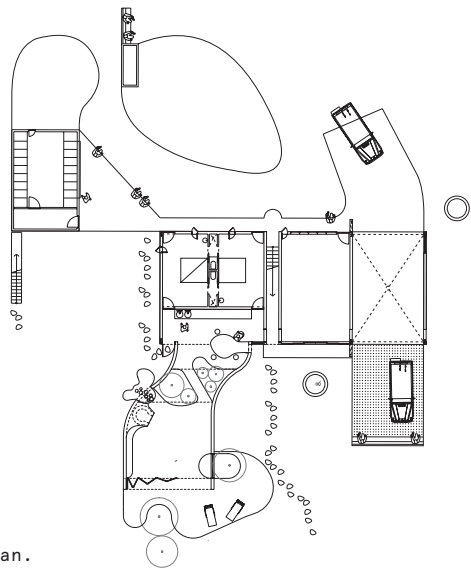


SFOSL sheds the original



Plan.



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An ambitious couple living on a vineyard in Sebastopol, California, have completed yet another piece of their ongoing master plan, a project that took place only 100 m from the 1930s bungalow that is their home. They watched as architect friends from SFOSL (the acronym refers to the firm's San Francisco and Oslo offices) implemented the latest phase of the undertaking. Having previously completed a cabana for Laila and Lars (a collector and painter, respectively), the architects – who, like their clients, are expats from Norway – now faced a new challenge: renovating an existing barn and extending it with spaces for their friends' vocations.

It soon became clear that the old barn was too decrepit to satisfy a

programme that included a shed for a tractor and other farm equipment, a storage place for years of memorabilia and an artist's studio. The existing structure had to be demolished. Rather than abandoning the original barn vernacular altogether, however, the architects shuffled the roof geometries to create the right ceiling heights and an interior with the desired amount and quality of daylight. Eager to maintain the existing 230-m² footprint, they found new ways to use the older typology. In the words of Casper Mork-Ulnes of SFOSL: 'The crisp dryness of the stereotypic utility building plan, cut to the bone, without excess or unused space, gave us a sense of freedom. It also required us to sharpen our pencils.'

The most striking design marker is the inverted roof pitch. Two double-height spaces – one on either side of the building – break open the traditional single pitch and provide the additional needs: extra space for storing a plethora of collectables and indirect northern light, ideal for painting.

Other features that shout 'barn' are of a material and/or structural character. To achieve large openings and spans for moving art work and farm tools, SFOSL opted for a simple timber-and-steel skeleton. The team used weathered, 100-year-old barn siding of varying hues as exterior cladding (aligned vertically), giving the building a timeless feel and preserving its agrarian aesthetic. Transparent

openings of different sizes reveal interior functions to people approaching the building. The light-filled artist's studio, in particular, is in full view.

Also exciting are the continuing prospects of this venture. One proposal is for an amoeba-like dining area that would include an interior jungle, an aviary, bathroom pods, a swimming pool, and an amphitheatre. There's also been talk of a hockey rink. Stay tuned for the next part of 'extending the barn vernacular' in Sebastopol.

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Inside, a mishmash of objects and workspaces creates a rather disorderly atmosphere.

