

DIMENSIONE CHI WING LO[®]

MADE IN ITALY BY MARONI



Project : Serenorth – April 2023

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Serenorth

While we continue thriving in this computer age, adapting to every means to catch up with the speed of electronic impulses, we have been feeling accomplished in managing a world that can possibly be under control, conducting a life that can hopefully be livable. We all know we are facing serious crises, in the way we exploit our environment, rely on fuel, produce food, and create jobs. Perhaps we are also conscious of the fact that we are also suffering from visual pollution, aesthetic illiteracy, the paralysis of living in our comfort zone, the addiction to our phones...



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From the Industrial Revolution of the late 18th Century to the Computer Age of the 21st Century, these 250 years, in retrospect, of war and peace, depression and prosperity, regression and progression, have inspired all sorts of social and artistic movements in the essential counterbalance between standardization and distinctiveness, machine and handmade. Prognostically, the Arts and Crafts Movement from the 1880s may gather momentum and be invigorated today to intervene once again in the decline of quality due to our indifference if not ignorance. It could not be a more suitable time to alter the endless reproduction of sad cities, dull buildings, dispirited interiors, flashy decors, and useless objects.



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Serenorth is a house situated on a quiet lane in London. The foundation and brick walls were laid during the golden age of the Art and Craft Movement that originated in Britain. Serenorth provides the context to postulate a transformation that could become a living reference beyond its genius loci. It is an archetypal house synthesizing design and making, the old and the new, the machine-made and the hand-crafted; it is always called a home by all, a home that has long rooted in the soil and history of its locality, flourished to withstand perpetually the wearing of time.



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The much sought-after block-printed wallpapers of William Morris, the main influencer of the Art and Crafts Movement, had once graced the walls of Serenorth. They were covered by prolonged neglect and emulsion paints, and rendered unrecoverable. Morris's vision of informing design with the mastering of material and technique brought about refinement and possibility in response to the soulless application of industrial standards at that time. As a homage to Morris and his insistence that no work should be carried out in his workshops before he had personally mastered the appropriate techniques and materials, the ideas of wallpapers for Serenorth experiment with applicable materials and modern techniques: their patterns are etched on frosted glass, silkscreen-printed on fine plastered walls, and revealed by exposing the different colour layers of lacquer under a dark top coating.



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The renovation work entails the complete removal of the internal walls and floors. The restoration of the old brick walls involves also the introduction of cast glass panels to increase the thermal insulation while keeping the visibility of the brickwork. The repositioning of the existing cast iron columns facilitates the replacement of the once wooden floor joists with new brick vault ceilings. The pitch roofs were no more supported by deformed wooden trusses but by finer metalworks with their cables in tension. It is an operation that calls for the heart as much as skill, an undertaking that demands a total synthesis of intellect and emotion, a unification of manufacturing and design.



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Serenorth's rename is derived from the characteristic quietude of the soft northern light filtered through its sash window panes. Usual strong chiaroscuro no more engulfs the interior, only faint shadow merges with soft light, like those that were once captured in the interior paintings of Vilhelm Hammershøi, in the still life paintings of William Bailey. As the daylight wanes, the dusk becomes pleasantly longer, only vanishing unnoticeably till the moon hangs high.



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It is in this light and context that the 2023 collection of DIMENSIONE CHI WING LO was conceived, reciprocating a passion as pervasive and omnipresent as in every room and detail in Serenorth



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