The ideal villa as imagined by Colin Rowe started with the Villa Rotonda and extended to the Villa Foscari, or Malcontenta, in his famous essay, "The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa." But Rowe's was far from any accepted definition of "ideal." The diagram here gives the most ideal reading possible of a front to back layered ABCBA symmetry in Malcontenta. Here the central C space is not a horizontal layer, as in Chiericati, but a cruciform with its own ABA internal organization. The actual, or virtual, villa is a superposition of B and C at the front, or water side, and a collapse of A, B, and C at the rear, garden side. This reading is further reinforced by the slight forward placement from the façade plane of a virtual portico, A-prime (notated as A'), at the rear.