

# PROJECTS (1983-2020)

## Manolo Laguillo

[LA VIRREINA]

CENTRE  
DE LA IMATGE

### JAPAN 2014

*Japan 2014* was the first piece in a new period that began in 2014. The 50 or so photographs from this time did not crystallise as a project until two years later, in 2016, after Laguillo had completed the experience of *The Provinces 2014-2015* and *Girona 2014-2015*.

### NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS 2019-2020

A large percentage of the electricity required by Spain for its economic boom from the mid-1960s onwards was produced at the Zorita (José Cabrera), Garoña and Vandellòs I nuclear power plants, which started up between 1968 and 1972. Zorita supplied energy to the centre of the Iberian Peninsula, Garoña to the north and Vandellòs I to Catalonia and the east. All these power stations are situated in the northern half of the country. Nuclear power plants have a useful life of approximately 30 years. Once they are decommissioned, they are usually dismantled in Spain. The waste will remain radioactive for at least 500 years, so where does it go?

A nuclear power station takes to the limit the idea of the inaccessibility of the *sancta sanctorum* of a temple, since priests are the only ones able to gain admittance to this place, where the deity lives, whereas nobody can enter the interior of the reactor. The essence of a nuclear power plant is thus unrepresentable. Every nuclear power station is a bunker in reverse: it protects those outside from what is inside.

### THE PROVINCES 2014-2015

These eight diptychs are a selection of the 64 that make up the work *The Provinces 2014-2015*, made with the support of the Museo Universidad de Navarra (Rafael Levenfeld / Valentín Vallhonrat). The eight provincial capitals I chose are in the ring situated between the centre of the Iberian Peninsula—the place of power—and its periphery—the place of production and of communication with the outside world. The 64 diptychs draw a 'composite portrait' of a type of city that has undergone relatively limited growth in the last 150 years. As a result, these cities contain more remains and traces of the era prior to industrialisation than larger ones. The idea of using the diptych for the presentation of the photographs in this project came to me when I had already completed the phase of work with the camera.

### LLEIDA 1996

A commission from the Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya, Demarcació de Lleida (Carles Llop) given to Humberto Rivas, Gabriele Basilico, Jordi Bernadó and me. I focused my interest on the entrance and exit roads, the railway and the Segre River.

### BELFORT 1987-1990

A commission in four phases from the Centre d'Action Culturelle de Belfort (Alain Buttard). The 101 municipalities in the French department of the territory of Belfort were allocated in groups to ten different photographers, each of whom worked with the same ten municipalities till the end of the project. The phrase that best sums up what we all felt on completion is one Flaubert wrote to George Sand in a letter: "Pour qu'une chose soit intéressante, il suffit de la regarder longtemps" (anything becomes interesting if you look at it for long enough).

### BILBAO 1983

At the end of August 1983, there was a period of very heavy downpours over Biscay that had devastating consequences. Koldo Chamorro and I travelled to the area two months later, in early October, and spent almost a week taking photographs along the Nervión River. The photographs barely reflect the magnitude of the disaster. With this work, I learned the extent to which reality and its depiction are at odds with each other.

### BEIRUT 2017

Twelve photographs taken one after the other on 10 December 2017 at the following times: 10.19, 10.49, 10.57, 11.01, 11.09, 12.35, 12.48, 12.53, 13.51, 14.15, 14.19 and 14.33. They are a selection from a series of 60 taken that same day between 10.15 and 15.20.

### PUERTO REAL SHIPYARD 1990

A commission co-ordinated by Publio López Mondéjar in which Koldo Chamorro, Manel Esclusa, Joan Fontcuberta, Cristina García Rodero, Ramón Masats, Félix Lorrio and I were involved. Not only was I interested in the huge shipbuilding structures but I also used in particular short-distance photography to ensure the workers themselves appeared.

### MATOSINHOS 1988

At the time, this city adjoining Porto was in the throes of sweeping change as a result of the relocation of its industry. What was happening there was more or less the same as had occurred earlier in Poblenu.

### CERDANYOLA-RIPOLLET HEALTH CENTRE 1985

A commission from the architect himself, Josep Llinàs, to photograph both the interior and the exterior of the newly-built health centre. I had to show the solutions Llinàs had come up with to ensure the corridors and walkways were not the hostile environments they usually are but to make them attractive places instead.

## **RICOLA FACTORY, LAUFEN, SWITZERLAND**

Herzog & de Meuron asked me to take photographs of the expansion they had just completed. They placed no restrictions on my work and gave me carte blanche to use my own criteria. So I also paid attention to the large warehouse the same architects had constructed earlier and which Ruff had already photographed.

## **RENFE. DIRECTORATE OF ROLLING STOCK, FUENCARRAL 1991**

A commission from its architects, Ábalos & Herreros. As well as focusing on the most obvious aspect, the building's plastic force, I wanted it to appear as a flagship in the industrial area on the outskirts of Madrid where it is situated by making sure that the special quality of the work, its elegance, would stand out.

## **L'ALZINA EDUCATION CENTRE, PALAU-SOLITÀ I PLEGAMANS 1985**

A commission from the architect himself, Eduard Bru. It was important for the photographs to show the special characteristics of this complex, a reformatory school for minors built in such a way that its purpose would not be evident.

## **ABRIL 2020. BARCELONA**

Taken at the height of the lockdown on three consecutive Thursdays—from the one before Good Friday to St. George's Day—these photographs explore the void, nothingness, zero, a concept that medieval theology refused to accept, and aim to show the impossible, the things that almost no-one has ever seen. Consequently, they deal with the limits of the medium of photography, that which cannot be photographed.

## **NEW YORK 2016**

8th Street Playhouse (The Cinema Guild), Greenwich Village, NYC. A project by Frederick Kiesler in 1929, intended to be a cinema and not a theatre. State of the façade in 2016. 30 West 57th Street, Manhattan, NYC. The top floor of this building housed Peggy Guggenheim's gallery The Art of This Century, a project by Frederick Kiesler in 1942. 56 7th Avenue, Manhattan, NYC. The building in which the architect and theatre designer Frederick Kiesler lived. Kiesler designed The Endless House.

*IN MEMORIAM* Julián Rodríguez (1968-2019).

## **CHICAGO 2019**

A portrait of this American city pictured from within and at street level. I'm not interested in the opposite vision, in which it is photographed from a distance as a skyline, because this naturalises it and makes it recognisable and welcoming. Nor am I interested in the bird's-eye view, which became the standard from the 1930s onwards.

## **FROM L.A. TO NYC 1989**

A trip across the United States that Josep Lluís Mateo, Rafael Argullol, Joaquim Nolla and I took in September 1989.

Fifteen days from Los Angeles to New York, taking in Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Denver and Atlanta. The photographs were published in *Quaderns d'Arquitectura i Urbanisme*, the magazine for which Mateo was then editor, Argullol the writer, Nolla the graphic designer and myself the photographer. The two photographs of the home of Ray and Charles Eames (Case Study House no. 8) in Pacific Palisades have not been shown in public before. Ray Eames had died a year before we visited it.

## **THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR 2018-2019**

Produced thanks to support from the Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes, this project looks at a landscape that owes its extreme complexity to the fact that not only is it geographically rugged and mixed, being part urban, part rural, but it is also a frontier zone. Some of the enormous tension hidden beneath the surface of what I saw is partly visible in some of the photographs. This work follows in the wake of *Belfort, 1987-1990* (Room II), as do *Madrid (The Outskirts) 1992-1993* (Room VIII), *Pseudopanorama 1993* (Room VII), *Japan 2014* (Room I) and two projects on rivers (*The Besòs 2017* and *Water Policies, León 2017-2018*) that are not shown here.

## **LA UNIÓN MINES 1993**

These five photographs make up a single work, the first in a new genre that I termed 'pseudopanorama' at the time. Between them, they form a continuous horizon and have all the appearance of being a panorama though they are not one, as each photograph was taken in a different place.

## **MADRID (THE OUTSKIRTS) 1992-1993**

A commission from Ábalos & Herreros that consisted of photographing the area between the roads out to Burgos and Valencia. In my search for a raised place, I ended up working in particular around Cerro Almódovar, Paracuellos de Jarama and Alcobendas.

## **GANDÍA AND LA SAFOR 1990**

A commission from the IVAM given to Gabriel Cualladó, Manel Esclusa, Cristina García Rodero, Joan Fontcuberta, America Sanchez and me to mark the 500th anniversary of the chivalric romance *Tirant lo Blanc*, since its author, Joanot Martorell, was born in Gandía. Once again, I saw an opportunity to consider the hinterland of a reality, in this instance of La Safor. I wanted to show the different stages in the construction of buildings where people spend their holidays, from the low-rise homes of the locals, situated on the seafront, to apartment blocks and terraced houses.

## **BERLIN, BRAUNSCHWEIG 1986-1992**

I travelled a lot to Germany between 1986 and 1992 when I was teaching at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig. While I was there, I would often go to Berlin. The first photograph shows a manmade hill in Görlitzer Park in Kreuzberg, created from the rubble of buildings destroyed

in bombing raids during the Second World War. This mound no longer exists.

The following photographs, taken for a commission from the architect Antón Capitel, show various areas around Potsdamer Platz and the Berliner Philharmonie, in other words, the heart of the city, which at that time was beginning to emerge from the very strange state of both emptiness and tension in which it had been immersed for three decades following the construction of the Wall.

The Madamenweg 130 Bunker in Braunschweig (1942) was one of 25 in the city and provided shelter for 1500 people during air raids. In 1984, two years before I photographed it, improvement works had begun so that it could be included in the civil protection network but were halted when the Cold War ended. It currently contains an apartment complex and it is impossible to see its original condition.

### **GIRONA 2014-2015**

A commission from the Arxiu Municipal de Girona - CRDI (Joan Boadas). It has many characteristics in common with *The Provinces, 2014-2015*, which I took in virtually the same months.

### **MEXICO 1994**

In this series, I explore the area around the Edificio de la Canada in Colonia Roma. As a counterpoint to these photographs, there is one of Guanajuato and another of a place en route between Oaxaca and the capital.

### **TENERIFE 1984**

A commission from *BASA* magazine (Colegio de Arquitectos de Tenerife). I was interested in the contrast between the vernacular architecture and the constructions erected for tourism. This material was later published in *UR*, the magazine of the Urbanism Laboratory of the ETSAB (UPC) that Manuel de Solà-Morales was editing at the time.

### **PORTO 2016**

What fascinates me about Porto—a city that is in fact two, itself and Gaia—is that when I walk around its centre I don't recognise it as such. Perhaps because its centre isn't what people say is its centre but the Douro. These photographs and those of Matosinhos in room 4 were taken three decades apart.

### **TRIESTE 2020**

Four photographs from a newly begun project.