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Aqueous place in the architecture of Luis Barragán: Dark Pink and surface-Other

Introduction

Touristic flows

What follows are divergent accounts of houses by architect Luis Barragán in *Ciudad de México*: *Casa Ortega* (1940–42), and *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* (1947–48). Barragán inhabited both, though the latter, being his primary home and workplace until death in 1988, has greater acclaim with a UNESCO World Heritage Site accreditation awarded in 2004.

Both operate as house museums, though differently, and persist by way of the visitor economies they tap into. The *Casa-Estudio* is jointly owned by the *Fundación de Arquitectura Tapatía* and the Government of the State of Jalisco. As an "Artistic Monument," changes require an *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura* approval, a stricture similarly applied to the adjacent neighbourhood.[1] As the ICOM Committee on museology of historical sites requires, museological 'interpretation' of house museums is necessarily limited.[2] Consequently, the *Casa-Estudio* is both regulated and regulator of the flow of temporal transformations it and its neighbours can enter into. Contrastively, the *Casa Ortega* is home to José Manuel Bárcena Ortega, nephew of famed silversmith Alfredo Ortega, and the house offers tribute to both Barragán and the longer tenure of this subsequent owner. Hence, the *Casa Ortega* examples an architecture in modest transition—a space that blurs the lines between a museum and a lived-in home, with José Ortega and his extended family maintaining and adapting the home across generations, and in turn introducing layers of temporal and spatial flux at odds with the essentially static preservation occurring next door.

Accordingly, the nature of the 'public' awareness and accessibility for both houses varies. The *Casa-Estudio* is integral with the city's cultural tourism stock,[3] contributing via its media reproduction to an out-size 'Barragán presence,' yet it cuts from this representational flow a miniscule tributary of admittees—twelve people per house tour. Visits to the privately owned *Casa Ortega* are arranged informally (by email request, or, in our case, by a knock on the door). Despite their immediate proximity—both joined by a party wall and a large rear garden—the

Casa Ortega and the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* draw, asymmetrically, from the city's touristic flow; as José puts it, this is "Luis Barragán's other house, his best-kept secret."[4]

With any visit to the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* needing to be booked far in advance, we had secured only a single place in a Spanish-speaking tour on the days we were in the city. The alternative for one of us was a fortuitous place within a tour coincidently running in the *Casa Ortega* next door. Unable to experience the houses together, shared knowledge of the two depended on recounting our respective visits later. It is this retelling that has provoked the parallel dialogues offered here.

Water: Present and occluded

On a working holiday to the city, and anticipating this issue of *Interstices*, the question on our minds was how the aqueous might inform Barragán's work. There was good reason to anticipate such an underpinning. Firstly, the *Casa Ortega* and the *Casa-Estudio* sit in the 'uphill' neighbourhood of Tacubaya, a place whose name means, "where water is gathered," and which once comprised a separate township at the confluence of rivers on the shoreline of Lake Texcoco, the partly drained, partly reclaimed basin across which much of *Ciudad de México* has eventually spread. The lake, and now the city itself, sit in a larger, central hollow known as the Valley of Anahuac—"the Land Between the Waters"—an elevated plateau cradled on two sides by north-south lines of volcanic mountains themselves dividing the Pacific Ocean from the Gulf of Mexico. Given these geographic and hydrological legacies, and more pointedly, the loss of the lake and the ongoing water crises confounding the enormous metropolis that has replaced it, water and its absence make up an ecocidal condition, as Juan Villoro has argued.[5] The result is an insoluble tension between water-sapping modernisation and awareness of the loss of indigenous life and cultures Lake Texcoco sustained.[6]

A second reason for addressing the aqueous in Barragán's work is the prevalence in it of aesthetically staged water (fountains, jets, ponds, etc.). Yet it is necessary to consider how its converse, pragmatically directed service flows—that which washes and discretely expunges the unsightly and the 'unclean'—points to broader urban political ecologies and imaginative spheres. Both are written into Barragán's architecture because they are complexly inscribed—geographically, historically, and culturally—into the city and the region he practiced within. Loss of lake water has both its revenge—routine, rain-induced flooding of flat, low ground in the city—and its celebrated reappearance as an animator of public space and private *patios*. Water 'here' (as elsewhere) carries deeply sourced referential motivations and politicised worlds. As Néstor García Canclini notes, in Latin American contexts more broadly, modernisation (including modernised understandings of water) less displaces older traditions than it permits cultural elites to benefit from the secularisation and liberalising of modernisation while holding on to previous advantages bestowed by "Hispanic-Catholic traditions."[7] Hence modern culture in places such as Mexico is carrier of a "multitemporal heterogeneity,"[8] something that bears on understandings of the aqueous and its intersection with Barragán's work.

Travel chronicles

In considering these aspects, we are mindful of our own visitor status and the Anglophone ears and eyes we brought to this encounter. We are complicit in the tourist flows converging on Mexico and Barragán's work; no less are we influenced by the complex mediatisation shaping reception of his work. Further colouring encounter here is our own divergent generational amenability to canonical modernism—with one of us inclined towards Barragán's output across a long working career; the other, at the commencement of their architectural vocation, being inclined to question canonicality as such.

In response we work within and against 'travel writing' as a genre, recognising that in post-colonial Mexico such writing—*crónica de viaje* (or travel chronical)—resonates with the *crónicas de Indias* (or chronicles of the conquest of Latin America), and therefore carries with it a certain rhetorical "taking possession" of territory, knowledge, and place.[9] Conversely, contemporary reworkings of the chronical form, as Thea Pitman puts it, are often journalistic, stressing subjective engagement, detailed evidence of "being there," and the identity of the traveller projected onto encounter with "other[s] on the road."[10] In our case, we offer parallel narrative and visual stream aiming to draw out less routinely followed touristic currents and their chronicling.

Echoes of Barragán

Mexico has long been framed avariciously and redemptively. Post-revolution particularly, the country has been for reforming activists, artists, and writers, a reviving domain. As Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo describes, between 1920 and 1949, a "Cosmopolitan Mexican Summer" can be conceived, one in which cosmopolitan centres internationally found in the country "a season of revolutionary fascination, primitivism, and social hope."[11] Unavoidably, echoes of this earlier 'summer' sound in our visit. For William Gass, the Mexico Malcolm Lowry portrays in *Under the Volcano* (1947)—written following his own participation in this 'summer'—amounts to "constructing a place, not describing one; he is making a Mexico for the mind."[12] Analogously, our 'Barragán,' and the aqueous underpinnings we ascribe to his work, are necessarily adapted constructions. We see them reworking what Lucas Tromly has termed "echotourism," a form of visitation guided by previous discourses.[13] Our trip similarly echoes, though it is unpacked differently between us: for one, it has meant a close tracking of fictional and historically inclined texts; for the other, echoing has entailed a hushing of such textual chatter in favour of a relatively unmediated reflection, itself miming a disinclination towards the canonical.

Dark Pink

Entering-in

Let me explain. I adopt the form of prose poetry, not simply as a stylistic choice, but as a means of staying close to experience—to impressions. Turning away from accounts by others, I am wanting to bring forward presence, even when that immediacy entails a degree of drift. Specifically, the early work of Luis Barragán, and most intimately, *Casa Ortega*, his first house for himself. Prose poetry allows me to dwell in the ambiguity and texture of experience that conventional architectural writing often smooths over. Where architectural analysis seeks legibility, prose poetry permits diverse grasp; where analysis tends towards resolution, prose allows things to remain suspended, contingent, and incomplete.

This partialness matches experience. My writing mirrors the fragmentary access to the houses themselves—visits shaped not by design, but by circumstance, translation, scheduling, and refusal. *Casa Ortega*, unlike the *Casa-Estudio*, grapples with cultural tourism differently: it offers a sense of living continuity and casualness—for instance, access via a personal mobile number pinned to the door, as opposed to an online system booked ahead by months. It is less curated, more contingent, still bearing the imprint of ongoing life. To write from within this experience—not as an authoritative interpreter, but as a visitor out of sync with the guided narrative—is to rest attentiveness on partial knowledge.

surface-Other

Entering-in

Entrance to the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* was oddly double. From General Francisco Ramirez Street, visitors were ushered into the studio's original reception room. There the rules of visitation were given (staying on designated walking paths, sticking with the guide, etc.), and reinforcing the *lingua franca* of touristic experience, photography permits were solicited from visitors for each of their photographic devices, receiving, on payment, a fluorescent tag ensured that only a paid flow of images could be drawn from the house. Led outside again, we were taken to an anonymous entry further down the street. There, a single blank door flush with the façade opened into a long vestibule running deep into the house, its closed nature occluding any sense of the spatial order beyond. Inside, three sensations prevailed: a deep flood of light from a yellow clerestory above the closed door; a long run of black volcanic pavers darkening passage towards and over further steps at the end; and a curious bitumen-like smell seemingly linked to the pavers (a polishing oil or wax perhaps?).

Borrowing a term from hydrology, the UNESCO World Heritage Nomination describes this vestibule as a "decompression sluice" whose aim is to install a "sensorial and therefore emotional filter" countering the street.[15] The claim echoes Barragán's assertion: "My home is my refuge, an emotional piece of architecture, not a cold piece of convenience."[16] Despite a certain swiftness in the vestibule's thrust, its sensorial palette invites a 'slow down,' triggering for me a run of queries: Why this 'cave-holed' volcanic flooring? Does this deep space mirror the yellow antechamber of Barragán's *Casa Gilardi*, which I'd visited yesterday, and will its traversal deliver some form of revelatory space—the famous luminescent pool in that case?

I extend this contingent attendance into the visual register. Just as prose poetry resists the polish and containment of rhyming verse, my black-and-white photographs resist the seductive similitude of colour. Together, they create a dialogue that approaches architecture's elusive tangibility, the sense that both absence and presence commingle. My intention has been less to document than to distil. In stripping away hue, the images search instead for the grain of surface, the slant of light, the murmur of texture (Fig. 1). The Ortega Pink, everywhere inside, becomes a whisper within grayscale, its fire extinguished, its seduction tempered. A wall leans into the sun. A lattice dissolves into shadow. What remains is not ornament but trace—the residue of gesture, of labour, of quiet devotion to place. In monochrome, the image is less spectacle than offering: a space where meaning hesitates, hovers, falters. Like prose, it leaves things unfinished.

as before water belongs, it roams;
before it becomes, it escapes . . .

Beginning anew

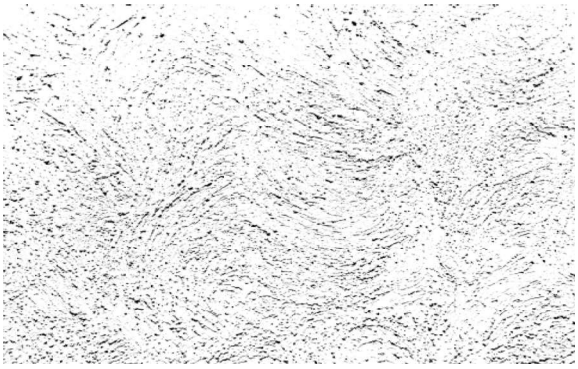


Fig. 1 *Casa Ortega* pink plastered wall [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Up volcanic steps

Seven steps up and through a door opening awkwardly over the stairs, a flash of soft pink confirms the *Gilardi* pattern with arrival into the much-publicised entrance hall. Yet it is clearly more organisationally complex. With the vestibule door closed behind us, seven further routes beyond are suggested by closed doors and the stair; rather than a terminating space, it is, to continue the hydrological metaphor, a control chamber for directing varying flows elsewhere. Plainly this mechanistic analogy overlooks the emotive intent: like the descending light into the *Gilardi* pool, and unlike the transverse thrust of light in the vestibule, the hall leaves visitors bathing in bright vertical daylight, itself coloured by the gold-leaf abstract altarpiece by Mathias Goeritz on an overhead landing—a lure causing eyes to rise (Fig. 18).[17] Revelatory downward light is balanced by an upward flow of black pavers surfacing the hall floor and the stairs rising to the landing, a dark tectonic the World Heritage Nomination describes as "pre-Hispanic [stone] platforms."[18] It can be seen to enact an assemblage of excess in the sense that Georges Bataille has referred to an "accursed

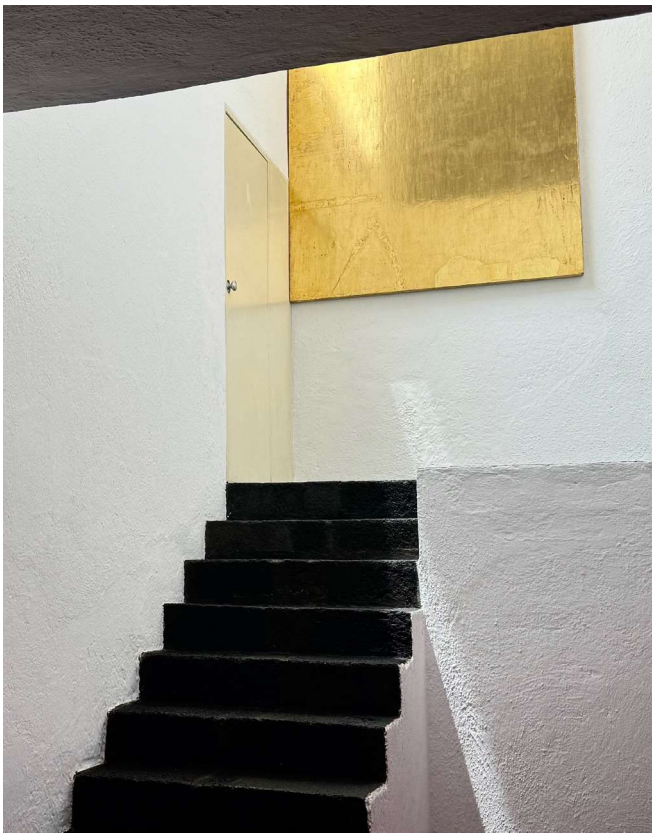


Fig. 18 Hall, *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

Fig. 2 Casa Ortega, entry from the street [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

A wall—dark pink, textured like skin touched too many times, its hue whispering bruises and secrets—leans into the sky, unflinching, like an old truth that has nothing left to prove (Fig. 2).

At the threshold, where the street rises into a step.

A door of five-by-nine frosted-glass tiles. Its breath is heavy with time. One tile, scratched and weary, bears a name:

"The Ortega House, Luis Barragán's other house, his best-kept secret" (Fig. 3).

But secrets, like water, resist containment. They seep through cracks, pooling in corners where light cannot reach. Sometimes they find light.

share" or that sacrificial overflow of energy responsive to a larger solar economy—a link found in indigenous sacrificial consumption.[19] Accordingly, these stair/platforms continue their ascent through the levels, including the monastically inclined "room of the Christ," to eventually reach—by way of further shadowing and light colourations (Fig. 19)—the celebrated roof terrace whose high walls and paved surface form a pool-like vessel.[20] Its vacancy, to borrow a phrase from Gilles Deleuze, is left facing the "cosmic surface energy" of the heavens (Fig. 20).[21]

Fig. 19 Terrace stairs, *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

José stands framed in the doorway, his silhouette, as if rising with the tide, consolidates behind frosted glass. His face peers at a clear pane (Fig. 4).

He tells of tending to this place as a spirit might tend to an island—not as master, but as steward of its mysteries, architect of its continual becoming.

Inside, I imagine the Ortega House a breathing refuge, its dust-laden air, luminous with the day's light. Or, standing against the nightly flooded streets, it must hold the storm at bay, and in doing so, harbours its own kind of tempest. Time's wear.

Behind José, Barragán's shadow lingers—the magician of this pink-walled island—conjuring a house that refuses to be stilled.

Fig. 3 Casa Ortega, front door [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Fig. 4 José Ortega, owner of Casa Ortega [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Fig. 20 Terrace, *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

I will return to Deleuze's notion shortly. For now, what this ascent imparts is a central vertical fulcrum for the house, a spindle around which privacy and utility are also spun. Immediately doubled with this rise from dark to light—though unseen by visitors nor publicised in any way—is a spiral service stair (utterly without natural light) rising the full height of the house, one that serves various utilitarian spaces including the housekeeper's quarters at the top and a hidden *patio* for laundry. Not coincidently, the service stair is topped with an enclosed water reservoir, itself becoming a key compositional feature organising the view from the street and the solar terrace. In essence, the house operates as two partitioned circulatory cells—and two economies in Bataille's sense (the general and the limited, the solar and the calculative)—with only one point of exchange between them—a small lobby off the hall, itself linking the kitchen and the breakfast room.

Francisco Quiñones has recognised how these partitioned realms define the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* as a house designed not for one (as routinely asserted), but for two people, Barragán and a full-time housekeeper, the last of whom, Ana María Albor, was provided with ongoing accommodation in the house after Barragán's death.[22] Quiñones points to the overlooked and exploitative dimensions of domestic labour in Mexico, dimensions that perpetuate prevailing class, gender, and racial hierarchies. Read against what our house guide suggested was Barragán's bachelor quest for solitude within the house, what was an emotionally enriched "refuge" for him was, for others sustaining that sanctuary, a calculative structure designed to keep them routinely out of the picture.[23]

Step inside (Fig. 5)

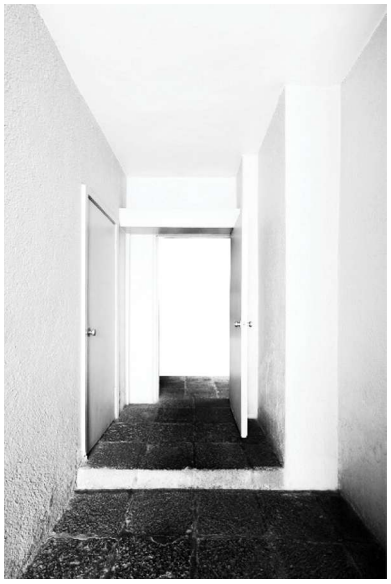


Fig. 5 *Casa Ortega* pink entry corridor [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

The corridor unfolds like a liquorice-pink wound.

The walls exhale dust—not in clouds but in whispers, soft and relentless, quiet proof of time's labour.

The floor beneath is volcanic, black as water after nightfall. The tiles are cool, unforgiving. Here water is silent, held within the stones, its flow hidden but unyielding.

The air thickens, like a house remembering too much.

The tiles drink rain from shoes and umbrellas, each crater cradling droplets: puddles within a house of puddles.

Welcome, José says. His voice, layered like the house itself—part keeper, part spell-caster—stretches across many who visit. He has lived here sixteen years, shifting walls not with magic but with will, recasting Barragán's vision to suit the present.

"Structure-Other" & "otherwise-Other"

My title for this essay, "surface-Other," takes its cue from the nature of other-relations in the *Casa-Estudio*. Rather than surface appearances concealing something beyond or behind (Quiñones's argument), my contention is that something 'other' arises with surfaces themselves. For this I draw on Deleuze's essay "Michel Tournier and the World Without Others."[24] In it he considers Tournier's restaging of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) in the novel *Friday* (1967). Compelling in Tournier's adaptation of Defoe is a switch in focus from the reconstruction of a 'civilised' world ruled by one (Defoe's theme), to "dehumanisation"[25] caused by the absence of others, a devolution that embraces the island's elemental, non-human constituents and their affective relations. The elemental—or avatars of the originating four elements (earth, wind, fire, and water)—become desired in the manner of human others:

> *Sun, are you pleased with me? Look at me. Is my transformation sufficiently in the manner of your own radiance? My beard, which pointed earthwards like a cluster of earthbound roots, has vanished, and now my head carries its glowing locks like a flame reaching upward to the sky. I am an arrow aimed at your heart, a sundial proclaiming with the shadow of my erect figure your mastery of the earth . . .*[26]

Deleuze finds in the elemental avatars described by Tournier indication of how we depend on human others to provide a "mantel" of surety and extended perceptual and existential depth—what he terms a normative, "structure-Other."[27] In the absence or the thinning out of human others, relational attachment turns instead to the elemental avatars an environment may provide—a quest, as he says, for the "otherwise-Other."[28] Such a quest brings to the surface a raft of "dehumanised" (or extra-human) attachments lived and enacted via "adventures of the [de-subjectified] spirit."[29] What this notion of the "otherwise-Other" offers is a way to think the aqueous non-reductively—that is, according to its transformations and not its literal appearance. For instance, as Deleuze argues, where the "structure-Other" and its mantle of normative relations persists, there is a terrestrially grounded "fire, water, air and earth"; alternatively, given the untethering and surfacing of the "otherwise-Other," released instead is "an aerial or celestial earth, water, air, and earth."[30]

Admittedly Tournier/Deleuze's articulation presupposes an extreme solitude removed from the relative withdrawal Barragán's domestic world crafted. Yet for Quiñones, the *Casa-Estudio* comprises a "total interior," purposely "designed [. . .] to protect [Barragán. . .] from unwanted human

This is no museum. Here, the past flows into the present, as water flows into cracks, as dust settles on what cannot hold it at bay—like fairy dust, luminous but heavy with the weight of time.

Glimpsed in the kitchen, his granddaughter, his son, a dog. . .

Walking onward, guest me and ghost him. José's shadow lengthens against walls that press closer. The pinkness guides tenderly, then abruptly sharpens at a bright end. I feel the pink's weight in this space, neither welcoming nor hostile, merely alive in its intensity.

Fig. 6 Angel at the end of the pink corridor [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Ahead stands the angel (Fig. 6)

Carved from stone, its wings folded tight, it watches without saving. Its gaze fixed on something we cannot see.

Perhaps it remembers the fall—the time trust shattered like glass when a body, Barragán's friend, left the stair's edge. Now an added balustrade guards (Fig. 7).

Beyond the angel, the house opens in fragments. It stretches, pulls, unravels into rooms. Puddles. Each one housing a question: Why this varied and unsure geometry? Some are narrow, suffocating, dark. Others expand into the light as if trying to breathe.

contact inside his home."[31] How strange, it feels, in retrospective, to be amidst a sea of others coursing the capillaries of this total interior, seeking, against the dweller's desires, hold of his subjective and creative distinction. Yet what if, in this populous, *structure-Other* overlay, an *otherwise-Other* persists unseen? For instance, could the solar ascent in fact indicate a celestial remaking of the aqueous? To better test this notion, a detour is required.

Yelling into the void

A day earlier, we had visited Under the Volcano Books, the shop advertising itself as, "an embassy for the soul of the English-speaking world in Mexico."[32] No coincidence then that I sought partial language solace in its upper storey interior. Daytime visitors are presented with an iron gate barring entrance to a dark, seemingly empty tenancy. A sign instructs those seeking the bookshop to yell "VOLCANO!" into the void—an uncertain cry, that eventually yielded the shop's minder. The store borrows the title of Malcolm Lowry's celebrated novel published in 1947, a story in which the narrator, a retired alcoholic British consul, mostly recounts the events of a single day—the Mexican Day of the Dead, in the fictional town of Quauhnahuac—culminating in his death. Played out before two volcanos—still smoking Popocatépetl and sleeping Iztaccíhuatl—the tale pairs the destructive potency of fluid rock with a catastrophic psychical dissolve induced by alcohol—what Gaston Bachelard terms, "*eau de feu* or fire-water."[33]

Situated in the suburb of Condesa, the store can be found on a street radiating out from the *Glorietta Popocatépetl*—its spoke-like form determined by the old *Hipódromo* racetrack defining what today is *Parque México*. Dropped in via Uber, none of this was obvious, but for context, according to Google Maps, a 35-minute walk will take me to Luis Barragán's *Casa Gilardi* (which I'd visited earlier that day), and a slightly more taxing 48 minutes would allow me to reach the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán*.

Much later I realised that a more immediate parallel ties the *Hipódromo* racetrack and the *Parque México* to Barragán—water, horses, and suburban land development—a signature trilogy found at the *Cuadra San Cristóbal* equestrian estate (1966–68) itself part of the *Los Clubes* residential subdivision designed by Barragán (1961–66) on the outskirts of *Ciudad de México*. Adjacent to it the streetside, *Fuente de los Amantes* (Fountains of the Lovers), and the *Fuente del Bebedero* (Fountain of the Trough) in the nearby *Parque Los Bebederos* testify to Barragán's mobilising of water and horses as factors of desirability in real estate speculation.[34]

The windows, José Ortega says, are meant to disappear.

Its glass erased by maintenance, by ritual—a meticulous effort to sustain Barragán's illusion of continuity with a garden he wanted to bleed in (Fig. 8).

But no labour can efface the truth.

The panes divide worlds: an outside cultivated, an inside avariciously consuming it (Fig. 9). *Either side, either way, dust settles, needing to be erased and re-erased, as if the act of cleaning could dissolve the divide.*

Fig. 7 Barragán never had balustrades until a friend fell off these steps [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Fig. 8. José opening the stable door to let the garden in. [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Fig. 9 The house opening in fragments [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

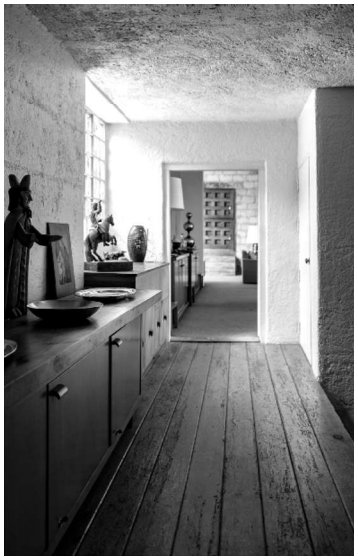
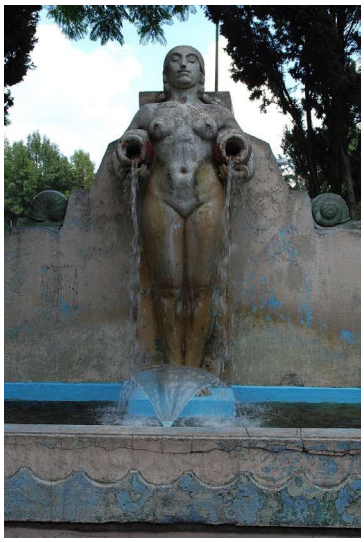


Fig. 21 *Fuente de los Cántaros* (1927) [Wikimedia Commons, Photograph: Thelmadatter, 2010]



"Camposcapes"

Latin American cultural historian, Ageeth Sluis, terms rural-agrarian idealisation of this sort appearing in Mexico's evolving urban contexts *camposcapes*—socio-politically expedient reproductions of pastoral beatitude. Increasingly evident from the late nineteenth century, *camposcapes* serve as a means of reconceiving modernising forces through an appeal to rural timelessness and female autochthony, all within a nationalist framework seeking to synthesise the complex nature of Mexico's urban and agrarian places.[35] The *Parque México* for Sluis is a key marker in *camposcape* evolution, appearing early after the revolution (1910–20). Designed by José Luis Cuevas in 1925—the same year Barragán visited the *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes* in Paris—the wider art deco subdivision that came to occupy the estate of the *Condesa of Miravalle*, left in reserve the equestrian *Hipódromo* as a park. At the heart of this "pseudo-countryside," as Sluis puts it,[36] is the *Fuente de los Cántaros*, a fountain created by José María Hernández Urbina featuring a naked depiction of Luz Jiménez, herself bearing two jugs delivering a continuous outpouring of water (Fig. 21).

For Sluis, what her obvious indigenous appearance signals is a *camposcape* whose "internal orientalism" had been adapted to "Art Deco spectacle," one in which widely publicised images of the female "deco body" were given concrete expression.[37] What these bodies were called on to do was tie desirability and health into a politically useful vision of "a lost, Mexican Eden."[38] In the post-revolutionary context, deco bodies made visible "new gender ideals" suited to the city's modernisation, ideals capable of "bridging the gap between two divergent racial discourses that accompanied revolutionary reform, *indigenismo* and *mestizaje*, paving the

Fig. 10 A Peruvian pepper tree in the *Casa Ortega* garden [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Fig. 11 *Casa Ortega* drawing room, sunken below the garden [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Fig. 12 A lamp [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

I imagine forgotten fingerprints lingering where light does not touch.

The garden waits outside (Fig. 10), *plainly lifted above this library floor, its soil reminding: the earth is always above, always cradling the house in its quiet power* (Fig. 11).

In these rooms, absence frames. Austerity guides the edge. Eroticism lingers like a breath—present and withheld (Fig. 12).

In the garden, water flows with precision. The fountains sing, but their music is orchestrated. This is not wildness—it is work.

way for a 'mestizo modernity.'"[39] For Sluis, the significance of Jiménez, a Nahuatl-language (or Aztecan) storyteller and model, within the *Fuente de los Cántaros* served to link "Art Deco spectacle" with evolving forms of *mexicanidad* or politicised, pre-colonial identification. If the continuous streams of water delivered by *los cántaros*, carried by Jiménez can be thought to invoke the Aztec goddess of fresh moving water and female fertility, Chalchiuhtlicue (she of the jade skirt), nakedness at the *Fuente de los Cántaros* suggests two easily overlooked scenographic facets central to land speculation then: an eroticisation of water and its purification (clear clean water), both facets Barragán redeployed in his subsequent work.

Detour through pre-revolutionary balneal space

Permitting water cleanliness at *Parque México* was the increasing homogenisation and reticulation of water. As Casey Walsh has argued, this homogeneity brought new 'virtues' linked, at one level, to the sanitariness and 'purity' of generalised water, and at another, to a residual place-specific taint of singular water sources. These opposing virtues rest on an historical evolving of water supply in the Valley of Mexico, a shift for Walsh from pre-revolutionary 'waters' to 'water,' the latter understood as a chemically singular, purifiable substance. In *Ciudad de México*, the heterogeneous sourcing of water in springs and wells was increasingly amalgamated in pursuit of "homogenized water" capable of merging new and old urban territories. Yet for Walsh, this "hydrosocial integration"[40] delivering convenience and hygiene, left in place an older belief in the therapeutic virtues of certain other waters if immersed in or ingested—the former of these resulting in the conversion of naturally forming springs into popular spas and bathhouses in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.[41]

Collective immersion bathing in *Ciudad de México* harboured mixed motivations: cleanliness, sociability, health improvement, and for some, erotic encounter. Victor Macías-González has traced these bathing motivations in Mexico historically, finding the origin of prevailing nineteenth-century division of male and female bathers in an early colonial fear of "nefarious sin" carried by mixed-gender bathing.[42] Under the pre-revolutionary presidency of Porfirio Díaz (variously spanning 1876–1911), male social bathing was integral with Porfirian political, cultural, and class intentions, with the bathhouses becoming sites for elevating 'hygiene' across male classes.[43] By the commencement of the twentieth century, a series of gender-transgressing and homoerotic exposés implicating Porfirian elites called any remaining value of bathhouses into question while prompting dissembling homoerotic legal scrutiny and penalties.[44] It is against this

The water obeys because it must, its freedom measured out in controlled streams. José leads us like actors in a scene, switching fountains on as we pass. Arcs of water leap into existence, brief and choreographed. When we turn our backs, he extinguishes them (Fig. 13).

Barragán's garden was once a retreat. A sanctuary from the city's chaos. Now, what once soothed the soul has become a currency, tended by José, its beauty exchanged.

Barragán's strange objects—manmade and hewn—resonate with and within the landscape (Fig. 14). *The vast and the human, the regulated and the chaotic—they collide.*

Fig. 13 *Casa Ortega* fountain [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

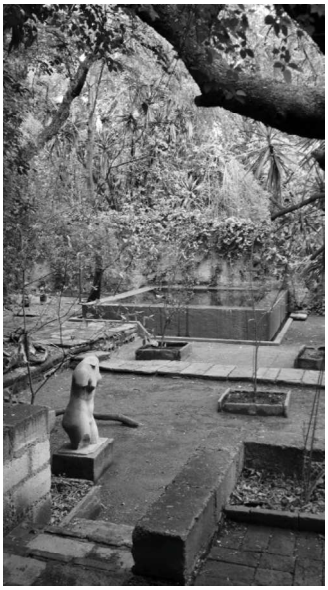


Fig. 14 *Casa Ortega* garden [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

backdrop that the post-revolutionary hydrosocial mandate unfolded, one where the tensions between moral and physical hygiene found resolution, as Walsh puts it, in a transition "from bathing together to showering alone [under . . .] modern homogeneous water."[45]

Two further propositions can be drawn from this intersection between hydrosocial traditions (themselves arising from deep pre-colonial roots)[46] and hygienism: firstly, the private partition of water and bathers was countered by a de-corporealised bathing in public spectacle (deco bodies, for Sluis), a scenography in Mexico recalibrated both for a nationalist *mexicanidad* and aspirational property speculation; secondly, the homogenised pool of hygienism transported by international modernism—in both its biopolitical and aesthetic modalities—was, by the 1940s, found wanting in Mexico (as elsewhere), and resulted in architectural expression seeking a counter-immersion in local or place-specific sources (sometimes read as regionalism or what might be better understood as an internationalised trade in autochthonic *camposcapes*). In Barragán's case, the displacement of 'waters' to 'water,' finds a complex return 'hydrology' in which a conformist hydrosocial—that renovation of the aqueous according to a post-revolutionary *structure-Other*—leaves open a range of other 'waters' exploitable as elemental avatars.

Volcanic waters

A source for such elemental avatars can be found some 22 minutes' drive from the Condesa's deco subdivision in what became *Jardines del Pedregal de San* Ángel, a vast development undertaken by Barragán between 1945 and 1950. Relevant for any consideration of the *Casa-Estudio* is the presence of *El Pedregal* as a pivot around which it and the *Casa Ortega* turned. The three combined define a decade across which Barragán broke with international modernism, but also architectural practice as typically enacted.[47]

At *El Pedregal*, in a location thought to be uninhabitable, Barragán conceived a radically updated *camposcape*. Set on a 2,000-year-old, "sea of lava,"[48] one that had buried important prehistoric townships,[49] he achieved a modern revaluation of this manifestly ancient ground, with a suburban plot determined by lava flows and punctuated by stone walls, metal fences, and gates, partially enclosed courtyards with neat lawns, and common areas enlivened by pools, fountains, and water jets.[50] If at Condesa, naked deco bodies and water were deployed to secure a marketable *mexicanidad*, at *El Pedregal* naked ground and its mediatising rested on topography itself aqueous in an arrested sense. Keith Eggener describes this mixed reality thus: "a dramatic, desolate, and venerable place, a visual mixture of violence and serenity,

Fig. 15 *Casa Ortega* trees trained into shade [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

Old peppercorn trees bend under ivy, their trunks warped into curtains of shade. Decades ago, weights were tied to their limbs to train them (Fig. 15).

Nature, too, is bent into submission here—trained to serve as a backdrop of warmth. The clivias kneel at our feet; jasmine threads light through the coral tree's red. Each layer of colour builds a tableau—orange, yellow, green, red. The garden glows, but only if you stand in the right spot.

This garden asks nothing of the city, but holds the city's breath. It no longer recognises the city—its noise, its grime. It remembers only a forgotten retreat, a place once meant to shield, to hide, to be apart. But now, the garden has outlived its purpose. Its tranquillity swallowed by the sprawl.

like a turbulent body of water suddenly frozen."[51] Perturbing this surface further were indigenous accounts of wandering witches and disturbed souls.[52]

El Pedregal expanded an initial property purchased by Barragán called *El Cabrío*. There he had shaped a series of garden spaces for solitary retreat from the city.[53] Immediately bordering the volcanic topography that would become *El Pedregal*, *El Cabrío* offered a contrastive magic, a place for spiritual revision linked to *ociosidad*, or idleness. As Barragán put it: "Humankind's greatest contribution to culture is *ociosidad* [it . . .] is the art of beautifully and transcendentally passing through time and space."[54] *Ocio* for him meant, "unconsciously fall[ing] into an atmosphere of meditation without effort."[55] As Luis Carranza notes, the gardens at *El Pedregal* offer no 'agricultural' yield—they endure and mutate according to ancient rhythms indifferent to those of humanity. Yet in Barragán's formulation, the passivity of *ocio* instilled something immediately productive: private solitude capable of cultivating non-standard mentalities freed from the uniformity imparted by modern urban living.[56]

Masculinisation and marketing alchemy

So does *El Pedregal* contradictorily carry both *ocio*, as a productive flow of private time, and the inherently diverting action of media flows integral with real estate speculation. More concretely, it draws on the aqueous in passive and active senses, with the frozen fluidity of lava fields set against actual water play in the *Plaza de las Fuentes* say—a doubling matching that of dormant Iztaccíhuatl and still active Popocatépetl, their confluence tied to *El Pedregal* in the celebrated early photograph by Armando Salas Portugal, *Los Volcanes Desde El Pedregal* (1938).[57]

These interlacing modes of fluidity parry an older alignment of *camposcape* with indigenous female telluric forces (*El Pedregal* was considered the "primary school of witchcraft" after all),[58] and a broader masculine remaking of *campo* Sluis attributes to a post-revolutionary "cultural stage" in Mexico. As she puts it, the vitality and agency of the "*ranchero*" had displaced an earlier alignment of *campo* indigeneity with "female architypes."[59] While Barragán's appeal to idleness as a foundation for privatised and non-conformist individuality hardly aligns with *ranchero* machismo, at *El Pedregal*, "magical Mexico" was given an alternative spiritualisation of place/nature/essence via the solitary photographic contemplation of *de San Ángel* undertaken by Salas Portugal, a photographer whose earlier, brooding black-and-white images helped shape and more broadly publicise the mystical nature of its violent landscape.[60] For Salas Portugal, like Barragán, contemplative waiting was key: "All one has to do is observe,

The statues—those strange objects—once anchored in domestic embrace, now stir like creatures from a long-forgotten dream. Where water and dust meet—where they linger and leave, where life moves in halting steps before the inevitable boundary, before the wall. In the silence, we wonder: What is it to sustain beauty, when it must be framed by walls that never bend, by time that never halts?

The garden has been watered, but never with enough flow. Its purpose: to remain. Contained, contained, contained.

The house persists as a corridor linking these rooms. Each garden, an extension of its pulse—a living part of something larger, but fractured, fragmented.

The walls hold memory. The ground speaks of things long buried. A whisper rises from the fountain, tangled with dust. A family waits for something—a time when water will connect them to something beyond.

They wait for the promise Barragán's vision once held: to humanise the earth without losing its magic. Barragán's geometry—its grids and arcs—was meant to contain such sounds.

To frame them. To temper the wildness of water. But water, like memory, will not obey.

Dust and water: the two alchemists of this house. One carries the weight of what is gone. The other speaks of what refuses to leave. Together they weave a presence, a story told in whispers and droplets.

And at the centre, José—a figure between worlds. Barragán knew this truth: that water must be guided, that dust must be swept, that pink must be painted anew when time wears it thin.

enjoy and await the light to enter [. . .] the beauty of a wall, a stone, a ravine, a mountain. Things are always there but only appear when the light reveals them."[61]

Soon after meeting Salas Portugal at an exhibition in 1944, Barragán invited him, and painter/writer and amateur volcanologist Gerardo Murillo (Dr Atl), to join in planning the *El Pedregal* development.[62] Despite the necessary reticulation of homogeneous 'water,' the aqueous appealed to here better aligned with an older understanding of 'waters' as a distillate of ancient place-specific essence. Not coincidently, Salas Portugal, initially a chemical engineer specialising in the development of fragrances and essences,[63] can be imagined enacting his own light extraction and distillation of place peculiarities, but in the burgeoning age of synthetic scents (1920–40), it is the compounding and reproduction of artificial essences that permitted their broader consumption[64]—by analogy, precisely what the image-production and marketing of *El Pedregal* sought to achieve.[65] Threaded through this lava field then, an hallucinogenic vision chiastically parrying liquid violence and human repose, one in which a vast terrain of geologically slackened time was quickened by mediatised property speculation.

Coming-in/coming-out

Back at the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán*, a project realised in the immediate wake of *El Pedregal*, this doubling of savage elements and human repose found recalibrated form. Brought inside, volcanic surface terrain was given domesticated placement in the flooring and ascending steps that culminate in a pool-like vessel addressed solely to the sky. No lounging space or solarium this terrace, its tiled surface is manifestly a roof in the sense of collecting and directing rainfall to outlets. Yet its coloured planar resolution—white-washed plaster walls broken up by burnt orange and hot pink expanses, each rising many times human high and orientated to catch the daily solar arc—burn brightly against the sky (Fig. 21). Here, ascent, returning to Deleuze's commentary on Tournier's novel, expresses a "becoming solar."[66] And this becoming is not without desirous affects: while Defoe's Robinson asks how a society of one can replicate a country lost to misadventure—a kind of asexual generation that industriously turns an island of deprivation into an estate rich in goods[67]—Tournier's Robinson elides industry as an end, making "dehumanisation" the goal instead, or what amounts for Deleuze to a non-anthropomorphic sensory coitus carried by the elements in their becoming.[68]

To make Barragán a Crusoe, either purely in the mould of Defoe, or in the devolving form of Tournier, is certainly to overstep. Yet resonances of both seem feasible, particularly

Dust and water—one fleeting, the other enduring. As we leave, I carry them myself: the whisper of water, the grit of dust, the pulse of pink.

Dark pink sings in silence, its hue rich as wound. It folds around the visitor, pressing close like a lover, like a secret, like guilt.

Our return to dust—as fiction (Fig. 16).

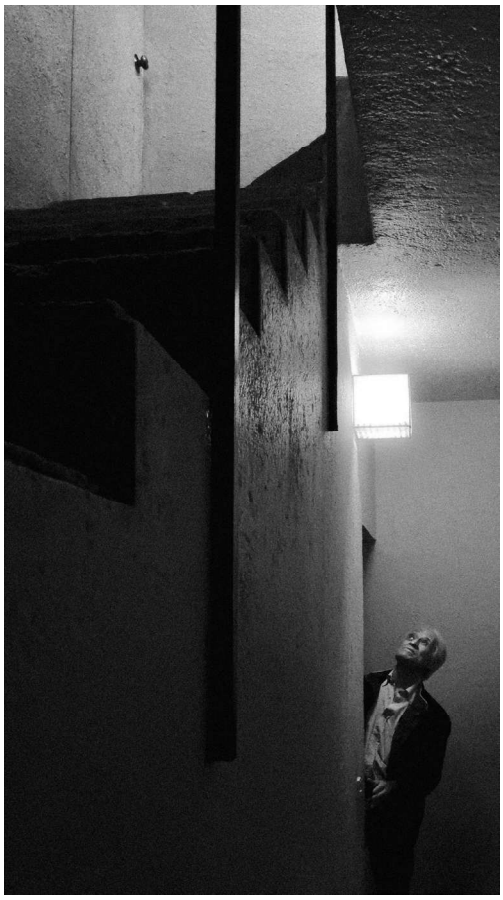


Fig. 16 Looking to the rain of light [Photograph: J. Wu, 2024]

when the profitable engendering of desolate and then suburbanised *El Pedregal* is set against the noted reclusion and spiritualisation engineered at the *Casa-Estudio*.[69] And if these two poles speak to and of desire, then there is the issue of Barragán's own sexuality, something which is hardly avoidable, it seems, when visiting his work in *Ciudad de México*.[70] Quiñones refers to a dichotomy well-rehearsed in critical contexts when referring to Barragán as embodying "the personas of both a dandy and a monk," while Evan Moffitt more explicitly depicts him "an observant Catholic and closeted gay man" whose house is composed as a "black box of privacy" dedicated to withdrawal and contemplation.[71] Yet the issue of his precise sexuality is ultimately unknowable; more pertinent is an intense investment in solitude, which for Moffitt (citing historian Juan Acha) causes particular spaces "to revolve around [themselves. . .] and irradiate a convent-like [. . .] introspection and withdrawal."[72]

Barragán's elevation of *ocio* and the solitude that completes it mirrors a broader critique of modernity favouring individual distinction in the working out of metropolitan psychic life, as, for example, Georg Simmel argued in "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903).[73] Barragán, at home in a monastic carapace, enacts something akin to what Simmel termed the "path of the soul [back] to itself."[74] In conditions where religiosity or "objectified spirit" (carried by objects, beliefs, and systems created collectively) is eroded by a secular world increasingly calibrated according to trite goals, subjective investment "into certain forms of beauty and grandeur, sublimity and lyric emotion" offers a way of rendering religious motivations self-sufficient.[75] Barragán's appeal to emotional beatitude and a meditative beauty at home enacted such an islanding furnished for intransitive spiritual pathways (rather than direct transitive ones).[76]

Living/library/sea

To put this diagrammatically, if the primary transcending thrust of life in the house is articulated in the volcanic climb from shadow to the full face and force of the (Mexican) sky-cosmos, a secondary axis runs horizontally and westwardly from the entry hall into the altar-like living room[77] with a series of subspaces themselves held within a larger volume defined upwardly by the beamed structure holding the roof terrace. Beneath the stark solar container overhead, what faces here instead is the rear garden, itself a complexly overgrown and shadowed reserve revealed through the celebrated garden window, its monumental scale subdivided crucifix-like (Fig. 22).[78]

Deeper access into the room requires an about-turn and navigation of numerous half-height partitions (Fig. 23),

And beginning once again
(with Gabriel García-Márquez)[14]

At the threshold, where the street hesitates before the wall.

A wall—dark pink, the colour of old wounds healed over. Or pink deepened by absence of light, bruised by shadows it had always ignored. Its surface holds every scar of hands long gone. Textured as though it could feel the rain's insistence. As though it had absorbed the centuries and now exhaled them slowly.

This was Barragán's pink, made for light. But here it stood—unlit, but not unlived.

José Ortega turned off the last lightbulb. The house inhaled its night.

In the absence of electricity, a different current stirred: the whisper of rain slipping through the garden, pooling in the fountain's lips. It became not a sound but a presence—heavy, restless. As though the water had waited too long to move.

The fountain overflowed. Waters spilled over, refusing containment. Each drop bore trapped rivers, Lake Texcoco's erased body, a city that drank itself dry and asked for more. The rain thickened. It pulsed. It surged into the house—not with chaos, but with purpose.

Inside, the walls softened. Rigid geometry surrendered to the damp. It was no longer water; it was awareness. The house became aware of itself. Its walls turned to skin, breathing after a long-endured sleep.

Furniture drifted. Tables became rafts. Chairs floated like islands,

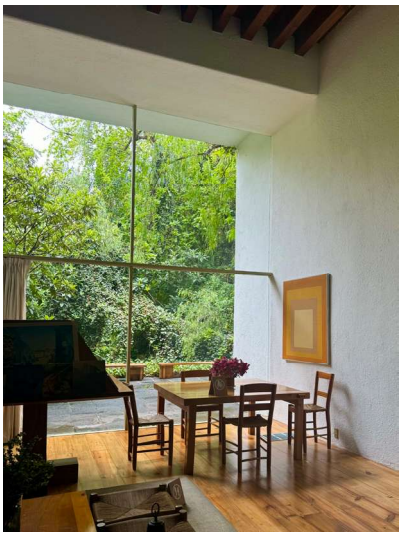


Fig. 22 Living room [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

Fig. 23 Passageway through the library [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

a transition that leads to the library proper with its floating zig-zag stair[79] whose handrail-less access offers a closed space excluded from the tour (Fig. 24).[80]

It astounds to learn subsequently that the living room and library were originally conceived as a single uninterrupted volume, with the cruciform garden window—or "great crystal opening"—being a later replacement for a semi-opaque glazed screen matching the high-level, street-facing library window (Fig. 25).[81]

With outlook dammed-up so to speak, the room must have been something like a lake of evenly diffused daylight where everything was rendered immediately and starkly viewable. Barragán's subsequent introduction of obscuring subspaces and the release of outlook into the garden has been attributed to his application of a Loosian *Raumplan*—a spatial nuancing of scale and volume tunned to discrete uses.[82] Contrastive with the terrace above, which initially had a

their legs skyward in defiance. The house became vessel. Water, like time, erased boundaries, spilled secrets. Furniture floated free. José climbed onto the dining table with his family—not to escape, but to move with the flood.

They navigated between islands of their lives: a photograph bobbing in the hall, a teacup spinning in the water like a lost moon. The water, cool and golden as light, carried whispers—of dust, clay, sunken lakes.

The fountain's waters became memory breaking free. They bore clay, dust, the sinking ground. They spoke of a time before loss, when land held firm. That night, the water reclaimed house, garden, family—flooding them with the uncontainable, the forgotten, the fantastic.

By dawn, the rain receded. The garden refused to shrink. Trees stood taller. Vines gripped eaves. Roots pushed deeper. The house, now dry, bore the marks of change: outlines on the wall, a scent of earth, a silence that felt alive.

The fountain sighed, empty again.

This was no longer Barragán's house. It had not been for some time. It belonged to the water now—to the past that would not be erased.

I wish to acknowledge the gracious hospitality and generosity José Ortega showed me across the short time I had at the *Casa Ortega*. José kindly agreed to my inclusion of photos of him for this essay.

Thank you, José!

overleaf:

Fig. 17 *Casa Ortega* afloat—a fiction [Drawing: J. Wu, 2024]

view over its western balustrade into the garden, but was later filled in,[83] the cellular subdivision of the simpler, living/library volume, and the selective release of outlook into the garden suggest a complicating machinery designed to both slacken and compound strands of duration loosened by *ocio*. Hence the importance of the figure of the labyrinth for the house. For Nicolas Gilsoul, Barragán's work directly taps the regressive and introspective qualities of labyrinthine places central to the Surrealist imagination—qualities experienceable first hand at the 1940 *Exposición Internacional del Surrealismo* in Mexico City. Noteworthy for Gilsoul too, the gardens comprising the Barragán property at General Francisco Ramirez Street were themselves formed over a quarry riddled with tunnels thereby aligning it with the maze of the Minotaur.[84]

Parallelling a growing entanglement of this garden over its unseen maze outside, the house, eschewing modernity's predilection for fixed form and unitary perception, transformed

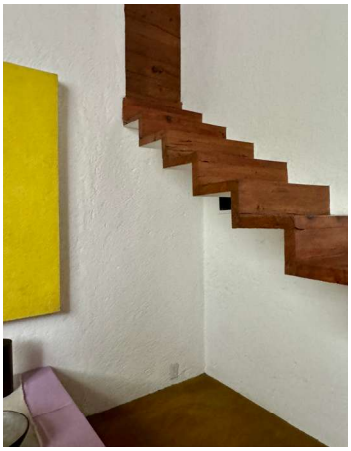
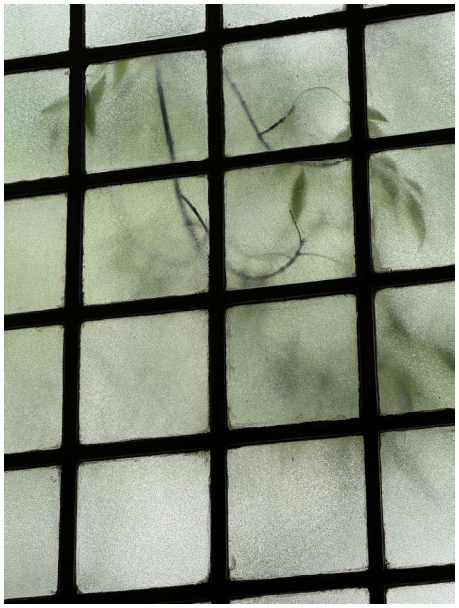
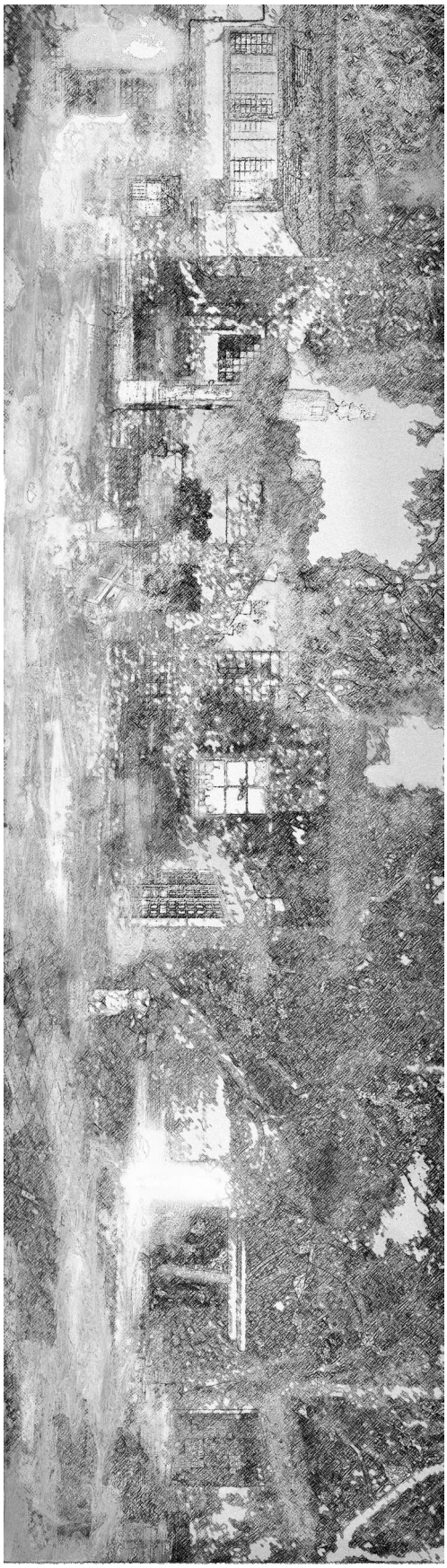


Fig. 24 Library stair [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

Fig. 25 High-level street-facing window in the library [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]





and mobilised viewpoints given sequentially and unexpectedly. An array of corner spaces formed at the convergence of wall planes offer pockets of stilled space.[85] These are the touch points, the tactile, furnished anchors most suggestive of Barragán's at homeness. Conversely, we, the sightseers, are mired in a perspectival mobility accelerated to absurdity: 'stand here not there, do not touch anywhere, have you had enough time to get a photo . . . move aside so others get a clear shot.' And so we dance around each other on a beige carpeted runway signalling permitted passage and rare touch points.

Nowhere is space and time more intensely compressed than in Barragán's library itself. As Alfonso Alfaro has written, though not systematic in approach, the bibliographic collection—present in the house, and under the care of the Tapatía Foundation—signals a solitary man's "active" inscription and dialogue with a plethora of "voices of sleeping ink."[86] Amongst these are publications by French illustrator, society chronicler, travel writer, garden designer, and architect, Ferdinand Bac. As Alfaro notes, his discovery of Bac while in Paris during the *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes*, provided an unexpected path to the paradise gardens of the "Spaniards of the three religions."[87] Moreover, the Mediterranean Basin itself, as Barragán's library suggests to Alfaro, shows an interest in diverse places and cultures gathered by the "tutelary skies" overarching this ancient sea ("Tangier, Venice, Istanbul and Alexandria").[88] They testify to referents far in excess of any singular "indigenist [Mexican] autochthony," joining instead Mexican traditional architecture with that of a cross-cultural enclave centred by this other basin, an aesthetic synthesis Barragán referred to as "Neo-Mediterranean,"[89] and for Alfaro underscores his interest in a "universalism of all cultures."[90]

So while the living room/library condenses Barragán's perspectivism and the referential sea it traversed, an additional insight can be drawn from the books he collected—spiritual mitigation. Fernando Curiel Gámez, building on Alfaro's bibliographic commentary, points to the importance for Barragán of reviving religiosity and its linking with art via mysticism. What Gámez draws from underlined phrases in Barragán's copy of Aldous Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy* (that "the beauty of art [alone can approach...] Divine Beauty"), is the importance of mystical detachment and a contemplative departure from everyday senses of self.[91] Read alongside the predominance of annotations by Barragán in his copy of Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* (*In Search of Lost Time*), and in French language commentaries on Proust, Gámez argues that spirituality within art rests on its address of a "proximity to eternity" through sensations that endure, as opposed to fleeting appearances defining

everyday life, a proximity locating the divine in the sensory as such.[92]

In Proust the eternal manifests in a pure time retained in, and reborn through, memory. The significance Proust afforded involuntary memory speaks to the rapturous, mystic recovery of a persisting time injected into the banality of everyday sensations—to borrow a phrase by Philippe Mengue, it affects a seeming "'visitation,' [or] 'annunciation.'"[93] What art concretises over memory, even its involuntary presenting, is a fixing of the enduring in a form that can be reproduced or accessed at will.[94] So does art achieve the spiritual. To the extent, as Barragán argued, his architecture is primarily autobiographical, it is so via a recalling and spiritualising of memories.[95] Imagination, reworking nostalgia, utilises memory, as Gámez puts it, as a "liquid solution" to deepen and preserve sensations across time.[96]

Sounding chamber

Such a mnemonic or 'liquid transfer' is explicitly enacted in the *Casa-Estudio's patio de las ollas* (courtyard of the pots), a small enclosure facilitating transfer from the larger garden back to the studio, a space inserted late in the house's history and experienced for us near the end of the tour. Like a canal lock adjusting water levels for transfer between varying terrain, the courtyard is reached through a series of tightly orchestrated bodily turns that culminate in a low pink gate. Stepping down and through, a small space enclosed by tall walls appears. In one corner a rectilinear reflecting pool is sunk into the ground. Dank, still, and of uncertain depth, a timber 'spout' suggests a possible inflow to the pool, and on cue, our guide announces, "Wait here while I turn on the water." Pitted volcanic pavers matching the entry and hall are here again, but now damp, slippery, and reflectively patchy from overnight rain—a dampness richly augmented by garden plants cascading into the courtyard over the top of the surrounding walls. Abruptly, a torrent of water fills the space with a deep-throated noise (Fig. 26).

Fig. 26 *Patio de las ollas*, timber spout [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

Reverberating around the small space, this aqueous exuberance stands in contradistinction to the empty pulque pots, vessels routinely used to hold an indigenous intoxicant derived from the maguey plant, a liquor referred to as "alabaster milk."[97] Filling much of the courtyard, some sixteen or so pots leave little space for human others, suggesting it is less a place for pause and contemplation than one to transition through (Fig. 27).

Still, with no view in, or out, the patio's purpose and nature is puzzling, especially when considered against the earlier configuration of this area which featured a glazed wall

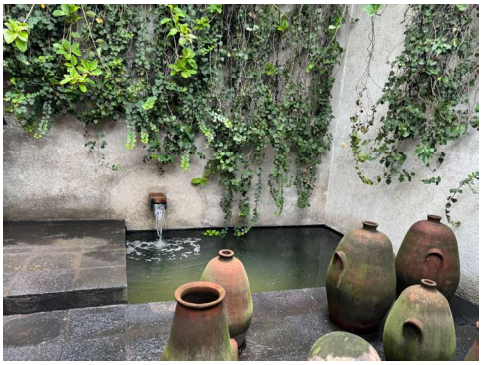


Fig. 27 *Patio de las ollas*, timber spout [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

Fig. 28 Stable door opening off the *patio de las ollas* [Photograph: A. Douglas, 2024]

providing the studio with a view into the garden, much as the "great crystal opening" does for the living room still. A closed vessel instead, the courtyard suggests an agrarian reminder in the city, a memory cell less seen than heard, particularly when the stable door arrangement linking it to the studio interior is considered (Fig. 28).

Like sound baffles, these doors suggest the likelihood of a prolongation of audible water within the studio itself, an acoustic remainder channelling an (autobiographical) anterior time or analepsis—to borrow a literary/filmic term— into projects to come. Flashback-like, this anomalous time was central to Barragán's architectural imagination and process, as he asserted, and the implantation of the *patio de las ollas* into what was a broad view out into the garden, suggests the intensifying role of inner excursuses in his work—as Barragán asserted in 1980, "the architect must listen and heed his nostalgic revelations."[98]

For little reason better than a coincidence in time, I am drawn to recall, that hail into the dark with which I started this account—"VOLCANO!" No link I know ties Lowry's *Under the Volcano* to Barragán, yet I picture them together partly through the coincidence of their production: the first published edition of *Under the Volcano* arriving in 1947; the initial completion and occupation of the *Casa-Estudio* achieved in 1948. The analepses suggested directly by the *patio de las ollas*—but evident indirectly everywhere throughout Barragán's work via dialogic exchanges savoured locally and afar, both from the immediate now and nostalgically drawn from distant times—is a key temporal modality also mobilised by Lowry in his autobiographically inflected novel, as Pierre Schaeffer suggests.[99] No simple synopsis or arrival into and through the narrative of *Under the Volcano* is possible; it is riddled through with what William Gass calls the "wormy ubiquitousness of the sign,"[100] a referential deluge overflowing simple capture and containment.

Barragán's work has an unfathomability too, though the deluge filling it differs. As Stephen Spender says in his introduction of *Under the Volcano*, the novel offers, "perhaps the best account of a 'drunk' in fiction"; in Barragán it was sheer sobriety (in principle) that sustained. While Lowry portrays Mexico as that intemperate place capable of deterritorialising self to the point of destruction, Barragán, drawn to the spiritual/perceptual roulette imagined by Huxley, charts a different route to the richness of the multiple, as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari define a compensatory world fallen beyond overarching religious unity.[101] Mirroring the loss of Simmel's "objectified spirit" and the resulting islanding of the religious soul, Deleuze and Guattari define the multiple this way:

> [. . .] unity is consistently thwarted and obstructed in the object, while a new type of unity triumphs in the subject. The world has lost its pivot; the subject can no longer even dichotomize, but accedes to a higher unity, of ambivalence or overdetermination, in an always supplementary dimension to that of the object.[102]

Key to overdetermination and a de facto unity of the multiple is a logic of subtraction: "Subtract the unique from the multiple [. . .] always n-1," as they say.[103] Such subtraction points to a rhizomatic structure concomitant with subterranean root systems of certain bulbs and tubers that seek water transversely and opportunistically across terrain.

In the *patio de las ollas*, subtraction and sobriety stand in plain sight via its emptied pulque pots. At one level, their presence calls up a far from temperate aqueousness. Consider Barragán's emphasis on "looking with innocence" in his Pulitzer Award speech, an attribute he credited to mentor and collaborator Jesús (Chucho) Reyes Ferreira, the Mexican artist renowned for his use of *papel de china* or "traditional Mexican coloured tissue paper."[104] The colouration Barragán instilled in his architecture drew directly from Ferreira's reworking of this rich tradition, an association most prominently fostered in the festive colours and motifs instilled in the *papel de china* used at the inauguration of pulque bars particularly. In this intersection of alcohol and coloured paper is a complex combining of "indigenous, European and Oriental traditions."[105] Pulque, that *alabaster milk*, reserved for priests and religious ceremony in pre-colonial times, and later regulated and restricted within *pulquerías* during colonial rule, is itself derived from the rhizomatous maguey plant. So does the sparseness of ground water rise, through rhizomatic and mnemonic relays, into the luminous and colour-tinted light Barragán achieved with Ferreira. So too does innocence, bypassing "the spirit in the plant" and its poisoning of the brain—to borrow Gass's phrase—rely on emptied vats, or pots in this case, as resonating chambers recalling times other than the present.[106]

From hydrosocial to transformative waters

A visit to the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán* follows a trochal structure: echoes of water and fire water from the *patio de las ollas* pass into the domain of drafted and photosensitised paper, the studio itself dense with drafted and photographed documents. The circle commenced with arrival is completed; predictably, exit passes via the gift store. The 'tour' as experienced is, of course, a contrivance. Any number of other ways in and through the *Casa-Estudio* are possible. Moreover, such a fleeting encounter with Barragán's home and workplace, is the opposite of his own dwelling as

such. The Ferris wheel of the everyday carves out cyclical spaces of occupancy rather than the singular lines of a 'pass-through.' Much has been written on the distinction between the Loosian *Raumplan* and the architectural promenade of the Corbusian *Plan Libre*. Tonghoon Lee, for instance, in his survey of these accounts, links the former with spatial subtraction from larger volumes in which tactility and contemplation are linked to immediate material qualities. The latter he suggests work through additive experience in which tactility is tied to movement and, to a degree, the distracted path of sight itself.[107] As tourist, and tour recipient, something like the architectural promenade predominates, one in which sight distractedly peruses the surface of things, irrespective of Barragán's commitment to a reworking of the *Raumplan* and a deep tactility in General Francisco Ramirez Street. On the other hand, any promenade can be thought and enacted differently, and for the Situationalist International, and Guy Debord particularly, the *dérive* or urban experimental drift was an antidote to the facile nature of tourism and the kinds of non-seeing it calls on. Not surprisingly, as Mark Goodall has written, the Situationists found in Lowry's *Under the Volcano*—itself a narrative structured by urban walking—a working model for the *dérive* and the recombinant action of *détournement*. As Goodall puts it, "the practice of psychogeography—a drunken drift through space and time—was dubbed by Debord and his colleagues as the 'Lowry game.'"[108] In pursuing the Lowry game myself, I have sought to redirect my own drift through channels of the aqueous Barragán shaped. Beyond the mute reticulation and plumbed-in presence of hydrosocial water, I have been drawn to imagine what appears to be three routes for aqueous 'waters' in the *Casa-Estudio Luis Barragán*: the ocean of the sky, a pan-Mediterranean sea, and the analeptic percolations and prolongations of mnemonic ground.

Conclusion

In titling this dual commentary on houses by Luis Barragán "aqueous place," we are mindful of its oxymoronic quality: place suggesting a certain bounded endurance; the aqueous implying, conversely, a 'watery' unfastening. *Ciudad de México* seems aptly suited to this paradoxical positioning, flooded, left dry, filled in, sinking down, rising up, as it all is. In our different ways we have sought, firstly, to tell each other of our experiences in houses on this marginally uphill edge of that which was once a lake—expanded and extrapolated as these accounts have become—and secondly, to keep those experiences alive through forms of prolongation. Both are standard modalities of touristic exchange with the latter, in our case, leaning towards travel writing, a protraction going well beyond the intimate retelling we initially entertained.

Yet we have sought to exceed and complicate travel writing in this disjunctive photo-essay too. Worked-through here is the divergent 'Barragáns' that come through to us—via museums and memory, bookings and detours, through photographs and forgetting, through puzzling and needing to dig scholastically for answers, and, ultimately, sensing an incompleteness in our understanding. Nevertheless, we have taken the aqueous as a kind of perturbing vector whose trajectory we have allowed to throw us off, thrown us beyond, the curated 'packages' on offer at these house museums. Despite their curation, our encounter with them has given rise to a fragmentary, incomplete, detoured beholding. The *Casa-Estudio*, in its regulated seclusion, asks for a touchless reverence; the *Casa Ortega*, still lived in, is rich in interruptive gestures and the touches of everyday life. One operates by way of the ticket; the other by a tap on the door. The two houses, the two experiences, share a wall. Once, they shared a garden in full. As José tells it, there was a door between them, long since patched over. The fictional remaking of the *Casa Ortega*—its open-endedness, its fluid temporality, its pink dust—was, in its own quiet way, an attempt to reach across that boundary. To test whether memory might seep through concrete, whether one could enter through a place no longer open. This was not about restoration, but about passage—about what might still flow, sideways, beneath walls. On the other side of the wall, tempering the step-by-step, photo-op-by-photo-op constraint and gauging of the *Casa-Estudio*, a dwelling of the mind has been proffered, one happily indicative of a drunken *dérive* not quite able to finish at the gift store.

NOTES

1. UNESCO World Heritage Nomination: File 1136/Luis Barragán House and Studio, "Description" (2004), https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/nominations/1136.pdf, 36.

2. Giovanni Pinna, "Introduction to Historic House Museums," *Museum International* 53, no. 2 (2001): 4.

3. The house and studio features on ArchDaily's "30 Sites Every Architect Should Visit in Mexico City" in the number two slot, the same place as it appears on Wanderlog's "The 49 Best Architecture in Mexico City" (see respectively: https:// www.archdaily.com/866897/30-sites-every-architect-should-visit-in-mexico-city; and https://wanderlog.com/list/geoCategory/98637/best-architecture-in-mexico-city).

4. José Manuel Bárcena Ortega, Unpublished pamphlet issued to visitors during the house tour.

5. Juan Villoro, *Horizontal Vertigo: A City Called Mexico*, trans. Alfred MacAdam (Knopf, 2021), 33.

6. Matthew Vitz makes this point about O'Gorman's painting in his discussion of the politics of water in, *A City on a Lake: Urban Political Ecology and the Growth of Mexico City* (Duke University Press, 2018), Kindle Edition, Location 140 of 9845.

7. Néstor García Canclini, Christopher L. Chiappari, and Silvia L. López, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 46.

8. Canclini, Chiappari, and López, *Hybrid Cultures*, 47.

9. Thea Pitman, *Mexican Travel Writing* (Peter Lang, 2008), 2.

10. Pitman, *Mexican Travel Writing*, 37.

11. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, "Cosmopolitan Mexican Summer, 1920–1949," *Latin American Research Review* 32, no. 3 (1997): 224–242; see 224.

12. William Gass, "Malcolm Lowry," in *The World Within the World: Essays by William H. Gass* (Basic Books, 1976), 57.

13. Lucas Tromly, *Travel Writing and Re-Enactment: Echotourism* (Routledge, 2023), 3.

14. I reference Gabriel García Márquez's short story "Light is Like Water" found in *Strange Pilgrims* (Pilgrim Books, 1992). I found my way to this story by way of Sheryl Tucker de Vázquez's "Light is Like Water: Barragán and the Question of Magic," *Third Text* 19, no. 3 (2005).

15. UNESCO World Heritage Nomination, 45–47.

16. Barragán cited by Emilio Ambasz in *The Architecture of Luis Barragan* (The Museum of Modern Art, 1976), 8.

17. Titled "(Job XXVIII:3, 1960)," the abstract gold-leaf panel was the first in a series Goeritz produced after the death of his wife in 1959. As Evan Moffitt describes it: "Its gold leaf catches sun at certain hours, giving brief light to interior gloom" (see "Uncovering the Sexuality and Solitude of a Modern Mexican Icon," *Frieze* 202, 18 March 2019). Utilising a nailing technique referred to as "Clouages," Goeritz titled these works overall "Mensajes," or message-bearing mediums (see Lily Kassner, "Lot Essay" in Christie's online auction posting, May 2009, https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5077509).

18. UNESCO World Heritage Nomination, 47.

19. Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy, Volume 1, Consumption* (Zone, 1988), 28, 34. On the specific link Bataille makes between the Aztec world view and a sacrificial becoming-solar, see 45–61.

20. Noteworthy is the characterisation in the UNESCO World Heritage Nomination of the terrace as something in excess of the name—a spatial experience better understood as a cross between, as Emilio Ambasz put it, a "'pool, patio, observatory, chapel or hanging garden [whose larger task is. . .] framing the view onto the sky," 48.

21. Gilles Deleuze, "Michel Tournier and the World Without Others," in *The Logic of Sense* (Columbia University Press, 1990), 302.

22. Francisco Quiñones, "Mi casa es mi refugio: At the Service of Mexican Modernism in Casa Barragán," *The Avery Review* 48 (June 2020): 1, 11. In fact, the World Heritage Nomination indicates that there were three permanent inhabitants in the house responsible for maintaining and cleaning it, Ana María Albor amongst them; see 114.

23. Quiñones points to an obvious glitch in the occluding machinery found in a 1951 photograph by Elizabeth Timberman of Esther McCoy at the first landing of the hall stair while visiting, an image simultaneously capturing a housekeeper known as Ángela answering the phone. See "Mi casa es mi refugio," 9–10.

24. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier."

25. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier," 303.

26. Michel Tournier, *Friday*, trans. Norman Denny (John Hopkins University Press, 1997), 203.

27. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier," 305, 38.

28. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier," 305.

29. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier," 305.

30. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier," 302.

31. Quiñones, "Mi casa es mi refugio," 11.

32. Under the Volcano Books, http://utvbks.com.

33. Gaston Bachelard, *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, trans. Alan C. M. Ross (Beacon Press, 1964), 83, 95.

34. Visiting the former on our last day, we found an empty fountain being cleaned out by a worker, while the latter was closed for repair.

35. Ageeth Sluis, *Deco Body, Deco City: Female Spectacle and Modernity in Mexico City, 1900–1939* (University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 102.

36. Sluis, *Deco Body, Deco City*, 186, 189.

37. Ageeth Sluis, "Journeys to Others and Lessons of Self: Carlos Castaneda in Camposcape," *Journal of Transatlantic American Studies* 4, no. 2 (2012), https://escholarship.org/content/qt2k72p3w7/qt2k72p3w7.pdf (pages unnumbered: page 7 of online document).

38. Sluis, *Deco Body, Deco City*, 102.

39. Sluis, *Deco Body, Deco City*, 62.

40. Casey Walsh, "Waters, Water, and the Hydrosocial Politics of Bathing in Mexico City, 1850–1920," *Water Alternatives* 14, no. 1 (2021): 47–48.

41. Casey Walsh, "Waters, Water, and the Hydrosocial Politics of Bathing," 50.

42. Victor M. Macías-González, "The Bathhouse and Male Homosexuality in Porfirian Mexico," in *Masculinity and Sexuality in Modern Mexico*, edited by Victor M. Macías-González and Anne Rubenstein (University of New Mexico Press, 2012).

43. Macías-González, "The Bathhouse and Male Homosexuality."

44. Macías-González, "The Bathhouse and Male Homosexuality."

45. Walsh, "Waters, Water, and the Hydrosocial Politics of Bathing," 54–55.

46. Read more broadly, the *Fuente de los Cántaros* and the various other water features of the *Parque México* can be imagined carrying what remains of long-practiced hydrosocial traditions starting in pre-colonial times with the sweat lodges, or temãzcalli (in the original Nahuatl language of Luz Jiménez),

running through to the public immersion baths of the city. See Walsh, "Waters, Water, and the Hydrosocial Politics of Bathing," 54.

47. For instance Keith Eggener, who references a shift in Barragán's work from 1940, particularly resulting from the evolving implementation of *El Pedregal*. See "Postwar Modernism in Mexico: Luis Barragán's Jardine del Pedregal and the International Discourse on Architecture and Place," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58, no. 2 (1999): 137.

48. The term is Emilio Ambasz's. See *The Architecture of Luis Barragán*, 11.

49. The age of the lava flow and the indication of earlier settlement comes from Barragán himself. See Damian Bayon, "An Interview with Luis Barragan," *Landscape Architecture Magazine* 66, no. 6 (1976): 530. Eggener refers to the remains of the ancient cites of Copilco and Cuicuilco found at *Pedregal de San Ángel* in nineteenth-century archaeological digs—see Eggener, "Postwar Modernism in Mexico," 125.

50. The demonstration gardens for the subdivision including the *Fuente de los Patos* (Fountain of the Ducks), *Plaza de les Fuentes* (Plaza of the Fountains). See Ambasz, *The Architecture of Luis Barragan*, 117.

51. Eggener, "Postwar Modernism in Mexico," 125.

52. Cited in Eggener, "Postwar Modernism in Mexico," 126.

53. See Ambasz, *The Architecture of Luis Barragán*, 11, 116.

54. Barragán cited in Luis E. Carranza, "Barragán Lecture No. 1: 'On Time and Experience,'" 8 May 2023, Vitra Design Museum, 34, 36, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YyncSECDXc.

55. Barragán cited in Carranza, "Barragán Lecture No. 1."

56. Carranza, "Barragán Lecture No. 1."

57. See Gonzalo Mendoza Morfin, "Armando Salas Portugal, His Eyes on El Pedregal," in *Architecture and Photography: Luis Barragán*, published lecture series (Architectural Association School of Architecture, 2020), https://www.academia.edu/47930018/Armando_Salas_Portugal_His_Eyes_on_El_Pedregal (pages unnumbered: pages 5–7 of online document).

58. Eggener, "Postwar Modernism in Mexico," 126. Eggener is citing Francisco Fernandez del Castillo's account of *El Pedregal* in *Apuntes para la historia de San Angel (San Jacinto Tenanitla) y sus alrededores: tradiciones, historia, leyendas* (del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historía y Ethnología, 1913), 151. In it the latter links witchcraft here with the preparation of potions derived from plants.

59. As Sluis puts it, camposcape is subject to "a masculine reinterpretation of the campo by mid-century [meant . . .] the realm of the tehuana gradually transform[ing] into the land of the charros." Sluis, *Deco Body, Deco City*, 258.

60. Morfin, "Armando Salas Portugal," page 6 of online document.

61. Claudia Rueda, "Armando Salas Portugal: Dialogues Between Landscape and Architecture," in *Click 2/Form+* (Iniciativa Digital Politècnica, 2016), 56.

62. Morfin, "Armando Salas Portugal," page 12 of online document.

63. Rueda, "Armando Salas Portugal: Dialogues Between Landscape and Architecture," 56.

64. Olivier R. P. David and Franco Doro, "Industrial Fragrance Chemistry: A Brief Historical Perspective," *European Journal of Organic Chemistry* 26, no. 44 (2023): 5–6.

65. Eggener points to Frank Lloyd Wright and Richard Neutra's validation of irregular and difficult sites as appealing to wilderness specificity, a view remaining influential in Mexico through to the 1940s. More absurdly, Wright's *Fallingwater* made an appearance in a remodelled *El Pedregal* context as part of the suburb's advertising campaign, a transposition between water and lava engaged with in this essay. See "Postwar Modernism in Mexico," 131, 136.

66. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier and the World Without Others," 302.

67. Deleuze reference's Pierre Macherey's "The Thematic Ancestor: Robinson Crusoe" when asserting Defoe's commitment to an experimentation with origins, one whose socio-economic undertaking is essentially asexual. In Macherey's phrasing: "From the destitute gaze to 'my island,' the genesis marks the stage of an appropriation. From an initial absolute poverty, Crusoe becomes a 'king of my kingdom,' and he comes to speak of it as 'my estate.' His adventure is indeed a history of economic development. The island represents the natural place of an economic autarchy." See *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. Geoffrey Wall (Routledge, 2006), 272 (emphasis in original).

68. Deleuze, "Michel Tournier," 303.

69. I am mindful of Keith Eggener's welcome reading of Barragán's work at *El Pedregal* and subsequently, one that recognises the need for a reading of his creative output within "nationalistic and exoticizing" frameworks aiming to 'protect' the architect from the onslaught of foreign appropriation, including "touristic" consumption, but which also sees in his work a greater synthesis of architectural and globalising forces (see "Postwar Modernism in Mexico," 140). My own approach in this essay is seeking to parry a reading spanning the inevitable ignorance of a foreigner and borrowed readings from those within and beyond Mexican critical appraisals. The otherness I reference intends, not an othering of Barragán, but the elemental, estranging appeal of the aqueous *tout court*.

70. On visits to each of his works, guides raised—with degrees of slyness apposite to the sharing of an "open secret"—the possible role homosexuality may have played in his work and life. This was particularly so in the *Casa-Estudio*, when the Spanish-speaking guide reverted to English when asking the two older single men, as opposed to the remaining 'couples' in the group, if we would like to live in such a house. Predicably

our response was yes, with the distinction in tour group sexuality being confirmed by the couples collectively renouncing the opportunity.

71. Francisco Quiñones, "Mi casa es mi refugio," 8; Moffitt, "Uncovering the Sexuality and Solitude of a Modern Mexican Icon," *Frieze* 202 (18 March 2019), https://www.frieze.com/article/uncovering-sexuality-and-solitude-modern-mexican-icon.

72. Moffitt, "Uncovering the Sexuality and Solitude of a Modern Mexican Icon."

73. Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*, edited by David Frisby and Mike Featherstone (Sage, 1997), 177, 182–184.

74. Georg Simmel, "The Concept and Tragedy of Culture," in *Simmel on Culture*, 55.

75. Georg Simmel, "Culture and Crisis," in *Simmel on Culture*, 88.

76. Simmel, "Culture and Crisis," 88–89.

77. As Fernando Curiel Gámez says of the living room and its great window looking onto the garden, "[it] function[s] as a frame of reverence, as a kind of alter that sanctifies nature and relates us to the transcendent." In "Luis Barragán's Criticism Towards the Publicity of Modern Life and his Vision Concerning the Spirituality of Art Embodied in his Architectural Work: 1940–1980," ACE, author trans., 16.

78. Gámez, "Luis Barragán's Criticism," 17.

79. Nicolas Gilsoul ascribes the "floating" nature of the stair to the Surrealist practice of seeking the unfamiliar in the familiar. See his "Emotional Architecture Scenographic studies in the Works of Barragan (1940–1980)," HAL archive, Sciences of the Universe [physics] (AgroParisTech, 2009), https:// pastel.hal.science/pastel-00005540v1/file/Gilsoul_2009_ArchitectureEmotionnelle.pdf.

80. UNESCO Nomination File, "Justification For Nomination" (2004), https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/nominations/1136.pdf, 65.

81. UNESCO Nomination File, "Justification For Nomination," 54–55, 76.

82. UNESCO Nomination File, "Justification For Nomination," 29.

83. UNESCO Nomination File, "Justification For Nomination," 77–78.

84. Gilsoul, "Emotional Architecture," 108. This insight was attributed to poet and chronicler of Mexico, Salvador Novo López.

85. UNESCO Nomination File, "Justification For Nomination," 30–31.

86. Alfonso Alfaro, "Voices of Sleeping Ink: Spiritual Itineraries of Luis Barragán," author trans., in *Artes de México: Nueva Epoca/ En El Mundo de Luis Barragán—Numero 23* (Primavera, 1994), 44. Collected across the fullness of his adult life—the sheer size of the collection requiring renovation of the Ortega House (see Gilsoul, "Emotional Architecture," 60). Many of the books are heavily annotated in pen and coloured pencils, with passages torn out in disagreement, or newspaper and magazine articles folded into the pages as part of broader conversations; so do the pages carry the tactile inscription of agreements, objections, and questions (see Alfaro, "Voices of Sleeping Ink," 44, 47).

87. Alfaro, "Voices of Sleeping Ink," 54.

88. Alfonso Alfaro, "In the World of Luis Barragán" (En El Mundo De Luis Barragán), author trans., in *Artes de México*.

89. Alfonso Alfaro "In the World of Luis Barragán."

90. Alfaro, "Voices of Sleeping Ink," 63.

91. Gámez, "The spiritual conception of art," 160–162.

92. Gámez, "The spiritual conception of art," 163.

93. Philippe Mengue, "Proust/ Deleuze: Mnemosyne, Goddess or Factory," trans. Mary Bryden, in *Beckett's Proust/Deleuze's Proust*, edited by Mary Bryden and Margaret Topping (Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 62.

94. Gámez, "The spiritual conception of art," 163.

95. Gámez, "The spiritual conception of art," 170.

96. Gámez, "The spiritual conception of art," 170.

97. Deborah Toner, "Pulquerías and Mexican Costumbrismo," in *Arara* 8 (2010): 1.

98. Luis Barragán, "Luis Barragán 1980 Laureate Acceptance Speech," https://www.pritzkerprize.com/sites/de-fault/files/file_fields/field_files_inline/1980_Acceptance_Speech.pdf. Emphasis added.

99. Pierre Schaeffer, "Notes on Dialogism and the Treatment of Time in *Under the Volcano*," Recherches anglaises et nord-américaines *21* (1998): 85–96.

100. Gass, "Malcolm Lowry," 35.

101. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Volume 2, trans. Brian Massumi (University of Minnesota Press, 1980), 6.

102. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 6.

103. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 6.

104. Humberto Spindola, *Interventions in the Architecture of Barragán: Homage to Chucho Reyes*, trans. Gregory Dechant (Barragán Foundation, 2008), 1.

105. Spindola, *Interventions*, 3.

106. Gass, "Malcolm Lowry," 21.

107. Tonghoon Lee, "Tactility and Architecture: Peter Zumthor's Thermal Baths in Vals and the Hybridization of the Two Motifs of Tactility—Materiality and Movement" (MSc thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 47.

108. Mark Goodall, "Under the Volcano . . . the Beach: Malcolm Lowry and the Situationalists," in *Malcolm Lowry's Poetics of Space*, edited by Richard J. Lane and Miguel Mota (University of Ottawa Press, 2016), 15.