

CHILLIDA SINCE EVER

PUBLISHED IN

Unpublished. 2023

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When I am now asked to remember Chillida, I must say that Chillida has always been in my memory.

When I first met Chillida, or rather, when I first saw a work by Chillida, is lost in my memory. I have a photo taken in my studio in 1975, showing a Chillida hanging on my wall. It was a page from a Nueva Forma by Fullaondo that looked splendid there as if it were an original.

I remember those Nueva Forma magazine's that Juan Daniel Fullaondo dedicated to him. And I liked that drawing so much that I tore out that page and framed it. It was the 1970s.

In 1964, at the New York International Fair, Javier Carvajal built a beautiful pavilion where, although Chillida is listed as a participant, I have still not been able to find the work with which he was represented there.

CHILLIDA AT ETSAM

Chillida studied architecture at the ETSAM in Madrid from 1943 to 1947. And although he didn't finish his degree, he always had that air of an architect that can be smelt in all his work.

In 1979, when I was already a professor of Projects, my devotion to Chillida was so great that I propose my students of ETSAM think about a house for Chillida as a course exercise. I am trying to find an exercise from that time.

I went to visit him in San Sebastián to invite him to go to Madrid with his wife, Pili Belzunce, to explain how they wanted their house. Everything went marvellously. I was accompanied and helped by Paco Merino, Antonio Sancho, and Toni Segura. I have some wonderful pictures of that visit.

Luis Peña Ganchegui was there. He was a wonderful architect who had helped Chillida with "Peine del Viento".

And then we invited him to come, and he came to our class in Madrid to correct that project and much more. It was an unforgettable working session in which we kept some unrepeatabe documents. Sáenz de Oiza came to our class, and among the teachers were Antonio de la Peña, Daniel Ruiz Pita, Fernando R. de Torres and Ignacio Mendaro. Among the students were Pepo Seghers, Guillermo Cases, Ricardo del Amo, Rodolfo Ucha, Pedro Valle, Moncho Andrada and even Concha Rodríguez Caro.

After all this adventure of his coming to the School of Architecture in Madrid, he gave me an engraving, an artist's proof, dedicated and signed.

CHILLIDA VS. THE RIGHT ANGLE

I have always been more than Cartesian, and I have even written texts defending the squaring of the circle! The squared paper, that's how I titled a text defending orthogonality in Architecture.

Well, Chillida never, never practiced orthogonality. What's more, it would seem that he spent his whole life escaping from the pure right angle. Almost but never. Of course, Bernini did the same thing in his day.

Chillida even dares to explain to us how not all right angles are equal. If Descartes would raise his head!

“LA SIRENA CALLADA” IN MADRID, IN SILENCE

In Madrid there is a wonderful work by Chillida, with the title of “La sirena varada”, hanging with cables under a Castellana’s flyover. It stands so silent that I think it should be called “La sirena callada”, so silent is it. Placed in 1972 under the overpass where Juan Bravo Street overflies the Castellana from Serrano Street, to access Eduardo Dato Street, it is a privileged place in Madrid. An open-air sculpture museum was created there, of which the most outstanding work is that of Chillida.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

There is an extensive and stupendous bibliography on Eduardo Chillida. Even Bachelard and Heidegger have written about Chillida. And many doctoral thesis, such as the magnificent one by Beatriz Matos, who is also a wonderful architect.

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