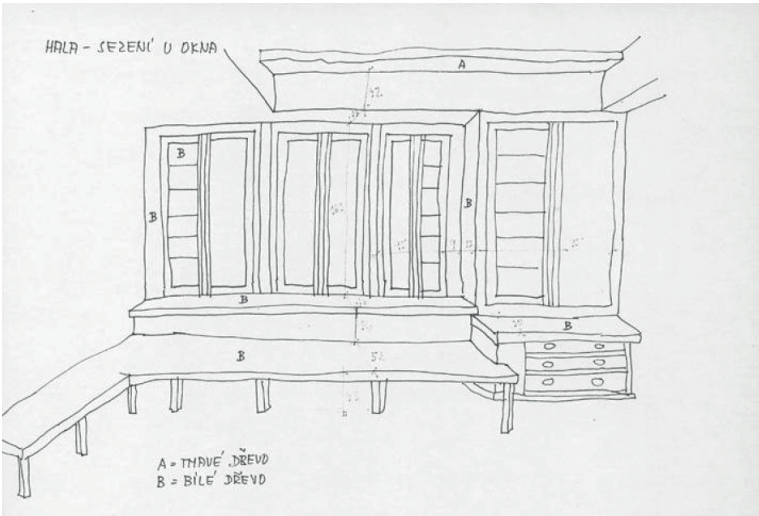
37 Sketch of the main staircase.
(Engelmann, 1928)



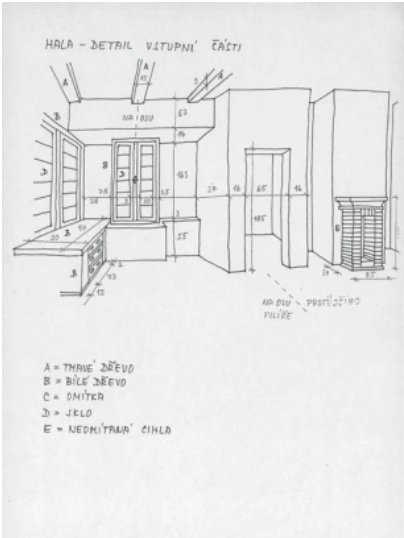
38 Main staircase with adjacent fireplace.
(Photograph by Author)



39 Sitting area with a fixed bench in the main raumplan space, surrounded by windows and built-in cupboards.
(Kratovich & Sborwitz Architects, 2019)



40 Sketch of the living room.
(Engelmann, 1928)



41 Sketch of the living room.
(Engelmann, 1928)



42 Raumplan space from the perspective of the dining room entrance.
(Photograph by Author)



43
Evidence of Raumplan elements in walk-in wardrobe on the first floor.
(Vltava, 2021)



44
Detail of one of the built-in storage cupboards in the living room.
(Photograph by Author)



45
Detail of one of the built-in storage cupboards in the living room.
(Vltava, 2021)

wardrobe is situated one step lower compared to the adjacent bedroom, creating the illusion of a distinct separation in function, without needing a physical barrier. From this wardrobe space, access to the roof terrace is granted.

Furnishing

Engelmann’s interpretation of Raumplan becomes evident by analysing various fixed furniture elements. Loos often tries to exert some type of intangible control over the user by nudging their movements through the house in a structured way. Incorporating fixed furniture elements into the architecture limits the user from having complete freedom in the occupancy of their home, yet they show that these spaces are intended to be occupied in a certain way (Colomina, 2008). Some important fixed elements remain visible in the Vila Vladimír Müller today, such as the fixed bench in the sitting area, in combination with built-in storage cabinets with flowery wallpaper, visible in Figures 39, 43 and 44. The furniture in the study corner is fixed as well, indicating the intricate and careful placement of this function. Loos also tends to indicate moments for art by building frames into the wall, enabling the art to become part of the Vila. Engelmann granted the user more freedom to adapt parts of the interior to their own taste by minimising the amount of fixed furniture elements. The main Raumplan spaces remain quite defined in their composition and design, but spaces with other functionalities prove to be quite adaptable, such as the dining room, which has nowadays been modified into a contemporary living room with a couch and a TV. ‘A modern man needs a home that is more cosy and comfortable than those of other times’ (Frank, 2013).

Introverted Architecture

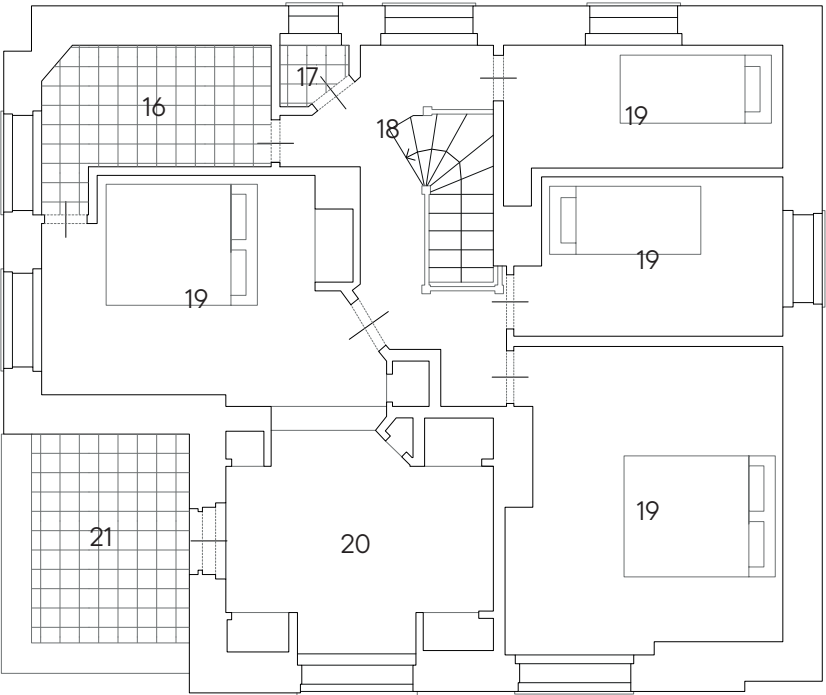
From the contrast between the soberness of the exterior and the elegant richness of the interior that characterises Raumplan Vila’s, a sense of interiority can be derived. The focus of the house is in the interior, where an unexpected experience awaits the user. Where pure and precious material details unfold when moving through the house. As per Loos’ example, Engelmann interpreted these principles and applied them to his architectural designs. Vila Vladimír Müller has a matter-of-fact exterior, but the interior is simple and contemplative (Zatloukal, 2019).

In the previous works by Adolf Loos, the windows have always been monofunctional, to let the natural light in. The view to the outside has been neglected and actively avoided by the configuration of furniture elements within the spaces. People are always oriented away from the window, towards a central point in the room (Loos, 1908). The central space within this Raumplan interior is on the main fireplace, characterised by its green structured tile cladding, directly facing the French doors in the library. This axis creates a rare moment of interaction between inside and outside, at the request of Mr. Vladimír Müller, who was a passionate gardener. The fixed bench in the living room also orients the user towards the rest of the room, with their backs against the window. The pattern created in this trio of windows is carefully repeated in the doors of the

- 16 bathroom
- 17 toilet
- 18 hallway
- 19 bedroom
- 20 wardrobe
- 21 terrace

46

Ground floor floor plan with configuration of functions.
(Drawing by Author)





47
Positionality of the window in the study.
(Photograph by Author)



48
Diagram showing the main square, main axis and various streets within the Raumplan floor plan, following the concealed symmetry within the house.
(Drawing by Author)

built-in cupboards adjacent to the windows, as visualised in Figure 49. The continuation of this pattern refutes the presence of the windows, as they blend into the functionality of the cupboards.

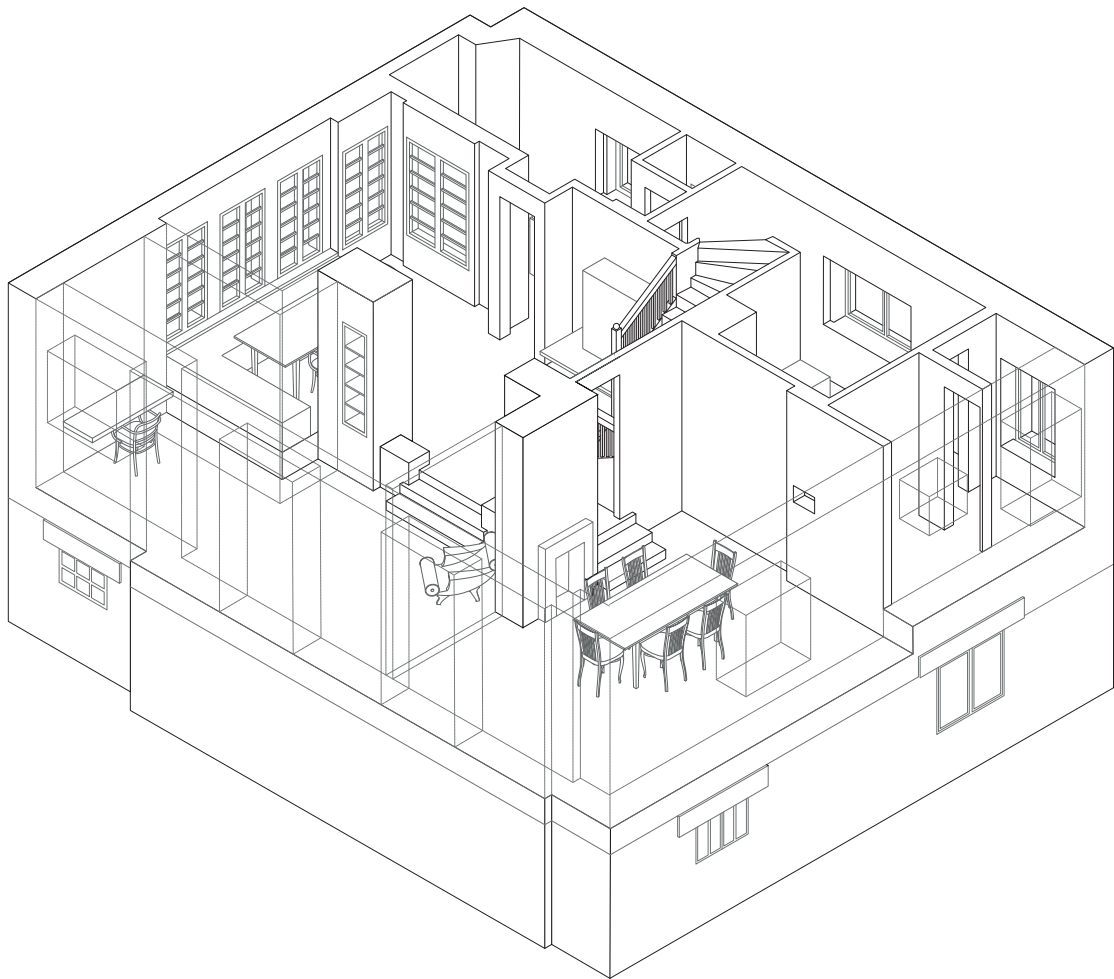
As the study area required a window to provide sufficient daylight for working and reading, Engelmann placed this window at a significant distance above the table. This prevents one from getting distracted by anything happening outside, remaining focused while studying or reading.

The positionality of the main seating arrangement can be described as a ‘Theatre box’ (Colomina, 2008), which often is the main seating area of the house that looks onto the main staircase. The theatre box is positioned in a way that creates a play between power and vulnerability. The spectator has a clear overview of the movements throughout the house, by being able to observe the central staircase. An intruder would immediately be noticed. The vulnerability is woven into the clear visibility of the spectator from the rest of the room (Colomina, 2008). A game of noticing and being noticed.

The House as the City

Raumplan designs emphasise the importance of the ways of consciously moving through spaces. The user’s experience of a space is carefully manufactured on the drawing table, composing the house of internal streets, squares and axes. This affects the perceived feeling of privacy throughout the house, as described by Jozef Frank in a translated publication of his essay ‘The House as Path and Place’ (2013). The route that guests will follow will diverge from the paths of the maid and the family. Some spaces will express the feeling of publicness, others will remain more private, creating a sense of urbanity within the walls of the house. All spaces have been carefully designed to serve a certain purpose for their determined target groups. The main Raumplan spaces will feel very open and public, comparable to the public squares in the urban fabric. In the Vila Vladimír Müller, the fireplace beside the main staircase can be classified as a communication hub (Zatloukal, 2019), the most important place in the house that can be defined as the central square. The main Axis runs from the main seating area to the library and the dining room, as these more formally designed Raumplan spaces are to be experienced by guests. The libraries are classified as the male space, which represent a public space within the house. In Vila Vladimír Müller, the library is located along the main axis, resulting in a public library with an increased sense of privacy in the study corner. Smaller ‘streets’ can be unfolded by considering the concealed symmetrical elements in the interior. The fireplace forms a reaction to the French doors in the library, creating a small street. From the main seating area, the view of the staircase is very important, following the Theatre box theory by Colomina (2008). To see and to be seen.

The first floor of the house, where the bedrooms and bathrooms are situated, is perceived to be separated from the streets and squares. The functionality of the spaces indicates a high level of privacy.



49
Isometric drawing of the configuration of the ground floor Raumplan principle.
(Drawing by Author)

The analysis of different Raumplan methodologies provides a framework to construct the main interpretation of the principles that Engelmann used in the design of the Vladimír Müller Vila. Engelmann did not apply many fixed furniture elements in the interior; solely, the main Raumplan spaces are fitted with built-in furniture. The elements that were fixed were preserved very well by the Müller family throughout the past century. The freedom that Engelmann granted his commissioners is expressed through the contemporary adaptations of the house, allowing it to bend with the needs of contemporary urban life.

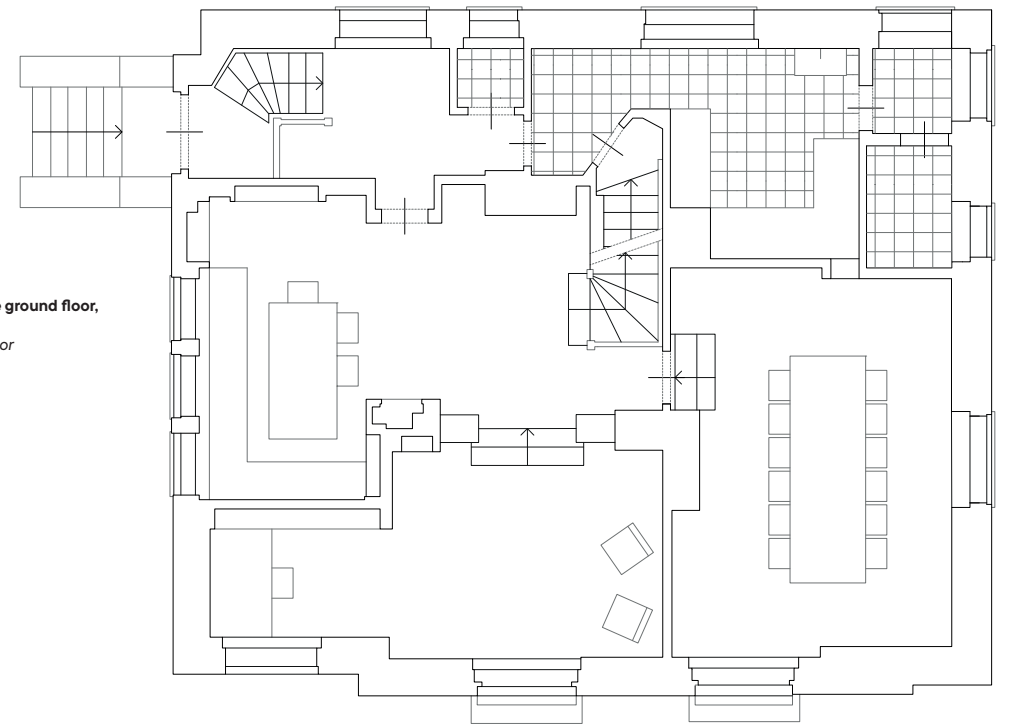
Engelmann seems more reserved in the application of distinct Raumplan elements, which is also reflected in the smaller domestic scale of the building. The limited budget of the Müller family resulted in an absence of luxury materials, following a more sober interior. The distinct focus away from the windows is evident in the main sitting area, where the fixed bench orients the user towards the rest of the room. Engelmann however introduces one important moment of interaction between inside and outside, as requested by Mr. Vladimír Müller. The sightline from the central fireplace to the French doors connects the main Raumplan space with the gardening terrace on the SE facade. The analysis of clear gradients in perceived publicness and privacy throughout the house provide a clear overview of its internal urbanity. Having a central 'square' that is connected by multiple 'streets' unfolds the structured ways of moving through the interior. A Loosian way of nudging and directing the user's spatial experience. The clear influence Loos had on the practical way of designing is evident, yet there are slight differences that distinguish Engelmann's work from Loos' designs.

The little historic documentation of the house resulted in a dependance on information that was gathered after the recent renovation in 2018, when the Vila gained international attention. Original publications from 1927 were scarce. The precise accuracy of the information can be influenced by the interpretation of writers, but also by the translation of sources from Czech to English. The conversation with David Voda was very valuable, as it came closer to a primary source than any article on the internet.

Conclusion

Appendices

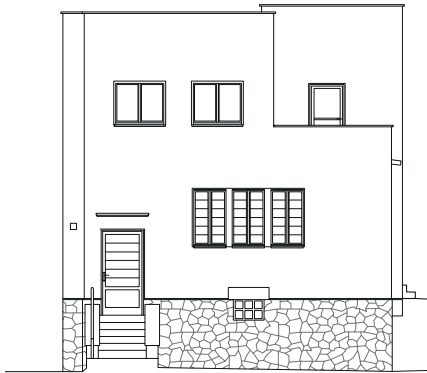
A.1 Floorplan of the ground floor,
scaled 1:100.
Drawing by Author



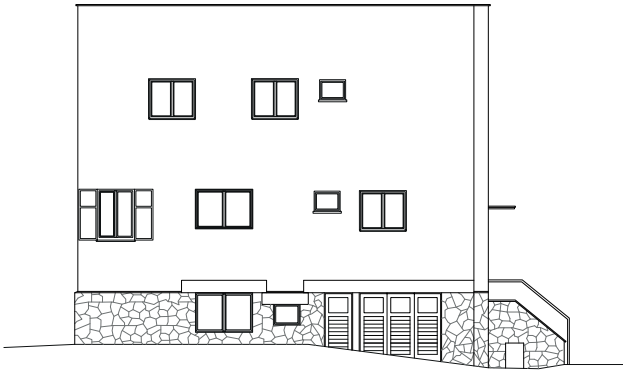
A.2 Floorplan of the first floor,
scaled 1:100
Drawing by Author



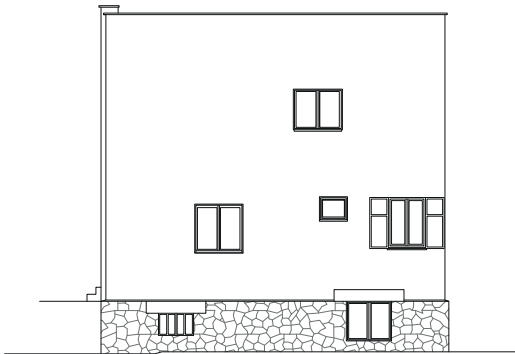
A.3 Elevation of the SW facade
scaled 1:200.
Drawing by Author



A.4 Elevation of the NW facade
scaled 1:200
Drawing by Author



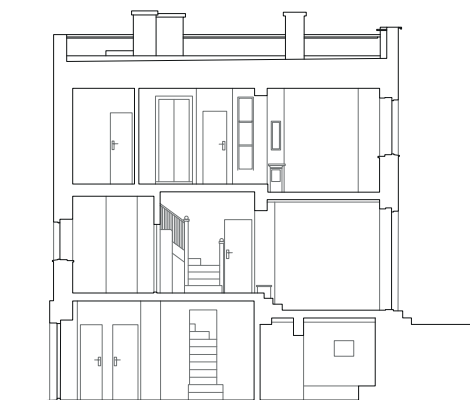
A.5 Elevation of the NE facade
scaled 1:200.
Drawing by Author



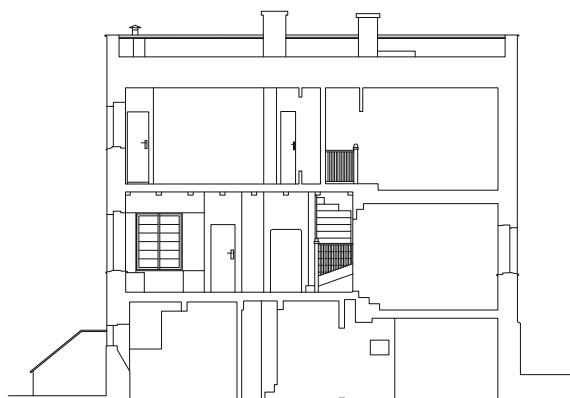
A.6 Elevation of the SE facade
scaled 1:200
Drawing by Author



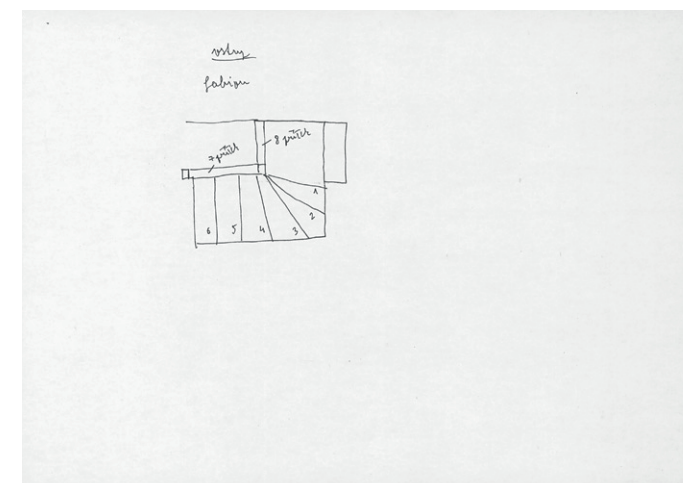
A.7 Section from SW/NE
scaled 1:200.
Drawing by Author



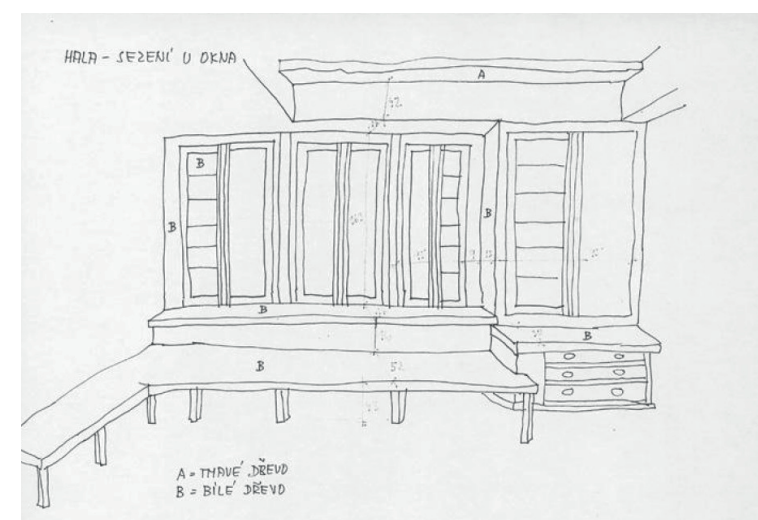
A.8 Section from NW/SE
scaled 1:200
Drawing by Author



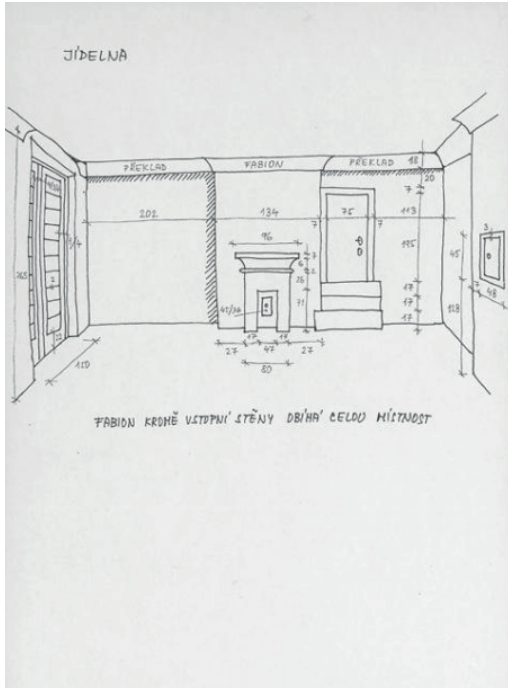
A.9 Sketch of the staircase in the
vestibule.
Engelmann, 1928 via Sbírky
Muzeum umění Olomouc



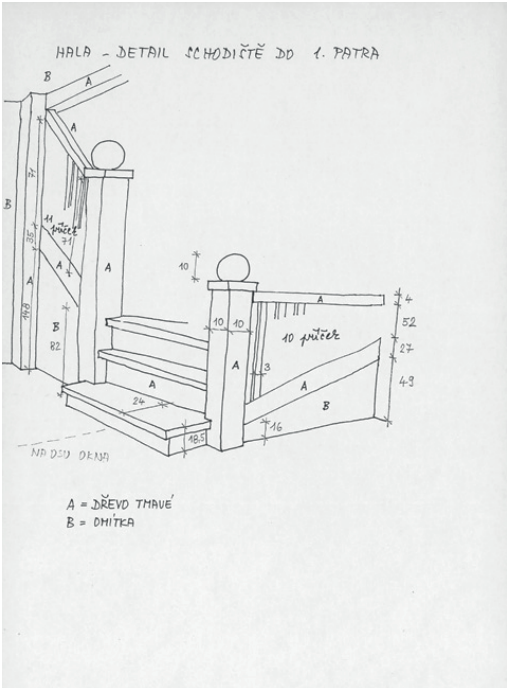
A.10 Sketch of the fixed bench in
the living room, one of the main
Raumplan spaces.
Engelmann, 1928 via Sbírky
Muzeum umění Olomouc



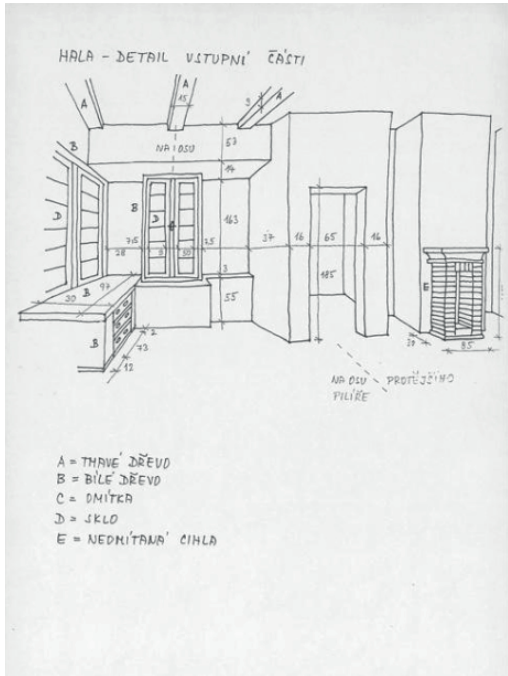
A.11 Sketch of the dining room.
Engelmann, 1928 via Sbírky
Muzeum umění Olomouc



A.13 Sketch of the main staircase.
Engelmann, 1928 via Sbírky
Muzeum umění Olomouc



A.12 Sketch of the built-in
cupboards and the entrance
into the main Raumplan space.
Engelmann, 1928 via Sbírky
Muzeum umění Olomouc



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