

PALIMPSESTO #26

VOIDS

Vacuum is the stuff of space and time. Despite appearance, it is not an absence. Architecture and life are full of these silent presences that **Agustí Obiol** has always had in this publishing adventure. We dedicate this issue to him, which begins with a compilation of texts about his figure, with the confidence of precisely glimpsing the architect's ingenuity. In an issue of dialogue and back and forth we also collect an unpublished conversation with the Portuguese engineer **Rui Furtado**, responsible for numerous projects by architects such as Mendes da Rocha or Souto de Moura, carried out by Gloria Ochoa and Pablo Guitierrez, third cycle students from Valladolid and Barcelona. His silent and at the same time central position in each of his projects creates a contained echo linked to Agustí's legacy.

The empty, geometric and structured space is the center of the installation created at the summer symposium of the Son Aiet foundation in Ciutadella, Menorca, directed by **Carlos Ferrater** years after the celebrated Instant City. The difficulties, the passage of time and the transformation evoked by this light structure of tensegrity hoisted around an era is part of humanity's almost secular ambition to look towards the sky. As a counterpoint, **Gaizka Altuna** and **Oscar Linares** carry out a landscape and historical review of these constructions, observatories, and land art installations from a new perspective.

Ignacio Paricio points out the unfair anonymity of other ways of looking. In this case those of the generous doctor Comas Llaería who, in addition to being an innovator in his field, took a series of unpublished photographs now rescued and enhanced through the thesis of Francesca Portolés. We therefore have the privilege of collecting in our pages this discovery that reveals the innards of some of the most relevant constructions of the early 20th century.

Returning to the landscape, the material and the imprint of the masters, **Rafael Reinoso** and **Rodrigo Coelho** reveal to us the seminal condition of Távora's project in Quintas de Conceição and Santiago (in Leça de Palmeira) for the Oporto School. The relationship with the landscape and the material, the fusion of city, territory and architecture or the attention to the small as a path to emotion guide the intervention to lay the foundations for the work of architects such as Siza or Souto.

We accompany this attention to the territory with a collective study carried out at ETSAM by the **Maruri Architectural Design Unit** on the emptied Spain. The emptiness of a country full of opportunities, systematically analyzed here in the urban fabrics of Valpueda and Granadilla as a basis for interpretation and future settlements. From an opposite context and objectives, Ivan Shumkov provides us with the revaluation of another pre-existence, the imposing Battersea Power Station that serves as a pretext for a series of urban projects that aim to dialogue with the original factory, perhaps not always with the success it deserves.

Dialogues that do not always agree, but whose back-and-forth feeds reflection and a critical spirit. Thus, we introduce this new section where beyond the dormant consensus we will stimulate cordial controversies between different authors. On this first occasion, we positioned ourselves in favor of the coating and accompanied it with the accurate counterpoint against it from **Enric Massip**.

And if we began this reflection by glossing the void, we close the issue with the beautiful corporeal presence, origin and destination of architecture as the Mexican architect **Fernanda Canales** understands it. It is not just a matter of reflecting on its phenomenological condition but of understanding that one thing and another, body and space go hand in hand. There is no space without a body, just as there is no void without presence.

Agustí Obiol. The architect's ingenuity

Cecilia Obiol
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We remember the figure of Agustí Obiol through some writings and interviews.

Key words: Agustí Obiol; architecture; structure.

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A new life for the Battersea Power Station in London

Ivan Rumenov Shumkov
DOI: 10.5821/palimpsesto.26.12850

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The testimonies of Doctor César Comas Llaería

Ignacio Paricio
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Doctor César Comas Llaería was not only the introducer of radiology in Spain, a task to which he devoted himself with rigor and responsibility. He was also an expert photographer who, thanks to his ability to observe and his desire to document his time, amassed an archive of almost three thousand photos with the most innovative techniques of the time.

These photographs have come to us thanks to the documented thesis that Francesca Portolés presented at the University of Barcelona in 2004.

Key words: César Comas Llaería; photography; San Pablo Hospital; Francesca Portolés.

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Sway

Alberto Peñín, Enric Massip-Bosch
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The arbitrary is often claimed as a creative mechanism intrinsic to the project process. Architecture coexists and uses the contradiction between private obsessions and public interests. Functionalism is overcome, the answers are not univocal and the certainties beyond their lukewarmness and ambiguity, admit counterpoint. In architecture and urban planning - and in other areas of life - one thing can be true, and also its opposite. In a culture with a certain tendency towards uncritical consensus, slogans and certain imposed truths, reasoned disagreement emerges as a necessary value for reflection. This section of Palimpsesto aims to explore these cordial discrepancies by calling for a new type of writing, a kind of double call of short texts that reason either for or against different topics of architecture and urbanism. We begin the series with a reflection in favor of the coating, apparently disappeared in contemporary architecture, against an allegation of its opposite, which associates this patina with the antonym of honesty.

Key words: discrepancies; opposites; coating.

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Son Aiet pavilion

Office of Architecture in Barcelona
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On the island of Menorca, the Pabellón Son Aiet foundation puts on the table a reflection inscribed in the social, territorial and resource crisis in which we find ourselves. Education, commitment to the territory, resources and nutrition, are the vertices of this initiative that incorporates technology with optimism, as the only human action that allows us to coexist in a sustainable and social way with nature.

Key words: Son Aiet; Menorca; tensegrity.

Primary urban form

Mónica Alberola, Joan Casals, Fernando Casqueiro, Aurora Fernández, Rafel Guridi, Nicolás Maruri
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The objective of the research project introduces a reflection on findings and questions in the proposals developed in the workshop on architectural design, projects based on the condition of emptied Spain: a concept that describes urban fabrics in a rural environment with reduced population occupations and with prospects of abandonment. The workshop is oriented to thinking about questions such as morphology, conditions of the site, and growth strategies, either from the densification (re-occupation) or the extension (development) of the urban fabric.

Key words: architectural design studio; rehab; urban form; mass plan.

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What if looking at the finger is not stupid?

Oscar Linares de la Torre, Gaizka Altuna Charterina
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From Stonehenge, built in Great Britain 5,000 years ago, to FAST, built in China in 2016, the construction of astronomical observatories has brought great works of architecture intimately linked to their distant environment, the Cosmos, but also to their nearby environment, the landscape. This article explores precisely the points of contact between the plastic interest of those observatories built in the landscape and the principles of the artistic movement founded in the 1960s known as Land Art. After a brief description of the typological evolution of astronomical observatories, this paper focuses on the analysis and comparison of various radio astronomy observatory, with some of the most iconic works of the Land Art movement.

Key words: Architecture; astronomy; observatory; land art.

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Topology of landscape in the architecture of the masters of Porto

Rafael Reinoso Bellido, Rodrigo Coelho
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The text is a reflection on the roots of the Porto School through the project of a surprising park: Quintas de Conceição and Santiago (F. Távora 1956-60). A piece of suture between the port infrastructure and the city of Leça de Palmeira.

The text, the introduction of a more extensive research work, was written through quotes from the protagonists, avoiding the opinions, the external points of view or reflections on the body of work of these architects. It was a way of reaching a crystalline view and interpretation of the authors and their body of work. never from opinions about their work, clearing the view on what we know of very valuable interpretations, it is true, but we have wanted to look at, and translate it here, with the seminal view and interpretation of its authors on how to do it.

In the Quintas de Conceição and Santiago, Távora, the "inventor of the new Portuguese architecture", as Siza states, provides the instructions for a large body of work of an entire generation of architects of the so-called "School of Porto" in the following years. Távora, Siza especially, and Souto de Moura - the loose verse. With a careful reading of the site, they integrated the very small with the very large. They taught that in face of the "difficulty of the urban" and the "impossible geography", it was possible, hardly being noticed, to provoke emotion setting up a building, to shape its access surprisingly, to frame the landscape with the most beautiful windows of the 20th century, to feel the building as something dynamic, almost cinematic in its register; and, above all, with the love for accurate detail, because precision and rigour were not a limit for imagination or creativity, because "QUALITY" - according to Siza, quoting Che Guevara, in capital letters in that writing dedicated to the SAAL technical brigades, "IT WAS RESPECT FOR THE PEOPLE."

Key words: Oporto; Távora; Siza; Souto de Moura.

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Architecture for which bodies?

Fernanda Canales
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Doing architecture involves inventing not only spaces but inhabitants. In the same way that an outfit encourages some movements and cancels others, architecture defines our behaviors. It facilitates certain behaviors and prevents from others. Additionally, it determines the type of users, inviting or excluding them.

Architect John Hedjuk said he couldn't make a building without building a new repertoire of people. For him, imagining forms meant inventing future inhabitants. The best architectures have been those that require the script to make other forms of relationships, production or entertainment possible. That is, architectures created to house not only new clothes but other bodies.

Key words: architecture; inhabitants; bodies.

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