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Fala Atelier makes one plus fun equal five

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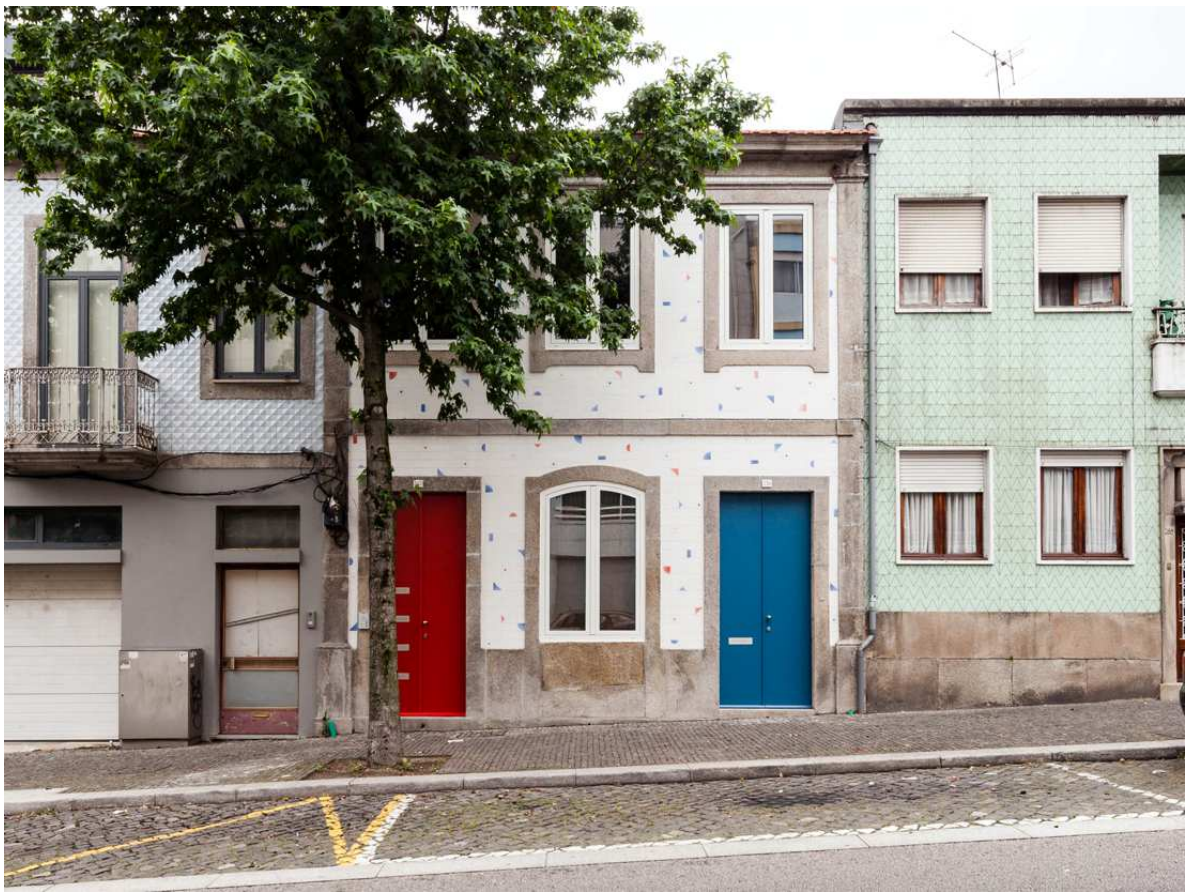
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PORTO – A 20th-century home in the centre of the Portuguese city has been adapted into five small studio flats of approximately 35 sq-m. Local studio Fala Atelier explains the motivation behind the conversion: ‘Porto is under a huge transformation driven by private investors. Smaller typologies allow for a big profit, since the price per sq-m in a smaller unit can be higher.’ It all makes financial sense in an area that is becoming a precedent for gentrification – but who lives in the house with the blue doors?



The architect followed the boundaries of the original construction in order to complete the simple renovation. Each of the five new apartments features a modular wall of plywood panels – painted in deep blue – which conceal the functional amenities, such as the bathroom, kitchen and storage cabinets. The building's façade also adds to the fun with a decorative finish scattered with fragments of traditional local tiles.

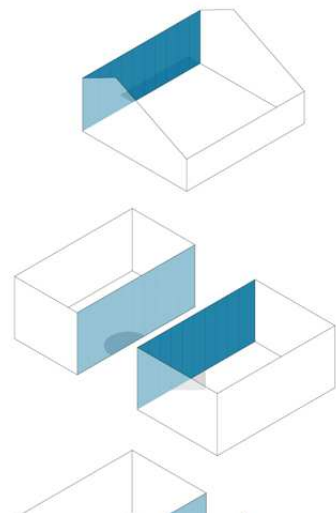
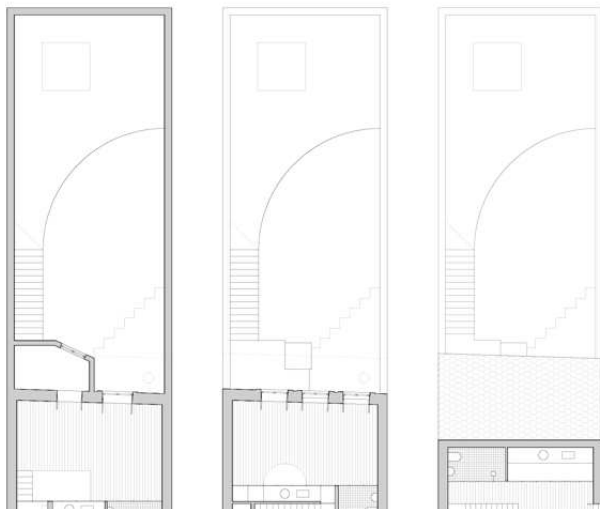


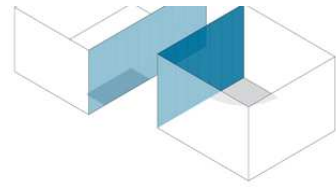


A lot of work was needed to bring the abandoned building into line with modern regulations. Although the thick, granite walls were still in good condition, the inner structure – floors, stairs and roof – were all completely replaced. The interior layout was then reorganised into five studio apartments. ‘The location of the staircase was kept from the original condition, as per municipal law,’ says the architect.

‘As such – and since it was effectively cutting each floor into two almost-equal parts – we decided to organise all the core programmes around it. We thought about

many ways to emphasise the strategy in a clear way, since it was the key gesture for the project. In the end, the rooms were left white, silent and abstract, while the “machine” functions were highlighted.’





Plan — Level 0 / Level 1 / Level 2

falaatelier.com

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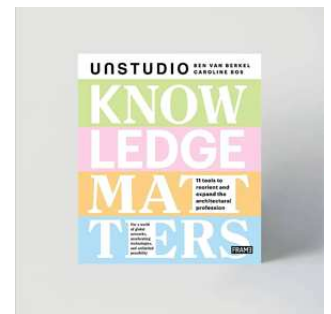
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