Landscapes of architectural education -architecture, knowledge and existential wisdom (1/2)

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ABSTRACT

The very essence of learning also in any creative field is embedded more in the student's sense of self and his/her image of the world than in information and facts. The promoters of a professionalist education seem to entirely dismiss this essential mental and existential perspective. This area of learning can appropriately be called personal growth. Education and learning in any creative field has to aim at the student's individual and unique self, and the content of education is bound to be more existential than factual, related more with experiences and values than information.
The essence of learning is the gradual construction of an inner sense of goal, responsibility, ethical stance, and a combined sense of humility and pride. In my view, this polar attitude is most difficult to acquire.
Paradoxically, the essence of learning is essentially "un-learning", or forgetting the learned facts. One must be able to forget them when they are many and one must have the great patience to wait until they come again.

KEY WORDS: architecture; education; knowledge; wisdom; learning.

'*Thinking is more interesting than knowing, but less interesting than seeing.*'[1]
J.W. Goethe

'*Thoughts are the shadows of our feelings – always darker, emptier and simpler.*'[2]
Friedrich Nietzsche

Learning by embodied absorption

When the poet David Shapiro interviewed John Hejduk, the legendary Dean of the Cooper Union School of Architecture and one of the finest and most influential teachers of architecture in the past decades, and asked him about his teaching method, Hejduk answered: "I teach osmosistically, by osmosis".[3] With this surprising answer Hejduk reveals the most essential manner of learning. And, that is an unconscious, embodied, and existential absorption rather than an intellectual and verbal recording of facts. This immersion is the manner in which each one of us learned our mother tongue. The very essence of learning also in any creative field is embedded more in the student's sense of self and his/her image of the world than in information and facts. The promoters of a professionalist education seem to entirely dismiss this essential mental and existential perspective. This area of learning can appropriately be called personal growth. Education and learning in any creative field has to aim at the student's individual and unique self, and the content of education is bound to be more existential than factual, related more with experiences and values than information. I can already feel objections to my view arising in the reader, but I'll continue to explain why I feel this way, after having myself taught architecture around the world for more than fifty years.

John Hejduk articulates his educational method further: "I never draw for the student or draw over their work and I never tell them what to do. I try, in fact, to draw them out. In other words, draw out what's inside them and just hit a certain key point whereby they can develop their idea".[4] I share Big John's educational philosophy and I have even used the same word "osmosis" to describe my teaching approach, based on an unconscious embodied absorption, as the central learning process. In meaningful education we unnoticeably shape and mold ourselves, our very personality, character and self, instead of primarily accumulating facts, or even skills. This modelling of self takes place predominantly through an unconscious embodied "osmosis", or to use the Aristotelian notion, "mimesis". Our mimetic skills have recently been valorized by the invention of the mirror neurons. These specialized neural ingredients make us unknowingly mimic movements, gestures and behaviours of others in our environment; even newly born babies mimic facial gestures. Through embodied simulation we unconsciously mimic even physical events, objects and qualities. I can personally say sincerely that I learned more from the way my professors walked and occupied space with their bodies than from their words. I learned more being with my mentors and breathing the same air, than doing what they told me to do. We seem to be especially strongly influenced by the ethical air that we breath in our youth. The essence of learning is the gradual construction of an inner sense of goal, responsibility, ethical stance, and a combined sense of humility and pride. In my view, this polar attitude is most difficult to acquire.

Paradoxically, the essence of learning is essentially "un-learning", or forgetting the learned facts. I once had the opportunity of carrying a dinner conversation with the great Spanish sculptor Eduardo Chillida. During the evening he said: "In my work, I have never had any use for what I have done earlier".[5] This is a stunning confession of vulnerability from one of the finest artists of last century. Mind you, this artist was also a thinker of the calibre that he collaborated with Martin Heidegger, who is often named as the most influential philosopher of the twentieth century. Gaston Bachelard, another seminal philosopher, also uses exactly the notion "unlearning". In his stunning and humbling advice on what it takes to write a single line of verse, Rainer Maria Rilke first says that verses arise from experiences, but these experiences have to be forgotten: "And still it is not yet enough to have memories. One must be able to forget them when they are many and one must have the great patience to wait until they come again. For it is not yet the memories themselves. Not till they have turned to blood within us, to glance and gesture, nameless and no longer to be distinguished from ourselves – not till then can it happen that in a most rare hour the first word of "a verse arises in their midst and goes forth from them."[6] Why should the making of architecture differ fundamentally from writing a verse?

Simply, we humans are complete biological beings and in any creative work we react with our entire existential sense and identity rather than with our isolated intellect or aesthetic sense. And we think with our bodies and intestines as much as with our brain cells. Wisdom arises from existential experiences, not mere pieces of information. The meaning of the hierarchical scale *information – knowledge – wisdom*, is not always understood in pedagogic thinking, and as a consequence information is given too much value.

Ludwig Wittgenstein suggests: "Work on philosophy – like work in architecture in many respects – is really work on oneself. On one's own conception. On how one sees things. (And what one expects of them)".[7] We have to make ourselves and construct our world before we are capable of building places for other people to dwell or contemplate in. In educating creative capacities, information has to turn into knowledge, knowledge into existential understanding, and understanding into internalized wisdom. And, what is wisdom? Isn't wisdom the finest and deepest quality of being human? As TS Eliot, one of the greatest of the modern poets, writes:

"Where is the life we lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?"[8]

The poet's lines make me think of the most severe threat to humanistic and creative education today: the loss of the book. Books, whether books on poetry, novels, arts, or the sciences, develop fundamental narratives of causality, and they open up epic views into the continuum of culture and human life. Regardless of their numerous advantages, digital media break narratives, causation and logic into fragmented bits of information. They also strip away inherent human meanings, intimacy, tactility and sensuality of things. It is not information in a book that is of primary value; it is the book itself, the logic of the story and its ethic causality that possesses the highest educational value. Great novels provide the most profound theater of learning about the logic and illogic, the ecstasies and frustrations of life. Literature permits us to view and experience life and its mysteries and dramas through the minds and hearts of some of the finest and most talented individuals of the Humankind. Through art, we can see with the eyes of Piero della Francesca or Vermeer, and we can feel with heart of Rilke or Eliot. This is the great gift, the great mercy of profound art and poetry. Great architects lend us the sensitivity of their skin to feel "how the world touches us", to use a beautiful notion of Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[9] We can feel the touch of the world and culture through the skin of Luis Barragan or Louis Kahn, and experience the mysteries as well as truths of existence.

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Architecture -an impure discipline

The complexity of the phenomenon of architecture results from its 'impure' conceptual essence as a field of human endeavour. Architecture is a practical and metaphysical act, it is a utilitarian and poetic, technological and artistic, economic and existential, collective and individual manifestation, all at the same time. I cannot, in fact, name a human endeavour or discipline, which would have a more complex, and essentially more conflicting, grounding in the lived reality and human intentionality. Architecture is a response to existing demands, fears, wishes and desires, at the same time that it creates its own reality, dreams and criteria. It unites the past, present and future. It is both the end and the means. Besides, in its aspiration towards an ideal, authentic architecture always surpasses all consciously set aims and, consequently, is always a gift. How does one possibly teach such an impossible entanglement of requirements and contradictions?

The sheer complexity of any architectural task calls for an embodied manner of working and a total introjection – to use a psychoanalytical notion – of the

task. In creative work, the artist and the architect alike are directly engaged with their bodies and existential experiences rather than focusing on an external and objectified problem. A great musician plays himself rather than the instrument, and a masterful soccer player plays the entity of himself, the other players and the internalized and embodied field. 'The player understands were the goal is in a way, which is lived rather than known. The mind does not inhabit the playing field, but the field is inhabited by a "knowing body"', writes Richard Lang when commenting on Merleau-Ponty´s views on the skill of playing soccer.[10]

The wise architect works likewise, I believe, through his/her entire personality, instead of manipulating pieces of pre-existing knowledge or verbal rationalizations. An architectural or artistic task is encountered rather than resolved. In fact, in genuine creative work, knowledge and prior experience has to be forgotten. Joseph Brodsky, the Nobel Laureate poet, puts it bluntly: 'In reality (in art and, I would think, science) experience and the accompanying expertise are the maker's worst enemies.'[11] (Note that here the word "experience" has a different meaning than in the Rilke quote earlier.)

In creative work forgetting is as important as remembering, un-knowing as important as knowing, hazy perceptions as valuable as focused seeing. This is implicit in the aphorism of Goethe, by which I began my essay.

The power of poetic logic

I want to say already at this point, that because of its impossible task to integrate irreconcilable opposites, the essence of architecture is bound to be mediation and reconciliation rather than expression, not to speak of self-expression. Architecture negotiates between differing categories and oppositions. I also wish to argue, that architecture is conceivable in its contradictory task only through understanding it as a poetic manifestation; only poetic imagery is capable of overcoming contradictions of logic through its polyvalent, synthetic and unconscious imagery. As Alvar Aalto once wrote: 'In every case [of creative work] one must achieve the simultaneous solution of opposites. Nearly every design task involves tens, often hundreds, sometimes thousands of different contradictory elements, which are forced into a functional harmony only by man´s will. This harmony cannot be achieved by any other means than those of art.'[12] We could speak of a poetic rationality and logic, or a 'poetic chemistry', to use a notion of Bachelard.[13]

Architecture in other art forms

In the past years, I have written quite a lot about the architecture of painting and cinema, and I have also studied how architectural settings and situations are conveyed in poetry and fiction. Marilyn Chandler's book *Dwelling in Text* is a study of architectural imagery in American fiction. As she explains herself, she explores 'the ways in which … writers have appropriated houses as structural, psychological, metaphysical, and literary metaphors, constructing complex analogies between house and psyche, house and family structure, house and social environment, house and text … American writers have generally portrayed the structures an individual inhabits as bearing a direct relationship or resemblance to the structure of his or her psyche and inner life and as constituting a concrete manifestation of specific values.'[14]

Considerable amount has also been written on the architectural essence of music and vice versa, not to speak of direct cross-inspirations between these two arts. The Pythagorean harmonics, in fact the oldest western scientific tradition, seeks to unite the spiritual essence of music and architecture. I can confess, that I was converted to Pythagoreanism by my professor and mentor Aulis Blomstedt already in the early 1960s.[15]

All art forms explore the existential essence of culture, life and human consciousness and all of them are bound to follow similar strategies and aspirations, structures and metaphors. All arts aspire to represent the human condition, and the fundamental existential enigma. Besides, all artistic expression is sieved through the human senses, memory and imagination. 'All painters and poets are born phenomenologists', as the Dutch phenomenologist J. H. van den Berg writes16, and we can say the same of all other artists as well as profound architects. Semir Zeki, the neurologist has made another interesting proposition: "Artists are in some sense neurologists, studying the brain with techniques that are unique to them, but studying unknowingly the brain and its organisation nevertheless."[17] This view opens up a bottomless well for architectural inspiration and insight through the study of other art forms. Because of its severe logistical complexities and layers of practical requirements, architecture tends to loose sight of its fundamental existential essences and meanings and to turn into pure rationality or mere aesthetics. An encounter with other arts certainly reinforces the architect´s sensitivity of the artistic essence of his/her own art form.

Architecture of painting

Speaking of the evolution of modern architecture, Alvar Aalto said: '… [I]t all began in painting.' In 1947 he wrote: '… [A]bstract forms of art have brought impulses to the architecture of our time, although indirectly, but this fact cannot be denied. On the other hand, architecture has provided sources for abstract art. These two art forms have alternatingly influenced each other. There we are – the arts do have a common root even in our time (…)'.[18]

Painting is close to the realm of architecture, particularly because architectural issues are so often - or I should say, unavoidably - part of the subject matter of painting, regardless of whether we are looking at representational or abstract painting. In fact, this categoricization is highly questionable altogether, as all meaningful art is bound to be representational in the existential sense; if a work of art does not evoke an existential encounter, it simply remains meaningless.

Late medieval and early Renaissance paintings are particularly inspiring for architects, because of the constant presence of architecture. I cannot think of a more inspiring and illuminating lesson in architecture than early Renaissance paintings. If I could one day design a building with the tenderness of Giotto´s, Fra Angelico´s or Piero della Francesca´s houses, I would have reached the very purpose of my life. The painters´ interest in architecture seems to be related with the process of the differentiation of the world and the individual consciousness, the birth of the first personal pronoun 'I'. In these paintings, buildings are presented almost as human figures. The smallest of details suffices to create the experience of architectural space; a framed opening or a mere edge of a wall provides an architectural setting. The innocence and humanity of this painterly architecture, the equality of the human and architectural figure is most comforting, touching and inspiring; this is a truly therapeutic architecture. The best lessons in domesticity and the essence of home are the 17th century Dutch paintings, in which house interiors reflect a happy bourgeois life style.

The interactions between modern art and modern architecture are well known and acknowledged, but I have not yet seen an architecture, which has been inspired by the painterly world of J.M.W. Turner, Claude Monet or Mark Rothko, for instance. These inviting and enveloping spaces of colour project a radiant vision of space, whereas Pierre Bonnard´s paintings of bathing women express a delicate sensuality and hapticity which can surely teach a lesson to architects. Bonnard's paintings fuse the interior and the outdoors, near and distant, the constructed and the live.I want to argue, that painting and other art forms have surveyed dimensions of human emotion and spirit, which have remained untouched too often by architects, whose art in today's consumerist world tends to respond to rationalized normality and remain one-dimensional in its existential scope. The work of numerous artists of our time is closely related with essential issues of architecture, such as Robert Smithson, Gordon Matta-Clark, Michael Heizer, Walter de Maria, Donald Judd, Robert Irwin, Jannis Kounellis, Wolfgang Leib, Ann Hamilton and James Turrell, just to mention a few of the most obvious cases. These are all artists whose works have inspired architects and will continue to do so.

We can also study principles of artistic thinking and making in the impressive writings of today´s artists, such as Henry Moore, Richard Serra, Donald Judd, James Turrell and Agnes Martin, all of whom also write perceptively on their own work. I feel obliged to say, that artists tend to write more directly and sincerely of their work than architects, who frequently cast an intellectualized smokescreen across their writings.

Architecture of cinema

A number of notable architects of our time have explicitely acknowledged the importance of the cinematic world in their work, such as Jean Nouvel, Bernard Tchumi, Rem Koolhaas and Hani Rashid. This is what Jean Nouvel has to say about the interaction of architecture and cinema: 'Architecture exists, like cinema, in the dimension of time and movement. One conceives and reads a building in terms of sequences. To erect a building is to predict and seek effect of contrast and linkage through which one passes … In the continuous shot/sequence that a building is, the architect works with cuts and edits, framing and opening'.[19]

In its inherent abstractness, music has historically been regarded as the art form, which is closest to architecture. In my view, however, cinema is even closer to architecture than music, not solely because of its temporal and spatial structure, but fundamentally because both architecture and cinema articulate lived space. These two arts create and mediate comprehensive images of life. In the same way that buildings and cities create and preserve images of culture and particular ways of life, cinema projects the cultural archaeology of both the time of its making and the era that it depicts. Both forms of art define dimensions and essences of existential space; they both create experiential scenes for life situations.

Film directors create pure poetic architecture, which arises directly from our shared mental images of dwelling and domesticity as well as the eroticism and anxieties of space. Directors like Andrey Tarkovsky and Michelangelo Antonioni have created a moving architecture of memory, longing and melancholy, which assures us that also the art form of architecture is capable of addressing the entire human emotional range ranging from grief to ecstasy.

Jean Vigo´s *L´Atalante*, Jean Renoir´s *The Rules of the Game*, Orson Welles´ *Citizen Kane* and many other classics of cinema should be made compulsory ingredients of architectural education.
In fact, I have listed fifty books of fiction and poetry, fifty books of non-fiction, and fifty films as my personal recommendation to my architecture students.

Due to its extension, this article will continue in the next issue of Palimpsesto, that will be launched in December 2021.

[1] Source of the quote unidentified. The writer received it from Steven Holl in the early 1990s.

[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Book Three, note 179. Vintage Books, New York, 1974, p. 203.

[3] 'John Hejduk or the Architect Who Drew Angels', Architecture and Urbanism, no. 244, January 1991, p. 59.

[4] Wim van den Bergh, 'John Hejduk's Teaching by Osmosis', lecture manuscript, 2011, p. 1.

[5] Eduardo Chillida's private comment to the author, Helsinki, 1987.

[6] Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge.* W.W. Norton & Company, New York, London, 1992, pp. 26-27.

[7] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value,* edited by Georg Henrik von Wright with Heikki Nyman. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 1998, p. 24e.

[8] T. S. Eliot, Choruses from 'The Rock' (1934) in *The Complete Poems and Plays*. Faber & Faber, London, 1987, p. 147.

[9] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne's Doubt', in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Sense and Non-Sense*. Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1964, p. 48.

[10] Richard Lang, 'The dwelling door: Towards a phenomenology of transition', in David Seamon and Robert Mugerauer, *Dwelling, Place & Environment*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1989, p. 202.

[11] Joseph Brodsky, 'A Cat´s Meow', *On Grief and Reason*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1995, p. 302.

[12] Alvar Aalto, 'Taide ja tekniikka' [Art and Technology], lecture. Academy of Finland, October 3, 1955 in Göran Schildt, *Luonnoksia: Alvar Aalto*. Otava Publishing Company, Helsinki, 1972, pp. 87-88 (tr. Juhani Pallasmaa).

[13] Gaston Bachelard, *Water and Dreams: An Essay On the Imagination of Matter*. The Pegasus Foundation, Dallas, Texas, 1983, p. 46.

[14] Marilyn R. Chandler, Dwelling in the Text: *Houses in American Fiction*. University of California Press, Berkeley-Los Angeles-Oxford,1991.

[15] See Juhani Pallasmaa, 'Man, Measure and Proportion: Aulis Blomstedt and the Tradition of Pythagorean Harmonics', *Acanthus, The Yearbook of the Museum of Finnish Architecture*. Museum of Finnish Architecture, Helsinki, 1992, pp. 6-31.

[16] J.H. van den Berg, *The Phenomenological Approach to Psychiatry,* Charles C Thomas Publishers, Springfield, Ill, 1955, as quoted in Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969, p. XXIV.

[17] Semir Zeki, *Inner Vision: An Exploration of Art and the Brain*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.

[18] Kirmo Mikkola, *Aalto*. Gummerus, Jyväskylä, 1985, pp. 42-45. The origin of the quote unidentified.

[19] Kester Tauttenbury, 'Echo and Narcissus,' *Architectural Design, Architecture & Film*. AD Architectural Design, London, 1994, p. 35.

Book and film recommendations for students

Fifty Novels and Collections of Poetry

Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (two vols., 1605 and 1615)
Nikolai Gogol, *The Dead Souls* (1842)
Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (1851)
Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* (1854)
Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (1856)
Charles Baudelaire, *The Flowers of Evil* (1857)
Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace* (1869)
Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Crime and Punishment* (1866)
Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880)
Anton Chekhov, *The Steppe* (1888)
Rainer Maria Rilke, *New Poems* (1908)
Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910)
Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice* (1912)
Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* (1915)
Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (completed in 1915; published posthumously in 1925)
T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (1922)
James Joyce, *Ulysses* (1922)
Rainer Maria Rilke, *Duino Elegies* (1923)
Thomas Mann, *Magic Mountain* (1924)
Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, seven volumes (seven vols., –1927)
Hermann Hesse, *Steppenwolf* (1927)
Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet* (1929; published by Kappus)
William Faulkner, *The Wild Palms* (1939)
T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (1942)
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince* (1943),
Pablo Neruda, *Canto General* (1950)
Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (1955)
Wallace Stevens, *The Collected Poems of Wallece Stevens* (1954)
Junichiro Tanizaki, *The Key* (1956)
Harry Martinson, *Aniara* (1956)
Alain Robbe-Grillet, *Two Novels: Jealousy and In the Labyrinth* (1957)
Jorge Luis Borges, *Labyrinths* (1962)
Poems of [Anna] Akhmatova, trans. Stanley Kunitz and Max Hayward (1967)
Georges Perec, *A Void* (1969)
Anton Tsehov, *Short Stories* (1970)
Ezra Pound, *Cantos* (1915–1962 / 1970)
Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (1972)
Robert Frost, *The Poetry of Robert Frost* (1979)
Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of the Disquiet* (published posthumously in 1982)
Paul Valéry, *Dialogues* (1989)
Milan Kundera, *Slowness* (1995)
Octavio Paz, *Selected Poems* (1957–1987 / 1991)
Jorge Luis Borges, *Selected Poems* (2000)
Paul Celan, *Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan* (2001)
Osip Mandelstam, *The Moscow and Voronezh Notebooks: Osip Mandelstam; Poems 1930–1937* (2003)
Federico Garcia Lorca, *Selected Verse* (2004)
Orhan Pamuk, *Istanbul: Memories of the City* (2005)
Vincent van Gogh, *The Letters* (2009)
Tomas Tranströmer, *New Collected Poems* (2011)
Seamus Heaney, *100 Poems* (2018)

Fifty Books of Philosophy and Nonfiction

William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (1890)
Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900)
D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, *On Growth and Form* (1917)
Wassily Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane* (1926)
T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays 1917–1932* (1932)
Junichiro Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows* (1933)
John Dewey, *Art and Experience* (1934)
Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (1941)
Gaston Bachelard, *Water and Dreams* (1942)
Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (1943)
Jean-Paul Sartre, *What Is Literature?* (1948)
Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Psychology of Imagination* (1948)
Max Picard, *The World of Silence* (1951)
Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (1958)
William Barrett, *Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy* (1958)
Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (1959)
Gaston Bachelard, *The Flame of a Candle* (1961)
Paul Klee, *The Thinking Eye* (1961)
Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962)
Josef Albers, *The Interaction of Colour* (1963)
Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs* (1964)
Carl G. Jung, *Man and His Symbols* (1964)
Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (1964)
Henry Moore, *Henry Moore on Sculpture* (1966)
Edward T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (1966)
Anton Ehrenzweig, *The Hidden Order of Art* (1967)
Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (1968)
Ashley Montagu, *Touching: The Human Significance of Skin* (1971)
Adrian Stokes, *Image on Form* (1972)
Henri Matisse, *Matisse on Art* (1973)
Edward S. Casey, *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study* (1976)
Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings* (1977)
Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (1977)
Richard Sennett, *The Fall of the Public Man* (1977)
Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (1980)
Edward O. Wilson, *Biophilia* (1984)
Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain* (1987)
Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (1987)
Joseph Brodsky, *Less Than One* (1986)
Gianni Vattimo, *The End of Modernity* (1988)
Octavio Paz, *Convergences: Essays on Art and Literature* (1991)
Joseph Brodsky, *Watermark* (1992)
Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (1994)
Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: a historical introduction* (1994)
Joseph Brodsky, *On Grief and Reason* (1995)
Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (1998)
Semir Zeki, Inner Vision: *An Exploration of Art and the Brain* (1999)
George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (1999)
Jean-Paul Sartre, *Basic Writings* (2001)

Fifty Films

D,W. Griffith, *The Birth of a Nation* (1915)
Robert Wiene, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920)
Sergei Eisenstein, *Battleship Potemkin* (1925)
Charlie Chaplin, *The Gold Rush* (1925)
Buster Keaton, *The General* (1926)
Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dali, *The Andalusian Dog* (1929)
Alexander Dovzhenko, *The Earth* (1930)
Fritz Lang, *M* (1931)
Carl Th. Dreyer, *Vampyr* (1932)
Jean Vigo, *L'Atalante* (1934)
Charlie Chaplin, *Modern Times* (1936)
Jean Renoir, *Rules of the Game* (1939)
Jean Renoir, *Grand Illusion* (1939)
John Ford, *Stagecoach* (1939)
Orson Welles, *Citizen Kane* (1941)
Michael Curtiz, *Casablanca* (1942)
Roberto Rossellini, *Rome, Open City* (1945)
Vittorio de Sica, *The Bicycle Thief* (1948)
Alfred Hitchcock, *Rope* (1948)
Carol Reed, *The Third Man* (1949)
Jean Cocteau, *Orpheus* (1950)
Akira Kurosawa, *Rashomon* (1950)
Luis Buñuel, *Los Olvidados* (1950)
Vittorio de Sica, *The Miracle of Milan* (1951)
Fred Zimmerman, *High Noon* (1952)
John Ford, *The Quiet Man* (1952)
Yasujiro Ozu, *Tokyo Monogatari* (1953)
Kenji Mizoguchi, *Ugetsu Monogatari* (1953)
Alfred Hitchcock, *Rear Window* (1954)
Federico Fellini, *La Strada* (1954)
Carl Th. Dreyer, *The Word* (1955)
Ingmar Bergman, *Wild Strawberries* (1957)
Ingmar Bergman, *The Seventh Seal* (1957)
Robert Bresson, *Pickpocket* (1959)
Billy Wilder, *Some Like It Hot* (1959)
Jean-Luc Godard, *Breathless* (1960)
Alfred Hitchcock, *Psycho* (1960)
François Truffaut, *Jules and Jim* (1962)
Andrei Tarkovsky, *Andrei Rublev* (1966)
Stanley Kubrick, 2001: *A Space Odyssey* (1968)
Andrei Tarkovsky, *Mirror* (1971)
Bernardo Bertolucci, *The Last Tango in Paris* (1972)
Michelangelo Antonioni, *The Passenger* (1975)
Andrei Tarkovsky, *Stalker* (1979)
Stanley Kubrick, *The Shining* (1980)
Ingmar Bergman, *Fanny and Alexander* (1982)
Andrei Tarkovsky, *Nostalgia* (1983)
Andrei Tarkovsky, *Sacrifice* (1986)
Peter Greenaway, *The Belly of an Architect* (1987)
Aki Kaurismäki, *The Man Without a Past* (2002)

Books by Filmmakers

Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory* (1949)
Jean Renoir, *My Life and My Films* (1974)
Luis Buñuel, *My Last Breath* (1994)
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Contra la intemperie

Paulo Mendes da Rocha (1928-2021) Joan Margarit (1938-2021)

"Cada uno elige su memoria como forma de conocimiento, y en eso se basa la intuición: en escoger los recuerdos adecuados."

Paulo Mendes da Rocha
Entrevista para *Palimpsesto* 03, agosto de 2011

Paulo Mendes da Rocha no creía en vocaciones predeterminadas. Nos lo explicó[1] una fría mañana de agosto en su estudio de Sao Paulo, un local austero y desprovisto de cualquier elemento esencialmente ornamental. Con la misma sencillez, teñida de un carisma insólito, nos desveló el origen de su asombrosa facilidad para la construcción en su sentido más amplio: *"mi padre era ingeniero, y yo me eduqué siempre en esa visión de que las cosas pueden ser construidas."*[2]

En 1957, con 29 años, Mendes da Rocha ganó el concurso para el Centro Atlético Paulistano. Se presentó "*sólo para tener una primera experiencia, con absoluta libertad y sin ninguna esperanza de ganarlo"*[3]. Lo ganó, con una estructura inventada junto al ingeniero Julio Stucchi (colega de promoción de Vilanova Artigas, quien pocos años antes había invitado a Mendes da Rocha a ser su asistente en la Universidad de Sao Paulo), y con un jurado compuesto, entre otros, por Rino Levi y Plínio Croce. Tres años más tarde, el proyecto recibiría el Gran Premio Internacional en la IV Bienal de Arte y Arquitectura de Sao Paulo, cuyo jurado estaba presidido por Eduardo Reidy. Con poco más de 30 años, Mendes da Rocha se rodeó, estrechamente y como sin darse cuenta, de un buen número de maestros brasileños.

Con esa misma edad, Joan Margarit alcanzaba en 1968 el grado de Doctor Arquitecto y se convertía en catedrático de cálculo de estructuras de la UPC. Era un momento de crecimiento de la Escuela de Arquitectura de Barcelona, y la necesidad de nuevos catedráticos abrió la puerta a un grupo de jóvenes que insuflaron aire fresco y, entre otras muchas cosas, aportaron una mayor presencia en las aulas más allá de las horas lectivas. En gran medida, esta proximidad con los alumnos catalizó la formación de una corriente, muy propia de la escuela de Barcelona, de arquitectos dedicados al diseño y cálculo de las estructuras de edificación. Una disciplina que en la mayoría del territorio nacional -y más aún en el internacional- estaba consagrado principalmente a los ingenieros. Joan Margarit y su socio, amigo y también catedrático Carles Buxadé tuvieron mucho que ver con este cambio de paradigma y, paralelamente, construyeron una carrera profesional plagada de reconocimientos.

Pero Margarit, que sí creía en vocaciones predeterminadas, se entregó a la suya: la poesía. *"La vocación tiene muchos grados. En última instancia es la del artista. Es una vocación necesaria, si no la haces, mueres. Este es el límite de la vocación, que se da en territorios especiales."*[4] Buscó un oficio compatible con ella y eligió estudiar arquitectura y especializarse en el cálculo de estructuras, que consideró el área que requería menos energía para pasar de un lado a otro. Cosechó una trayectoria brillante en lo docente y en lo profesional y, una vez jubilado, se declaraba muy agradecido a la arquitectura, tanto o más que a la poesía, y consideraba su relación con ella sentimentalmente impecable. Y hasta cierto punto agotada.

La poesía, en cambio, fue haciéndose cada vez más necesaria. Las pérdidas -especialmente la de su hija Joana- le enfrentaron a la intemperie moral, contra