

# Mannerists in times of crisis

Around Francisco González de Canales and a case study:  
Anna & Eugeni Bach

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## Index

SUMMARY .....	3
MANNERISM AND ITS NOW .....	4
ANNA & EUGENI BACH .....	7
MANNERISM AND A&EB .....	11
ANNEX .....	15
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	17

## SUMMARY

More than 10 years have passed since 2008, time enough for there to be studios who have developed their careers mostly in times of crisis. Francisco González de Canales (Professor at the ETSA in Seville) has recently published the book *El manierismo y su ahora (Mannerism and its Now, December 2020)*, which brings together this generation of architects and brings them together under the term *Mannerists*. With the help of art historians and architecture critics, he proposes *mannerism* as an optimistic attitude in the face of the difficulties posed by a system in crisis (as occurred at the end of the Renaissance and at other times throughout history). This attitude leads us to understand the crisis as a stimulator of creativity and, therefore, of new *manners* of making architecture.

Francisco González de Canales analyses a series of Spanish (MAIO, Studio Wet, TEd'A, etc.) and European (6a Architects, Office KGDVS, Lütjens-Padmanabhan, etc.) studios in Venturian terms, highlighting the complexities and ambiguities of their works. It is with this mannerist attitude and with a greater or lesser theoretical discourse that new expressive resources appear, which are the result of programmatic, budgetary, plotting, etc. complexities.

Anna & Eugeni Bach (a studio of the generation of studios presented in the previous book) explain their work with concepts very close to those of Robert Venturi in *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*. Both Anna and Eugeni are familiar with this book and it plays an important role in their work, although they do not apply it literally, it is an implicit rather than an explicit role.

For this reason, this paper presents an analysis of the recently published work of the Anna & Eugeni Bach studio '7 vidas' (2020) from a Venturian point of view. This analysis helps us to see how Robert Venturi's discourse is still relevant for our time and how it is applied in current works.

## MANNERISM AND ITS NOW

Orson Welles justifies himself in *The Third Man* with a somewhat cynical sentence: "In Italy, in thirty years of Borgia rule, there was nothing but terror, war, slaughter, but Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance were born. In Switzerland, on the other hand, they had 500 years of love, democracy and peace, and what was the result? The cuckoo clock.

Just as Welles realises that the crisis stimulates creativity, Francisco González de Canales (Professor of Architectural Composition at the ETSA in Seville) wrote the book *El manierismo y su ahora* [1] (*Mannerism and its Now*, December 2020), launching an optimistic proposal to today's architects who live on commissions considered minor (renovations, adaptations, single-family homes, etc.). These commissions, mainly from private clients, are based on realities that make the architect's task more complex, such as the budget limit, a client who is difficult to convince, complicated plots, pre-existences, the need for handcrafted solutions or - why not - the accumulation of increasingly demanding and sometimes contradictory regulations.

With the help of architectural (and art) historians and critics, he highlights a vision of mannerism as a 'habit of mind' or 'attitude' that cannot refer only to a specific period such as the *Cinquecento*. This Mannerist recurrence is trans-historical, it is not a concluded phenomenon. Among the twentieth-century art historians who contributed different views on Mannerism -Erwin Panofsky, Max Dvořák, Ernst Robert Curtius, etc.-, Arnold Hauser publishes *Der Manierismus. Die Krise der Renaissance und der Ursprung der modernen Kunst* (*Mannerism. The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origins of Modern Art*, 1964). In this book, Mannerism is stripped of the negative connotations it has been acquiring - overloaded, exaggerated, overacted, grotesque, etc.

This appreciation of Mannerism gradually influenced architecture. In the second half of the 20th century, Colin Rowe and Manfredo Tafuri wrote extensively on the subject, and before them, Nikolaus Pevsner, Anthony Blunt and Rudolf Wittkower laid the foundations.

Rowe published a somewhat provocative article entitled "Mannerism and Modern architecture" (*The Architectural Review*, 1950). He proposes a completely dehistoricised and timeless vision of Mannerism, using a merely formal comparison between Le Corbusier and Andrea Palladio that he published in 1947 in the article "Mathematics of Ideal Villa" (*The Architectural Review*) -even more polemical-. As Francisco González de Canales explains: "Mannerism is thus presented by Rowe as a condition of intellectual superiority, or



Illustration 1. Mannerism and its now.

Source: *Arquitecturas*.

in his own words: an attitude of non-conformity that demands an orthodoxy within whose structure it may be heretical"<sup>1</sup>.

Tafuri, on the other hand, sets his discourse on Mannerism within the *Cinquecento*. A characteristic element of mannerism, for Tafuri, is self-criticism. De Canales is able to link three quotations that sum up Tafuri's vision well: in the face of this energetically critical culture "art, in effect, begins to pose itself as a problem", so that "a formal organisation wishes to accede to self-critical enquiries" and the "configurative process tries to be replaced by the critical process"<sup>2</sup>. An order appears at the same time as a counter-order. It is a problem that arose with Mannerism in the 16th century and which manifested itself again at the beginning of the 20th century with modernity<sup>3</sup>.

In literature we find the case of *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, first published in 1605 by Miguel de Cervantes. It is a critique of chivalric literature, which instead of enriching Alonso Quijano's spirit leads him to madness. This criticism is made precisely with a book of chivalry. This self-critical mentality operates from within the system to stress it, question it or reveal its own contradictions<sup>4</sup>.

It was Robert Venturi who brought all this theoretical corpus to the practice of architecture with the book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966). Venturi's discourse has recently been revived on its 50th anniversary with the MoMA publication *Complexity and Contradiction at Fifty* (2016). It is a vindication of a mannerist, timeless attitude that uses ambiguities and tensions to enrich architecture.

Francisco González de Canales asks himself the following question: "But what is it that unites all these very different concerns about mannerism? Surely, if we had to choose a basic concept common to all of them, it would be that of *crisis*". "It is to understand that the crisis is not passing", "so that the crisis is the usual, the accustomed territory from which one must develop one's work"<sup>5</sup>. As Curtius points out: "classical art only occurs in brief periods"<sup>6</sup>.

This review of the history and meanings of the term mannerism, pronounced in the manner of an Easter proclamation, encourages an

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<sup>1</sup> DE CANALES, F. G., 2021, *El Manierismo y su ahora*, vibok works (author's translation).

<sup>2</sup> TAFURI, M., 1974, *The idea of architecture in the theoretical literature of Mannerism*.

<sup>3</sup> Cfr. DE CANALES, F. G., 2021, *El Manierismo y su ahora*, vibok works (author's translation).

<sup>4</sup> Cf.

<sup>5</sup> Idem.

<sup>6</sup> CURTIUS, E. R., 1955, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*.

optimistic acceptance of this permanent state of crisis or instability in order to stress it from within, not to dream of changes in systems that in the long term would bring questionable stability. It is remarkable that in Europe - and especially in Spain - studios are appearing with a way of working that responds to this situation. Young studios whose work has mostly been carried out during the 2008 crisis (although the crisis is not only limited to its economic consequences).

In the book *Mannerism and its Now*, the work of various current European studios, 6a Architects, Office KGDVS, Lütjens Padmanabhan and national studios, MAIO, TE'd'A and Studio Wet among others, is analysed from a Venturian point of view. The complexities of the commissions entail complexities and ambiguities that can be read in Venturian language.

This paper analyses the Barcelona studio Anna & Eugeni Bach (named in the book *El manierismo y su ahora*) and looking at their recent work (especially the 7 vidas project, published on their website on 24 February 2021). I see that it will be interesting to broaden the range of studies presented by Francisco González de Canales and shed light on this multifaceted subject.

## ANNA & EUGENI BACH

The Anna & Eugeni Bach studio is part of the generation of studios that were born around the 2008 crisis, the same generation that we see in the studios presented in the book *El manierismo y su ahora* (*Mannerism and its Now*). Taking into account the current specialisation fever, it is a romantic architectural practice that strives not to specialise (thus reducing the spectrum of public competitions to which it can apply). "We are trying to fight against this", says Eugeni Bach, "we are going to resist and we are going to stay where we are. We are aware that we are going to resist and we are going to die in oblivion, but if at least we can have a good time while we live, that's it, we're not asking for more"<sup>7</sup>.

Anna & Eugeni Bach have a certain concern about the theory and criticism of architecture that has led them to devote part of their time to teaching and to be the directors of the XV Spanish Biennial of Architecture and Urbanism. This theoretical corpus, as Eugeni explains, was born during the crisis when they had more time to think not only about what to do but also what for. It was during this crisis that Nuccio Ordine published his book *La utilidad de lo inútil* (*The Utility of the Useless*). This book, led by the great classics, reveals how what is useful does not only refer to that which brings short-term economic profit, but that which cannot be quantified in money or which enriches the mind, affectivity, the human being in short, is the most important thing: they are the basis of society. Ordine covers the subject from a critique of the university, currently detached from its original etymological definition: "universality", "community"; a community of universal knowledge. A university that has forgotten Terence's old adage *homo sum, nihil humanum a me alienum puto*<sup>8</sup>, and which does so much harm to particular knowledge, as in the case of architecture, "How does one design if not by coherently structuring the set of multidisciplinary interests?"<sup>9</sup> But outside of architecture, Gregorio Marañón already warned us that the doctor who only knows about medicine, does not even know about medicine.

Anna & Eugeni Bach read Ordine's book shortly after it was published and, as they explain in their numerous lectures, it forms part of their theoretical discourse to the point of entitling most of them *The Utility of the Useless*. His work thus becomes a critique of capitalist society through the humanities, cultural references and playful, carefree gestures. In the explanation of their work, they also overflow their

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<sup>7</sup> BACH, EUGENI (2020), *The utility of the useless*. CTAA (author's translation).

<sup>8</sup> "Because I am a man, nothing human is alien to me".

<sup>9</sup> VICENS AND HUALDE I., 2012. *Said and done*. Nobuko (author's translation).





Illustration 2. Casa de les Punxes.

Source: Public domain



Illustration 3. Casa Milà.

Source: Public domain.



Illustration 4. David Hockney.

Source: Artnet.



Illustration 5. MMMMMS House.

Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.

ideas in an optimistic way, they do not limit themselves to showing the architectural form, they explain the intention they seek with it. The projects explained serve to relate the concepts of their work: "The works are anecdotal, in reality what is important is what they are telling us"<sup>10</sup>. In other words, "the interesting thing about a talk is to explain what cannot be seen"<sup>11</sup>.

They define their design attitude in five concepts:

MULTIPLICITY is the most important of all, from which the following are derived. This multiplicity is based on treating each material, each element, according to its own nature. It consists of working in layers, each one operating according to its own rules, with individual meaning as well as a whole. They refer many times to the *Casa de les Punxes* by Puig i Cadafalch [2], in which we see a brick façade, an individual rectangular element, which makes it possible to form cylindrical towers that interrupt the flat façades. These in turn are perforated by windows with stone lintels that do not seek to blend in with the whole, just like the modernist wrought iron railings. This project contrasts with Gaudí's *Casa Milà* [3], in which each element is subordinated to the formal fluidity of the façade, regardless of the material, whether rock or wrought iron.

Transferring this example to another area, the first is a fruit salad and the second a fruit smoothie. The ingredients are the same, but in the fruit salad, as the ingredients are separate, it is possible to choose which combinations to enjoy. With the layers of his buildings he seeks the same thing, so that we can read the order of the structure, the order of the windows, the order of the roof, etc. and play visual games with them. As in the photographs of David Hockney [4], they all form an aesthetic whole that makes the sitter known, but if we look at one in particular, we can also find its own beauty and the facets of the character.

An example that helps to see how this concept is materialised is the MMMMMS House [5]. The structure of the house follows its rhythm beyond the enclosure to generate a pergola and the windows play the same game by giving the pergola an opening as if it were another room. The windows themselves have several functions, in addition to serving as an entrance and exit to the room, depending on the programme, they become a bench, a bathtub, etc. The stonework on the façade, which merely complies with planning regulations, is arranged in vertical strips that reveal the white-painted brick wall, the real structural element. The only function of these stone pilasters

<sup>10</sup> BACH, EUGENI (2018), Recent work. UNAV (author's translation).

<sup>11</sup> BACH, EUGENI (2020), The utility of the useless. CTAA (author's translation).

is to support the water guttering, as a humorous wink at the absurdity of the planning regulations.



Illustration 6. House in Caüses.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.

IMPERFECTION and the following concepts revolve around multiplicity. It is a concept that mainly refers to the medium, to the design process. It is materialised in their work in scale models or in the fact that they flee from the captivating rendering and give prominence to the hand drawing made with two colours, black and white, leaving space to the imagination of the observer. In other words, architecture is understood as a craft, it works with matter and is therefore more imprecise than something digital. Although we also see this attitude materialised in the façade of the House in Gaüses [6]: the vertical stripes of green paint have no other intention than to conceal the cracks produced by the settling of the building.

MATERIALITY has already emerged from the point of view of multiplicity and imperfection. But as Eugeni recognises, it is a concept that comes from Anna being Finnish. They explain how the material tells us about the construction system, the way it is put in place, its origins, the location of the project... A great reference is the work of Lewerentz's joints.



Illustration 7. 7 lives.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.

THE UNEXPECTED LITTLE TWIST takes its name from Billy Wilder's film *One, Two, Three*, a phrase with which James Cagney announces to the spectator an unexpected change in the script. In truth, it is a resource used by many architects from different periods, such as Edwin Lutyens or Charles Moore, which consists of taking elements out of the project's narrative to give another approach to the whole. A clear example is his recent project 7 Lives [7] (which we will develop later), in which a window follows the vertical order and is located on the parapet, protruding from the façade wall.

LIFE AND TIME is the concept that gives meaning to the others. It gives the *what for to* his work. It can remind us of Charles Eames' photographs of his own houses, which are basically about the life they contain, not so much about their container. The Casita [8] they made for their children shows this concept in a special way. There is no programme, it is added by the children playing in it: it is whatever the life it generates wants it to be (an ice-cream parlour, a western fort, a castle, etc.).



Illustration 8. La Casita.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach:  
Anna & Eugeni Bach.

These concepts have led them to make projects with a certain unity between them, with a common thread that allows them to be called a work. It is a case study that is part of the discourse of the book *El manierismo y su ahora*, a young studio that, through small commissions (mostly private), has a work to explain with a small theoretical corpus and above all, with an attitude of not wasting any

opportunity to make architecture, not even a reproach from their children demanding a playhouse. "The attitude does not depend on the scale, it does not depend on the programme, it does not depend on the commission, the attitude is something that is carried, made, transformed and applied [to each situation]"<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> BACH, EUGENI (2018), Recent work. UNAV (author's translation).

## MANNERISM AND A&EB

The above terms have a clear origin in Venturi. This sentence from his gentle manifesto can refer to the work explained above: "A valid architecture evokes many levels of meaning and combination of focus: its space and its elements become readable and workable in several ways at once"<sup>13</sup>. In fact, Anna & Eugeni Bach explain that "Venturi is key to our work and has inevitably influenced our understanding of architecture and our approach to projects"<sup>14</sup>, referring to *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* before *Learning from Las Vegas*. "Since we read it when we were studying (I remember it was while I was an Erasmus student in Finland, in the fourth year) it has been a fundamental piece in our work. [...] *Complexity* is a timeless book, one that you can go back to at any time and it is a constant source of inspiration.

"Terms such as *the one and the other, contradiction, the element of dual function, complexity, interior vs. exterior or the difficult whole* are themes that any architecture deals with at all times, and in our projects, the way we deal with them tries to be as unprejudiced as in Venturi"<sup>15</sup>.

Comparing this way of understanding Venturi with other studies presented in *Mannerism and its Now*, such as that of the Swiss Lütjens Padmanabhan, we see that it is not necessary to follow Venturi's formal games in order to be a mannerist. The architecture presented in *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* shows a way of understanding architecture that goes beyond Venturi himself, the author does not claim to be the culmination of his discourse, he is "suggestive rather than dogmatic"<sup>16</sup>. Anna and Eugeni Bach enter into Venturi's discourse beyond Venturi's work.

Venturi speaks of the importance of context from the very first chapter of the book, closing the manifesto with a brief explanation so that its meaning is not extrapolated: "But an architecture of complexity and contradiction has to serve especially the whole"<sup>17</sup> and bearing in mind that Venturi admitted to Emmanuel Petit that "if I were to give the book a new title, I would call it *Mannerism in Architecture*, because that is what it is about"<sup>18</sup> and that this is what

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<sup>13</sup> VENTURI, R., 1966, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, MoMA, p. 23.

<sup>14</sup> BACH, E. (Personal communication, April, 25, 2021) (author's translation).

<sup>15</sup> Idem.

<sup>16</sup> VENTURI, R., 1966, *Complexity and contradiction in architecture*, MoMA, p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Idem.

<sup>18</sup> VENTURI, R. AND SCOTT, D., 2002, interview by Emmanuel Petit in *Irony in Metaphysics's Gravity: Iconoclasm and Imagination in Architecture, 1960s-1980s*, Princeton University.

it was intended to be called until shortly before publication<sup>19</sup>, we can see the response to context as a characteristic of Mannerist architecture -among others-. Translated into Venturian language, it is a response to the chapter "The Obligation Toward the Difficult Whole". Architectural historian Stanislaus von Moos writes a chapter for the book *Complexity and Contradiction at Fifty*, published by MoMA on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, in which we find a collection of articles and conversations about Venturi and his book. Its chapter entitled "Sharpening Perception" discusses context and its implication for Venturi's perception of architecture and art. His starting point is a 1953 essay by Venturi on the 'Piazza del Campidoglio' in which he never discusses its constructional history, "its exclusive focus is the perceptual conditions that determined how its users and visitors over time saw the piazza and experienced it as a space"<sup>20</sup>. This is not just a Venturi quip to articulate his discourse, it helps to reinforce it. The 'Piazza del Campidoglio' is a set of Michelangelo's operations that only make sense if they are understood from the point of view of the visitor. It is from this point of view that we realise that the insertion of future monuments in the eternal city implies the alteration of the existing ones (for better or for worse). The position and magnitude of the Monument to Vittorio Emanuele II has changed the climax created by the access to Piazza del Campidoglio, taking away meaning from its relationship with the city<sup>21</sup>.

With this first essay by Venturi, the title of the chapter "The Obligation Toward the Difficult Whole" can be better understood: there is an obligation to the city to design with the understanding that the surrounding buildings have yet to be completed and that they will be completed with the projects that will be built later. Transcending architecture, T. S. Eliot says: "the historical sense implies perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literatura of Europe... has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order"<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> G. DE CANALES, F., 2020, *El manierismo y su ahora*, vibok works, p. 19 (author's translation).

<sup>20</sup> VON MOOS, S., 2016, "Sharpening Perception" in *Complexity and Contradiction at Fifty*, MoMA, p. 169.

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. VENTURI, R., 1953, "The Campidoglio: A Case Study" in *The Architectural Review*.

<sup>22</sup> ELIOT, T. S., 1932, *Selected Essays: 1917-1932*, Harcourts, Brace & Co., New York, pp. 3 and 4.

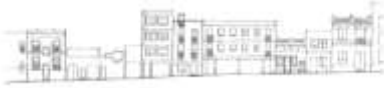


Illustration 9. 7 lives.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.



Illustration 10. 7 lives.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.



Illustration 11. 7 lives.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.



Illustration 12. Flat for Charles Beistegui, Le Corbusier.  
Source: stepienybarno.

Something similar happened when the Anna & Eugeni Bach studio received a commission in Carrer de Horta in Barcelona, located in a street in the old part of the Horta district. The houses form a morphology that has been respected until the arrival of the new urban planning regulations that disassociate themselves from the existing elements such as the plinth, vertical windows, balconies, etc. The problem with these new dwellings is not so much that they do not contribute anything to the whole by getting rid of these elements, but rather that they do not contribute anything individually. Precisely, the plot is located between a house that adheres to the morphology of the street and another one that wants nothing to do with it and is higher than the others. Anna and Eugeni Bach understand that the piece inserted in the middle can reconcile the other two façades. They not only design a façade, they design the street [9].

There is a certain mannerist attitude in tackling a project for minimal housing on a low budget in a neighbourhood of little relevance in Barcelona. Accepting all these contingencies, they play formal games that make the building interesting and can be read in a Venturian key. We have already emphasised the *commitment to the difficult set of this building*. How to make a building that responds to two different heights? It is a challenge that has appeared many times in architecture, without moving beyond Barcelona we find the roof of the Casa Batlló which is set back to form a terrace whose railing joins the roof of the Casa Amatller. In the *7 vidas* project, within the studio's discourse, they give the façade a *little twist* by placing a window on the roof following the alignment of the tallest house.

This element leads us to a compositional ambiguity that makes us wonder, as Venturi poses, using the conjunction "or" to describe it: does the window protrude or has the wall lowered? [10]

This same window gives another character to the roof terrace, making it the centre of the project. It gives it a contradictory meaning: it follows the same constructive and compositional system as the interior windows, although it is exterior. It is a phenomenon of "the one and the other" which is described with the conjunction "although". This paradoxical contrast is reinforced by Eugeni Bach's photograph of the window from the roof with a BKF chair [11]: an interior window and chair in an exterior space. It may remind us of Le Corbusier's photographs of the attic for Charles de Beistegui [12] in which we see a chimney without a flue and various pieces of furniture that give it a paradoxical character.



Illustration 13. 7 lives.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.

This gesture is not only limited to the upper window, but can also be seen in the ground floor window, which breaks the horizontal line of the plinth, generating a contradiction [13]. The grille of this window is resolved by adapting it to the order of the joints in the ceramic tiles of the plinth. The upper window is juxtaposed and the ground floor window is adapted.

Among the explanatory drawings of the project we see an inventory of conventional elements [14] found in the building's street (which can also be extended to other neighbourhoods in Barcelona). Anna and Eugeni Bach's project is not special for once again highlighting the conventions forgotten by modern architecture, but for using them in an unconventional way. It is a mannerist attitude that we also see in the exaggerated balconies and arrangement of the ceramics on the façade of the MAIO 110 Rooms building, explained in the book by Francisco González de Canales. The formal contradictions and complexities described above are nothing more than a play on the conventional elements extracted from the whole. Let Venturi explain it to us in his own words:

"Through unconventional organization of conventional parts he is able to create new meanings within the whole. If he uses convention unconventionally, if he organizes familiar things in an unfamiliar way, he is changing their contexts, and he can use even the cliché to gain a fresh effect. Familiar things seen in an unfamiliar context become perceptually new as well as old"<sup>23</sup>.

Something that we can see not only in Anna and Eugeni Bach, but in the projects explained in *Mannerism and its Now* is that analysing their elements separately they are not new (elements ranging from balconies and galleries to air conditioning and installations). It is in the project as a whole that we can say that it is a new way of doing architecture. Anna & Eugeni Bach can be said to be part of this generation of mannerists who, with a job well done and an optimistic and mature spirit - without falling into injustice - do not renounce to express themselves formally and contribute something to the history of architecture.

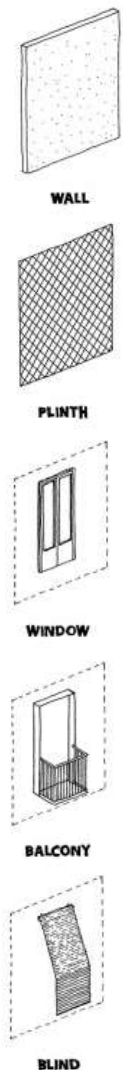


Illustration 14. 7 lives.  
Source: Anna & Eugeni Bach.

<sup>23</sup> VENTURI, R., 1966, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, MoMA, p. 50.

## ANNEX

The term mannerist encompasses many architectural practices, each with their own trajectory and very different from one another, since to bring together a group of architects according to their acceptance of the crisis and its complexities is to do so by the starting point of the project, not by the formal proposal they make. For this reason, within this group of studios we can sift two subgroups:

The first is *realism*, those who accept the complexities given by the project and show them with formal games. This is the case of Anna & Eugeni Bach, 6a architects, Studio Wet, Lütjens - Padmanabhan, Arquitectura-G, etc. The discourse of architecture is the discourse of the complexities of the project and the reality they have been confronted with and not the uncontaminated genius of the architect. One example is the 'Tree House' by 6a architects [15], in which the tree that produces the curve of the extension is the one that gives the project its name: the tree is more important than the house. Another example is the one explained above, '7 lives' by Anna & Eugeni Bach. They explain on their website: "we get seven ways of living in three dwellings, seven lives, like seven windows"<sup>24</sup>. The seventh window responds to the neighbour who has an extra floor, and is once again the protagonist of the project.

The second is - borrowing from literary criticism - *magical realism*. These are those who show the complexities of the projectual reality by adding others, that is to say, complexity is sought. Here we see architects such as Andrés Jaque, MAIO, Ted'A, Office KGDVS, etc. A couple of significant projects are Andrés Jaque's 'Restaurante Rómola' [16] and MAIO's 'Bar Nou', both of which involve the refurbishment of a ground floor with vaults that are separated from the logic of the pre-existing premises. We can add the deformation of the lift and the stairs in MAIO's 'de 110 Room' hall [17] and the misalignments in the axes of Ted'A's projects, as in 'Can Jaime i n'Isabelle' and 'Ca na Barbel i en Tobias'; or his almost artisanal games with ceramics that we see in 'Can Picafort' and 'Ca na Laia i en Biel'. Here, the protagonist elements of the buildings are added to the intrinsic complexities of the project and give a magical or unreal character to the space. " Human kind cannot bear very much reality"<sup>25</sup> says Eliot in the first of his Four Quartets, there is a will to bring something magical to the reality they have been confronted with in order to escape - for a moment - from it.



Illustration 15. Tree House.  
Source: 6a Architects.



Illustration 16. Rómola Restaurant.  
Source: Andrés Jaque.



Illustration 179 . 110 Rooms.  
Source: MAIO Architects.

<sup>24</sup> BACH, A. and E., 2021, *Seven Lives*, Anna & Eugeni Bach.

<sup>25</sup> ELIOT, T. S., 1943, *Four Quartets*, Faber & Faber.



In my opinion, this classification provides some clarity within the various studies called Mannerist by Francisco González de Canales, although it should be studied in greater depth, a task I have not been able to undertake due to the length of this work.

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