

# Learning from the Chasa Viletta in Switzerland for “House Europe!”

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Collaboration                Chair of Construction Heritage and Preservation — Silke Langenberg



Bos-cha, Chasa Viletta (ca. 1960) © Dumeng F. Clagluna

The Course in Architectural Behavior focuses on the Chasa Viletta in Bos-cha, a hamlet near the village of Guarda in the Swiss Canton of Graubünden, in order to test the hypothesis put forward by House Europe!: that it is possible to increase Switzerland's population by one million without destroying any existing buildings. Bos-cha is a relay point on the mountain road that runs from Italy to Austria. The original farmhouse built in 1630 was destroyed by fire in the early 19th century. It was rebuilt by its then owner, the farmer Friedrich Huder in 1830. He had made his fortune in Venice. The memories of his travels found their expression in the neo-baroque front-façade. Around 1900, Stevan Viletta took over the house. In 1953 Friedrich Viletta carried out renovations. In 1962, a barn was added by Jahan and Martina Clagluna Viletta. The last renovation was carried out in 1996. After the death in Summer 2024 of its then owner, who still lived the whole year in the house, it came into the possession of Annapatrizia and Dumeng Claglün.

While the barn is still in use for dairy farming by the neighboring farmer, the main house is currently not in use. However it is still in good shape, decorated with handmade curtains, quilts, and antique tools that have been passed down through generations to make the long winter months more enjoyable. The owners' loving gaze towards the house is still alive, making it everything but a museum. What can architects learn from these houses in the mountain villages of Switzerland, that have been in good use for centuries, and how can they become models for the future? In our master's thesis studio, we would like to think about their meaning by working closely with the next generation of householders.

In the preparation phase, we will visit the site, conduct on-site surveys and literature reviews, and then organize the basic information together in the form of A0 posters with arguments and images that summarize the research, but also trace possible perspectives for the elaboration phase. At the same time, each student based on their own interest, will conduct research on the important issues (resources, industry, land use, materials, technology, lifestyle, etc.) that will help them to unlock the secrets of this house and summarize them as an actor network drawing done by the group to guide the design of it. In the elaboration phase, the aim is to further deepen each issue through design proposals that will lead to the future of Chasa Viletta.

In the elaboration process, CAB will provide supervision on ethnographic research and design, while GTA will provide supervision on historical research and design for students. Chasa Viletta residency research is scheduled to take place from February 10th to 14th, 2025. It is expected that the students will be able to obtain a lot of information from their own life experiences and interactions with the owner families and the local residents. As it is winter, we are considering a hybrid survey that uses digital tools such as drones and 3D scanners in conjunction with the Chair of Construction Heritage and Preservation. It is also envisaged that the survey and design process, interim presentations and final public presentations will involve exchanging opinions with the next generation of homeowners from the perspective of the local community and family to deepen the hypothesis. Through this interaction with the house and the local community, we would like you to consider the history and future of the lived-in house Chasa Viletta, and propose a future mountain house and lifestyle as part of House Europe!

## Description of preparation and elaboration phase in key-words

For the design project's target, each student is expected to formulate his own interests for Chasa Viletta residency research scheduled to take place from February 10th to 14th, 2025. The Reviews and weekly critiques are held on Monday. The students will be evaluated on four submissions: two submissions during the preparation phase and two submissions during the elaboration phase.

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|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CAB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Actor-Network Drawing</li><li>– Architectural Behaviorology</li><li>– Construction</li><li>– Design for future mountain house in Switzerland</li></ul>                                  |
| GTA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Technical Survey of the House, Archival and Literature Research</li><li>– History of the House, its networks and its environment</li><li>– AO poster with argument and images</li></ul> |

## Schedule and expected outcomes

Preparation	W1	<b>Start: February 03</b>	Orientation & Theme Discussion
	W2	<b>Site Visit (Mo–Fr)</b>	
	W3	Desk Critique	
	W4	Desk Critique	
	W5	Desk Critique	
	W6	<b>1st Mid Review</b>	A0 poster with argument and images
	W7	<i>Seminar Week</i>	
End / Start Elaboration	W8	<b>2nd Mid Review</b>	Group Actor Network Drawings of research
		Colloquium	
	W9	Desk Critique	
	W9	Desk Critique	
	W10	Desk Critique	
	W11	<b>3rd Mid Review</b>	Project AND, Drawings, Model
	W12	<i>Easter Holiday</i>	
	W13	Desk Critique	
	W14	Desk Critique	
	W15	Desk Critique	
W16	<b>Submission: May 23</b>	Project AND, Drawings, Model	
W17	<b>Final Review</b>		
	Colloquium		

## Ratio of grading by cooperation partners

Preparation	40% – 1st Mid Review 25% / 2nd Mid Review 15%
	CAB: 70%
	GTA: 30%
Elaboration	60% – 3rd Mid Review 20% / Final Review 40%
	CAB: 70%
	GTA: 30%