

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

New Submission Amended Submission



A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Architecture of the 1960's in Puerto Rico

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Architecture of the 1960's in Puerto Rico, 1958-1972

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Carlos Rubio Cancela, Architect Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Officer June 17, 2019
Signature of certifying official Title Date

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Jay Salby 7.3.2019
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Introduction:

The pencil with which History is written sports a fine lead and a huge eraser. Retelling what took place ten minutes ago, the past decade, or the last century, is a task fraught with problems - particularly omissions and exclusions - as many historians have warned us throughout the centuries, among them Herodotus, Marc Bloch, and Edward H. Carr. Compression means suppression, they all seem to coincide, and this is History's own Achilles' heel. The panoramic presentation that follows on how modern architecture developed in Puerto Rico during the 1960's acknowledges said difficulty as inherent to the discipline. To compensate for it - if never completely possible - a multidisciplinary research approach was adopted for thematic breadth, but also to eventually foster, whenever possible, subsequent investigations on subjects marginally exposed here.

As expected, other historical challenges were addressed. First and foremost, efforts were focused on identifying and weighing forces and influences that nurture the complex, overlapping web of relationships that characterize any extended time period. Secondly, after site visits, interviews, and archival consultation, research concentrated on gauging apparent contingencies, in pursuit of a unity of analysis that is more than often elusive at the initial stages of any extended investigation.

The subject studied posed an additional problem. Customarily, when analyzing a building's style and its development, historians can reinforce their explanations, interpretations, and criticism with texts, theoretical writings, or publications dating from the period being addressed. It is so because, in many cases, buildings are the product of discourses, of tenets and ideas against which architects want them to be understood. In Puerto Rico, however, most designers from the 60's refrained from engaging in any architectural discourse, abstaining from stating any philosophical stances *a priori* or *post facto* the completion of their projects. When published, local designs were briefly described, adjectives used and abused, photos paired with basic professional credits... and that was about it. Criticism, per se, was limited to complain about urban problems in general, not the particulars of any project.

Certainly, the absence of a discourse against which to calibrate intention versus realization hinders analysis. However, it also enables an objective approach focused on the architectural product itself, free from explanations that often occlude the identification of common denominators pursuant to a given period, recurrences that - transcending authors, typologies, building programs, materiality, and tectonics - bring them all together. 1960's architecture in Puerto Rico is here made intelligible from such perspective.

Buildings have been our primary sources: architects read buildings like paleographers interpret ancient forms of writing. In parallel, no attempt has been made - there was no interest - at

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naming or establishing a particular stylistic designation for the body of work studied. It pertains to the period labeled years ago as “Late Modern” by eminent architecture critics and no real reason was found to go against the grain. Furthermore, no claim of originality is being made, for foreign influences - particularly North American - weigh heavily in all work produced along the sixties in Puerto Rico, as in other places around the globe.

Moreover, for years, peripheral cultures have argued that their particular adoption of the 20th century idiom has included local/creative reinterpretations of the modern dogma when, in most cases, the argument is weak, unfounded, unrelated, or not evident in built samples. That a “vernacular modern” may have surfaced at other locations is possible; to make a case for it in Puerto Rico would be presumptuous. The Cambridge Design Research Studio, focused as it is on *“reinterpretations of ‘modern’ that form continuity with localised architectural heritage and that test new design methodologies in a bid to find harmony between the demands of global and local urban culture”* cannot be oblivious to the many questions raised by such argument. Is “reinterpretation” just denial, a crutch to avoid acceptance of how Architecture is disseminated and reproduced *regardless* of local considerations? Are alleged critical stances covering up for a discipline more than often molded by what is in vogue? Is it uncomfortable to acknowledge how relentless direct/dogmatic influences can be? Haven’t trade magazines informed and inspired architectural thinking world-wide since the 19th century? And finally, didn’t Kenneth Frampton’s *critical regionalism* - not completely succeeding at persuasion - ultimately just produced apprehension?¹

Said insistence at being “modern-but-local” has delayed much-needed research on the identification of formal/cultural continuities, on what recurs in spite of being imported, and ends up grafted indelibly into a nation’s architectural imagery regardless of its provenance. Reiterations build up into traditions; style lacks comparable power. Unfortunately, Puerto Rican texts repeatedly focus primarily on architectural styles, turning their back consistently on spatial, typological, and technological considerations.² Moreover, so far, foundational periods - whether Spanish-colonial or Modern - have attracted more attention than those instances somewhat removed from them. Such is the case with modern architecture in Puerto Rico: its work from the late 40’s and the 1950’s has been, up to this point, the object of preferred

¹ The idea of Architecture becoming a worldwide phenomenon as *“an essential vehicle for delivering on the promise of modernity”* is exemplified by Robert Cowherd’s, “Identity Tectonics: Contested Modernities of Java and Bali”, in Patrick Haughey, Ed., *Across Space and Time: Architecture and the Politics of Modernity* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2017), 1.

² As an example, see: María de los Ángeles Castro, *Arquitectura en San Juan de Puerto Rico (siglo XIX)* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial Universitaria, 1980); Carol F. Jopling, *Puerto Rican Houses in a Sociohistorical Perspective* (Knoxville, Tennessee: University of Tennessee Press, 1988); and Arleen Pabón Charneco, *La arquitectura patrimonial puertorriqueña y sus estilos* (San Juan, Puerto Rico, Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica de Puerto Rico, 2010).

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attention.³ Such partiality is somewhat understandable, as several iconic buildings from said time periods are still functioning and continue to be admired, among them: the San Martín de Porres Church (1950), and the Parke-Davis & Company Building (1958; now under another name), both by Henry Klumb; as well as the Caribe Hilton Hotel (1948), the Supreme Court seat and the twin office buildings annexed to Puerto Rico's Capitol Building (both from 1955), and La Concha Hotel (1958), by the firm *Toro y Ferrer*.

Klumb and *Toro y Ferrer* continued working well up to the 1970's, but their most archetypal projects belong to the fifties, with some memorable designs executed in the sixties. By mid-decade, Klumb was having a rift with Jaime Benítez (1908-2001), Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico, the institution for which the German designer had been, up to then, sole architect. Klumb was not pleased with Benítez' decision to grant *Toro y Ferrer* the project for a new General Studies Building in the Río Piedras campus. It did not help that, at that time, the Puerto Rico House of Representatives was pushing to decentralize institutional power at the university.⁴ Times had changed and heirs to the modern tradition would expand on it.

Diverse local and international events unfolded processes that influenced the production, and public projection of architecture in Puerto Rico at that time. Bracketed by the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, and the end of the Vietnam War in 1973, the decade is one during which the smallest of the Antilles felt the "ripple effects" of global history. The Cold War, incidences in Indochina, and architectural ideas from Canada – among other occurrences - will have a bearing on the Island's political, economic, and cultural development during this period in which both conservatism and revolution - not in tandem - feed urban transformations.

Not all historical events – in spite of their weight – can be said to have had a significant or direct influence on architectural production. The 60's witnessed important processes, not all of which fueled design answers. Events that claimed global attention like the Vietnam War, civil unrest in the USA, the Kennedy Assassination, May 68 in Paris, or the Tlateloco Massacre in Mexico City, did not change the corporate, pro-establishment focus of most architects, then bent on benefitting from the prevailing building boom in the Island. In contrast, forces that straightforwardly impacted the architectural discipline included: the Cuban Revolution; Puerto

³ Most representative of said emphasis are the following: Enrique Vivoni Farage, "Palimpsesto Tropical: vetas de la arquitectura en el Puerto Rico del siglo XX", en Irma Rivera Nieves, Carlos Gil, Eds., *Polifonía salvaje: ensayos de cultura y política en la postmodernidad* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial Postdata, 1995); Enrique Vivoni Farage y Mary Frances Gallart, Eds. *Modernidad Tropical: Arquitectura y la fuerza creadora de los años 50* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Comisión Especial para la Celebración del Cincuentenario de la Constitución del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico, Oficina Estatal de Conservación de Puerto Rico, 2002); and Enrique Vivoni Farage, Ed., *Klumb: Una arquitectura de impronta social* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico; La Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2006).

⁴ Silvia Arango, "Klumb y la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras: la lógica del resultado, in Enrique Vivoni Farage, Ed., *Klumb: Una arquitectura de impronta social* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico; La Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2006), 130, 131.

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Rico's role as showcase for democracy in the Caribbean, the hippie culture; and mass media (television and cinema).

Cuba's dictator Fulgencio Batista was ousted on New Year's Day in 1959 by rebels led by Fidel Castro. After initially proclaiming to be a socialist state, by 1965 the Cuban government had adhered to Communism, altering geopolitics significantly within the Caribbean basin. Castro's government nationalized private enterprises and property, promoting political consolidation in economic terms. Its close ties with Russia exacerbated tensions inherent to the Cold War, challenging the United States long-standing, hemispheric political hegemony. The spiraling momentum of the Revolution led to a standoff between the powers that be on October, 1962, concerning ballistic deployments of the USA in Italy and Turkey, an action quickly imitated by Russia in Cuba to deter US harassment.

Tense negotiations that involved fear of a nuclear war, Cuba's blockade, and threats to Russia – made public and more dramatic by television broadcast – culminated weeks later in the withdrawal of the offensive missiles. The affair consolidated contrasts between Cuba and Puerto Rico. The former, under Russia, as a communist country; the latter, a territory of the United States, as a democratic, capitalistic entity.⁵

Losing its grip in Cuba along the 1950's, the United States had consolidated its territorial relationship with Puerto Rico. In 1952, after decades of military rule and a succession of appointed governors, the Island's political status was defined by Congress as a "Free Associated State", an achievement credited to Luis Muñoz Marín (1898-1990), governor of Puerto Rico from 1948 to 1964. His leadership and legacy extended well into the following years.

Smaller than Cuba – but comparable in terms of heritage and idiosyncrasy – throughout those years (particularly after Castro's takeover) Puerto Rico received federal funds funneled to make of the Island a showcase of democracy ("*vitrina de la democracia*"), an idea drilled publicly into the population during the period, and disseminated insistently at schools, where progress was insistently promoted. Comparisons between Cuba's ensuing economic stagnancy and Puerto Rico's fiscal boom (even if somewhat artificial) were common by critics of the communist regime.

Along the sixties, politics and social development in Puerto Rico took a significant turn under Muñoz Marín. The process impacted architectural production and urban development directly. The public push to attract tourism led to the construction of high profile hotels like the La

⁵ The impact of international politics and the fear of an imminent nuclear war in Puerto Rico are analyzed from different perspectives in Sylvia Álvarez Curbelo, Manuel R. Rodríguez Vázquez, Eds, *Tiempos binarios: La Guerra Fría desde Puerto Rico y el Caribe*. (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Callejón, 2017).

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Concha. The government's industrialization program was based on the construction of hundreds of factories spread throughout the Island's then eminently rural landscape. The establishment of the *Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña* in 1955, and its widely-publicized Preservation Program for Old San Juan, encouraged real estate investments and building restorations in San Juan and Ponce.

Ten years being a considerable lapse of time, contrasting and conflicting issues developed in parallel as years passed. The governor's promise of granting everyone a piece of land was never fulfilled. Population migration figures rose, as families and individuals moved to the United States. The industrialization program failed to meet growth expectations. The many contradictions inherent to the *ideology of progress* slowly surfaced, disappointing many, upsetting others.

Literature best mirrored the discontent. Authors like René Marqués, Emilio Díaz Valcárcel, Pedro Juan Soto, and others, addressed issues of national identity and US imperialism in somewhat canonical style. *El apartamento*, a play by Marqués, constitutes one of the best examples of the local demonization of modern architecture. A couple is trapped in isolation, forced to do repetitive work, only to be saved by an atavistic presence.

Anti-establishment literature flourished. A younger generation of Puerto Rican writers embraced leftist ideas fueled by the Cuban Revolution, inspired by socialist intellectuals, and exalted by Latin American authors or world-wide renown. Literary magazines like *Guajana*, *Mester*, and *Palestra* acknowledged the relevance of *Poetry as Politics*. It has been reasonably argued that during the 1960's, local "*Writers began to desacralize language and traditional narratives and to discredit established social structures, producing a critical literature*", although no comparable effort or interest was made evident in architectural design at that time in Puerto Rico.

The *San Juan Review Magazine*, published from February 1964 through November 1966, mirrors most effectively cultural concerns then prevalent, regarding - among other important subjects - Art, Landscape Architecture, and Literature. The work of high profile local artists like Rafael Tufiño, and writers like René Marqués and Pedro Juan Soto was regularly featured. Critics consistently reviewed music and theatre performances, also the effervescent night life in San Juan. Articles by landscape architect John B. Frazier addressed environmental and urban concerns, wisely foreboding problems Puerto Rican cities would face shortly afterwards.

Towards the end of the decennium, Muñoz Marín and his *Partido Popular* witnessed their loss of political hegemony in the Island. In a public referendum held in 1967, votes in favor of Puerto Rico becoming a state of the USA reached almost 40%. The *Estado Libre Asociado*

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harvested 60%. In 1968, a new political party promoting statehood won the Island's general elections. As the 1960's came to an end, Puerto Rico's political panorama shifted.⁶

If at that time quotidian life seemed relatively quiet on the Caribbean – in parallel – Asia was stage to the Vietnam War, involving Laos and Cambodia. The conflict lasted two decades, spanning from 1955 to 1975. On the Homefront, opposition to the US's involvement in the confrontation was strong. Civil unrest found a nurturing nest in Academia. Demonstrations and student protests were angry, bitter, and tragic... also in Puerto Rico. The Island's fatalities have been estimated around 15,000. The anti-Vietnam War movement nurtured a strong anti-American sentiment that would foster general skepticism about the Nation's government alleged intentions and actions in most of its endeavors. The hippie movement became a most critical voice, opposing Capitalism, officialism, and consumerism.

Hippies - members of a counterculture, anti-establishment youth movement – were associated to crucial tensions inherent to the decade, as well as long-lasting, important contributions. Challenging the establishment, hippies scorned institutions and middle class values. As pacifists, they opposed weapons and war. Considered utopian socialists, their proclivities were questioned and censored by conventional society. Hippies promoted rock and roll, but also folk music. They valued Native Americans and cultural diversity, endorsed vegetarianism, and were eco-friendly. Concocting the slogan "Let a Thousand Parks Bloom", hippies are to be credited for raising environmental awareness, land retrieval initiatives, alternative energy, and organic farming, among other contributions with which they opened doors for others to follow, even if most would crystallize later along the 1970's. The use of *Taíno* motifs in the rehabilitation of the main plaza at Jayuya; community-led design efforts; and urban reforestation proposals of the 60's in Puerto Rico are all in debt with the hippies' sociopolitical stances.

Most significantly, television and cinema accelerated the dissemination of ideas world-wide. By the end of the decade, television had indelibly become the vehicle by which important historical events transcended their own immediacy. As such, TV allowed multiple nations and cultures to build shared memories through vicarious experiences of, among others, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy's assassination, and Apollo 11's moon landing.

Film-making also reflected and shaped ideas and mores of the 1960's: naivety in *Mary Poppins* (1964), *The Sound of Music* (1965) and the Doris Day comedies; escapism in James Bond thrillers where the bad guys luxuriated in late modern architecture; Stanley Kubrick's nihilistic *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964); and

⁶ For a succinct explanation of the processes that led to this shift, see Blanca G. Silvestrini and María Dolores Luque de Sánchez, *Historia de Puerto Rico: Trayectoria de un pueblo* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Cultural Puertorriqueña, Inc., 1987), and Francisco A. Scarano, *Puerto Rico: Cinco siglos de historia* (México: McGraw-Hill Interamericana, S. A., 1993).

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the uncertainties raised by Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1964), Mike Nichols' *The Graduate* (1967), Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), and *Planet of the Apes* (1968); culminating with the acknowledgment of countercultural, anti-establishment ways of life, as best depicted in *Easy Rider* (1969) and *Midnight Cowboy* (1969).

In parallel but in contrast, European cinema engaged in more introspective accounts, addressing human disenchantment with existence. The period's angst was best captured in Michelangelo Antonioni's isolation trilogy, comprising *L'avventura* (1960), *L'eclisse* (1962), and *Deserto Rosso* (1964). The Italian director's films focused on the impossibility of effective personal communication, and modernity's ultimate legacy of boredom and defeat: the *ennui*. With no official art-film house in Puerto Rico at the time, avant-garde films were enjoyed at only specific occasions, and by limited audiences, mostly academics at the University of Puerto Rico's Río Piedras Campus. In the same way that general audiences today still prefer Hollywood entertainment over European despair, most architects working in Puerto Rico along the 60's sidestepped practically all social and political predicaments, engaging in the pursuit of projects primarily from a business standpoint, not a theoretical one.

The social, political contents of earlier modern projects surrendered to Capitalism and free enterprise. Architecture was at the service of the establishment, prevailing business interests, government, and the well-to do. Characteristically, local architects wore white, short sleeve shirts and a tie, emulating the business dress code of colleagues in the Mainland. Architectural practices were modeled after American offices. Willingly or not, local architects became instruments of political/colonial interests, in spite of world-wide changes taking place.

Designers from the sixties had experienced how modern orthodoxy was transcended by figures like Alvar Aalto, Bruno Zevi, Ernesto Rogers, Luigi Moretti, Carlo Scarpa, and later, James Stirling, as well as Alison and Peter Smithson, among others. From them, local architects inherited - not theories - but a zest to push forward beyond established compositional dogmas. From the 50's, they reappropriated an interest in shaping form, acknowledging History, turning walls into perforated screens, making stairs protagonic, and inviting art into their buildings. Because or in spite of it, some critics do not grant much originality to the architecture produced in the 1960's. Antón Capitel is most definitive about it: "...it is clear that in our time, circumstances have not fostered a new architectural revolution, minimally comparable to that which the birth of modern architecture originally entailed."⁷ Even if that is the case, it does not render invalid the effort to dissect, analyze, and disseminate building designs and urban proposals that came into existence in the sixties. Subsequent generations have acknowledged that these projects merit both interest and emulation: they represent cultural/architectural aspirations of ambition, historic significance, tectonic value, and public resonance. Moreover, even if architects from the sixties "...did not really fight with the legacy of the modern movement, they just enriched it, granting it a notable degree of

⁷ Antón Capitel, *Papeles de crítica: de arquitectura, arte y ciudad*, 21.

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*pluralism. A pluralism previously engrained within it, in truth, just by having initially endorsed the rationalist and organic trends...*⁸

After all, followers have always something to say.

Chronological brackets being always diffuse, several examples discussed further ahead - in spite of dating from a few years before or after the 60's - are rendered as accomplishments more related to the sixties than to any preceding or succeeding period. After all, "...*the experience of modernity is neither distributed homogeneously within geographic or national boundaries nor is it sequentially ordered in sharply defined periods of time.*"⁹

By 1960, Puerto Rican architects were very much aware of significant architectural undertakings elsewhere around the world. All had been trained abroad and kept in contact with their peers, many traveled extensively, publications were plentiful, and mass media generated interest in the building boom that was shared by many nations.

During the 1960's, the legacy of Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier cast a giant shadow amongst architects all over the world. By 1965, his professional reputation was unparalleled, having concluded a wide array of significant projects in the most diverse locations. He died the same year, and his fame grew exponentially, influencing architectural education, design stances, and building tectonics to this day. From 1951 until his death, Le Corbusier worked on the Master Plan for Chandigarh, one of the early planned cities in post-independence India. The construction of new cities from scratch (*tabula rasa*) was a highly lauded (and publicized) initiative at that time, one that did not go unnoticed by architects of the Americas.

In fact, by 1960, Brasília had been inaugurated and continued to be celebrated around the globe in the following years. Planned and developed in 1956 by Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer to move the capital of Brazil from Rio de Janeiro to a more central location, Brasília adhered unwaveringly and audaciously to Le Corbusier's tenets pertaining to modern, artistic urban planning. The landscape architect was Roberto Burle Marx, noted for his use of native flora in abstract patterns. Claims of modernity in Latin American architecture had not gone unnoticed in previous years by renowned architectural critics like Henry-Russell Hitchcock.¹⁰ The International Union of Architects (UIA) held its annual congress of 1963 at Havana, and its 1969 meeting in Buenos Aires. Members from around the globe shared their interest in Latin America's architectural initiatives.

⁸ Antón Capitel, *Papeles de crítica: de arquitectura, arte y ciudad* (Buenos Aires: Diseño Editorial, 2015), 23.

⁹ Patrick Haughey, "Introduction", in Patrick Haughey, Ed., *Across Space and Time: Architecture and the Politics of Modernity*, X.

¹⁰ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Latin American Architecture since 1945* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1955), but also much earlier, Phillip L. Goodwin, *Brazil Builds: Architecture New and Old 1962-1942* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1943).

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In contrast, Buckminster Fuller's 1959, one-man show at New York's Museum of Modern Art and the 1960 publication of Reiner Banham's *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, seem to have gone unnoticed by local architects. Lack of "crumbs" unable to trace any direct influence of Fuller or Banham on Puerto Rican designers working during the 60's.

Along the decade, two world fairs impacted an architect's fancy like no others. In New York's 1964 World's Fair, designers could indulge in a new-found freedom of form, and validate their partiality for new, contemporary building materials like: reinforced concrete, fiberglass, plastic, tempered glass, and stainless steel, among others. The immediate future was made evident at the fair, whether by sitting in furnishings designed by Finnish-American architect Eero Saarinen, or watching a film by Charles and Ray Eames, and other similar instances. In EXPO 67, in Montreal, Canada, the inventiveness of architect Moshe Safdie challenged architects in a different manner. His housing complex named *Habitat 67* - a project based on prefabrication, modularity, and stackability – proved to be highly seductive as a combination of technology and creativity, as well as extremely suggestive for replication in other countries. Puerto Rico was one of those, as explained ahead.

As the decade came to a close, the future announced itself more than once.

By the late 1960's, in the 1956 Wendell O. Pruitt Homes and William Igoe Apartments (known together as the Pruitt-Igoe Complex, in St. Louis, Missouri), living conditions had begun to decline. The project soon became notorious for harboring poverty, crime, and racial segregation. As a result, the limits of Architecture at addressing social issues were publicly and heatedly debated. Skepticism regarding urban renewal efforts and public-policy planning proliferated. Ultimately, all 33 buildings integrating the project were demolished in the mid 70's.

The design of the World Trade Center opened another window into the following decade. Although completed in 1972, WTC's design was highly publicized during 1968 and 1969. Photos and articles about the project, as presented in *Urbe Magazine*, a local periodical, bear witness to the excitement that surrounded its construction. However, architect Minoru Yamasaki's design vocabulary, although rooted in the 60's, represented at that time a major glimpse into the following decade.

To sum up, key events, projects, and figures integrated a modern architect's imaginary during the sixties. Which, to what extent, and which others weighed in at the time design decisions were made, cannot be assessed in full specificity or certainty. As can be expected elsewhere or in the Puerto Rico, some architects imitated or emulated prevailing ideas; some tried to copy them, and others remained indifferent to undertakings understood as being far removed from their quotidien milieu. Conversely, a group of key exponents of the Modern Movement in Island merely succeeded by transcending routine. Aware of the complexities inherent to the period, unfazed by historical predicaments, and not discouraged by working at a distance from

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metropolitan centers, these designers succeeded at addressing myriad political, social, and cultural challenges. As such, their work must be examined *vis à vis* the following:

01. Embracement of Modernity and Abstraction
02. Public Trust in Planning as Progress
03. Urban Development as Prelude to Sprawl
04. Polemical Entanglements with Tradition
05. Professional Advancement and Public Projection
06. Signature Designers
07. Integration of Migrant Cuban Architects
08. Religious Design Reconceptualized
09. Representative Buildings

Throughout time, ideas and beliefs, political processes, economic interests, social conundrums, identitarian concerns, and aporias have all played a role in the making of Architecture. The particular way in which it materialized in Puerto Rico during the 1960's requires an in-depth examination.

01. Embracement of Modernity and Abstraction

After the succession of eclectic styles which permeated much of the first half of the 20th century, the Modern Movement's *cri de guerre* "History is dead!" would certainly appeal to the larger segment of society, one accustomed to associate Past with Privilege. Moreover, the *modern person* looked forward, fueled by the ideal of Progress, for which Modernity became standard-bearer.

In Puerto Rico, the lines and *leit motifs* of the International Style had made their appearance in the 1940's, among these: unadorned surfaces, flat roofs, horizontal fenestration, and glass windows. In the 1950's, "American", low, stepped, concrete, gabled roofs were popular; thin iron columns were grouped in asymmetrical location for decorative purposes; and covering façade components with a locally quarried limestone (*piedra Bechara*) became a popular way to add texture to otherwise plain elevations. Along the 40's and the 50's, however, the Spanish Revival never lost popularity. *Villa Ange*, one of the best examples of said style designed by local architect Pedro Méndez Mercado (1902-1990), was built in 1952.¹¹

That same year Puerto Rico became a "free, associated state of the United States", publicizing its newly-acquired democratic rights, and rejecting past colonial experiences under Spain and USA military rule. Segments of the population were not convinced much had

¹¹ Jorge Rigau, *Puerto Rico 1900: Turn of the Century Architecture in the Hispanic Caribbean, 1890-1930* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1992), 229.

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changed in terms of political self-determination, but were not paid attention to by the majority, enthused as most people were with the prospect of change and prosperity.

Hope is inherent to change and, at that time, expectations ran high within the Puerto Rican population, which could now elect its own governor, manage most of the Island's budget, and receive Federal funds to implement public works and social initiatives. A sense of achievement and newly-acknowledged capabilities pervaded at many levels of Puerto Rican society, eager as it was to "catch-up" with advanced countries and metropolitan centers already committed to the *International Style* as Architecture's contemporary, modern vocabulary. To assert its commitment with Progress, Puerto Rico emulated key building efforts in Europe and the Americas. The Supreme Court Building in Puerta de Tierra, by the firm *Toro y Ferrer*, recalls more than one building from Brasília. The seat for the *Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico*, in Hato Rey, by Pedro Luis Amador, evokes the Expressionist urban volumes first conceived by Ludwig Karl Hilberseimer; and *La Concha* Hotel mirrors hospitality comparables in other world locations, including the Xenia hotels developed in Greece from 1955 to 1965 under a governmental public investment program.

Most of the time, by being located in privileged sites of high public visibility, these buildings' presence underscored the Modern style's potential for becoming a sort of architectural *Esperanto*, thus heightening their cultural impact as entities emblematic of the future. However, validating locally architectural efforts from other places required trained designers capable of succeeding at the task. Most of them were architects educated in the United States, for no local school to address the design discipline had yet been established in Puerto Rico. While in training, as it still happens, students came in contact with the latest trends and exited Academia enthused about spreading the vanguard's gospel. Most of the architects whose work is of relevance during the sixties studied at universities in the United States: Columbia, Cornell, Harvard.

Modern Architecture's early association with the *The Stijl* and *Cubism*, its analytical approach to space, and its quest for minimal expression, all fed the period's intellectual commitment to abstraction. In Puerto Rico, throughout the 50's, architect Henry Klumb and the firm of *Toro y Ferrer* experimented with modern, abstract, spatial ideas that they themselves and younger colleagues continued to endorse during the sixties. Morphologically speaking, forms of clear cut profile (orthogonal or curved) were preferred. *Toro y Ferrer* made it clear in the cupola placed above the clear-cut rectangular volume of the Supreme Court Building. Klumb made it evident at his *Iglesia del Carmen* in Cataño, from much later.

Site plans and landscape designs, rendered in geometric shapes and bright colors, resembled abstract collages. Walls – when not solid or underlined as a geometric plane by applying stone facing – were also donned "filters", transparent screens made out of different materials, all in pursuit of the same effect: shielding from view literal features like doors and windows for the building to resemble a sculpture, rather than revealing it as a space for habitation. Aided by

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the tropical environment for which they designed, *Toro y Ferrer* was successful in “blending” interior and exterior spaces, while Klumb manipulated space in fluid terms, mastering “anti-space”, to use the term aptly coined by Steven K. Peterson.¹² Among other instances of adherence to abstraction, one can mention architect René Ramírez. Of lesser stature than *Toro y Ferrer* or Klumb - but nonetheless an interesting designer – Ramírez designed the seat of the Lawyers’ Association (Colegio de Abogados de Puerto Rico) in Miramar, Santurce publicly manifesting his adherence to Italian Rationalism, clearly detaching himself from Historicism.

Art supported Architecture’s interest in abstraction. In Puerto Rico, accomplished painters and sculptors contributed important pieces to buildings and open spaces. Large paintings in canvas by Rolando López Dirube were included at each floor lobby of the Ashford Medical Center, in Condado; free-standing sculptures by the same author highlighted small, grassed street rotundas at *La Arboleda*, one of the decade’s most successful neighborhood developments in the area of Guaynabo. *Los Iranzo*, two exceptionally creative brothers who had fled from Francisco Franco’s dictatorship, authored an unabashedly horizontal mural for the Nursing Building at San Juan’s Medical Center.¹³ Spanish artist Elvira Coya de Pons was responsible for paintings and sculptures at Banco de Ponce, in said city’s Santa María Shopping Center.¹⁴

Most works mentioned above (and many others created concurrently) were conceived in abstract terms, shying away from literal expression. Local artists intellectually committed to abstraction at the time also included: Myrna Báez, Luis Hernández Cruz, Domingo García, Francisco Rodón, Rafael Rivera García, and Arnaldo Maas.

¹² Steven Kent Peterson, “Space and Anti-space”, in *Harvard Architectural Review: Beyond the Modern Movement* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980).

¹³ José María and Manuel Iranzo were multifaceted artists who emigrated from Spain to the Dominican Republic, later settling in San Juan to work for the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, under the directorship of Ricardo E. Alegría. Model making being one of their talents, they produced maquette of many notable buildings in Old San Juan. Most of them were exhibited at the Institute’s small architecture museum in Fortaleza Street. See Glorilianne Morales Jordán, *Trabajos de apoyo a otros trabajos: La obra de los hermanos Iranzo en Puerto Rico (1960-1980)*, Mid-Career Research Project, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, 2014.

¹⁴ Elvira Coya de Pons emigrated from Cuba to Puerto Rico. One of the above mentioned sculptures was demolished in 2012, allegedly for salubrity reasons, after *Scotiabank* had taken charge of the premises. The piece, made of concrete, resin, and fiber, depicted two women looking at each other. Coya de Pons was also responsible for a monumental bas-relief in concrete, depicting Christ’s Deposition from the Cross at the portico of *La Piedad* Cemetery, in Ponce, 1968. It measured 20’-0” high by 41’-0” long, and weighed over 50,000 lbs.

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02. Public Trust in Planning as Progress

Author John Peter, in his book *"The Oral History of Modern Architecture"* concludes: *"The social impulse in modern architecture is nowhere more evident than in city planning."*¹⁵ And, as a matter of fact, the 1960's could be labeled Puerto Rico's Planning Decade. The stage for it to happen was probably detonated by the establishment of the Puerto Rico Planning Board (*Junta de Planificación*) in 1942 and its 1956 *Plan Regional del Área Metropolitana de San Juan*, coordinated by Uruguayan architect and city planner Eduardo Barañano da Costa (1915-2004). Official interest in the development of the Island nurtured this plan, highly lauded in and outside Puerto Rico, praised to this day by its scope and vision, even if lacking specificity in some aspects.

Even though historian Rafael Crespo argues that: *"The first half of the 60's were difficult economic times for Puerto Rico, and many architectural firms had a tough time maintaining a practice"*, official fiscal data and statistics indicate the opposite.¹⁶ Capitalism was the world's order. Around the planet, long-reach urban development projects were plentiful. Previous initiatives to establish new capital cities like Brasília or Chandigarh had become universal symbols and, as such, the object of widespread emulation.

In Puerto Rico, architect Juan Alberto Terrassa proposed to relocate *ex novo* the Island's capital in Aibonito, a town nestled in the hills. His *"Propuesta para una nueva capital administrativa de Puerto Rico ubicada en el altiplano central del país"*, as presented in *Urbe Magazine*, included an aerial view of the proposed scheme (in black and white) and a brief explanatory text.¹⁷ Throughout its years of publication, *Urbe* consistently reported on planning practices in and outside Puerto Rico without shying away from incorporating polemicizing views. Its editor, architect Efraín Pérez Chanis was originally from Panama, but had settled in Puerto Rico. His personal interests included art, interior design, and planning...subjects with which he was familiar from a broad Latin American perspective, as it becomes evident throughout the magazine contents. *Urbe* included a column entitled *"Noticias de Planificación"* and one of them announced a series of fifteen-minutes, radio programs entitled *"Planificación en marcha"*, broadcast by six stations of the Metropolitan Area (WKBM, WRAI-AM, WIPR, WKAQ, WUNO, and WAPA) with plans of transmission by additional Island stations.¹⁸ Whether responding to public concern or for reasons of novelty, the planning discipline was then granted importance.

¹⁵ John Peter, *"The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century"* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994), 53.

¹⁶ Rafael Crespo, "Tom Marvel, Arquitecto" in Rafael Pumarada, Ed., *Thomas S. Marvel Architect (Arquitecto)* (*San Juan, Puerto Rico: Colegio de Arquitectos y Arquitectos Paisajistas de Puerto Rico, Colección Catálogos de Arquitectura*, 2005), 10.

¹⁷ *Urbe* Núm. 9: abril, mayo, junio 1964, 31.

¹⁸ *Urbe*. Núm. 30, Vol. 6: agosto, septiembre 1968, 48.

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The work of a group conceived (and operated) as an arm of the *Junta de Planificación* best summarizes planning concerns, aspirations and achievements of the 60's decade. Conceived as a task force for environmental improvements, the *Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental* (EMA) granted vision to the Island's planning expectations. Young architects and planners employed by the Planning Board teamed up to produce urban design proposals, promote governmental commitment to public projects, and stimulate community commitment and participation. In one proposal, Puerta de Tierra's Capitol Building extended its staircase landing south over Constitution Avenue to reach San Juan Bay, culminating in an expansive plaza. In another, the back lots of buildings facing both Ponce de León and Fernández Juncos Avenues in Santurce, were activated as a pedestrian mall running parallel to both thoroughfares.

EMA's most ambitious undertaking was, undoubtedly, the so-called *Plan Piloto de Santurce*, a large-scale urban proposal that addressed (and, it should be said, simultaneously promoted) San Juan's growth as a metropolitan center. Dense land use and tall buildings make up most of the city plan, highlighting tree-lined streets, as well as commercial and recreational use of *Caño Martín Peña*, all of it under the eye of a streamlined lighthouse at *La Puntilla*, south of Old San Juan. To carry the message more effectively, a vast scale model was made. Surviving photos of this impressive mock up attest to EMA's quasi-religious commitment to modern planning ideas and its members' self-imposed responsibility to persuade decision makers and educate the public to ultimately implement them.¹⁹

The team was integrated by architects Gabriel Ferrer Amador (who produced some of EMA's most important explanatory free-hand diagrams); Néstor E. Acevedo Coll (who formulated *San Germán 2000*, an urban development proposal for the second oldest city in the Island); José Mimó Mena (urban planner and abstract painter from Catalonia, naturalized Venezuelan); and Roger L. Pompei (from the USA, designer of *Plaza Covadonga* as an extension of Puerto Rico's Capitol; polemicist in *Urbe*). Architect Otto Reyes Casanova joined the group in community initiatives in Jayuya and Utuado.

A group photo of these individuals taken atop the Planning Board Building in Santurce constitutes a period classic: men suited up, engaged in serious, pensive glances, turning their backs to the traditional city, their eyes fixed elsewhere, as if stubbornly convinced about an alternative future. José Mimó Mena stands at left, hand in chin, determined to carry out the plans in hand. Gabriel Ferrer kneels at left, Néstor Acevedo Coll, at right. Roger Pompei stands.²⁰

¹⁹ See Jorge Rigau, "MoMA y EMA", *El Nuevo Día*, June 2, 2015; Ricardo Romero Hernández, *¿Icaro en la Junta de Planificación?: La labor de su Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental en la década del 60 en Puerto Rico*, Mid-Career Research Project, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, 2011; also, José I. Yepes de Pablos, *Ambición a distintas escalas: Proyección urbanística del Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental en la década del 60 en Puerto Rico*, Mid-Career Research Project, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, 2016.

²⁰ *El Mundo* Newspaper, 16/III/63, 1.

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Unexecuted, unbuilt projects - as it happens in any period of time - were plentiful along the sixties. Initially admired for their ambitious scope, they would fail to be executed precisely because of their out-of-scale aspirations. Such was the destiny of EMA's efforts, but all team members remained productive. After working for EMA, Mimó Mena designed *Plaza Baldorioty de Castro*, bordering the Condado Lagoon. Ferrer Amador founded the *Fondo de Mejoramiento*, a non-profit entity that in ensuing decades pioneered environmental awareness in Puerto Rico. Néstor Acevedo Coll and Otto Reyes Casanova carried out private practices.

Although often associated with urban developments of the 1970's, the large-scale planning project known as "*Nuevo Centro de San Juan*" was also a landmark product of the sixties. During these years, said new city center was conceived, promoted and preliminarily implemented, paving the way for the subsequent urban development of the Hato Rey area in the capital city, well unto the 1990's. Up to the 1950's and early 60's, contemporary living took place in the area known as Santurce, east of Old San Juan, but architect/historian Enrique Vivoni explains:

*"Santurce's supremacy as the city's center lasted a relatively short time, until the sixties, when Hato Rey declared its superiority with its "Golden Mile", Plaza Las Américas shopping mall, the Hiram Bithorn Stadium, and the New Center of San Juan."*²¹

In Puerto Rico, the passenger and cargo train system had ceased operations in 1957, accelerating the supremacy of the automobile. Urban design was radicalized, and not just in Puerto Rico "...with intentions to supersede the 19th century urban fabric by concentrating uses, creating vertical urban soil and solving the coexistence of pedestrians and traffic by means of a three-dimensional understanding of infrastructure."²²

In consequence, the "*Milla de Oro*" – the Island's "golden" banking district – witnessed key buildings penned by noted architects rise up during the 1960's: *Banco Popular Center* (*Toro y Ferrer*, with associate architects Kahn and Jacobs), *Citibank Tower* (René O. Ramírez), and a former *Fomento* building (Vicente Muñoz Núñez, with Victor Bisharat, and the firm Sargent, Webster, Crenshaw and Folley), distinguished by its round corners and sinuously perforated panels designed by sculptor Erwin Hauer, from Vienna and Yale (**Figure 1**).

²¹ Enrique Vivoni Farage, "A San Juan Flaneur: To Cross the Architectural Thresholds of the Capital City", in E5.

²² Ana María Rigotti, "*The Other Crossing of the Andes: Megaforms Projected in Argentina for Santiago*", in Hugo Mondragón L. And Catalina Mejía M., Eds., *Modern South America: objects.buildings.territories*. (Santiago de Chile: ARQ Ediciones, 2015), 208.

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Figure 1: FOMENTO BUILDING (now International Business Center), Hato Rey
Sculptural, folded-plate marquee; intricate screen by Erwin Hauer.
Architects: Vicente Muñiz Núñez, Víctor Bisharat. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Given Planning’s preeminence in public and private efforts, it should not come up as a surprise that in 1965, Puerto Rico’s first Graduate Program in Planning was inaugurated at the University of Puerto Rico’s Río Piedras Campus. Its establishment was the result of a collaboration of the Island’s *Junta de Planificación* and Cornell University, Planning Board Director Ramón García Santiago, and John W. Reps, Director of Regional Planning for Ithaca’s Ivy League institution. Advisors for launching the program were plentiful, represented myriad disciplines, and included Eduardo Montoulieu, from Cuba; landscape architect Milton R. Cobin, and Antonio C. Kayanan, urban planning professor from the Phillipines and MIT. The inauguration of UPR’s Planning School at mid-decade acknowledged the contemporary validity of the discipline, but also its future, as nest for younger generations interested in the field. Among distinguished professionals who eventually graduated from the school are: Gerardo Navas Dávila, José J. Villamil Fernández, Osvaldo Real Villarubia, and Aníbal Sepúlveda.

Before the sixties came to the end, an emblematic project captured world-wide attention, ultimately finding its way into Puerto Rico: Moshe Safdie’s *Habitat* Project, previously mentioned in this text. First showcased in *Expo 67* at Montreal, the Canadian architect’s innovative housing proposal circled the globe. Based on prefabrication and stacked modules, *Habitat* marketed functionality and flexibility in tandem, promising cut-rate building costs and reduced construction time. It was all in-keeping with the spirit of the times:

“Urban designers from the 1930’s through the 1960’s typically dreamed of reinventing the city-following a modernist way of thinking, they aimed to design and build massive projects that would overhaul traditional urbanism and bring cities into a bright new future. Far from trying to weave their creations into the urban fabric, they saw them as separate from the problems and corruptions of the outdated city. Not surprisingly, these modernist architects and urban designers had little use for the seemingly mundane

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*details of zoning. Not all of their projected projects and megastructures were built, but those that were generally had negative consequences for urban life.*²³

And so it happened in the Island. With government support, and sponsorship of the *Administración de Fomento Cooperativo de Puerto Rico* and the Development International Corporation, foreign investors saw fit to develop a *Habitat Puerto Rico*. On November 1968, an exhibit of *Habitat* was presented in Santurce. Architect George Z. Mark was hired to lead the effort locally. After much work, travel, meetings, and consultations, the initial location chosen - "*la loma de San Patricio*", for which drawings and scale models were made - never became available. An alternate site was identified and some modules were built. Because the project ultimately came to a halt, these modules were either sold or abandoned in place close to their production site in Carolina, where to this day they still loom as modern ruins.²⁴ In retrospect, Mark concedes that various overlapping problems proved unsurmountable: the complex engineering requirements; compliance with seismic codes; the transportation of prefabricated modules, and ultimately; a lack of demand that made prefabrication too expensive. Mark reminisces: - "*There was much fantasy involved...*"²⁵

Architect Enver Azizi captured *Habitat Puerto Rico*'s visionary and illusory predicaments in a caricature of his making entitled "*Puerto Rico Ja Ja bita!*", *ja* being a Spanish linguistic interjection related to laughter, scorn, and/or irony. Azizi's Hieronimus Bosch-like cartoon minutely addressed most conflicts that Safdie's project had by then elicited and could also further in Puerto Rico (**Figure 2**). Politics, planning, and architecture were severely chastised by the artist. An early detractor, engineer Ramón Pizzini had already complained in *Urbe* magazine: "*I enclose a photo of a stand for elevators in a vulgar (chabacano) style that most resembles "Habitat 67". I ask, what would a city resemble if all its residences were like "Habitat 67"?*"²⁶

²³ Matthew Heins, "Zoning and the Controlled Space of Modernity", in Patrick Haughey, Ed., *Across Space and Time: Architecture and the Politics of Modernity* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2017), 202.

²⁴ Safdie's unfinished project in Puerto Rico vertebrated artist David Hartt's 2017 exhibition entitled "*In the Forest*" at the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts in Chicago. Using sculpture, film, and photography, Hartt questioned linkages between Architecture, ideology and the natural environment. The exhibit coincided with the celebration of Chicago's 2017 Architecture Biennale.

²⁵ Interview with architect George Z. Mark, March 3, 2017.

²⁶ *Urbe*. Núm. 24, Vol. 5: agosto, septiembre 1967, p. 78.

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Figure 2: HABITAT PUERTO RICO CARTOON BY ENVER AZIZI

Journalistic cartoon critical of architect Moshe Safdie's *Habitat* proposal for Puerto Rico. Author: Architect Enver Azizi, 1969

Although the *Habitat* experiment granted some international exposure to Puerto Rico, in the end, it remains a symbol of unfulfilled urban expectations. Sadly, the best-known photos which illustrate the original intentions for translating architect Safdie's ideas locally, pertain to the San Patricio site, where it would have never risen. As detailed in his book *Beyond Habitat*, Moshe Safdie's recollection of the affair is not pleasant.²⁷

Contemporary interest in alternate housing solutions was not limited to the Habitat module. The architects of IBEC (*International Basic Economic Corporation*), an entity organized by Nelson Rockefeller in 1947, with 140 subsidiaries and affiliates in 33 countries designed prefabricated homes²⁸ - particularly a prototype named MONOPLANE-31, for Hacienda Sion Development in St. Croix. The project comprised 315 units of 3 bedrooms each, for a total of 859 square feet per house. These dwellings, many of which are still standing, rest over cisterns that double up as footings. By the time they were built, *Urbe* was reporting "*IBEC has built more than 12,000 family structures in Puerto Rico since 1954, when it started operations.*"²⁹ Another experimental housing effort was led by Cuban architect Fernando Alvarez Tabío, awarded an Honorable Mention by *Urbe* for his low-cost housing named SIMALVA 63, based on prefabricated units with folded-plate roofs.³⁰

²⁷ Moshe Safdie, *Beyond Habitat*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970), 194-196.

²⁸ Guillermo A. Baralt, *Una de cal y otra de arena: Panorama histórico de la construcción en Puerto Rico: 1943-2004*, (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Asociación de Contratistas Generales de América, Capítulo de Puerto Rico, 2008), 273.

²⁹ *Urbe*. Núm. 30, Vol. 6: agosto, septiembre 1968, 59.

³⁰ *Urbe*. Núm. 33, Suplemento Especial, Vol. 8: febrero, marzo 1969, 44.

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To sum up, during the sixties, Planning came of age as a result of government initiative, the endorsement of Academia, private investment, professional leadership, prefabrication and, of course, familiarity with akin international efforts.

03. Urban Development as Prelude to Sprawl

Planning reached a peak along the 60's because during the 1950's the construction industry had become an unstoppable transformative force in the Island: "*the strong pulsation of construction... the main increase achieved by this industry, came from the erection of private housing in apartments and condominiums...*", even taking into account that, by then, 43.1 million had been spent in public housing (*residenciales*).³¹

In an article addressing condominium building in Puerto Rico, the Vice-president of the First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Puerto Rico acknowledged that the original 1951 law regulating horizontal property on the Island "*was not specific enough*". The issue was addressed by Law 104 of June 25, 1958, and "*it was not until after the passing of Law of 1958 that construction of high rise buildings did not take off.*"³² Shortly after, Cuban architects - many of them experienced on related housing legalities and project financing strategies - started arriving in Puerto Rico. They contributed in granting San Juan a renewed vertical skyline. The push to build seemed unstoppable:

*"The Planning Board reported that construction activity in Puerto Rico during fiscal year 1967-68 reached a new record of \$672.5M. This total exceeds by almost ten percent the record of 612.9 millions reached during the previous fiscal year... The net income generated in construction contracts reached \$278.9 millions, 12.7% more than in 1966-67."*³³

Historian/lawyer Rubén Nazario Velasco has explained how by 1966, Puerto Rico could no longer be considered an agrarian society, as agriculture had significantly reduced its contribution to the gross national income, and the middle class continued to grow.³⁴ Public housing complexes, thousands of single family homes, and the first shopping malls had been built before 1960. Neighborhoods like *Las Lomas*, *Altamesa*, *Santiago Iglesias*, and *Reparto Metropolitano*, in San Juan; *Lomas Verdes*, in Bayamón; *La Rambla*, in Ponce, and *Villa Blanca*, in Caguas, date from that time. The first mall to be built, *Metropolitan Shopping*

³¹ Urbe. Núm. 25, Vol. 5: octubre, noviembre 1967, 21.

³² Urbe. Núm. 26, Vol. 5: diciembre 1967, enero 1968, 17.

³³ Urbe. Núm. 33, Suplemento Especial, Vol. 8: febrero, marzo 1969, p. 24.

³⁴ See Rubén Nazario Velasco, *El paisaje y el poder: La tierra en el tiempo de Muñoz Marín* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Callejón, 2014).

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Center, at the heart of Hato Rey, was designed by architect René O. Ramírez. Other early examples include: *San José Shopping Center*, in Río Piedras, and *65th Infantry Shopping Center*, advertised as the largest one erected in Latin America at that time. Many of these and other projects that propelled Puerto Rico's suburbanization were entrusted to IBEC, responsible for completing an average of 1,000 houses per year in Puerto Rico, using mass fabrication of housing components, and pouring concrete floor slabs on site, later craned to each house. Prefabrication and on-site construction eased and accelerated the job.

After witnessing the Island's unbridled physical transformation during the fifties, confidence about the future growth of Puerto Rico became stronger, stimulating urban investment, public and private, throughout the 60's. Legislation pertaining to federal funding, the *Model Cities Program*, and the *Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966*, promoted urban renewal efforts across the USA and its territories.

In Puerto Rico, prefabrication gained further prestige when William J. Levitt, President of *Levitt & Sons, Inc.*, built one of the largest housing developments ever conceived for the Island's burgeoning middle class. Cushioned next to Cataño and Toa Baja, Levittown came into existence in 1963 after Mr. Levitt had successfully engaged in similar enterprises in Long Island, and Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Construction was carried out in assembly-line manner. Complex components were prefabricated. Four hundred acres ended up lodging 10,000 dwellers in a planned community that included schools, churches, commercial, recreational, and sports facilities, as well as a cultural center.³⁵ The same company would go on to develop *Levittown Lakes*, and *Río Hondo*, in Bayamón, and *Las Delicias*, in Ponce. Other companies were also engaged in construction at other locations. *Rexach Construction*, working under its subsidiary named *Puerto Rico Homes*, was responsible for 10,000 homes in Country Club, also with ample supporting facilities. Rexach built *Urbanización El Remanso* in Cupey and *Rexville* in Bayamón. Suburban sprawl had come to stay.

As can be expected, the scale of many urban and architectural undertakings required investors, construction consultants and state-of-the-art specialists. Some were local, a good number from architectural firms from the US, and many acted as project collaborators. *Isadore and Zachary Rosenfield, Architects and Hospital Consultants*, designed a Master Plan and several buildings for the Puerto Rico Medical Center. Paul Bauer Laser assisted in the design of health care facilities, particularly for Ponce's Hospital Center.

Morris Lapidus, *Leedman Associates* was responsible for the Americana Hotel, in Isla Verde. William B. Tabler, J. C. Mayer and *J. B. Robinson Associates* designed the Ponce Intercontinental Hotel, where Henry J. Stojowski acted as associate architect. *Warner, Burns, Toan, and Lunde* were associate architects for the Puerto Rico Sheraton Hotel, *Toro y Ferrer*

³⁵ Guillermo A. Baralt. *Una de cal y otra de arena: Panorama histórico de la construcción en Puerto Rico: 1943-2004*, 312.

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being lead architects. *Leo Kornblath Assocs.*, from New York, is credited with the Flamboyán Hotel in Condado as well as the Dorado Hilton and Luquillo Beach hotels. *Goldstone and Dearborn* worked as architects for the Dorado Beach Hotel.

Sargent, Webster, Crenshaw, and Fowley, an architectural firm from Syracuse, New York, collaborated in multiple projects in Puerto Rico. They partnered with architect Vicente Muñiz Núñez for *Nuestra Señora de Lourdes* in San Juan, a school operated by Trinitarian fathers. Both firms also joined efforts for the Student Center at Interamerican University in San Germán, the *Fomento* building in Hato Rey (now renamed "International Business Center") and the ESSO headquarters in San Patricio Plaza. The latter was raised on very slender stilts, its upper floor covered all-around with a semi-transparent black net. Unfortunately, it was demolished in 2007.

Sargent Webster were associate architects, engineers, and planners for local architect Lionel A. Fernández, who in the late 50's developed the *Minillas Government Center*. Victor Bisharat, from Stamford, Connecticut, contributed in the now called International Business Center, one of Vicente Muñiz Núñez's projects with *Sargent Webster*. Bisharat, who participated in the development of Disneyland, designed the Jordanian Pavilion at the 1964's World's Fair. His High Ridge Park project, in Stamford, Connecticut - a six-building office complex - features the same rounded corners and sculptural columns that grant the former *Fomento* building its unique identity.

The list of North American architectural firms connected to Puerto Rico in the 1960's is an extended one. In the Supreme Court Building of Puerto Rico, by *Toro y Ferrer*, Charles H. Warner, Jr. is also credited as architect, and Harold Eliot Leeds as design consultant. *Kahn & Jacobs*, from New York - as already stated - participated as associate architects for *Toro y Ferrer* in Hato Rey's Banco Popular project.

In 1963, *Brooks & Barr* with architect Horacio Díaz completed the Federal Aviation Building, in Carolina, distinguished by its tapering, striated, flaring columns. José A. Fernández, in his book *Architecture in Puerto Rico* (published in 1965) lists *Tippetts, Abbett, McCarthy, and Stratton* as architects for the Puerto Rico International Airport and *Toro y Ferrer* as consulting architects. *Tippetts, Abbet* also authored the Communications Relay Center at Fort Allen, Juana Díaz. *Herbert Johnson and Associates* authored Sears Department Store in Hato Rey, while Edward Durell Stone designed the Ponce Museum of Art alongside Carlos R. Sanz as consulting architect. Edward Larrabee Barnes was the architect for *El Monte* apartments, to this day celebrated among the best examples of private, multifamily housing erected in Puerto Rico during the decade.

Design awareness was a trademark of the 60's, underscoring the relevance of not just Architecture, but also its allied fields: Interiorism and Landscape Architecture. Hunter Randolph and Milton R. Cobin, both USA born, already settled in Puerto Rico, led

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distinguished careers as landscape architects. Hideo Sasaki designed the gardens of *El Monte* apartments (north high rise). Martha C. Gruson, from Cambridge, was responsible for the landscape treatment at the Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium. Allen Edwards and the *Walter M. Ballard Corporation* contributed in the landscaping of the Ponce Intercontinental Hotel. Interior Design firms contributed in many private projects, particularly hotels: Henry End Associates (*El Conquistador*); Ann Hatfield Associates (Dorado Beach); Warner-Leeds (Caribe Hilton); Carlos Lavandero (Ponce de León Hotel); and David H. Engel (Puerto Rico Sheraton Hotel).

04. Polemical Entanglements with Tradition

That prospective buyers of modern houses in Levittown, Puerto Rico, were offered the choice of Spanish or contemporary decorative motifs for their homes concisely sums up a cultural predicament faced by many architects of the 1960's: addressing Modernity without fully rejecting the Hispanic heritage. Such quandary was not always well resolved. The most successful instances were those addressed in spatial terms, particularly in residences based on a central patio typology, like the dwelling for Dr. and Mrs. Ramón López by architect Orval Sifontes, in Caguas, and the house of Dr. and Mrs. Víctor Marcial in Río Piedras, by architect Jesús E. Amaral. In contrast, many projects made reference to the Island's historical legacy through the literal appropriation of details in textured and/or colored materials like brick, dark wood, glazed tile, and colored glass.

Arches, coincidentally, enjoyed a comeback during the 60's. In buildings throughout the world, arches were often projected outwards - vaulted - transformed into volumetric features, as in Wallace K. Harrison's Metropolitan Opera, inaugurated in 1966. Locally, Mayagüez boasts said vocabulary in the cantilevered arches of its 1960 Cultural Center in adjacency to City Hall, designed by architect Juan Amador. **(Figure 3)** With arches being part of the period's contemporary expression, architects in Puerto Rico saw fit to enrich them by "quoting" traditional, semicircular, tinted-glass, door transoms featured in many late 19th/early 20th historic houses in Puerto Rico. Earlier, in Cuba, modern architects had attempted a similar blending of past and present, inspired by Spanish colonial architecture's colored windows. Cuban designers migrating after 1959 would find fertile ground in Puerto Rico to further this attempt as an acknowledgement of tradition, while adhering to the tenets of the Modern Movement. Why indulge in it?

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Figure 3: MAYAGÜEZ CULTURAL CENTER, Mayagüez
Arches projected as vaults in succession. Architect: Juan Amador. Photo: Jorge Rigau

In Puerto Rico – and elsewhere in the Hispanic Caribbean – modernization was inevitably associated with Americanization which, in turn, might account for the designers’ insistence in “referencing” traditional, Spanish colonial architecture even if, in the end, said attempts happened in superficial manner. Most certainly, in their haphazard appropriation of motifs from much earlier styles, architects were betting at making the abstract spaces of modernity more palatable to the general public.

For a proposed Municipal Parking and Office Building in Old San Juan, by René O. Ramírez, “*the exterior was designed to blend with the old Spanish style of architecture with the use of arches, canopies, random location of balconies and arcades.*”³⁶ Notice the alleged intention to “blend” and the association of Spanish colonial architecture with the word “random”, obliquely contrasting lack of order and reason with the rational tenets of modern expression. Even when aware of design constraints imposed by attempting to reconcile old and new, architects persisted in the attempt, as exemplified by Condominio Monteflores, work of the firm Montilla y Látimer: “... *an environment of a certain “Spanish” flavor difficult to find in high-rise, multifamily buildings.*”³⁷

María Do Carmo y Gustavo Cossio, reflecting upon the decade’s generalized insistence to bridge the local/international divide as made manifest in Brasil, argue that by 1966 “...*designers of the second modern phase found themselves divided between nationalism and internationalism, between traditional crafts and industrial development.*”³⁸ In Puerto Rico, nonetheless, such a claim would add unfounded depth and drama to local design pursuits which, more than anything, attempted to appease the public’s initial, reluctant embrace of all things modern.

³⁶ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico* (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., Inc., 1965) p. 223.

³⁷ Urbe. Núm. 11: diciembre 1963, enero, febrero 1964, 53-61.

³⁸ María Do Carmo y Gustavo Cossio, “El proyecto de Bornancini y Petzold: Un estudio sobre innovación de producto para Todeschini”, in *Modern South America: objects.buildings.territories* (Santiago de Chile: ARQ Ediciones, 2015) ,73.

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Interior designers displayed no hesitation in mixing contemporary and historic furniture in truly eclectic fashion. *Urbe* magazine published many of them, customarily engaging in frivolous, verbose descriptions of projects noted for their lack of design coherence:

*"In its decoration, the technique of harmonizing antique with contemporary was used. The blue color of the silk material that covers the walls is repeated in the upholstery of the dining room chairs, Italian style. Above the marble floor rests a modern rug by V'Soske. The Spanish lamp, the Louis XV-style chandeliers and the antique clock, from the XVII century, grant an accent of singular elegance."*³⁹

Within that apparent eclecticism, however, details and features associated with Puerto Rico's Spanish descent - *lineage*, hopefully? - almost always played a protagonical role in local interior design projects. When the Residence of David Rodríguez and Miriam Bobadilla de Rodríguez received an *Urbe* Interiors Award, the editors praised it particularly for these reasons:

*"The way and sensibility with which the designer resorted to traditional themes of Puerto Rico within a contemporary environment was much lauded. Elements of antique fenestration, belonging to long-gone mansions, were adapted with great elegance in this new residence of great beauty and bearing."*⁴⁰

*"This beautiful residence constitutes a harmonious integration of that which is traditional within a contemporary ambiance. Combining the rich inheritance of the past and modern design, the architect created an atmosphere of exquisite taste and sober elegance."... "windows with carved wood balusters in harmony with an antique, ogival gate in centenarian mahogany."*⁴¹

Disregard for any ideological and tectonic contradictions inherent to the marriage of two dissimilar grammars was particularly evident in private housing developments promoted precisely for referencing the past. For example, at *La Arboleda*, in Guaynabo, "...Architecture was combined with ceramics (Spanish clay tiles - a most traditional detail of our colonial architecture) and the use of colored glass, another Caribbean tradition..."⁴² *Garden Court*, another development within the same municipality, made sure to have it all: Roman arches, stained glass, gargoyles, wide overhangs, decorative clay tiles, wooden grilles, and wooden gates, also underlining the extended use of white color in its facades. In this "*desarrollo*" whose design is attributed to SACMAG of Puerto Rico, "*Symbolic details of colonial*

³⁹ *Urbe*. Núm. 26, Vol. 5: diciembre 1967, enero 1968, 32.

⁴⁰ *Urbe*. Núm. 21, Vol. 5: Suplemento Especial de Premios de Diseño, febrero 1967, 42-44.

⁴¹ *Urbe*. Núm. 26, Vol. 5: diciembre 1967, enero 1968, 30, 31.

⁴² *Urbe*. Núm. 22, Vol. 5: abril, mayo 1967, 50.

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*architecture in the Caribbean have been adopted to provide the traditional touch of the area in which the project is nestled.*⁴³

Reluctant to break away from History completely, projects that in principle constitute Modern responses, not just embraced the Spanish Colonial idioms, but also *taíno* patterns, as well as rococo furniture in “Modern” interiors. In 1966, for refurbishing the public plaza of Naranjito, architects summoned the community to participate in incorporating “*diseños indígenas*”. However, even household items were expected bridge the gap between yesterday and today: “...furniture in Puerto Rico changed partially the esthetic forms of its designs, without losing because of it that which his essentially and clearly boricua, but creating a truly Puerto Rican style...”⁴⁴ As in other similar statements, comparable arguments remain lacking in specificity or valid examples, remaining unsubstantiated opinions.

This trend would also impact pottery design. *Caribe China* industry saw fit to incorporate native decorations from the *Centro de Alfareros y Artesanías*, in Carolina, and spawn a related enterprise. Hal Lasky’s *Puerto Rico Clay Products*, enriched the market of locally-inspired, household modern objects.⁴⁵

Architectural projects of high visibility underpinned this stylistic alliance based on an overstated urge to validate the Island’s Hispanic identity and simultaneously tame the modern idiom... still considered too inscrutable for so many! Old San Juan’s *El Convento* Hotel, restored in 1962 by architect José Firpi and interior designer José S. Alegría, certainly set the tone for subsequent imitations, displaying antique furniture, tapestries, chests, and candelabra in rooms and common spaces.⁴⁶ The Americana Hotel, in *Isla Verde* - a completely modern establishment - proudly promoted its Spanish-inspired interiors, with shields and suits of armor.⁴⁷ An advertisement of this hotel depicted flamenco dancers in full regalia at staggered, modern balconies of the guests’ bedrooms. Alma Concepción, noted ballerina, and other dancers from the highly regarded company *Ballets de San Juan*, were wasted in a photo that, today, seems pure kitsch.⁴⁸ Even for the interiors of *Pueblo Supermarket* in Old San Juan was this trend deemed proper, as highlighted in the description of the new grocery store in the old city: “*The colonial flavor has been preserved in the disposition of the roof and the walls.*”⁴⁹

Much admired at the time was the *Velasco* store in *Plaza Las Américas*, the covered/interior mall built towards the end of the decade in - where else? - Hato Rey. The high-end store

⁴³ Urbe. Núm. 28, Vol. 6: abril, mayo 1968, 28-31.

⁴⁴ Urbe. Núm. 32, Vol. 7: diciembre 1968, enero 1969, 33.

⁴⁵ See José Luis Colón González, *Caribe China: Ventana a la Modernidad* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: EMS Editores, 2008).

⁴⁶ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 106.

⁴⁷ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 98.

⁴⁸ Urbe. Núm. 4, Vol. 1: diciembre 1962, 68, 71.

⁴⁹ Urbe. Núm. 6: septiembre 1963, 68.

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entrusted its interiors to the firm *Amaral y Morales* which, given its previous projects in a severe, restrained modern idiom, must have undertaken this job with some reluctance. *Urbe*, nonetheless, praised it: “*It is of interest... the insinuation of traditional Puerto Rican (boricua) architecture, expressed in semicircular, multi-colored glass transoms (“soles truncos”) used as discreet accent in lateral walls.*”⁵⁰ Neither insinuated, nor discreet, these *montantes* above each door were highlighted by red, blue, and yellow panes, directly quoting the play by Puerto Rican playwright René Marqués, *Los soles truncos* (The Fanlights). Premiered in 1958, the drama has enjoyed great popularity to this day; its main characters are three sisters who prefer to live in the past, and commit suicide before surrendering to modernization.⁵¹

Even the exterior treatment of *Plaza Las Américas*, considered a state-of-the-art mall when it opened in 1968, became the object of haphazard, erratic historic quotations: “*...there was some insistence on adopting for Plaza “the traditional Spanish structure,” giving the design colonnades, pitched roofs, and exposed wooden beams on the ceiling.*”⁵² As pointed out by cultural critic and historian Sylvia Álvarez Curbelo:

“*...Plaza’s “Hispanicity” was not due solely to American architecture’s inclination toward historicism, which had not disappeared altogether even at the peak of modernism’s heyday. It was also made possible by the legitimacy regained by Spanish-colonial architecture in Puerto Rico through legislation and the preservation/conservation programs in Old San Juan, which had been backed by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture since 1955.*”⁵³

True, but by the time the mall was built, expectations to address Old and New in tandem had met crucial difficulties in Puerto Rico. An uneasiness about coming to terms with Tradition was made manifest, of all places, in Ponce, where the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture established a Historic Zone, hoping to echo Old San Juan’s economic revival under the agency’s pioneer architectural conservation program. In contrast, and in spite of the city’s strong, conservative bent, the Institute of Culture’s decision met fierce public opposition. In retrospect, dissenters had good reasons to object for, ultimately, the limitations imposed by historically-minded measures would eventually deter Ponce’s urban development.

The attempt to render modern design as capable of its own hybridity - of incorporating local architectural/traditional expressions - was not unique to the Hispanic Caribbean. At that time, the hybrid potential of a local/modern architecture – a sort of design interracial marriage – proved to be an important issue in other locations throughout the globe, as made evident by

⁵⁰ *Urbe*. Núm. 33, Vol. 8: Suplemento Especial febrero, marzo 1969, 40.

⁵¹ René Marqués, *Los soles truncos* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial Cultural, 2003).

⁵² Sylvia Álvarez Curbelo, “The Center of Everything; Consumption, Architecture, and City”, in Enrique Vivoni Farage, Ed., “*San Juan siempre nuevo: Arquitectura y modernización en el siglo XX*” (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Comisión San Juan 2000), 260.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 261.

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Robert Cowherd in his above referenced essay on identity tectonics regarding comparable processes in distant places like Java and Bali.

As part of his understanding of the period under study, architect Nataniel Fúster Félix has argued that "...an essential aspect to consider in the re-evaluation and re-reading of the buildings produced by the Modern Movement in Puerto Rico is the continuity that they established with the cultural patterns and themes of the past."⁵⁴ In light of the examples here presented (and others to be expounded ahead), said continuity seems more lacking than evident. By patching "fragments" from the past randomly - most out of register - architects from the sixties ultimately failed to establish a coherent architectural narrative. Could more have been expected from these designers, having already acknowledged that most of them refrained from taking any firm theoretical stand regarding their work?

Since the late fifties, Marta Traba, art critic and polemicist from Argentina/Colombia, had been publicly arguing how attention and reference to local themes and signs had, so far, hindered the development of Latin American art.⁵⁵ She urged artists to avoid the distractions of context, to steer clear of folklore, and focus on esthetic issues, like colleagues elsewhere in the world were doing. Even if blatantly Eurocentric, Traba's advice eluded - or did it fail to enthuse? - many of the architects then fooled by the fallacy of fastening old and new.

One project compels to remove the grain from the husk: *Hotel Las Delicias*, in Fajardo, from 1961. Because it appropriates the traditional patio typology without any affectations; applies traditional materials in details unrelated to a given date or style; respects a reduced sense of scale; and integrates all of these ideas with severe discipline, this unassuming building by *Amaral y Morales* constitutes an eloquent example of synthesis, that single attribute that designers claiming joint command of *before and after*, more than often fail to grasp. As described by architect Andrés Mignucci:

"The project uses such typically Spanish-Caribbean architectural elements such as the interior courtyard, wooden lattices used as light filters and privacy screens, and brick paving. The interior courtyard, with its intimate scale and covered walkways or galleries around the perimeter, evokes the character of traditional interior courtyards in Old San Juan's colonial structures. Overall, the use of lattices as light filters, the structure's proportions, the intimate scale, the wooden handrails, and the roofs above the rooms and galleries angled down into the courtyard give the design an identity immediately identifiable as tropical, Caribbean, and Puerto Rican. Amaral y Morales took part in the

⁵⁴ Nataniel Fúster Félix, "Recovering the Modern Movement's Heritage: The Río Piedras Market", in Enrique Vivoni Farage, Ed., "San Juan siempre nuevo: Arquitectura y modernización en el siglo XX", 282.

⁵⁵ Marta Traba, "Problemas del arte en Latinoamérica", Revista Mito, Núm. 58, Año III: febrero-marzo 1958), 430. From the same author, "El problema de la 'existencia' del artista latinoamericano", Revista Plástica (Bogotá), Núm. 4 (1957), 25.

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*selection of the furniture, table settings, art works, and fabrics for tablecloths, upholstery and bedcovers.*⁵⁶

Granting extended life to the architectural heritage of Puerto Rico, however, was better served by the increased public concern for architectural preservation. As communities experienced hurried transformations, many citizens became aware of the urgent need to protect Puerto Rico's centuries-old built legacy. Economic and political interests, as can be expected, differed. Public debate ensued, involving key governmental, cultural, and professional figures, as already mentioned regarding the city of Ponce. It did not help that, in implementing its regulations, the Institute of Culture strictly requested property owners in Ponce to restore their buildings in imitation of those in Old San Juan. Imposed without previous profound analysis of the city's typological precedents or recognition of its own inherited design idiosyncrasies Ponce's Historic Zone was ill-fated from the start. Several irate owners opted for demolishing their buildings without previous warning, so as to make the lot more attractive to prospective buyers, no longer intimidated by the prospect of compliance with the Institute of Culture and/or the additional restoration costs related to it. No wonder cynics were quick to address *la zona histórica* as *la zona histérica* ('*the hysterical zone*') simultaneously making fun of the bitter debates (which last to this day), and the mumbo-jumbo grafting of architectural styles within the traditional urban texture.

Encouraging preservation while relentlessly praising progress proved to be the government's own predicament, ensnared in an aporia of its making, spellbound in an irresolvable internal contradiction flared by economic and social pressures. Nonetheless, Ponce's preservation efforts succeeded best in the internal rehabilitation of some of the city's most prominent historic buildings, like *Banco Crédito y Ahorro Ponceño*, originally designed by Francisco Porrata Doria, and restored by architect Carlos R. Sanz.

Besides being responsible for other conservation projects in the Southern City (where he had robust family and business ties), Sanz was also responsible for similar projects in San Juan, where the preservation efforts of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture had been relatively well met. Tax exemptions granted to property owners interested in restoring historic buildings strongly encouraged them to invest in the Old City. Among key designers working consistently in conservation projects in *El Viejo San Juan* were HTC Davis and Juan Amador. Upon finishing his first restoration in the historic district, architect Vicente Muñiz Núñez decided that would also be his last one: - "*Too many encumbrances...*"⁵⁷

Interior designers with high profile work in the Old San Juan included two leading figures of the period: José S. Alegría and David Rodríguez. Spaces of their making chose to underscore,

⁵⁶ Andrés Mignucci, *Jesús Eduardo Amaral: Arquitecto/Architect*. (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Colegio de Arquitectos y Arquitectos Paisajistas de Puerto Rico, 2011), 98.

⁵⁷ Interview with second wife Nila Costas Quiñones and their daughter, Yiria Muñiz Costas, July 7, 2017.

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often in excess, the Island's Spanish heritage, dotting rooms of heavy wooden beams, period furniture, dark paintings, heavy rugs, oversized chests, or lighting fixtures imitating candles, among other similar features previously mentioned.

The paradoxical nature of said architectural undertakings did not go unnoticed by Puerto Rican artists and literary figures. Preservation undertakings were criticized for catering primarily to tourism and foreign investment, rather than serving the interests of the long-time resident communities. In different ways and moments, paintings, works in silkscreen and woodcuts - but also short stories, novels and dramas - all forewarned about the influx of upper and middle-class people and the displacement of lower-class residents in the neighborhood. If the term *gentrification* did not arise as such, it was because British sociologist Ruth Glass coined the term in 1964 and it had yet to circle the globe.

Highly-regarded playwrights like Manuel Méndez Ballester and René Marqués forcefully deplored what they (and their large crowd theatre audiences) understood to be the defacement of the Old City, and with it, the loss of traditional values. Méndez charmed audiences with his 1964 play *Bienvenido Don Goyito*, where the elder father of a middle-class Puerto Rican household defends Tradition against the frivolities of Modernity. Much earlier, in the farce entitled *Carnaval Afuera, Carnaval adentro* (1960), Marqués chastises those responsible for the transformation of Old San Juan due to urban redevelopment through preservation. Tamara Holzapfel in "*Evolutionary Tendencies in Spanish American Absurd Theatre*" (1980) observes:

*"Through the use of festive and farcical elements, such as the presence of vejigantes or carnivalesque figures, drum music, linguistic absurdities, change of roles or identities, pantomime, and others, René Marqués creates a codified artistic world that mirrors and parodies the values of a society that subjects itself to appraisers and is willing to sell itself to the highest bidder."*⁵⁸

Visual artists working in the Island recorded, in their own way, similar concerns. Lorenzo Homar, José R. Oliver, and Rafael Tufiño rendered their acute, sardonic perceptions of the situation with a masterly command of creative skills in different media. Nowadays, their work vertebrates the history of art in Puerto Rico, with pieces that, although created during the sixties, they still resonate today. Designers, writers, and artists did not hold back their vision of conflicted current events, and their voice most probably proved instrumental in ensuring some official restraint from the powers that be. However, it must be conceded that, in spite of literary and/or public reprimands aimed at the preservation program for Old San Juan, the program succeeded at generating healthy investment and granting extended life to many historic buildings within the walled city that, without said support, might not be still standing today.

⁵⁸ Tamara Holzapfel, "Evolutionary Tendencies in Spanish American Absurd Theatre" in *Latin American Theatre Review*, Vol. 13, No. , Summer 1980, 37-42.

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As a coda to the role played by authors and artists in Puerto Rico along the sixties - and specifically for their contribution to disseminate specific design values pursuant to the period - architectural photographers active in the Island at that time deserve mention. It is of consequence that:

“Amongst many others, Beatriz Colomina has characterized the printed public dissemination media as one of the pillars of modern architecture. As such it was also consolidated through equally modern media such as photography, advertisement and architectural criticism.”⁵⁹

Luckily, and adding to the many merits of *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, author José A. Fernández had the insight to include detailed picture credits which highlight those individuals that recorded key architecture of the period. Among these, Alexandre Georges leads the group as author of over 100 images of buildings in the book. Puerto Rican Francisco E. Vando was responsible for over 60 photographs, and Conrad Eiger more than a dozen. To Fernández’s list, one must add Ignacio Martínez, who shot many of Jorge del Río’s buildings, and Gil Amiaga, photographer for some of Thomas S. Marvel’s projects. Georges shot *El Conquistador* Hotel and the interiors of *El Mundo* Building. Ignacio Martínez photographed Jorge del Río’s award-winning elderly housing in Cidra, long ago demolished. Amiaga, from New York, recorded *El Monte* Mall. The photographic legacy of these artists of the lens - most of it in striking black and white - has proven valuable in terms of composition, documentation, analysis, and building conservation.

05. Professional Advancement and Public Projection

In the 1960’s, financial stability and the generalized economic solvency of Puerto Rico’s upper middle class helped fuel the popularity of all design-related disciplines alike: Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Interior Design. Government and the private sector consistently hired high profile architects. Design teams for important projects included professional landscape architects. Interior designers enjoyed remarkable public visibility. Likewise, all fields seemed to be at ease with each other’s reach and responsibilities, unflustered by the customary overlaps. *Urbe* magazine must be credited for reporting (thus, recording) the decade’s wide spectrum of design initiatives by granting attention to representative work of them all. In 1965, it established its annual design awards program, including architecture and interior design projects.

⁵⁹ Hugo Mondragón L. and Catalina Mejía M., “South America and the forms of the Modern”, in Hugo Mondragón L. And Catalina Mejía M., Eds., *Modern South America: objects.buildings.territories*. (Santiago de Chile: ARQ Ediciones, 2015), 27.

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In a world imbued in progress, architects were seen, to a certain extent, as purveyors of civilization. The academic campuses and buildings by Henry Klumb; the hotels by *Toro y Ferrer*; the medical facilities by Pedro Luis Amador; the corporate buildings by Vicente Muñiz Núñez; and the private residences by Jesús E. Amaral, Angel Avilés, Jorge del Río, René O. Ramírez, and Orval Sifontes – among many other examples – lent credibility (and sophistication) to the role of the architect in society's advancement.

Coincidentally, and certainly connected to this process, key professional organizations came to be during the sixties: the *Instituto de Arquitectos de Puerto Rico*, *La Casa del Arquitecto*, and the Puerto Rico AIA Chapter, then affiliated to the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Architect Carlos R. Sanz led the initiative to grant Puerto Rico its own AIA component, officially installed in April 21, 1966. In subsequent years, through Puerto Rico's AIA Chapter Design Awards, the profession gained considerable public exposure.

The three groups just mentioned preceded by much the formal establishment in 1978 of the *Colegio de Arquitectos de Puerto Rico* as a separate entity from the *Colegio de Ingenieros, Arquitectos y Agrimensores de Puerto Rico*. “-Fue una lucha.”; mentioned architect Jesús E. Amaral, crediting in particular two colleagues for giving the good fight: Pedro Luis Amador and Santiago Iglesias, Jr.⁶⁰

Interestingly, the architects' efforts to establish a distinctive public profile did not discourage willful interdisciplinary interaction. The inclusion of landscape architects in fundamental design undertakings is noteworthy. Hideo Sasaki was hired to do the grounds of *El Monte Apartments* and conceived a scheme for a so-called *Parque de las Américas*. Hunter Randolph designed the gardens of the Supreme Court Building in Puerta de Tierra. Milton R. Cobin was entrusted several projects for the University of Puerto Rico, having been previously responsible for the landscaping at Henry Klumb's *San Martín de Porres* 1950 church. Edward Durell Stone, Jr. was hired by art patron Luis A. Ferré to garnish the gardens of his *Museo de Arte de Ponce* and, subsequently, asked Fernando Chueca Goitia, an architect/historian from Spain, to consult for the museum's so-called *Jardín de Granada*. Numerous landscaping mainland firms were engaged to work at hotels; Frederick B. Stresau, from Florida, worked at the Americana Hotel, in *Isla Verde*. David H. Engel was the landscape architect for the Puerto Rico Sheraton Hotel in Condado. At the same time, Carlos Lavandero, a local landscape architect, penned several projects, as credited in *Urbe: a Master Plan for Laguna San José; Punta Picúa Development; Mayagüez Medical Center; Ponce de León Hotel*, in Condado; Coamo Nursing Home, and a house at Dorado Estates [with Carlos R. Sanz]. The magazine also makes mention of Juan J. Rodríguez, a Public Works officer, but his landscaping projects are not mentioned.

⁶⁰ Interview Jesús Eduardo Amaral, October 20, 2017.

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The 1967 visit of Roberto Burle Marx, noted Brazilian designer, must have enthused local practitioners in their commitment to the landscape profession. Equally interesting is *Urbe's* earlier acknowledgement of the existence of a local voluntary organization "advocating for vegetation within Puerto Rico's environment". Self-appointed *Grupo VAP*, ("*Grupo por la vegetación en el ambiente puertorriqueño*"), not much more is known about its practices, projects, or period of operation.

During the 60's, articles in the previously mentioned *San Juan Review Magazine* by landscape architect John B. Frazier addressed environmental and urban concerns, wisely foreboding problems Puerto Rican cities would face shortly afterwards. In columns entitled "Townscape", Frazier endorsed environmental awareness, the importance of trees, and the threat of visual pollution, arguing his ideas with succinct, informative, accessible drawings, all of them an apt example of the character and quality of many 1960's graphics.

Modernity being promoted as not just a style, but a way of life, helped popularize interior design along with the discipline's renewed interpretations of the quotidian. As such, homes, offices – all places of dwelling – became the object of widespread public attention in magazines, newspapers, and television. Consequently, signature designers like José S. Alegría, Ángela Belaval, Paul Bexon, Bill Boydston, Salvador Casellas, David Rodríguez, and Edna Rozas were highly respected. Traditional styles and period furniture – combined with eclectic proclivities – prevailed within buildings that, in contrast, were starkly modern.

Alegría (nicknamed "*Popi*"), established his practice at Cristo St. and furnished many restored homes in Old San Juan, as well as *El Convento* Hotel, in Spanish Colonial style, customarily incorporating many imported period pieces. Ángela Belaval must be credited for exalting Interior Design as a professional field. For years, *interiors* had been somewhat derided as the concern of idiosyncratic "decorators", but Ms. Belaval had a solid, broad practice, acknowledged as such more than once by *Urbe* magazine. She even conducted a television program for WAPA-TV station on the subject of interior design in what, still today, represents a major pioneering/dissemination effort.

Paul Bexon, from France, had worked in Cuba since 1955, being responsible for the Havana Hilton and the Havana Riviera, also designing miniature golf gardens. In Puerto Rico, Bexon designed restaurants like *La Zaragona* (in Old San Juan); *Café Pierre* (in Santurce), and *Zipperle's* (in Hato Rey). Bill Boydston tailored interiors for the Caribe Hilton Hotel, in conjunction with Warner/Leeds, and for many private clients, later in life establishing a furniture and home décor shop in Puerta de Tierra. Both Bexon and Boydston were credited for "a new Caribbean look". Edna Rozas catered mainly to a private, residential and commercial, clientele. Roberto Bennet was acknowledged as interior designer for the *Ponce de León* Hotel, but additional information about other projects of his are lacking.

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Work for the expanding tourism industry - plentiful and widely promoted along the sixties – must have proven catalytic in encouraging the exalted status of Interior Design within the Island. It probably facilitated (and tempered?) interdisciplinary efforts between architects and interior designers. Though it must be admitted that – probably because professionals (architects and interior designers alike) were but a handful – congeniality prevailed. The same could be argued regarding architects and engineers, the latter being too many, the former but a few. In spite of it, in the mid-60's, architect Horacio Díaz was elected president of the *Colegio de Ingenieros, Arquitectos y Agrimensores de Puerto Rico*, an episode not to be diminished for, at that time, in one way or another, it helped to bridge disciplines customarily and uneasily vying for the same work. Díaz, whose imposing presence included an amicable, cheerful personality, contributed to bolster ties between engineers and architects.

In fact, professionals from one area of expertise and the other were working hand in hand to bring modern ambition into fruition. Overhangs, folded plates, shapes, shells, and thin slabs in concrete, all required advanced engineering expertise, as exemplified by projects like the Hiram Bithorn Stadium, in Hato Rey. Among the engineering firms that contributed to the period's achievements are: *Hernández y Hernández*, structural engineers, and, *Martínez y Costa*, led by Milton R. Martínez. Other professionals, like engineer Héctor Huyke, engaged in residential design with notable results in terms of siting strategies, architectural composition, proportions and, tectonics.

06. Signature Designers

Having been entrusted some of the government of Puerto Rico's most emblematic projects during the previous decade, the firms of Henry Klumb and *Toro y Ferrer* were well established and busy by the 1960's. Klumb designed his *Miramar Condominium* early on (1960-62), and worked in the different stages of the Social Sciences Building at UPR, Río Piedras (1960-68); as well as other facilities in the institution's Mayagüez campus and the Vélez Residence, in San Germán. Flagrantly modern, to this day this house contrasts significantly with its surrounding context, rising in one of the most traditional and conservative towns of Puerto Rico. Klumb's overconfidence was not only evident in his designs, but also in the sententious nature of his admonitions, adamant as he was regarding clients meddling: "...*convince project sponsors, public as well as private, that they too can contribute and foster creativity, but not through the authoritarian exercise of power that controls and dictates a solution even before the problem has been stated.*"⁶¹

Toro y Ferrer kept busy with other important design and construction projects: the Puerto Rico Sheraton Hotel, in Condado (1963); Banco Popular Building, in Hato Rey (1965); the *Edificio para la Facultad de Estudios Generales* at UPR's Río Piedras campus (1966); and the

⁶¹ Urbe. Núm. 33, Vol. 8, Suplemento Especial: febrero, marzo 1969, 58-59.

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Intendente Ramírez Building for Puerto Rico's Treasury Department in Puerta de Tierra (1969), commonly referred to as "*el Edificio de Hacienda*". The firm also designed Hilton's Curaçao hotel.

Klumb and *Toro y Ferrer* can be said to have "owned" the fifties, for their most representative, conspicuous projects date from said decade. Conversely, it could be argued that the 60's belonged to then younger voices for whom progress was a given, not a goal. History was not an enemy, and abstraction could accommodate literality. Their projects involved sophisticated craftsmanship and incorporation of a great wealth of materials like bronze, aluminum, and/or glass, including expensive stone-facings, and other finishes. Unabashed to quote from the Island's Spanish heritage - as we have seen - arches complemented orthogonal compositions, wood details proliferated, and glazed ceramic tile was often used as accent.

Although by no means conclusive, a list of practitioners that addressed the paradigms and predicaments of the decade includes:

01. Néstor Acevedo Coll

Member of the *Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental* (EMA) of the Puerto Rico Planning Board. Author of *San Germán 2000*, a master plan for the development of the town of San Germán.

02. Remus E. Acosta

His practice centered in southern Puerto Rico. He designed *Urbanización El Rosario* in Yauco, and built idiosyncratic beach houses in Guánica. Of modest, yet stylized design - as featured in *Urbe* - none of them seem to be still standing.

03. Juan Antonio Amador Hernández

Architect of the *Centro Cultural* and the Raquel Fajardo Residence at *Cerro Las Mesas*, both in Mayagüez. Was also responsible for several restoration projects in Old San Juan.

04. Pedro Luis Amador

Designed the seat and the hospital for the *Asociación de Maestros*, both in Hato Rey, and among the most representative buildings from the decade. He was also the architect of the Mayagüez Medical Center.

05. Jesús E. Amaral

Designer of *Condominio Universitario* in Río Piedras, and *Costa Azul Condominium*, in Ocean Park: two of the period's most accomplished apartment buildings. Founder of the University of Puerto Rico's School of Architecture.

06. Ángel Avilés

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Dexterous and idiosyncratic, the architect designed the Miramar Charterhouse Hotel; the Radio City/Excelsior Theatre Complex with offices, in Santurce; *Iglesia Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles*, in Isla Verde; and notable private residences.

07. Basora y Menéndez

Architect José Luis Basora and Engineer Francisco J. Menéndez joined Edward Larrabee Barnes and William Reed in *El Monte Apartments*. Other designs include: WIPR-TV Station; *Ponce de León Hotel*, and *Condominios Quintana*.

08. Howard Besosa

Designed an all-wood, finely detailed country retreat (*Finca El Salto*) in Barrio Bairoa of Aguas Buenas for well-known publicist Samuel Badillo before settling permanently in the United States.

09. William Biscombe

Established *Metropolitan Builders* with other construction-industry professionals and, since the 1950's, engaged in the design and construction of condominiums like Lakeshore Apartments, in Condado, and *Palma Real* in Miramar.

10. David P. C. Chang

Designer of the John F. Kennedy Elementary School in Levittown, *Academia San José* in Villa Caparra, the offices of *Metropolitan Builders*, and WAPA-TV station with architect Lorenzo Ramírez de Arellano.

11. Henry Thomas Coleman (HTC) Davis

After working for *Toro y Ferrer*, set up his own office, carrying out multiple restorations in Old San Juan. Well-remembered as a design teacher at UPR's architecture school, his son is architect José Ricardo Coleman-Davis Pagán.

12. Jorge del Río

Among the most talented, prolific, and well-liked architects that emigrated from Cuba, he was a design instructor at UPR's architecture school, and author of several award-winning projects, including residences and post office buildings.

13. Horacio Díaz

Architect of religious buildings sporting freeform geometries: *Primera Iglesia Bautista de Caguas*, *Iglesia Cristiana Discípulos de Cristo*, in University Gardens, and the dormitory building of the Evangelical Seminary, in Río Piedras.

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14. Lionel Fernández

Graduated from Syracuse. Designed *Borinquen Towers* Apartments, a proposal for Minillas Government Center, the residence of Henry Rodríguez, at *Extensión San Agustín* and, in the early 70's *Iglesia Sagrado Corazón*, University Gardens.

15. Rodolfo Fernández

Trained in Mexico, and committed to articulating building masses in robust, multiple volumes, his design for the Medina Center, in Río Piedras (at an early professional stage) presaged a career that would blossom fully during the 1970's.

16. José A. Fernández

Author of the indispensable book *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, showcasing projects of the 60's. He lived in New York, advocating for Puerto Rican architects, and designed many shops. *Urbe* features his design for *Balneario de Isla Verde*.

17. Gabriel Ferrer Amador

Member of the *Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental* (EMA), and skilled at synthesizing and illustrating complex ideas graphically, he was a visionary of things to come: community advocacy and planning, as well as ecotourism.

18. Gelabert & Navia

Cubans José Gelabert and Rosita Navia set up practice in San Juan, engaged in widespread condominium-building, and ultimately changed the capital's skyline. Condado Terrace, in the shape of a triangle constitutes a remarkable example.

19. Luis Clemente González

Referred to in *Urbe* as "the most prolific church builder in Puerto Rico, particularly for the Protestant faith", he designed temples like the Lutheran Church, in Puerto Nuevo, and the Lutheran Church *El Buen Pastor*, in Río Piedras.

20. Gonzalo González Seijo

A partner in the firm *Schimmelphenig, Ruiz, González*, he designed the *Iglesia de los Tres Santos Reyes*, in Aguas Buenas (1969), an architectural tour-de-force, and also penned *Iglesia del Inmaculado Corazón de María*, in Santiago Iglesias (Río Piedras).

21. Henry Klumb

Acknowledged father of Modern architecture in Puerto Rico, in 1961 he designed the Vélez House in San Germán, openly challenging Puerto Rico's Hispanic urban legacy in one of the Island's most traditional, conservative towns.

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22. Russell Látimer

As a recent graduate from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, he designed the residence of Clemente "Kaki" Fernández, Puerto Rico's ping-pong champion for 21 years, in *Extensión San Agustín*, before integrating the firm *Montilla y Látimer*.

23. Humberto Lorenzo Varela

Trained in Spain, the architect's most notable design is that for the *Sion Lutheran Church* in *Hermanas Dávila*, Bayamón. Placed in a corner, the temple projects its roof outwards, with three arches that "fly" and open in conical manner.

24. George Z. Mark

With partner Rafael Pérez Marchand, he was responsible for *El Yeso Municipal Cemetery*, in Ponce, the building for the *Instituto Psicopedagógico* in Bayamón, and a notable *caserío* in Yauco. Mark was *Habitat's* local architect.

25. Samuel G. Marra

Architect for *La Milagrosa Church* in Hato Rey; GEM de Puerto Rico Store, at Norte Shopping Center, as well as the residences for Dr. José Fernández and Dr. Manuel Fernández Mena, both in Humacao.

26. Carmen Julia Mascaró García

Urbe mentions her, but not her work or any projects. In subsequent years, she actively fought against property expropriations in Cataño to build a statue of Christopher Columbus, also the controversial construction of *Paseo Caribe*.

27. José Mimó Mena

Architect, urban planner, abstract painter, and member and spokesperson of the *Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental* (EMA). Coming from Venezuela in 1960, he published a handful of polemical planning articles in *Urbe* magazine.

28. Vicente Muñiz Núñez

Architect of the Student Center at Interamerican University, San Germán; also, *Banco de Ponce Office Building* at Stop 18, Santurce; and the former Fomento Building, Hato Rey, with Jordanian architect Victor Bisharat.

29. Efraín Pérez Chanis

Editor and columnist of *Urbe*; architect of the Ronchamp-inspired Church of Santa Catalina, in Bayamón; also the Medical Sciences Building at San Juan's *Centro Médico*. In later years, he taught at and led UPR's School of Architecture.

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30. Rafael A. Pérez Marchand

A paratrooper in World War II, he subsequently partnered with George Z. Mark and built *El Yeso* Municipal Cemetery, and *Condominio El Señorial*, both in Ponce; also a *caserío* in Yauco.

31. Pedro A. Miranda

Architect of the *Plaza de Mercado*, in Río Piedras. Winner of the design competition for the design of Hiram Bithorn Stadium, Hato Rey.

32. Roger Pompei

Member of the *Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental* (EMA) of the Puerto Rico Planning Board. He was involved in the design of *Plaza Covadonga*, south of Puerta de Tierra's Capitol building.

33. René O. Ramírez

Trained at Cornell University, he designed *Condominio San Luis*, in Puerta de Tierra; prototypical factories built all over the Island for the *Compañía de Fomento Industrial*, and the *Colegio de Abogados de Puerto Rico*, in Miramar.

34. Reed, Torres, Beauchamp, Marvel

Members of this firm were responsible for several iconic buildings. Reed was involved with *El Monte* Apartments; Thomas Marvel designed emblematic residences, and from the 1970's on was regarded as a most important designer.

35. Otto Reyes Casanova

With the *Equipo de Mejoramiento Ambiental* (EMA) he participated in community projects like the rehabilitation of the main plaza in Jayuya, where local residents were involved in incorporating native *taíno* motifs.

36. Rodríguez-Benítez y Francinetti

Joaquín Rodríguez-Benítez led this firm that specialized in hospital facilities, participating in the "modernization" of Presbyterian Hospital, in Condado, and the expressive *Rehabilitación Vocacional* building in San Juan's Centro Médico.

37. Osvaldo Ruiz Villarrubia

Architect of the house of Fernando Martínez and Zaida Ginorio, in Aibonito. A planner, he taught at UPR's School of Planning shortly after its foundation. To this day, yearly, the top student of the school receives an award named after him.

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38. Carlos R. Sanz

Leading founder of the AIA Puerto Rico Chapter, he was architect-of-record for the Ponce Museum of Art. Sanz designed often for the banking industry and was responsible for several preservation projects in San Juan and Ponce.

39. Orval E. Sifontes

Key designer of the Hiram Bithorn Stadium, in Hato Rey, he also penned the residence of Dr. Ramón López, at *Urbanización El Verde*, in Caguas, and was involved in the rehabilitation of *Parque Luis Muñoz Rivera*.

40. William Francis Sigal

Key undertakings include: his Caimito residence, a low-income housing project in Cayey, and *Condominios Bahía* in Santurce (**Figure 4**). His work for the hospitality industry extended to the Virgin Islands and included a proposal for an underwater hotel.



Figure 4: CONDOMINIOS BAHÍA, Santurce
 Rhythm of solids and voids in the façade (with prefab panels).
 Architect: William F. Sigal. Photo: Jorge Rigau

41. Enrique Soler Cloquell

Among projects for which he partnered with Horacio Díaz are: the Evangelical Seminary Dormitory in Río Piedras, and the Presbyterian Church in Caparra Terrace. Afterwards, he was president of the Puerto Rico Planning Board.

42. Miguel Soto Cuevas

Most of his work was carried out in Lares, his hometown. Within what was a traditional, conservative milieu, Soto Cuevas persisted in introducing the modern vocabulary in several apartment buildings and houses he designed.

43. Toro y Ferrer

Along the sixties, Osvaldo Toro and Miguel Ferrer - pioneers of the Modern Movement on the Island - built Banco Popular Center, in Hato Rey; UPR's *Facultad de Estudios Generales*, in Río Piedras; and Hotel Excelsior, in Miramar.

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As can be expected, these individuals' contributions were varied in theme, tone, and reach. Some led by example, given the bulk of their work; some ignited creativity in others with just a few signature projects; and yet, several articulated informed opinions... but a few must be distinguished as **voices that significantly weighed in:**

Efraín Pérez Chanis, who published *Urbe*, almost single-handedly guaranteeing its continuity along the sixties. The magazine showcased Architecture, Planning, Landscape Architecture, and Interior Design projects.

José A. Fernández, editor of *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, the book in which high-quality photos and plans of most buildings of the decade are gathered, identifying architects, contributing firms from abroad, and engineering consultants.

Néstor Acevedo Coll, Gabriel Ferrer Amador, José Mimó Mena, Roger Pompei, Otto Reyes Casanova, the EMA architects that advanced relevant, ambitious urban ideas, producing long-lasting images and models of them.

Ángela Belaval, productive interior designer with her own program in WAPA-TV, capitalizing early upon the new communications medium: television.

John B. Frazier, landscape architect, whose column *Townscape* in *The San Juan Review*, regularly addressed subjects related to the environment, public spaces, urban landscape, and good design.

Even if the modern spirit can be said to have pervaded most endeavors, a handful of singular, professional polemics – nonetheless - underpinned the decade's myriad accomplishments. First and foremost, the establishment of a school of architecture at the University of Puerto Rico (the first in the Island) met opposition from different sources, including architect Henry Klumb. Citing a previous failed effort at Interamerican University, and the number of architects already in practice as sufficient, the initiative was publicly decried. In addition, the assistance of Cornell University in the development of the school's curriculum was denounced as uncalled-for.

As already discussed, most inflammatory was the institution of a historic zone delimitation in Ponce. Following the successful conservation efforts in Old San Juan, the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP) legislated to protect historic properties in the second largest city in the Island. Even if well intended, the government's official interests met intense local opposition. Enforcing rules applicable to one city in the other proved an arbitrary, if not perverse exercise, given discernible architectural differences between San Juan and Ponce. Detractors and supporters included prominent civic leaders. Local architects voiced tough opposition against the city's "*histeric zone*", as it was publicly derided. – "*I am for Modernism*", decried in heroic tone architect Virgilio Monsanto. Progress was pitted against tradition, and the ulterior

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consequences of Modernity became evident: society had come to understand advancement in terms of unrelenting change. Controversies regarding Ponce's historic zone lasted for years, and the unfortunate experience eventually made other traditional towns shy away from any protective legislation.

Along the sixties, other important professional debates included: architects signing projects designed by others, an issue most probably related to the influx of USA based architectural firms then being entrusted jobs on the Island, and; dwindling urban aesthetics, associated with urban/rural migrations, slums, and buildings being abandoned for new construction. To this day, both issues are still debated upon, even if from new and expanded perspectives.

A serious dispute erupted with the arrival in Puerto Rico of Cuban architects fleeing from Fidel Castro's regime. Academically trained in their own country, they were not registered to practice in Puerto Rico, therefore unauthorized by law to do so. Aware of the difficulties of competition within a small architectural market, awarding licensure to incoming, exiled Cuban colleagues raised eyebrows. Local architects clashed sourly on the subject. The dilemma ceased to be shortly afterwards, and Cuban architects were authorized to apply for a license.

07. Integration of Migrant Cuban Architects

Historians are aware that, through a ripple effect - and given particular circumstances - events can have an impact in places removed from their point of origin. The process is further exacerbated when geopolitical conditions mediate, as evidenced by the migration of design professionals from Cuba after Fidel Castro came into power. Miami, Mexico, Spain, and Puerto Rico were choice locations for exile. Florida was only 90 miles away, and most importantly, USA (safe) territory. Mexico and Spain were Spanish-speaking countries where many had relatives, even if distant. Puerto Rico was an American territory where Spanish, however, was the main language. Twice assured of key concerns - democracy and daily life - many Cubans chose to resettle in Puerto Rico. Some, in fact, stopped first at other localities, eventually taking up residence in Puerto Rico.

Many of those that did, struggled - and ultimately succeeded - at becoming leaders in the local design and construction industry. It is a story that, in time, Cuban architects like Nicolás Quintana and Fernando Alvarez Tabío chose to tell publicly, while other colleagues never did. It is a story not exempt of sour, divisive moments. As mentioned before, facilitating professional licensure to the exiles was heatedly debated in Puerto Rico, driving apart local designers.⁶² Those opposing were afraid that too many architects on the Island would

⁶² *Urbe*. Núm. 33, Vol. 8, Suplemento Especial, febrero, marzo, 1969, 68: "In our country... where recently emphasis has been granted to the chauvinistic practice based on architects and engineers with local licenses..."

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inevitably translate into less projects commissioned. It was understandable, although said fear might have been fed by parallel, underlying concerns.

At that time, architectural practice and the construction industry in Cuba were much more advanced. Cuban architects were heirs to a longstanding, ambitious building tradition, having had direct access to raw materials, sophisticated finishes, and able craftsmen for over two centuries. Moreover, many were experienced in the financing, permitting and techniques pertaining to large-scale urban undertakings and multi family housing. In a way, Puerto Rico was just being initiated in such endeavors.

At first, while the right to practice in the Island was being elucidated, many Cuban designers worked as renderers of local architectural firms. That task granted them a double opportunity: first, to earn much-needed money, but also to become familiar with key players and peculiar travails of the local professional establishment. As a result, many of the decade's projects that best represent 1960's architecture in Puerto Rico were disseminated and marketed using perspective drawings inked by Cuban designers previously trained in the modern idiom. Noted perspectivists of the period include: Pacífico Bacalzo, Joaquín Cristofol, Jorge del Río, Germán Hevia, Fernando Mirabal, and Aldo Regalado.

Before migrating, Joaquín Cristofol had partnered with Alberto Hernández Dupuy and worked in Havana. Jorge del Río practiced as an architect in the firm of well-known architect Mario Romañach. Germán Hevia designed Havana's *Tribunal de Cuentas* and the tunnel that connects the city with *Barrio Miraflores*. After arriving in Puerto Rico, Cristofol and Hernández Dupuy worked together again, now in Henry Klumb's office. Germán Hevia and Fernando Mirabal subsequently collaborated with *Gelabert y Navia*, a firm led by Cubans José Gelabert and Rosa Navia. And Jorge del Río labored as draftsman for *Basora y Menéndez* and *Toro y Ferrer*. For the latter, del Río drew perspectives of their Kodak Building, in Carolina,⁶³ and Banco Popular Center⁶⁴

As architects, in the mid 70's, Hernández Dupuy and Cristofol authored an attractive, tropical-looking, low-rise, housing complex in Ocean Park, Santurce, known as Mabok Apartments. Jorge del Río went on to establish his own firm and design award-winning projects, including post offices, housing for senior citizens, and private residences. Three of these homes are highly distinctive: *Residencia Daniel Montalvo*, in Aguas Buenas; the Arcadio Vélez House in Río Piedras (**Figure 5**); and the Silva Residence, in Humacao. In all of them, del Río grants independence to most spaces, willfully articulated as volumes, and in multiple levels. Inverted

⁶³ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 222.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 208. Israel Ríos Reyes, in his Mid-Career Research Project for Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico entitled "*Arquitectos en fuga: Los perspectivistas modernos en Puerto Rico (1960-1980)*", acknowledges the different rendering technics that characterized each architect's drawings and the different projects entrusted to their artistic abilities.

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A-shaped roofs open most rooms up to the sky, bringing light in. This feature is an inheritance from Mario Romañach, del Río’s mentor in his early years in Cuba.



Figure 5: ARCADIO VÉLEZ RESIDENCE, Río Piedras
Protruding volume and upwards-projecting roofs at main elevation.
Architect: Jorge del Río. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Majestically in possession of its ample wooded site, del Río’s Daniel Montalvo Residence constitutes one of the great achievements of the sixties in Puerto Rico. Concrete, brick, and wood were combined in it with clear and red-colored glass - all elements contributing to underline the architect’s particular sense of interior scale, somewhat reduced in contrast with other projects of the decade. The imposing mass of the house outside - suited to the site - is ably calibrated inside, where the scale is reduced to appropriately render the house as a home (Figures 6, 7 and 8). The architect’s other two houses in Río Piedras and Humacao follow similar design lines and self-imposed concerns. Both residences have been significantly altered throughout time. The house of Arcadio Vélez has been subjected to internal modifications. *Casa Silva* now lies boarded up, hoping for a buyer. Emptied several years ago, the Montalvo’s abode has been abandoned to its fate; the surrounding flora and fauna are slowly taking over terraces, roofs, pavilions, pool area... even bedrooms and bathrooms.



Figures 6-8: RESIDENCE OF ENG. DANIEL MONTALVO, Aguas Buenas
Living/Dining areas articulated by a transparent, low wall; view from entrance gate of house perched upon a small hill; manipulation of materials: concrete, brick, and wood. Architect: Jorge del Río. Photo: Jorge Rigau

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Cubans migrating to Puerto Rico included other important practitioners: architects José (Pipo) de la Torre, Evelio O. Pina, landscape architect Vilma Blanco, José Gelabert and Rosa Navia, Ariel and Henry Gutiérrez, also Nicolás Quintana. Architect de la Torre worked in *El Conquistador* and *El San Juan* hotels. Pina's practice focused on private projects, either institutional or residential. Among De la Torre's projects, the house for Oscar Pereira Lacourt stands out. Landscape architect Vilma Blanco, Harvard-trained, arrived in 1961, working for ten years at Puerto Rico's Planning Board, and later setting up her own office. Throughout the decades, she has maintained an active practice.

Gelabert y Navia, a married couple, partnered with developer David Efrón to produce countless apartment buildings in San Juan, including Condado Terrace, and Iberia I and II Condominiums. Brothers Ariel and Henry Gutiérrez engaged aggressively in construction development, as did Nicolás Quintana. Most of these architects' efforts changed San Juan's skyline, particularly along the 1970's.

However, not only the capital city's profile metamorphosed after the Cuban's influx; local construction practices did too. As can be expected, building techniques, programming systems, execution processes, and funding/investment strategies were influenced by what architects native from Cuba had previously experienced in their homeland. The local interest in prefabrication and its popularization was, to an extent, spurred by Cuban construction knowledge. Ten years after migrants from the largest of the Antilles arrived in Puerto Rico, draftsmen and renderers had become sound architectural practitioners, empowered by government and private enterprise, many of them involved in high stakes investment projects.

Curiously – but probably lacking particular significance - no religious building of consequence can be attributed to an exiled Cuban architect along the 60's in Puerto Rico. Note is made of it because amidst the prevailing building boom, church design took a significant turn in the Island at that time, and religious projects were plentiful.

08. Religious Design Reconceptualized

As early as 1950 in Puerto Rico, Henry Klumb had already endorsed the use of the Modern Movement's vocabulary in ecclesiastical architecture, as evidenced by his *Iglesia de San Martín de Porres* in Bay View, Cataño. However, it would take a decade and the Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council to convince the faithful on the appropriateness of praying within spaces designed in a contemporary idiom.

Held from 1962 to 1965, and convoked by Pope John XXIII, the council addressed topics like: the Church in relation to the modern world, liturgical renewals and, including others, the needs of modern life. Among changes introduced, mass would no longer be celebrated in Latin, now

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adapting to the language of each culture. A free-standing altar-table would be added at center. Throughout the religious service, the priest would face the community, instead of turning its back to it. Proximity between the celebrant and the faithful was newly valued and, among other measures, communion rails were understood to distance the priest from its people. In traditional churches, many of these were discarded. In fact, Klumb's church in Cataño lost its own - in spite of being a truly modern one in spirit and realization.

The commitment to bring closer priest and people probably incentivized the construction of contemporary churches all over the Island, as did the excitement over Rome's designation of a new archbishop of local extraction. Monsignor James Peter Davis had held office from 1943 to 1964, the year he was substituted by Luis Aponte Martínez, who thus became the first Puerto Rican archbishop. Throughout his tenure, Davis sponsored the construction of many churches, but along his 35 years at the job, Aponte Martínez merits credit for over 100 newly-founded parishes. Up to date temples were not built in all of them, but many of those erected are most representative of the Catholic Church's audacious adoption of the modern lexicon.

Klumb - again ahead of other architects - had already designed one daring example in 1959, even before the Second Vatican Council was held: *Iglesia del Carmen*, also in Cataño. Massive and hexagonal in plan, articulated, but fairly closed in, with repeated curves stuccoed in concrete, and unpainted, it constitutes a brazen statement adjacent to an otherwise traditional town's plaza... and a premonition of things to come. In morphological terms, churches would become more sculptural, at least on the outside.

By 1967, Klumb had also authored *Iglesia San Ignacio de Loyola*, at *Urbanización Santa María*, in Río Piedras. Its expansive plan of ample spatiality, the angled/sculptural treatment of the roof, parallel piers laid out in perspective, huge doors in between with colored glass... all make of it one of the most modern, but also idiosyncratic pieces of the decade.

No specific temple typology was endorsed as such during the sixties: churches could be longitudinal, centralized, or fan-shaped, the latter proving popular. *Iglesia Nuestra Señora Reina de Los Angeles*, at *Urbanización Los Angeles*, Carolina, was designed by architect Angel Avilés as a single-nave church, highlighted by a striking, A-shaped roof with beams and prefabricated panels, all in concrete. **(Figure 9)** The main axis is established, as expected, by the altar and, at the opposite end, a spiral staircase that leads to a small choir mezzanine. All stair steps are in terrazzo. Sizable panels representing the *Via Crucis* - the Stations of the Cross - line up at both sides of the nave, furthering the sense of procession towards the altar. Longitudinality is underlined in a different manner at *Iglesia Santa Catalina de Siena*, in *Urbanización Hermanas Dávila*, Bayamón, erected in 1963. Here architect Efraín Pérez Chanis chose to ramp down (at a somewhat steep angle) the single nave of the church towards the altar. A honeycombed, free-standing belfry, as well as several exterior sculptural volumes grant the church its own identity, but excessive, literal "quoting" from Le Corbusier's

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Chapel at Ronchamp - a well known icon at the time - maims any claim of originality in the effort.



Figures 9 and 10: CHURCH OF NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LOS ÁNGELES, Carolina. View of the triangular nave towards the altar. Architect: Ángel Avilés. Photo: Jorge Rigau / CHURCH OF LA MILAGROSA, Hato Rey. Photograph by architect from his professional portfolio. Architect: Samuel G. Marra.

Designers for an important group of churches built in adherence to the new liturgical principles favored fanlike, centrifugal plans. Three outstanding examples include: *Iglesia Inmaculado Corazón de María*, at *Urbanización Santiago Iglesias*, from 1961; *Nuestra Señora de la Milagrosa*, at *Urbanización Pérez Moris*, 1968 (**Figure 10**); and *Iglesia San Luis Rey*, at *Urbanización Reparto Metropolitano*, built in 1968. The 1961 temple was designed by the firm Schimmelphenig, Ruiz y González. Its architecture comprises an imposing welcome awning of diluted Corbusian inspiration, a low-angled, folded plate roof, and a semicircular facade screened by a fairly transparent and abstract triangular ornamental grid in cement. The adjacent school is also roofed by a folded plate, but one more orthogonally shaped. Inside the temple, a floor-to-ceiling mural painting serves as background to the altar. The linear disposition of the *Via Crucis* panels at each side of the main aisle underscores the horizontal proportions of the space.

Nuestra Señora de la Milagrosa, by architect Samuel G. Marra, is also radial in plan, and boasts a high-pitch folded plate for roof (**Figure 11**). Its circumference is mostly covered by expansive, colored-glass walls, and the altar's background is elegantly sheathed in wood. White, cheap, aluminum doors added several years ago currently detract from the church's svelte, modern appearance (**Figure 12**).

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Figures 11 and 12: CHURCH OF LA MILAGROSA, Hato Rey

Exterior view, highlighting curved and angled shapes in concrete. Upwards view, illustrating the aluminum system for colored panes.
Architect: Samuel G. Marra. Photos: Jorge Rigau

The third notable example of a fanlike church, *Iglesia San Luis Rey*, claims dual authorship. Horacio Díaz acted as architect of record, but the design is attributed to Franciscan brother and architect Cajetan J. B. Baumann.⁶⁵ Born in Germany, Baumann took into consideration all liturgical dispositions of the Second Vatican Council. -“*When finished in 1967, the church was considered the most liturgically correct of the archdiocese.*”, argues Fr. Alfonso Guzmán Alfaro, OFM.⁶⁶ At *San Luis*, wall surfaces are mostly made up of cream colored, cement block, left exposed. Horizontal bands, “fins”, and roof - all in white - read as architectural accents.

Inside, it is spacious and well-proportioned. Lally columns support a thin mezzanine, while floor-to-ceiling, clear glass windows articulate many of the building’s volumes.

One last fan-shaped example should be mentioned: *Iglesia Sagrados Corazones*, at *Urbanización Ponce de León* (1969), designed by architect Luis A. Torres.⁶⁷ The designer’s mix of multiple volumes and contrasting vocabularies impede a coherent understanding of the temple’s exterior volumes and interior spaces. Nevertheless, the main space is dynamic, and rich in attractive components.

A pair of examples from the period includes: *Nuestra Señora de Belén*, in the area of San Patricio (1967), and *Iglesia Santa Madre Cabrini*, at *Urbanización Caparra Heights*. Inaugurated in 1969, *Madre Cabrini* constitutes one of the most decidedly sculptural examples of 60’s architecture in Puerto Rico. The internal spatial disposition, however, seems rather haphazard. The location of the altar is at odds with the seating areas. In addition, the long,

⁶⁵ Cajetan B. J. Baumann was the first member of a religious order ever to be named to the American Institute of Architects.

⁶⁶ Fr. Alfonso Guzmán Alfaro, OFM, “*Memoria y profecía: la familia franciscana en Puerto Rico*” (Publicaciones Gaviota, 2015).

⁶⁷ Torres was to be the first president of the *Colegio de Arquitectos de Puerto Rico*, created in 1978.

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glass slit that mediates between two curving planes on the main facade, only hides a closet and leftover spaces behind.

All of the above-mentioned churches share something: they were built at *urbanizaciones*. These suburban developments of single-family residences were the physical by-product of the spiraling demographic growth experienced by Puerto Rico along the sixties. Population spread, and so did the Catholic Church.

And so did other religious denominations, simultaneously acknowledging the Island's augmented and diversified population profile. In Bayamón, at a corner site along Comerío Avenue, architect Humberto Lorenzo Varela designed *Iglesia Evangélica Sión*, whose roof flies out in the shape of three arched vaults, highlighting its intersection location within the surrounding community. Curiously, interior corners of this temple are curved, not angled, granting a "smooth", planar continuity to the space.

Architect Horacio Díaz, in particular, was responsible for three superlative buildings, two churches and one student dormitory. Most important is the *Iglesia Bautista de Caguas*, designed in 1959, and completed in 1967. Located at the town's Gautier Benítez Avenue, this church exalted the use of concrete shells and concrete "filters" or screens, like no other had done at the time. **(Figure 13)**

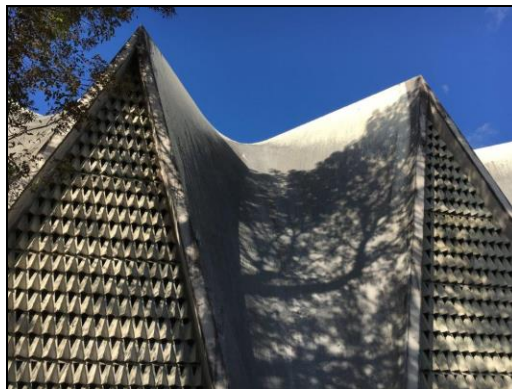


Figure 13: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Caguas

Curving roof and cement screens at side elevations. Architect: Horacio Díaz. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Its arresting mass and upward thrust, its surface sinuosities and angularities, the repetitive large and small-scale staccato articulations, as well as the seamless changes of direction in the ceiling comprised of hyperbolic paraboloids... all render the church as a timeless piece of architecture, one whose vibrancy remains to this day an object of admiration. At his *Iglesia Discípulos de Cristo*, in University Gardens, architect Díaz used hyperbolic parabolic shapes again, but in a different manner. The lower body of the temple is plainly orthogonal, and capped with a cantilever that casts a strong shadow over said base. In contrast, the roof was granted sculptural design treatment, simultaneously rising north and south in pyramidal, tent-

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like manner. Horizontality and verticality fare here somewhat at odds, for the base seems to weigh down the top, while the top wants to fly, yet it can't.

Horacio Díaz's dexterity became again evident in his design for the dormitory facilities at the Evangelical Seminary in Río Piedras, next to the University of Puerto Rico's campus (1959). The slab-like, three-stories building is supported by Y-shaped, faceted columns, generous spaced. The facade of the upper body is gridded without interruption, with wall sections and windows set back, deeply recessed. Columns seem to support with ease the weight imposed upon them, as if a metaphor for hands or fingers. **(Figure 14)** The lower level lodges a common, open space with benches. A dramatic bullnose stair connects to the rooms and the upper floors. However, the plasticity with which all building components were originally handled was never too evident to passersby, given the dormitory's original siting in a somewhat remote location and the fact that said area never developed further. In addition, the building's original design merits are today obscured by the lack of maintenance granted to these dormitory facilities throughout the years. They have been vacant for a long time, failing to capture the imagination of the uninformed, only professionals and students. Architect Enrique Soler Cloquell shared credit with Horacio Díaz in this project.



Figure 14: STUDENT DORMITORIES, EVANGELICAL SEMINARY, Río Piedras
 Recreation lobby, including sculptural/trapezoidal columns, ceiling texture treatment, and paving patterned in hexagons.
 Architects: Horacio Díaz and Enrique Soler Cloquell. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Churches were not the only buildings deeply influenced by modern trends during the 60's. The period also left an imprint in projects for Business, Culture, Education, Government, Health, Housing, Industry, Cinema, Tourism, Transportation, Science, Sports and, as can be foreseen, in Private Residences.

09. Representative Projects

Projects are listed according to DATA CATEGORIES FOR FUNCTIONS AND USES, by Category and Subcategory, as defined in the National Register Bulletin. Color coding is provided to facilitate the quick identification of the eleven (11) category groupings.

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Name	Architect	Category	Subcategory
Eastern Airlines Building	René O. Ramírez	Commerce/Trade	Business
El Comandante Commercial Center	Rodolfo Fernández	Commerce/Trade	Business
Housing Investment Corporation	Reed, Basora y Menéndez	Commerce/Trade	Business
International Commercial Center	Vicente Muñiz Núñez Victor Bisharat	Commerce/Trade	Business
Medina Center, Río Piedras	Rodolfo Fernández	Commerce/Trade	Business
Metropolitan Shopping Center, Hato Rey	René Ramírez	Commerce/Trade	Business
Ponce de León 1155	Toro y Ferrer	Commerce/Trade	Business
Plaza Las Américas, Hato Rey	Ángel Avilés	Commerce/Trade	Business
González Padín Dept. Store, Santurce	Toro y Ferrer	Commerce/Trade	Department Store
Plaza de Mercado de Río Piedras	Pedro A. Miranda y Asociados	Commerce/Trade	Department Store
Banco de Ponce, Hato Rey	Toro y Ferrer	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
Banco de Ponce, Stop 18, Santurce	Vicente Muñiz Núñez	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
Banco de Ponce, Río Piedras 65th Infantry Shopping Center	Antonio Lucarelli, IBEC Arthur Clemens, structural engineer	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
Banco de Ponce, Santa María Shopping Center		Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
Banco Popular Center, Hato Rey	Toro y Ferrer	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
Chase Manhattan Bank, Hato Rey	Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, Gordon Bunshaft, Design Partner	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
1st Federal Savings Bank, Santurce	Lorenzo Ramírez de Arellano	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
1st National City Bank, Hato Rey	René Ramírez	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
1st National City Bank, Santurce	René Ramírez	Commerce/Trade	Financial Institution
Asociación de Maestros, Hato Rey	Pedro Luis Amador	Commerce/Trade	Organizational
Colegio de Abogados, Miramar	René Ramírez	Commerce/Trade	Organizational
FIAT Dealership, Martorani Motors	Armando Vargas	Commerce/Trade	Specialty Store
GEM Store of Puerto Rico	Samuel G. Marra	Commerce/Trade	Specialty Store
Americana Hotel, Isla Verde	Morris Lapidus Lorenzo Ramírez de Arellano	Domestic	Hotel
Da Vinci Hotel, Condado	Enrique Gutiérrez Noldi Schrek	Domestic	Hotel
Hotel Delicias, Fajardo	Jesús Amaral	Domestic	Hotel
Flamboyán Hotel, Condado	Rodolfo Fernández	Domestic	Hotel
Miramar Charterhouse, Miramar	Ángel Avilés	Domestic	Hotel
Ponce Intercontinental Hotel, Ponce	William Tabler	Domestic	Hotel
Ponce de León Hotel	Basora y Menéndez	Domestic	Hotel
Sheraton Hotel, Condado	Toro y Ferrer	Domestic	Hotel
El Convento Hotel, Old San Juan	José Firpi	Domestic	Hotel
Jardines de Montellano, Cayey	William Francis Sigal	Domestic	Institutional Housing
Condominios Bahía, Santurce	William Francis Sigal	Domestic	Institutional Housing
Low-Income Housing Development, Yauco	Rafael A. Pérez-Marchand George Z. Mark	Domestic	Institutional Housing
Condominio La Luna, Old San Juan	Jaime Torres Gaztambide	Domestic	Institutional Housing
Project for La Puntilla, CRUV	Jan Wampler	Domestic	Institutional Housing
Condominios Quintana, Hato Rey	Basora y Menéndez	Domestic	Multiple dwelling
Condominio Universitario, Río Piedras	Jesús E. Amaral	Domestic	Multiple dwelling
Costa Azul Condominium, Condado	Jesús E. Amaral	Domestic	Multiple dwelling
El Monte Apartments, Hato Rey	Edward Larrabee Barnes	Domestic	Multiple dwelling
Miramar 656, Miramar	Henry Klumb	Domestic	Multiple dwelling
Pine Grove, Isla Verde	Gautier y Llenza	Domestic	Multiple dwelling
Dr. Ramón López Residence, Caguas	Orval E. Sifontes Fontán	Domestic	Single dwelling
Vélez Residence, San Germán	Henry Klumb	Domestic	Single dwelling
Daniel Montalvo Residence, Aguas Buenas	Jorge del Río	Domestic	Single dwelling
Casa Beauchamp	Thomas Marvel	Domestic	Single dwelling
Arcadio Vélez House	Jorge del Río	Domestic	Single dwelling

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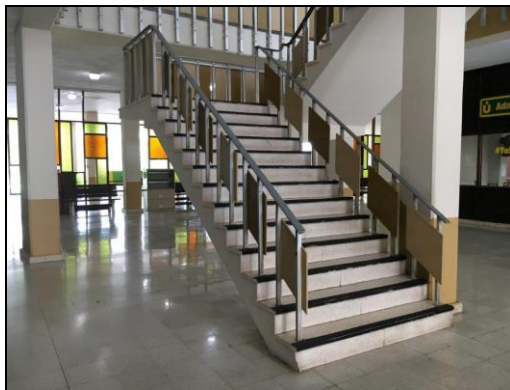
Finca El Salto, Aguas Buenas	Howard Besosa	Domestic	Single dwelling
Marcial Vega Residence, Río Piedras	Jesús Amaral	Domestic	Single dwelling
Silva Residence, Humacao	Jorge del Río	Domestic	Single dwelling
Tito Rodríguez Residence, Ocean Park	Ángel Avilés	Domestic	Single dwelling
Residencia González Giusti, Caparra	Ángel Avilés	Domestic	Single dwelling
Administration, Education, Social Sciences Building, UPR, Río Piedras	Henry Klumb	Education	College
Infirmery Building, Mayagüez UPR	Pedro Luis Amador	Education	College
Law School, UPR	Henry Klumb	Education	College
Seminario Evangélico Dormitory, Río Piedras	Horacio Díaz Enrique Soler Cloquell	Education	Education-related
Student Center, Interamerican University, San Germán (Figure 15)	Vicente Muñiz Núñez Sargent, Webster, Crenshaw, Folley	Education	Education-related
Academia San José, Villa Caparra	David P. C. Chang	Education	School
John F. Kennedy Elementary School, Levittown	David P. C. Chang	Education	School
Víctor Parés Collazo School, El Monte, Hato Rey	Efraín Pérez Chanis	Education	School
Cementerio El Yeso, Ponce	Rafael A. Pérez Marchand George Z. Mark	Funerary	Cemetery
Intendente Ramírez Building, Puerta de Tierra	Toro y Ferrer	Government	Government Office
Centro de Diagnóstico y Tratamiento, Puerta de Tierra	O'Kelly, Méndez, Brunner	Health Care	Hospital
Clínica Dr. Pila, Ponce	Horacio Díaz y Enrique Soler Cloquell	Health Care	Hospital
Mayagüez Medical Center	Pedro Luis Amador	Health Care	Hospital
San Juan Medical Center	Isadore and Zachary Rosenfield	Health Care	Hospital
Psychiatric Out-Patient Department, Ponce Regional Hospital, Ponce (Figure 16)	Reed, Basora y Menéndez	Health Care	Hospital
The John F. Kennedy Day Care Center, Instituto Psicopedagógico, Bayamón	George Z. Mark Rafael A. Pérez Marchand	Health Care	Sanitarium
WAPA TV Studios	David P. C. Chang	Industry/Processing/Extraction	Communication Facility
WIPR TV Station	Reed, Basora y Menéndez	Industry/Processing/Extraction	Communication Facility
Fomento Industries Prototypes	René O. Ramírez	Industry/Processing/Extraction	Manufacturing Facility
Ely Lilly, Carolina	Henry Klumb	Industry/Processing/Extraction	Manufacturing Facility
Puerto Rico Distillers, Arecibo	Schimmelpfenig, Ruiz y González	Industry/Processing/Extraction	Manufacturing Facility
El Convento Hotel, Old San Juan	José Firpi	Other	Conservation
Hotel Meliá, Ponce	Enrique Soler Cloquell	Other	Conservation
Banco Crédito y Ahorro Ponceño, Ponce	Carlos R. Sanz	Other	Conservation
Pueblo Supermarket, Old San Juan	Carlos R. Sanz	Other	Conservation
Myriad preservation projects, Old San Juan	HTC Davis	Other	Conservation
Ponce Art Museum, Ponce	Edward Durrell Stone Carlos R. Sanz	Recreation and Culture	Museum
Hiram Bithorn Stadium, Hato Rey	Pedro A. Miranda & Assocs.	Recreation and Culture	Sports Facility
Olympic Pool at El Escambrón	Jaime Alfonso Pargas, from Cuba Compañía de Fomento Recreativo Consulting firm, planners, designers: Carrero, Ávila y González	Recreation and Culture	Sports Facility
Cobián's Center, Santurce	Ángel Avilés	Recreation and Culture	Theater
Convento y Colegio San Benito, Humacao	Jesús E. Amaral	Religion	Church School
Church of San Ignacio de Loyola	Henry Klumb	Religion	Religious Facility

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Iglesia Bautista de Caguas	Horacio Díaz	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia de Tres Santos Reyes, Aguas Buenas	Gonzalo González Seijo	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia Santos Ángeles Custodios	Jesús E. Amaral	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia de Madre Cabrini		Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia Discipulos de Cristo, University Gardens	Horacio Díaz	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia de Sión, Bayamón	Humberto Lorenzo	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia Inmaculado Corazón de María, Urb. Santiago Iglesias	Schimmelphenig, Ruiz y González	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia San Luis Rey	Brother Cajetan Baumann Horacio Díaz Enrique Soler Cloquell	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia de Santa Catalina, Bayamón	Efraín Pérez Chanis	Religion	Religious Facility
Chapel, Communications Relay Center Fort Allen, Juana Díaz	Tippets, Abbott, McCarthy & Stratton	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia Presbiteriana, Caparra Terrace	Horacio Díaz Enrique Soler	Religion	Religious Facility
Iglesia de La Milagrosa, Hato Rey	Samuel G. Marra	Religion	Religious Facility
Round Hill Community Center	David P. C. Chang	Social	Clubhouse
San Juan Combined Center/Radar Approach Control (CERAP), ["Federal Aviation Building", Carolina	Horacio Díaz	Transportation	Air-related
Municipal Parking; "El Parking de Doña Fela" (and the demise of the historic walls)	McClintock & Thun	Transportation	Road-related
Roberto H. Todd Parking, Stop 18, Santurce	Gonzalo Fernós	Transportation	Road-related
San Juan Municipal Parking Proposal	René O. Ramírez	Transportation	Road-related



Figures 15 and 16: STUDENT CENTER, INTERAMERICAN UNIVERSITY, San Germán. Main stair with wood and acrylic dividers. Architect: Vicente Muñoz Núñez / PSYCHIATRIC OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENT (REGIONAL HOSPITAL), Ponce. Inner, open hallway, articulated from the ground. Architects: Reed, Basora y Menéndez. Photos: Jorge Rigau

10. Design Features

It took the first half of the 20th century for eclectic architectural styles to lose their decades-old grasp on Puerto Rican society. A watered-down taste for Art Deco details persisted well into

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the 1940's, and one of the best examples of the Spanish Revival on the Island was built as late as 1952.⁶⁸ By mid-century, modern buildings had already made their appearance - but it was not until the 1960's that the newly-adopted design idiom can be said to have taken hold with the general public. Echoing the development of the modern style elsewhere around the world, structure, form, ornament, specific architectural elements, and distinct building types and materials received particular attention in Puerto Rico. Among those properties most characteristic of the period, nine (9) key features prevail:

- A. Structure as Ornament**
- B. Freedom of Form**
- C. Sculpted Building Profiles**
- D. Towers with Plynth**
- E. Ornament as Grille**
- F. Arches Resuscitated**
- G. Stairs the Star**
- H. Awesome Mansions**
- I. Trending Tectonics**

A. Structure as Ornament

Modern architecture professed adherence to truth and functionality, principles that many designers chose to address and express in terms of the structural treatment of their buildings. Columns and beams were often exposed and their reticular pattern made regularly evident in elevation by recessing non-structural elements and fenestration components. As a result, light and shadow highlighted depth and the tridimensional qualities of most volumes designed accordingly. As early as 1956, Eero Saarinen - among notable modern architects - had argued:

*"...I think ornament, in our time, will come as it always has come, from the accentuation of structure. I mean starting with the structure and then the playing up of it beyond the necessity of the structure. With a willingness to have this texture which it creates, we will have ornament."*⁶⁹

What happened next has been summed up by several architectural historians, including Jorge Lizardi-Pollock, from Puerto Rico: *"...the modern avantgarde did not exile ornament. It may seem ironic, but determination regarding its annihilation, ended up granting it new roles, this*

⁶⁸ Villa Ange, in Yauco, by architect Pedro Méndez.

⁶⁹ John Peter, *"The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century"*, 81.

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*time invulnerable, now associated to structure or function.*⁷⁰ Saarinen's words and Lizardi-Pollock's aptly explain why many projects built during the 60's in the Island make a point to show off their structural system. Most apartment buildings designed by Jesús E. Amaral, of the firm *Amaral y Morales* - and particularly *Costa Azul*, in Ocean Park, and *Condominio Universitario*, in Río Piedras - adhere to said principle. Andrés Mignucci, in analyzing Amaral's work, underscores how the architect acknowledged structure as much more than a mere solution to the force of gravity: "...rigor in his discipline led Amaral to develop a method centered on structural modulation as true generator of the design. His projects can be read as complete entities in which the module, the generative cell, is constantly visible and evident."⁷¹

Similarly conceived projects of the period are Pine Grove Condominiums (1960) in *Isla Verde*, by Gautier y Llenza; and Ashford Medical Center, in Condado, by Joaquín Rodríguez Benítez. In the latter, the main volume of offices highlights unabashedly the load bearing system of columns and beams.⁷² Although never built, the proposal for Buena Vista High Rise, by Horacio Díaz and Enrique Soler Cloquell, appropriates comparable strategies.⁷³

Amaral's most assertive example of structure-as-ornament, however, was the *Convento y Colegio San Benito*, from 1962. In it, as the datum-like, main building stretches horizontally, structure provides rhythm, at the same time celebrating depth and reveal, unfolding all architectural components in slow revelation. That is, after all, what ornament is all about. Upon scrutiny, other projects by the firm emerge as more literal in their intent to grant structure some ornamental value. At Cervantes #9 (a small apartment building in Condado), and the Parish House in Yabucoa, exterior walls are recessed from the bearing elements, with beam sections exposed rather crudely, nevertheless prominent in elevation.

The idea that structure constitutes ornament was also made manifest in buildings where columnar supports became a showpiece, as represented by the key-shaped columns at Ponce's Centro Comercial; the conical, faceted piers that architect Rodolfo Fernández designed for *El Comandante* Commercial Center,⁷⁴ and those over which the Dormitory for the Evangelical Seminary, in Río Piedras, stand. Elevated on sculptured concrete piers, this cantilevered residence for students, strongly evokes Le Corbusier's Swiss Pavilion from 1932, the French architect's first major public building.

One must understand that, by sculpting columns, buildings above them appeared to be challenging gravity more gracefully for, as stated by preeminent architect Phillip Johnson: "*The modern style of architecture is one in which we emphasize the weightlessness, the lightness,*

⁷⁰ Jorge Lizardi-Pollock, "Ornamento e identidad", *Patrimonio*, Vol. 3, 2011, p. 7.

⁷¹ Andrés Mignucci, *Jesús Eduardo Amaral Arquitecto/Architect*, p. 40]

⁷² José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 203.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 233.

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the inherent characteristic of skeleton construction.” ... adding about them that *“they make this massive building float and keep light, which is the essence of modern.”*⁷⁵ Fairly well-known, but already demolished, the Sears Roebuck Company building, in Hato Rey, also relied on the revelation of its structural system as an ornamental device.⁷⁶ However, commitment to the expressive character of beams and columns - as we shall see - did not deter architects from engaging in explorations of architectural form. Orthogonal, rational designs comfortably then coexisted with the advent of more fluid spatial concepts.

B. Freedom of Form

The Y-shaped columns at the dorm of the Evangelical Seminary in Río Piedras are not the only ones that can attest to the decade’s expanded liberty regarding architectural form. As early as 1960, Reyner Banham was accusing the modern masters of betraying functionality and construction in favor of form⁷⁷, but his pronouncement fell on deaf ears. The world-wide trend has been described by Spanish critic Antón Capitel:

*“...novel, trendy, and streamlined forms take greater hold for being modern and amusing - and are not beneath contempt - but for sure, they are not the product of technology, but of style. A style is made out of technology, of the aerodynamic condition, although the designer perhaps may not exactly realize it.”*⁷⁸

Capitel himself has synopsisized: *“Without an idea of form, architecture does not happen.”*⁷⁹ And the pursuit of form is one of the distinctive design traits of architecture produced along cities in Puerto Rico, as elsewhere. For the outdoor chapel at *Cementerio El Yeso*, in Ponce, (**Figure 17**) architects Rafael A. Pérez Marchand and George Z. Mark used dendriform columns, akin in shape (if not in scale) to those used by Frank Lloyd Wright in the Johnson Wax Building, so named because of their tree-like shape. (**Figure 18**) With designers navigating the tension between formal constraint and freedom, the sculptural treatment of concrete during the 1960’s included much more elaborated types of supports. Among these, are: the columns at Church of Santa Catalina de Siena in Bayamón⁸⁰; the cone-shaped columns of the Nursing Home, at San Juan Medical Center (including an angled arch, **Figure 19**); and the columns and bent arch at Condado’s Ashford Medical Center.⁸¹

⁷⁵ John Peter, *“The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century”*, 84.

⁷⁶ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 233.

⁷⁷ Antón Capitel, *Papeles de crítica: de arquitectura, arte y ciudad*, 52.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁸⁰ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 166.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 203.

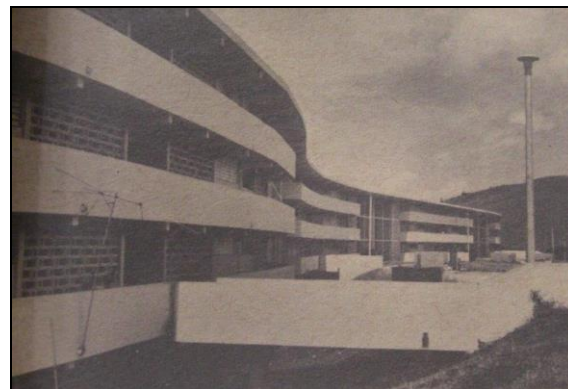
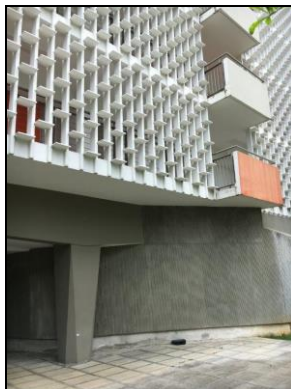
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Figures 17 and 18: **CEMENTERIO EL YESO**, Ponce
East elevation of administrative/funerary building and downspouts / Circles and cylinders integrate the mourning chapel.
Architects: Rafael A. Pérez Marchand and George Z. Mark Photos: Jorge Rigau



Figures 19 and 20: **SAN JUAN MEDICAL CENTER**, San Juan. Sculptural columns, beams and screens at nursery building. Architect: Efraín Pérez Chanis. Photo: Jorge Rigau / **JARDINES DE MONTELLANO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**, Cayey. Reproduction of photo included in *Urbe Magazine*, Issue #5. Architect: William Sigal

The seashell shape housing the restaurant at *La Concha Hotel*, by Toro y Ferrer, is probably the most iconic effort of the period. Contrasted as it is against the adjacent, orthogonal, slab building, its seashore location furthers its original metaphoric intention, symbolically standing for the hotel's brand name.

Form addressed as multiple volumes was superbly manipulated in two emblematic housing projects built in the 1960's: *Jardines de Montellano Development* (**Figure 20**), and *El Monte Apartments*. *Jardines*, designed by architect William F. Sigal, snakes down a hillside in Cayey, including two apartment buildings and clusters of town houses. For *El Monte*, architect Edward Larabee Barnes conceived two concave, single-loaded, apartment slabs looking inwards, but slightly displaced from each other. According to their orientation, they are referred to as *El Monte North* and *El Monte South*. As can be experienced to this day, the location and height of both buildings succeeded at granting a spatial identity of its own to the public, urban space contained in-between the two volumes.

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At *El Monte* South, some original hexagon-shaped, floor paving tiles still remain in place (**See Figure 46 in page 85**).⁸² If worth noting, it is because during the 60's, hexagonal figures captured most designers' imagination in an unprecedented manner. Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion House and Tower had been divulged world-wide since the early 60's, after his much publicized, 1959, one-man exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Fuller's engagement with triangles and hexagons seems to have earned him many disciples. Fascination with the polygon's six sides and six vertices - equilateral and equiangular - spurred manipulation of the shape, often "flattening" hexagons by stretching them along one axis to produce a sort of elongated rhombus.

In 1966, the University of Essex, Colchester Campus, in England, "determined to look to the future and break with tradition" inaugurated, among other "brutalist" buildings, The Hexagon Restaurant, whose iconic character was shortly after immortalized in a Royal Mail stamp from the early 1970's. Kenneth Capon, of Architects Co-Partnership was the designer. In ways difficult to establish with any certitude - lacking any verifiable linkages - these international developments did not go unnoticed in Puerto Rico, where the hexagon was featured in multiple projects at different scales. *Amaral y Morales* adopted it for *Condominio Costa Azul*, in Condado. As a hexagonal volume, partially built in prefabricated concrete units, this housing tower included twenty-four (24) typical apartments, two (2) per floor, and one penthouse. *Shockbeton*, an architectural concrete precasting system developed in the early 1930's in the Netherlands, was used in mullions and window frames.⁸³ Because of its spatial layout, its proportions, and siting next to the ocean - currently harboring its intended use program - *Costa Azul* remains one of the exemplary condominiums of 1960's architecture in Puerto Rico.

Architect Pedro Luis Amador also resorted to the six-sided/six angles figure when designing the tower of his Mayagüez Medical Center, whose main body rises as an elongated hexagon above a lower plynth-like base. Projecting solid walls and retreating fenestration - fully aware of how the tropical sun assists in sculpting an elevation - Amador succeeded in granting depth to the hexagon's longitudinal facades, and contrasting them with the more solid ones at both ends.

Hexagon fever reached most local architects. The firm of *Reed, Basora y Menéndez* bequeathed Puerto Rico its only public hexagonal space so far, one defined by the two (2) apartment towers that comprise *Condominios Quintana*, in Hato Rey. As wide-angled, V-

⁸² Santiago Gala Aguilera, "Suburban Bliss: Un[re]encuentro insospechado con el pasado reciente", *Patrimonio*, Vol. 3, 2011, pp. 68-73.

⁸³ Patented in 1935 and marketed for close to half a century, Shockbeton is based on "shocking" (vibrating) the concrete mixture for a few minutes before casting to reduce its water contents and achieve better compaction and strength using less cement. Shockbeton precasting plants produced customized building elements like sills and window frames. Upon being interviewed, architect Jesús E. Amaral recalls a local Dutch representative of the system. The designers reminisces: "*I saw it used by Toro y Ferrer in the Capitol's annex buildings and I liked it.*"

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shaped volumes, these buildings encompass a green, leisure and recreation area for the use of residents.

The market at Río Piedras, by Pedro Miranda and Associates featured a hexagonal playground. The paving of the main plaza at San Juan Medical Center is patterned in hexagons. At Bayamón's *Instituto Psicopedagógico* (also known as The John F. Kennedy Day Care Center, 1967) by George Z. Mark and Rafael A. Pérez Marchand, the institution's main circulation axis was culminated with a hexagonal multipurpose room. By shape and scale, this constitutes the hierarchical component of the overall architectural composition. To add to its spatial flexibility, the room was provided folding metal tables retractable into wall pockets.

For the plan of his centralized church *Nuestra Señora del Carmen* in Cataño, Henry Klumb selected a hexagon motif. Architect Ángel Avilés used the same shape to pattern all the fenestration of the Miramar Charterhouse Hotel, rising high in Miramar, facing the Condado Lagoon. Additionally, Edward Durrell Stone based his design for the Ponce Art Museum on a hexagonal plan, a design decision made more evident to visitors upon reaching the second floor.⁸⁴

Columns, platforms, ornamental screens, and even swimming pools, surrendered to the six-sided shape. At their base, columns of the Evangelical Seminary's dormitory are hexagonal before becoming Y-shaped supports. Even the paving pattern at this building's open-but-covered area echoes the aforementioned shape. George Z. Mark, in his 1965 low-income housing development at Yauco, repeats the form as an open-air, stage-like platform with four (4) detached steps within a paved, pedestrian plaza. At the *Instituto Psicopedagógico*, by the same architect, the patio around which most program components lie, includes sculptural play equipment, a fountain, and a sunken, quasi hexagonal area, stepped to double up as amphitheater seats. At their Puerto Rico Sheraton Hotel in Condado, *Toro y Ferrer* made the swimming pool both hexagonal and hierarchical. In designing *La Concha*, the same architects used a hexagon screen horizontally in the hotel's street level facade and vertically in the tall slab facing the ocean. A comparable screen was used by architect Samuel G. Marra in the Residence for Antonio Caldas, in Río Piedras (1963).

Along the sixties, freedom of form was addressed in another relevant manner: incorporating free-standing volumes in projects based on multiple built components articulated to simultaneously reveal programmatic complexity and programmatic interdependence.⁸⁵ Henry Klumb had earlier impressed his colleagues with the cylindrical cafeteria he designed for the Parke-Davis Pharmaceutical Complex in Carolina. Three other projects best illustrate how locally object-buildings proliferated: the cylindrical chapel at *Convento y Colegio San Benito*,

⁸⁴ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 260.

⁸⁵ Antonio Bonet Correa, "A manera de prólogo: La producción bibliográfica de la arquitectura de Antón Capitel", in Antón Capitel, *Papeles de crítica: de arquitectura, arte y ciudad*, 16.

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by *Amaral y Morales*; the cafeteria in-the-round at San Juan's Medical Center⁸⁶, and the hyperbolic paraboloid built in adjacency to Miramar Charterhouse's swimming pool. Said hotel also featured a circular rooftop dining room for ninety (90) people at the top, as if a flying saucer were spinning to grant full view of the breathtaking vistas commanded from the building's privileged urban location. One more example deserves mention: the John F. Kennedy Elementary School, in Levittown, by architect David P. C. Chang (**Figure 21**). As one approaches the academic complex, a cylindrical volume with a wide, circular overhang (the kindergarten) welcomes all visitors. The overhang includes several radial/rectangular "cutouts" that add lightness to the roof, and cast playful shadows on the volume's curving walls and floor, all together suggesting rotation.



Figure 21 JOHN F. KENNEDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Levittown), Toa Baja. Cylindrical feature housing the kindergarten.
Architect: David P.C. Chang. Photo: Jorge Rigau

The manipulation of form, as it always happens, can lead to excess and, all over the globe, the 60's were no exception: "*Form is both safety and imprisonment... Form is rigid, inviolable, devastatingly correct; that is its vulnerability. Form can be broken. It will tolerate variation but not transgression... The only alternative to form is chaos.*"⁸⁷ Novelist Rachel Cusk's admonition regarding form in respect to Literature weighs also heavily in Architecture as a discipline. For indeed, some projects lack rigor - thus, relevance - in their unrestrained use of form. Crippled by shape overloading, *Iglesia Santa Catalina de Siena*, in Bayamón, remains a most uncontrolled design effort from the sixties.⁸⁸ Critic Peter Waldman, upon considering the temple as juror for the AIA Puerto Rico AIA Test of Time Award in 1994, summed it up:

"The most extroverted and unrestrained of the projects reviewed, this scheme is exuberant post-Ronchamp, post-Niemeyer, sharing the joys and excesses of the

⁸⁶ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 163.

⁸⁷ Writer Rachel Cusk, addressing her literary frustrations with the novel form in her personal chronicle *Aftermath* (2012), as quoted in the *New York Review of Books*, by critic Claire Messud, in "Fierce, She Got Outside the Moment", 28.

⁸⁸ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 166.

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baroque counter-reformation. Unlike the quality evident in other projects it seems more a collection of motifs rather than (sic) a synthesis of a critical position.”⁸⁹

David P. C. Chang’s proposal for a Community Center at Round Hill represents another odd entry, consistent with the period’s unbridled infatuation with form. In this project, the designer articulated the use program in separate pavilions and crowned them with roofs more akin to Asian/Pacific architecture than to any local expression or precedent. Used repeatedly within the project, these unconventional roofs endowed the center with some tribal, exotic - and touristy - look foreign to the Puerto Rican context. It was never built, but Chang succeeded in incorporating similar roofs in his design for WAPA-TV television station in Guaynabo.⁹⁰

Form, indeed, dictates how buildings look against the sky and, in spite of the two previous overindulgent examples just mentioned, the 60’s were nevertheless prodigal in cutting exciting, bold architectural silhouettes in the blue yonder of Puerto Rico.

C. Sculpted Building Profiles

“Who’s afraid of the big bold roof?”, read a 1963 ad from the Du Pont Company in the trade magazine *Progressive Architecture*. “*Progressive architects across the country are creating bold and beautiful new landmarks in roof design - more easily than you might think.*”⁹¹ It was true. Schools, shelters, gas stations, department stores - as well as churches and chapels - were all being designed taking into account novel shapes and forms.

Modern churches gave architects ample opportunity to explore the plasticity of cement and to shy away from traditionally orthogonal renditions, whether in plan or in elevation. In this respect, Le Corbusier had set a high standard which many were eager to emulate: the Norte Dame de Haut Chapel, at Ronchamp, whose impact was felt worldwide. By 1957, American architect Arne Jacobsen was stating: “...*Le Corbusier’s chapel at Ronchamp is, in any case, the building that has made the greatest impression on me... it attains such a high level that almost no other building has ever reached.*”⁹² *Iglesia Santa Catalina de Siena*, previously mentioned, incorporated an upwards paraboloid profile and myriad shapes in temple, baptistry, and belfry appropriated from Ronchamp’s design vocabulary.⁹³ Its architect, Efraín

⁸⁹ Benjamín Vargas, Ed. “*La vereda tropical: Down where the trade winds blow*”, Test of Time Awards Guide, 1990-2009, American Institute of Architects, Puerto Rico Chapter (San Juan: Fundación Puertorriqueña de la Humanidades y *National Endowment for the Humanities*, n.d.), 22. In spite Peter Waldman’s acerbic comment as Jury Chair, the project went on to earn an Honorable Mention.

⁹⁰ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 262.

⁹¹ *Progressive Architecture* magazine, December 1963, 70-71.

⁹² John Peter, “The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century”, 9.

⁹³ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 166.

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Pérez Chanis, worked briefly in Corb's atelier in Paris, and another of his projects, the Medical Sciences Building in San Juan Medical Center is also heavily influenced by the French master.

Sculpted building profiles flourished. Puerto Nuevo's *Iglesia Madre Cabrini* was donned sloping walls and roof. *Iglesia Discípulos de Cristo*, in University Gardens, extends upwards in tent-like, slowly-sloping manner. At Bayamón's *Iglesia de Sión*, the roof flares out in wide-open, semicircular arches. *Nuestra Señora Reina de Los Angeles*, by Angel Avilés, is distinguished by its single, A-shaped, triangular main nave. Nine triangles defined by concrete shells integrate the main elevation of *Iglesia La Milagrosa*, in Río Piedras (1968). Samuel G. Marra, its architect, interpreted these forms, metaphorically, as evocative of the Virgin Mary's tiara.

Two churches stand out among others: *Iglesia de los Santos Angeles Custodios*, in Yabucoa, and *Iglesia Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, in Cataño. Both temples substituted the original, traditional church in town, doing so with unusual siting strategies and brazen designs, resorting to bold, clear cut shapes and rough, exposed concrete. And both were undaunted by the scale or character of the surrounding context. Jesús E. Amaral was the architect for the Yabucoa church; Henry Klumb for the one in Cataño. With a sinuous roof and two svelte bell towers, *Santos Angeles Custodios* imposes itself over the immediate open space around, on which it sits at an angle. Concave and convex hyperbolic paraboloids are alternated in succession along the temple's main nave. *Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, in contrast, sits in a tight site, with curved walls that intersect each other, its main, hexagonal space capped by a mushroom roof and a belfry made up of three concrete columns that meet up high. The congregation was to be seated in the round,⁹⁴ but in recent years, the main altar was pushed up against a wall, relocating pews in a frontal position. Klumb's church in Cataño was Puerto Rico's early example of *béton brut* use. Unfortunately, it has already been painted over several times.

Most distinctive among churches built along the 1960's are Aguas Buenas' *Iglesia de los Tres Santos Reyes*, by Gonzalo González Seijo, and the *Primera Iglesia Bautista de Caguas*, by Horacio Díaz. **(Figure 22)** The temple at Aguas Buenas was shaped as an extrusion of a right angle. At the lower end, a volume protrudes to house supporting facilities. The roof rises to culminate in an independent, flat belfry that is intersected by a deep, folding plane within which the bells are hung. Inside, the right angle dictates an asymmetrical layout. Triangular, colored glass panes underline the entrance elevation.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 164.

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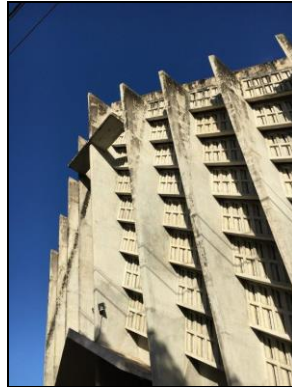


Figure 22: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Caguas. Sculptural treatment of concrete at main elevation. Architect: Horacio Díaz. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Church belfries were sculpted with zest against the sky. For his church in Yabucoa, Amaral opted to create two identical, orthogonal ones, in exposed concrete, alternating void and solid. For San José Church, in his hometown Camuy, Pedro Luis Amador, conceived a more playful belfry consisting of several planes paired and contrasted together. At *Inmaculado Corazón de María*, architects Schimmelphenig, Ruiz y González shed most traces of tradition, resorting to an undulating plane that rises up with a similarly-curved profile. The most abstract - and modern - of all bell towers, nonetheless, is the one at the entrance of the chapel at the Communications Relay Center, in Fort Allen, Juana Díaz, built by the US Army. Amidst barracks and other military facilities, this belfry is defined by minimal linear elements instead of solid mass, incorporating yellow and blue colored glass used with restraint.⁹⁵ (Figure 23)



Figures 23 a, b and c: COMMUNICATIONS RELAY CENTER CHAPEL (Fort Allen), Juana Díaz. Exterior and interior views. Architects: Tippetts, Abbets, McCarthy and Stratton. Photos: Jorge Rigau and Santiago Gala Aguilera (SHPO)

⁹⁵ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 251.

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All along the sixties, architects went to all efforts in their determination to cut an idiosyncratic profile against the sky. Breezeways at UPR's 1968 *Colegio Regional de Humacao* were covered with pyramidal shapes that necklaced the building complex extensively. Architect Jesús E. Amaral capped their top with a slightly trapezoidal, small and solid rectangle. When viewed against the surrounding mountainous landscape, these geometrical roof caps make evident the architect's intention to acknowledge the neighboring context in abstract terms.

Unique among period features - and also from 1968 - stands the mourning chapel at La Piedad Cemetery, in Barrio Magueyes, Ponce. Free-standing, and svelte, it translates traditional gothic vaulting into thin, concrete shells devoid of any ornament (**Figure 24**).



Figure 24: LA PIEDAD CEMETERY, Ponce. Mourning chapel integrating Medieval and Modern in concrete.
Architect unknown. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Among several buildings for Ponce's coffee corporation *Cafeteros de Puerto Rico*, architect Carlos R. Sanz designed a free-standing, cylindrical component covered by a circular roof with an extended overhang, and articulated as a flattened umbrella.⁹⁶ The Rehabilitation Center at San Juan Medical Center, by Joaquín Rodríguez Benítez -although one-story and rectangular, incorporates a roof that gently curves up, extending beyond the volume below. At each of its sides, the curve projects out further as a flat beam (also curved), ultimately becoming flat columns that are inclined inwards. Supports and the "sagging" beams suggest together an "M", the letter shape being replicated at smaller scale in ancillary walkways.

The decade also witnessed the use of V-shaped, concrete roofs in Puerto Rico, preferred and replicated by alums of Cuban architect, Mario Romañach, particularly Evelio Pina and Jorge del Río. Romañach, who championed the modern dogma and rubbed elbows with key exponents of the international style, was highly admired in his native Cuba, where he designed important projects before migrating to the United States after the 1959 revolution. Pina's most representative project of Romañach's influence in his work is a residence at Reina de las Flores St., in Santa María, with multiple roof components folded up as in flight. However, it

⁹⁶ Ibid., 261.

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was del Río who appropriated the V-shape cover as his own trademark, best demonstrated at the Silva Residence, in Humacao; the Arcadio Vélez House, in Río Piedras; and his own residence at University Gardens, Río Piedras.

The detail also appears in his winning entry for a competition of a small museum to be built at *Las Colinas* Development, in Fajardo. The contest - sponsored by the University of Puerto Rico, Eastern Shore Development and the *Instituto de Arquitectos de Puerto Rico* - attracted eighteen (18) entries. The second prize was awarded to Rafael A. Pérez Marchand; third went to Luis F. Coll Arana. Jurors were: artist Rafael Rivera García and Jorge M. Guillermet, for UPR; architect William F. Sigal, for Eastern Shore Development, and Jesús E. Amaral, Horacio Díaz, and Carlos R. Sanz, in representation of the architects' organization.

Sculpted building profiles, as evidenced, were most varied but, of all possible building contours, the serrated outline proved to be the most popular roof configuration during the 1960's. Folded plates, high or low angled, were used for any kind of building program: religious, industrial, institutional, or residential. Sometimes they would span the full length of a structure; in other instances they became no more than timid overhangs. Size did not matter; folded plates were in. Concrete made them possible. Adulation of the material knew no limit. Venezuelan architect Carlos Villanueva praised it as a "...symbol of the construction progress of a whole century, submissive and strong as an elephant, monumental like stone, humble like brick..."⁹⁷ Early in the decade, Italian master Pier Luigi Nervi affirmed: "...in it we find all the static, plastic, and structural characteristics of all other materials..."⁹⁸ Louis Khan, a towering figure of American architecture, categorized concrete as "stone that can understand."⁹⁹ Cement's ease of manipulation - its plasticity - enabled designers to be more playful in their choice of forms, being as they were then, quite removed from the early tenets of the Modern Movement. Saw-toothed building components must be understood as one way to celebrate the opportunity. Architects Morris Lapidus and José F. (Pipo) de la Torre covered the Golf Club at *El Conquistador* Hotel, in Fajardo, in playful, jagged manner.¹⁰⁰ At Interamerican University's Student Center, in San Germán, architect Vicente Muñiz Núñez treated the building's main volume in folded-plate manner. (**Figure 25**) David P. C. Chang similarly highlighted one of several volumes that comprise *Academia San José*, in Guaynabo. (**Figure 26**)

⁹⁷ John Peter, "The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century", 34.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁹⁹ *Idem.*

¹⁰⁰ *Urbe*. Núm. 29, Vol. 6: junio, julio 1968, 57.

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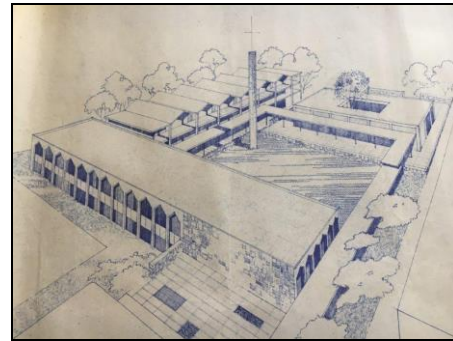
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Figures 25 and 26: STUDENT CENTER, INTERAMERICAN UNIVERSITY, San Germán. Folded plate roof articulated from exterior walls. Architect: Vicente Muñiz Núñez. Photo: Jorge Rigau / ACADEMIA SAN JOSÉ HIGH SCHOOL, Guaynabo. Aerial perspective drawing. Architect: David P. C. Chang

In spite of the fan-like, plan configuration of *Iglesia Inmaculado Corazón de María*, in *Santiago Iglesias*, the temple's architects designed a folded-plate roof that tapers as it reaches the altar area. Sawlike tops also became popular for industrial warehouses like the Bacardí Bottling Plant, in Cataño, designed by Engs. Miguel Rosich and Narciso Padilla in prestressed, post tensioned concrete.¹⁰¹ In many instances, the incorporation of folded-plates could be plainly whimsical, as for example, when used by architect Pedro Luis Amador at the *Asociación de Maestros* to cover of the pedestrian crossing over the pond between to building volumes. A case in point might also be the use made of it in a small follie-in-the-round, included as part of the landscape improvements by landscape architect Carlos Lavandero for Buena Vista High Rise, an unbuilt project authored by Horacio Díaz and Enrique Soler Cloquell.¹⁰²

Notable serriform awnings dating from the sixties still remain in place at *Banco Popular* building in Aguadilla, and the former *González Padín* Store, in Santurce (by *Toro y Ferrer*). The most distinctive of them all, nevertheless, is the one featured at Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium, in Hato Rey. For this sports venue, an architectural competition was held in 1959 and won by Pedro A. Miranda & Associates. Key local firms participating included: *Amaral y Morales* (second place), José Firpi, Horacio Díaz, Rafael A. Pérez Marchand (third place); also José A. Fernández, from New York, and Alexis B. Kononoff, from Miami (each having been awarded an honorable mention). Three architects joined the panel of judges: Osvaldo Toro, William Reed, and Humberto Espinosa.¹⁰³ Orval E. Sifontes Fontán and Alexander Papesh were associate architects in charge of design. Papesh went on to become one of America's foremost builder of stadiums.¹⁰⁴ Martha C. Gruson, from Cambridge, Massachusetts was the landscape architect. The stadium was completed in 1962, and inaugurated October 24, when

¹⁰¹ Idem.

¹⁰² José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 58.

¹⁰³ Orval E. Sifontes Fontán y Sara T. Aponte Meléndez. *Hiram Bithorn: Visión, icono y estadio* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Fundación Pro Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Inc., 2013), 39.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 8, 62.

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the world was expectant about the Cuban Missile Crisis. On January 22, 2014 it was included in the National Register of Historic Places (#13001118)

Planner and Professor Sara T. Aponte Meléndez explains how the Bithorn came to be partly in response to escalating juvenile delinquency in the capital city:

“As a result, the authorities began to pay special attention to the interest that young people displayed in legitimate sports... The government seized the occasion to devise adequate sports facilities, which might channel the needs of the Island’s young, urban population.”¹⁰⁵

The stadium’s daring architectural statement has been fancied by the population for decades. Architect Sifontes Fontán explains how the double curvature geometry of the concrete roof (a hyperbolic paraboloid) was designed to shelter the audience, but also to impact the urban landscape:

“The stadium... had to be an important element that conveyed an elegance that could withstand time and would become an attraction for generations to come. Its roof had to be one of those elements that broadcast its character that captured and showcased its most important feature.”¹⁰⁶

Addressing the folding roof ensemble and the resulting silhouette, he adds:

“The shape of the roof tiles [sic: should read slabs] obeyed the structural system we employed - with points tapering downward on the side of the playing field and upward on the side nearest to the exterior of the stadium. As a result, the aesthetic of the structure was even more attractive.”¹⁰⁷

It certainly was. In anecdotal mode, the son of architect Pedro A. Miranda recalls:

“Soon after, a visual echo of the Estadio Hiram Bithorn spread over San Juan through the public bus shelters which, although not built with doubly curving surfaces, their cantilivered, folded plate roofs in tandem with a diamond patterned back screen, made a sort of miniature version of the Stadium.”¹⁰⁸

If one building still stands as engaging evidence of the 60’s proclivity for cutting distinctive architectural profiles against the sky, that is the Hiram Bithorn Stadium.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 28.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 64.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 74.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 96.

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At that time, enthusiasm spread among professionals and the public alike for any project "... whose original design breaks the monotony of the straight and severe line evident in other buildings".¹⁰⁹

D. Towers with Plynth

However, other aspirations also fueled construction during the sixties. Verticality carried with it the prestige of progress so, many office and residential buildings were conceived as exercises in perpendicularity. In the best examples, towers negotiated their urban location by accommodating programmatic components at a base with a larger footprint than that of their volume above. A strategy referred to in Spanish as *torre-placa*, this has been identified as "...one of the most characteristic building typologies of modernism - the tower and platform high-rise building..."¹¹⁰ The best examples were designed with an urban purpose, stacking apartments and offices in the vertical volume, and aligning business and commercial facilities within the horizontal mass, most often at street level, incorporating mezzanines. Manhattan's Lever House, by Skidmore Owings and Merrill - a key architectural icon of the International Style - was the precedent for towers with plynth, having been inaugurated in 1952, in New York.

In Puerto Rico, several buildings were treated "...like a sculpture placed over a pedestal..."¹¹¹ Architect Lionel Fernández, with Sargent, Webster, Crenshaw and Folley, Associated Architects, Engineers, and Planners, designed *Borinquen Towers*, three (3) FHA rental condominiums in the area of *San Patricio*, above a single, extended commercial plynth under the trio of buildings. Caribbean Towers, in Miramar, was allegedly, "...the first combined, stores, office, and apartment building... the second largest on the Island..." With a single slab parallel to Ponce de León Avenue, the complex of 180 apartments is set back from the sidewalk just enough to create a covered walkway appropriately scaled down for passersby. *Bird Construction* was the contractor selected to erect Caribbean Towers in gang forming, a system praised for its speed and economy, based on lifting into place steel-ply forms for panels or fillers permanently assembled in a gangs, either vertically or horizontally, for use in large and small repetitive work."¹¹² The architect was Rodolfo Fernández.

Fernández also designed *Medina Center* in adherence to the *tower/plinth typology* popular in Puerto Rico from the 1960's through the 1970's. Oriented east-west, it sits one block away from the main plaza in the city of Río Piedras, rising as a slender, modern, rectangular volume placed above a parking podium, but articulated from it, seemingly detached. The top of the

¹⁰⁹ Urbe. Núm. 25, Vol. 5: octubre, noviembre 1967, 25.

¹¹⁰ Hugo Mondragón L. and Catalina Mejía M., Eds., *Modern South America: objects.buildings.territories*, 33.

¹¹¹ Armando Carola, "The Traces of Time: Entropy and Transformation in the Plaza de Armas Building in Santiago" in Hugo Mondragón L. and Catalina Mejía M., Eds., *Modern South America: objects.buildings.territories. Santiago*, 148-163.

¹¹² Urbe. Núm. 22, Vol. 5: marzo, abril, mayo 1967, 7.

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podium is a generous terrace from which three square (but slim) columns rise to hold an independent floor slab. This tray functions as a veranda and houses covered spaces that are set back from the upper building volume. The building's sleek, modern proportions contrast with the architecture of the surrounding context, older, lower, and uninspired. Sitting in a corner, its ground floor was also set back from both streets, and designed to house a US Post Office, Jewelry Store "Medina", and commercial rental space. To shield the ramps of the parking base, a screen was used as ornament, consisting of closely spaced, parallel vertical elements.

A wide entrance hallway leads to an almond-shaped stair whose steps direct visitors to a trapezoidal elevator lobby. As originally conceived - and built - this project could have detonated further urban development of its surrounding context, but such expectations remained unfulfilled, as Río Piedras did not subsequently attract comparable architectural efforts.

The base comprises two levels for cars, over which offices occupy nine floors. The North elevation includes full-glass fenestration (fixed and pivoting) and solid panels - all rectangular - over which vertical, aluminum elements extend from bottom to top of the upper body. These "fins" rise up beyond the building's mass and, at its crest, turn back as floating aluminum beams. The same effect is repeated at the main volume's first level. The South facade includes similarly proportioned windows, but with glass, operable louvers. Here, the stair shaft rises as an independent, mainly solid, rectangular volume, with its long side capped by a curving, concrete plane, timidly indented to indicate each floor level. East and West facades are solid, articulated by very narrow slot windows and slight recesses that acknowledge the width of the floor slabs.

In recent years, the original sidewalk setback was suppressed by speculative interests, making rentable space of it. To comply with prevailing codes, the hallway has been ramped up to reach the lobby level and the elevators. The US Post Office remains in place. In its own time, Medina Center was praised: "*This beautiful, multi use building is one of the most important esthetic elements of the new development of Río Piedras.*"¹¹³

Fernández also designed the René A. González Commercial and Office Building, equally assertive in its articulation of a high-rise volume and a supporting, larger base.¹¹⁴ This project was not executed, as were not two others even more ambitious in siting, sizing, and architectural sophistication, as can be inferred from their respective perspective renderings: The Park Plaza, by Curtis and Davis,¹¹⁵ and *Banco Crédito y Ahorro Ponceño* Center, in Hato

¹¹³ Urbe. Núm. 29, Vol. 6: junio, julio 1968, 30.

¹¹⁴ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 227-29.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 215-218.

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Rey. This last one comprised three buildings, a tower; an umbrella-type, object building shaped as an oval; Roman arches; a long, lower base; and ample civic space.¹¹⁶

All renditions of the *torre-placa* in the Island remain as unfulfilled promises of an expectant era: in the end, the measure of ambition was, in a way, a measure of failure. Land never having been scarce, Puerto Rican cities never achieved full densification. Nevertheless, interest in the building type continued into the 1970's, as made evident by *Condominio El Centro*, in Hato Rey, and Cobian's Plaza, in Santurce, then built.

E. Ornament as Grille

Having come of age under slogans like "history is dead" and "ornament is crime", the late modern architect faced a particular predicament not entirely of his making. His predecessors had favored abstraction over ornamentation, making no concessions about it. But the International Style's earlier dogmatic character had somewhat "softened down" by the 1960's, a process that was fueled, in part, by the decade's prevailing economic affluence. Richness of materials, after all, had been a part of canonical buildings like Mies van der Rohe's 1926 Barcelona Pavilion. And certainly, marble, granite, aluminum, and glass were featured in most key institutional buildings of the sixties. What was distinctive of the decade then? Architectural grilles.

As perforated, yet shielding surfaces, grilles integrated to buildings represent the period's iconic ornament, a singular symbol of modern, yet sober, wealth. Mass produced in different materials, these "screens" were of contemporary appearance, but simultaneously effective for adding texture and scale to any building of which they were made part of. In reference to ornament and how modern architects reinterpreted it, American architect Paul Rudolph explained:

*"We, of course, have knocked all of that out and in a sense have not found anything to replace it. It's one reason why grilles tend to be satisfying, up to a certain point anyway, because it does give this play of light and shadow, and maintains one's interest as one comes really close to the building. It has to with how architecture is read and from what distance."*¹¹⁷

Additionally, Rudolph argued that grilles helped relate modern, more abstract buildings, to others close by, smaller in size and more profusely historically detailed. Grilles add "*the sense of the reduction of scale*", he stated. Minoru Yamasaki also endorsed screened facades, stating his position from two different perspectives: functionality and industry:

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 209.

¹¹⁷ John Peter, "The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century", 75.

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“...if the screen to shut out the sun from the building can add richness to the building, then it answers a need. It still is part of our heritage and part of our education from the masters, from Mies, Wright, and Corbu, that the elements we put into the building must be integral with the building or must be a necessary and important part of the building.”¹¹⁸

“We can’t have handicraft ornament on our buildings today. If we do, we are just being somewhat sentimental and proving nothing. But if we can produce really lovely ornaments through the machine, machine-made ornament - we are proving something because then again another element in architecture becomes a part of our technological building.”¹¹⁹

In Puerto Rico, “grilled” facades appeared in important pieces by most of the high profile architects of the period. Since the 1950’s, Henry Klumb had made of use vertical, flat, brise soleils one of his signature architectural features. In his Social Sciences Building, at the University of Puerto Rico’s Río Piedras Campus (1961-68), Klumb also incorporated a 10-inches deep, cement screen to shield open corridors from the sun. The grille was patterned in flat rectangles staggered horizontally. Pedro Luis Amador (Klumb’s most probable Salieri) also combined sun breakers and a floor-to-ceiling perforated grille as a partial facade component of the *Asociación de Maestros* Building in Hato Rey.¹²⁰

The Diagnosis and Treatment Center built in Puerta de Tierra for the Municipality of San Juan by architect Joseph O’Kelly constitutes an early precedent in which a building’s volume is completely screened, in this case with perforated, ornamental, terracotta blocks. **(Figure 27)** These were produced in Puerto Rico. Other examples of “wrapping” elevations include *Toro y Ferrer’s Departamento de Hacienda* in Puerta de Tierra, and *Iglesia Inmaculado Corazón de María*, in Santiago Iglesias. **(Figure 28)** At the former, identical rectangular panels, closely spaced, weave a light skin over the north and south elevations. In the latter, the fan-shaped mass of the church is laced over (where it is wider) by a seemingly weightless web of triangles. More than often, built volumes included an extended grilled surface on one of its more public, visible sides. An early example dates from 1963: architect Samuel G. Marra’s GEM store of Puerto Rico, with a receiving screen to the right of the store’s entrance canopy and drop off.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 7

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 78.

¹²⁰ Pedro Luis Amador joined Henry Klumb and Stephen Arneson in the professional firm *Planners Associated*, of brief life, as mentioned in Enrique Vivoni Farage, Ed., *Klumb: Una arquitectura de impronta social*, 272.

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Figures 27 and 28: CENTRO DE DIAGNÓSTICO Y TRATAMIENTO, Puerta de Tierra. Terracotta bricks at entrance and upper body of the building. Architects: O'Kelly, Méndez, Brunner. / IGLESIA DEL INMACULADO CORAZÓN DE MARÍA, San Juan. Outer hallway shielded by triangular-patterned cement screen. Architect: Gonzalo González Seijo. Photos: Jorge Rigau

At *La Concha* Hotel, rhomboid shapes veil the complex's lower body that faces Ashford Avenue, in Condado. In another instance - as complement to its curved corners and gracefully-slanted columns, Hato Rey's International Business Center sports a sculptural, light-diffusing architectural screen based on modular constructivist ideas by Erwin Hauer, the Austrian-born American sculptor who was an alum of Josef Albers at Yale University, and experimented with geometrical, yet sinuous, three dimensional patterns.

A last example of an extended use of the grille is the one most openly visible in San Juan: the transparent veil that- resembling the folding door of an old elevator - curves around the upper volume of Hiram Bithorn Stadium, in Hato Rey. Few today are aware of the designers' original intent: "*The prefabricated, perforated exterior walls of the upper hallway were built as an allegory of the baseball diamond contained within.*"¹²¹

On many occasions, screens were used as an accent within an overall composition. At San Juan's Medical Center, open, roofed walkways included shielding screens at regular intervals, as passersby moved from one building to another. (**Figure 29**) These appear in the early visual renditions of the health complex.¹²² At Ryder Memorial Hospital Nursing Home, in Humacao, modular, perforated, concrete panels were used by architects Reed, Basora y Menéndez to partially enclose an elevated passageway that mediates the site's irregular topography to allow vehicular circulation without interrupting pedestrian connectivity within the hospital.

¹²¹ Orval E. Sifontes Fontán y Sara T. Aponte Meléndez. *Hiram Bithorn: Visión, icono y estadio*, 74.

¹²² As shown in the 1957 perspective of *Centro Médico*, in José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 180.

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Figure 29: SAN JUAN MEDICAL CENTER, San Juan. Cement screens at breezeways.
Architects: Isadore and Zachary Rosenfield. Photo: Jorge Rigau

The Student Center of Interamerican University, in San Germán, also integrated prefabricated perforated modules. At Roosevelt Housing Development, in Mayagüez, they became gridded frames, deep, but partially detached, as if hung from the more solid built volumes. Here, as in other projects like *Residencial José Aponte* at Aguadilla, the screen masked the stairwell. Semi-enclosed, naturally-ventilated stairs are a luxury granted by the Caribbean climate, in addition contributing to security.

The partial screen could be treated as a transparent plane clearly placed above a solid wall behind, or simply become a low wall with openings of diverse shapes and sizes. The first instance is best illustrated by the streamlined sun breakers at University of Puerto Rico's College of Law, in Río Piedras, by Henry Klumb (1962)¹²³ and repetitive ones throughout all floors of the Ashford Medical Center, in Condado.¹²⁴ The second modality - detached walls punctured for light and air - was adopted successfully by architects George Z. Mark and Rafael A. Pérez Marchand to contain, yet not separate The John F. Kennedy Day Care Center, in Bayamón, from its surrounding context. Also known as *Instituto Psicopedagógico*, the perimeter of this complex from 1967 includes ornamental cement blocks laid out parallel and perpendicular, leaving space in between, avoiding full closure of patios where the kids spent time as part of their sojourn at the institute.

Along the sixties, the interplay of voids and solids motivated designers to engage in a variety of grille patterns which deserve further study by themselves. At Santa Catalina Church, Efraín Pérez Chanis used relatively standard rectangles alongside the temple, but also triangles for its belfry - a slab-like screen - whose abstract pattern was argued for in symbolic terms: "*The bell tower, the union of triangular members to infinity, makes one think of the Holy Trinity, as the only element of God.*"¹²⁵ (Figure 30) In his *Iglesia del Carmen*, in Cataño, Henry Klumb chose to "trim" the bottom of the church's hexagonal cupola, making it lighter perceptually

¹²³ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 138.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 203.

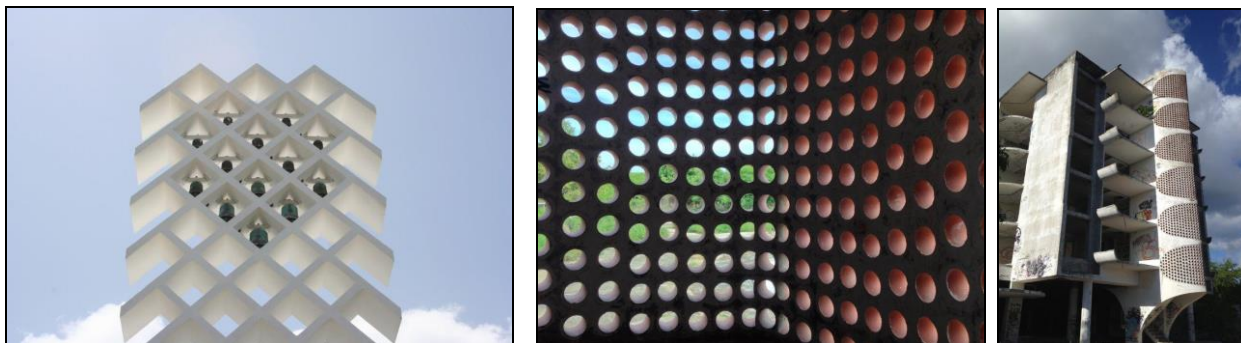
¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 166.

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before touching the supporting walls below.¹²⁶ The prominent, exterior stair that faces the pool area at Ponce’s Intercontinental Hotel, is enclosed by solid, helmet-like, curving walls, punctured with circular holes in polka-dot manner. **(Figure 31 and 32)** Condominios Quintana, in Hato Rey (by the firm Reed, Basora y Menéndez), covered its tall stair shafts with a continuous pattern of flat units that could best be described as “fat x’s” or resemblances of the original logo for the Cingular brand. **(Figure 33)**



Figures 30, 31 and 32: CHURCH OF SANTA CATALINA DE SIENA, Bayamón. Sculptural belfry in concrete. Architect: Efraín Pérez Chanis. / PONCE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL (El Vigía), Ponce. Light through the cement screen at the main stair landings. / Southern elevation highlighting semi enclosed stair and overhangs. Architects: William B. Tabler, J. C. Mayer, and J.B. Robinson Associates. Associate Architect: Henry J. Stojowski. Photos: Jorge Rigau



Figure 33: CONDOMINIOS QUINTANA, Hato Rey. Screened stairs and alternating hallways grant depth to the façade. Architects: Reed, Basora y Menéndez. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Screens in cement and wood were popular all along the 60’s, but aluminum had by then also become a choice material, and products derived from it included many architectural elements like railing systems, storefronts, signage, and, of course, screens. Although aluminum grilles proliferated much later in the 1970’s, several examples from the sixties survive to this day. Tubular ones at Housing Investment Corporation Office Building, in Hato Rey (by Reed, Basora y Menéndez) were cut off at an angle, creating organ-like ends to different pipes that, together, integrated a rectangular, window panel.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 164.

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Architect René O. Ramírez used aluminum screens in his two buildings for First National City Bank of New York in Puerto Rico. The Hato Rey tower rose eleven (11) floors combining the use of curtain-and-window wall and blue-pearl granite panels on the east and west elevations. *"The aluminum and glass windows have a satin finish and the aluminum panels between the glass windows are finished in Kalcolor amber anodized process."*¹²⁷ For the Santurce branch, whose ground floor was veneered in granite *"...grilles were designed following the official F.N.C. Bank seal in gold and natural anodized aluminum and they cover the cantilevered second-floor offices, acting as sun controls at the same time."*¹²⁸

To sum up, facade screens were the order of the day, made of different materials and granting different levels of visual and literal permeability. Other examples in which ornament was treated similarly include: Medina Center, in Río Piedras, by architect Rodolfo Fernández; the Nursing Building at Mayagüez Medical Center, by Pedro Luis Amador; Esso Standard Oil's Headquarters, in San Patricio Plaza, by Vicente Muñiz Núñez (demolished); and Hotel Delicias, in Fajardo, by Jesús E. Amaral. The Esso Building - square in plan, and raised over slender stilts - was enveloped in a steel, black, mosquito-like net that reduced the sun's impact on its peripheral walls. The hotel in Fajardo, in an effort to marry the modern idiom to traditional expressions, selectively provided privacy screens around its courtyard galleries, but on this occasion, resorting to the used of latticework, often featured in precedential local building efforts.

More than one backward glance inspired sixties design in Puerto Rico, and among one of the most noteworthy was the architects' rekindled taste for arches.

F. Arches Resuscitated

The period's appetite for arches has yet to be fully explained at both international and local levels, although the fact that it made itself manifest in important metropolitan centers has a strong bearing on why it ultimately took hold in Puerto Rico. Throughout time, arches have been closely associated to architectural styles, mainly Roman, but also Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo, Neoclassical or Spanish Revival expressions. That modern architects - self-proclaimed heirs of the International Style and abhorers of style as affectation - would fall for arches in the 20th century, demands more than a single explanation. One, for certain, has to do with the public dissemination of high-profile projects in the United States where arches were key components: from Wallace Kirkman Harrison's Metropolitan Opera House in New York (1966), to Wenceslao Alfonso Sarmiento's Phoenix Financial Center, in Phoenix, Arizona (1964-68).

¹²⁷ Ibid., 206.

¹²⁸ Idem.

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The Met's main facade - for years an object of world-wide expectation - was distinguished from the neighboring theaters at Lincoln Center by five tall, semicircular arches clad in marble, with all glass fenestration deeply-recessed to underscore their imposing presence. Harrison's arches invite reference to Giorgio De Chirico's paintings of unadorned arcades, as depicted in both earlier and later pieces by the artist: *Melancholy of a Beautiful Day*, 1913; *The Soothsayer's Recompense*, 1913; *Piazza d'Italia*, 1955, and *Italian Metaphysical Painting*, executed in 1965, but signed 1950, among others. Wenceslao Sarmiento's office complex, in contrast, evidences the freedom exerted at the time regarding the use of arches: his high-rise building in Midtown Phoenix includes two adjacent rotundas in both of which continuous, inverted arches act as U-shaped supports for their circular roofs.

When appropriating arches for their projects, most architects in Puerto Rico chose to grant them three dimensional character by horizontally extending them as small vaults often featured in multiples. There is no lack of examples in the Island. At *La Concha* Hotel and the Cultural Center of Mayagüez these vaults are used in linear manner, repeated several times, in parallel along the street they face. Arches used in groups or sequence were also adopted for the low-rise development at *El Monte*; the audacious overhang at Ponce Intercontinental Hotel's western facade; and the pool cabanas of the Americana Hotel, in Isla Verde, by Morris Lapidus, Liebman Associates, and Lorenzo Ramírez de Arellano as Associate Architect. Two other projects can be similarly singled out: Río Piedras' Public Market by *Pedro A. Miranda y Asociados*, from 1968, and; the Proposed Municipal Parking and Office Building for Old San Juan, by René O. Ramírez. Miranda's building was organized in terms of parallel barrel vaults. Ramírez' proposal (unbuilt) sprinkled arches in what was to be a car storage, superficially appealing to the responsibilities imposed by the historic location.¹²⁹

Canopied arches established an identity for large scale developments like the Ponce Hospital Center Nursing Home proposed by Horacio Díaz and Enrique Soler Cloquell; they also underlined metaphoric undertakings like "*Las gaviotas*" project in Fajardo – *The Seagulls* - initiated in the 60's, but completed years later. Vaulted arches added flair to a single-family dwelling, as exemplified by the San Francisco Development Residence, by Efraín Pérez Chanis¹³⁰; also in the town houses at El Monte. At other locations, these vaulted arches were laid out in radial patterns, as made manifest in the round, free-standing cafeteria of San Juan's Medical Center (**Figure 34**) , or Bayamón's *Iglesia de Sión*, whose multi-vaulted roof flares out from its constricted urban corner location. In his site proposal for *Cafeteros de Puerto Rico*, in Ponce, architect Carlos R. Sanz included a similarly roofed kiosk building.¹³¹

¹²⁹ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 223.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 261.

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Figure 34: SAN JUAN MEDICAL CENTER, San Juan. Cafeteria with vaulted arches in concrete and extended glazing. Architects: Isadore and Zachary Rosenfield. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Bow roofs were also used in government-sponsored housing projects like the *Caserío de Yauco* (designed by architect George Z. Mark), and the so-called “*Casas de la Patagonia*”, in Humacao. In Yauco, vaulted, prefabricated modules covered and highlighted the buildings’ open, communal stair. In Humacao, two low-pitched vaults were paired one next to each other as roof for a single unit. This low-cost project was erected as emergency housing to relocate victims in 1960 after a devastating flood.

Arches being so popular, beams often bowed to resemble them. As part of the frenzy about arches, concrete beams laid out in a typical post and lintel condition were on occasion “sculpted” or angled at both ends just enough to suggest an archway. At *Banco de Ponce*, Stop 18, Santurce, the edges of its street portico were slightly curved by architect Vicente Muñoz Núñez to achieve a similar effect. At Miramar Charterhouse, the entrance to the hotel’s car garage was designed by Angel Avilés to include an overhead beam that widens as it reaches its two end supports.

The detail developed quite a following. Rodolfo Fernández incorporated arched beams at the entrance canopy of *El Comandante Commercial Center*.¹³² Joaquín Rodríguez Benítez used them as supports of the Ashford Medical Center,¹³³ as did Efraín Pérez Chanis next to cone-shaped columns at the ground floor of his Nursing Dormitory Building in San Juan Medical Center. As late as 1968, the arched beams were still being used, displayed as they were in *Plaza Las Américas*, undoubtedly betting on their mnemonic reference to traditional Spanish-colonial architecture.

Late modern architects - including designers working in Puerto Rico along the 1960’s - acknowledged the theatrical nature of arches. Modernity had made progress spectacular, and arches claimed such pedigree since early Roman Times... well up to Eero Saarinen’s

¹³² Ibid., 233.

¹³³ Ibid., 203.

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audacious stainless-steel arch at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis, Missouri, completed in 1965. -“*You know, architecture is really impact*”, said its architect.¹³⁴

G. Stairs the Star

Stairs had been treated as expressive design components in various 50's projects by *Toro y Ferrer*, particularly at the Caribe Hilton Hotel and the Supreme Court Building, both in Puerta de Tierra. The practice of featuring staircases prominently extended well into the 60's, in buildings like *La Concha* Hotel (spiral-shaped); the Sheraton Hotel (helicoidal, under tall, concrete parasols)¹³⁵; the Ponce Art Museum (paired curves closing into the same landing area); and the Treasury Department (V-shaped from lobby to mezzanine). Detailed to seemingly float, steps and railings were designed as transparent as possible. Aluminum components helped to convey the lightness intended.

In some projects, stairs were articulated as structurally independent elements, even if not completely so. The triangular stairwells at *Condominio Universitario* (**Figure 35**), in Río Piedras, represent a stunning example, extending fourteen floors upwards in an abstract, Piranesian manner, as they appear when looked at from below. At *Condominio San Luis*, by René O. Ramírez, the stair shaft located at the intersection of two of the building's main housing volumes was left open. The solid treads that rise seven floors were deliberately exposed, and detailed with railings so transparent that they almost disappear from view. As a result, the meeting of building volumes is cleverly articulated by a deeply-recessed void and a continuous stair that weaves both masses together by being grafted in-between. For *Banco de Ponce*, in Hato Rey, *Toro y Ferrer* designed a pair of free-standing escalators that float from the sidewalk to an upper, spacious lobby crowned by a circular skylight.

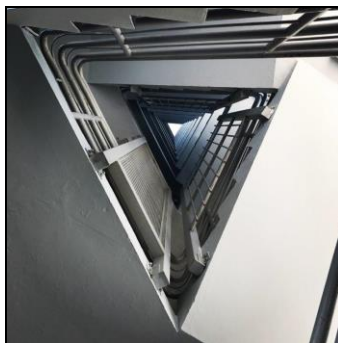


Figure 35: CONDOMINIO UNIVERSITARIO STAIRCASE, Río Piedras. Looking up the triangular stair shaft.
Architects: Amaral y Morales. Photo: José Jiménez Saldaña

¹³⁴ John Peter, "The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century", 200.

¹³⁵ *Urbe*. Núm.7: diciembre 1963, 61.

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Stairs were also featured as extended flights of steps. For the Pedro J. Beauchamp Residence, architect Thomas S. Marvel provided staggered, terraced steps at the back of the house. *Toro y Ferrer* did the same at *La Concha*, outfitting the ocean elevation with stairs stretching to the sea. At Henry Klumb's Student Center for the University of Puerto Rico in Mayagüez - because a section of the building's mass is lower than the sidewalk - steps laid out orthogonally spill down to a small, outdoor atrium that precedes the main entrance. Stacked as they are, their pyramidal disposition is rendered more powerful and abstract when the tropical sun hits the concrete steps and risers, creating highly-defined shadows. Also by Klumb's hand, another outstanding example of stair design in the sixties can be found at the Vélez Residence, in San Germán (1963-69). The underside of the indoor stairs of this two-story dwelling is a planar, yet sculpted surface, curved, stepped and continuous at the same time. It constitutes, by itself, a most poetic, somewhat understated, endorsement of abstraction. **(Figure 36)** The house, as such, is one of several residences from the 1960's in which prevalent architectural ideas best came into fruition.

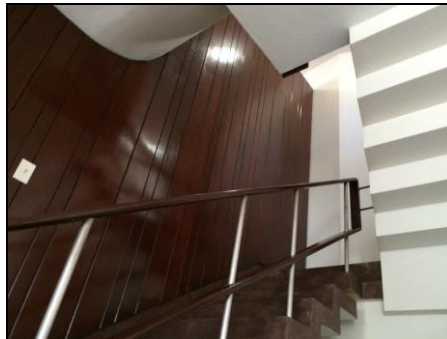


Figure 36: VÉLEZ RESIDENCE, San Germán. Stairs from ground floor to main floor.
Architect: henry Klumb. Photo: Jorge Rigau

H. Awesome Mansions

Of all efforts made during the sixties to appropriate ideas from the Spanish-colonial past, the most successful ended up being - even if unwillingly - the emulation of the patio typology, and not the literal, superficial appropriation of roof clay tiles, wooden beams, *soles truncos*, colored ceramic tile, and the like. As such, adherence to the centuries-old tradition of laying out program components around an open space yielded many protagonic patios in Puerto Rico, whether in institutional or residential architecture.

The Law School Building at UPR Río Piedras, the Student Center at Catholic University, in Ponce by architect Carl Brunner Jr. **(Figure 37)**, the John F. Kennedy Day Care Center, in Bayamón (*Instituto Psicopedagógico*, and *Academia San José* **(Figure 38)** were all organized around a courtyard. At Catholic University, the first-floor galleries are raised from the terrazo-paved patio, and steps leading to it are also articulated as independent planes. **(Figure 39)** At San José High School, the patio is raised in relationship to the surrounding walkways and

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covered with grass, including a belfry as its single hierarchical element. *Amaral y Morales* organized *Hotel Las Delicias* around a square patio, in-keeping with the rational, gridded disposition of all programmatic elements. At a much larger scale, *Toro y Ferrer* rendered the pool area of *La Concha* Hotel as a large-scale courtyard whose perimeter is defined by contrasting architectural elements: the two-story, vaulted entrance building and the open lobby, also the pool's cabanas, and the much higher slab of rooms.



Figures 37 and 38: STUDENT CENTER, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, Ponce. Helical staircase. Architect: Carl Brunner. / ACADEMIA SAN JOSÉ HIGH SCHOOL, Guaynabo. Patio, arcades, and folded plate roofs. Architect: David P. C. Chang. Photos: Jorge Rigau



Figure 39: STUDENT CENTER, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, Ponce. Hallways facing courtyard, articulated from the ground. Architect: Carl Brunner. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Houses laid-out around an open space were favored by the upper class, probably vouching for a tropical, expansive look, than any mnemonics regarding Old San Juan patios. Their design attests to the argument: room arrangement, materials, and details did not rely on tradition for inspiration. Completely open, living areas extend the courtyard into the residence at the house of Dr. José Fernández, in Humacao, by Samuel G. Marra (1963). Four volumes with roofs slanted in a single direction (not always inwards) contain an indoor garden at the Vega Marcial Residence, in Río Piedras, by Jesús E. Amaral. In it, because all volumes are independent, the open space penetrates the articulations in between, contributing fluidity to the sense of containment. In the house that Efraín Pérez Chanis designed for San Francisco Development, the four vaults that make up the roof are discernible from the interior patio, whose lay-out

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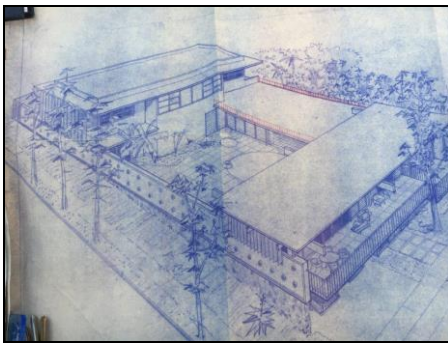
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includes more curved elements.¹³⁶ Architect Angel Avilés opted out of the more conservative, orthogonal courtyard and incorporated a circular patio with a plastic dome above in his design for the abode of Rosa Carrasquillo.¹³⁷

Two dwellings were more accomplished in the reinterpretation of the patio typology: the house of Pedro J. Beauchamp, in Río Piedras, by Thomas S. Marvel; and the Dr. and Mrs. López García Residence, in Caguas, by Orval E. Sifontes Fontán (**Figure 40**). The Beauchamp home, square in plan, includes a rectangular patio with a unique feature: its roof slab “folds up” as four (4) walls, creating a shaft above the open space, which claims added verticality. The resulting upward thrust is dramatic, but not just intended as visual effect, for Marvel’s design incorporated several cross-ventilation details throughout the house.¹³⁸ The López García home, on the other hand, locates its patio in a sort of *piano nobile* reached from a flight of steps at a lower level in the entrance’s vestibule. (**Figures 41 and 42**) The spatial sequence by which visitors reach the patio offers views - left and right - of the living and dining areas at different levels. As visitors climb up, the patio can be finally accessed from an ample hallway that runs parallel to the kitchen, showcased on purpose. The open space lies several steps down; its paving includes the shape of a circle and a fountain. Living and sleeping areas around have full view of the generous, appropriately scaled void.



Figures 40 and 41: RESIDENCE FOR DR. AND MRS. LÓPEZ GARCÍA, Caguas. Aerial perspective rendering. Architect: Orval Sifontes Fontán / Main (East) and South elevations. Photo: Jorge Rigau

¹³⁶ José A. Fernández, *Architecture in Puerto Rico*, 32.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 34,35.

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Figure 42: RESIDENCE FOR DR. AND MRS. LÓPEZ GARCÍA, Caguas. The living room area spilling onto the patio.
Architect: Orval Sifontes Fontán. Photo: Jorge Rigau

Besides patios and courtyards, another modality regarding program resolution was popular in the 60's: pavilions. Considered appropriate to the tropical climate - if not always practical or economical - individual cottages were used to lodge different house components, now interpreted as islands. Architects William Francis Sigal and Jorge del Río were most skilfull at interpreting an architectural program in terms of pavilions. Sigal's own residence in Caimito comprised several outhouses around a garden, but these were awarded privacy though the smart manipulation of the topography, raised at the space between the different units. Sigal's was a residence with almost no walls and extended overhangs, limited only by a continuous wooden bench from which to appreciate distant views and enjoy the immediate landscape. In many of the hospitality projects he developed for the island of St. Thomas - and in his proposal of an underwater hotel - Sigal turned to the pavilion typology. Jorge del Río did the same for his own dwelling at University Gardens; at the Silva Residence, in Humacao; and for the Arcadio Vélez House, in Río Piedras. In the three instances, program components were laid out around a rather small patio, conceived as an organizing, compositional device.

The Daniel Montalvo Residence in Aguas Buenas, also designed by del Río bears witness to another distinguishing trait of Puerto Rican 60's architecture: compelling kitchens. Commenting on the role of media along the decade, Eliseo R. Colón Zayas, professor of semiotics and communication, argues that: "*Kitchens and homes of nuclear families played a role in building those metaphors of social well-being with which Puerto Rican television bolstered the culture of consumerism that had been promoted by radio since the 1940's.*"¹³⁹ This was just one of myriad reasons that led the upper class to endorse large cooking, food storage, and servicing areas in their homes. The kitchen at the Montalvo house is ample to the point of resembling a commercial establishment, although gracefully detailed in brick, and wood mullions with white, transparent, and colored glass. Spaciousness also characterizes the kitchen of Dr. And Mrs. López García Residence, in Caguas. Leisurely longitudinal, it runs the

¹³⁹ Eliseo R. Colón Zayas, "*La criatura del mar encantado: Medios y mediaciones de la Guerra Fría en Puerto Rico, 1945-1960*" in Sylvia Álvarez Curbelo, Manuel R. Rodríguez Vázquez, Eds, *Tiempos binarios: La Guerra Fría desde Puerto Rico y el Caribe*, 185.

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full length of the dwelling’s courtyard, allowing both spaces to read as one when the glass sliding doors that run between them are opened.

A modern kitchen was not only privilege of the wealthy. Standardized kitchens - functional precisely because their compactness - embodied the merging progress and modern domestic aspirations. Even if different companies built and distributed kitchens in Puerto Rico, none is more representative of the 60’s than *Orbit Kitchens*. It widely and consistently advertised its product and services in newspapers and *Urbe Magazine*, succeeding in becoming a household name.¹⁴⁰

As can be expected, awesome mansions were designed for both rural and urban contexts. Jorge del Río’s Daniel Montalvo Residence, and Howard Besosa’s *Finca El Salto* (**Figure 43**) - both in Aguas Buenas - were built in the countryside. The William F. Sigal House stands in a comparable, verdant site. Those located in an urban milieu are many: the Tito Rodríguez Residence, in Ocean Park, by Angel Avilés; the Vélez Residence, in San Germán, by Henry Klumb; Marvel Residence #1, in Monteflores, by Thomas S. Marvel; and Efraín Pérez Chanis’ San Francisco Development Residence.



Figure 43: FINCA EL SALTO, Aguas Buenas. As featured in the front cover of *Urbe Magazine* #28. Architect: Howard Besosa

The list is much longer, but many of the most important residential examples already mentioned deserve a closer look, for patios, pavilions, and kitchens do not - by themselves - make a great house. They are always assisted by technology and tectonics, twin sisters ultimately responsible for the character of spaces and buildings.

¹⁴⁰ Orbit was one sub-exhibitor at 1964 World’s Fair, as acknowledged by Norma I. Figueroa Rubero, “El poder de la image Género y profesión en el campo de la arquitectura en Puerto Rico, 1945-1979” in *Op. Cit.*, Revista del Centro de Investigaciones Históricas (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras, 2007-08) Núm. 18, 266.

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I. Trending Tectonics

As the 20th century unfolded, many building materials - structural and decorative - became available through aggressive, commercial marketing. Products popular in the United States were made available in Puerto Rico, explicit preferences varying somewhat from decade to decade, as colors, textures, and finishes were adopted and substituted. As architect Phillip Johnson has argued, "...prosperity influences our attitude towards materials."¹⁴¹

During the sixties in Puerto Rico, given the absence of applied ornament as such, surfacing materials were adopted as highly expressive resources of texture. In a way, abstraction was "tamed" through the use of materials, whether natural or manufactured.

Architect Eero Saarinen, whose work was the object of emulation throughout the United States, strongly stated: "*The moment you start talking about texture, you're already on your way toward ornament.*"¹⁴²

Wood was used for fenestration, louvered or latticed, as at *Hotel Las Delicias*, in Fajardo, by Amaral y Morales; also at Jorge del Río's house for Daniel Montalvo in Aguas Buenas. In the latter, the architect incorporated glass panes, combining transparent, translucent, and red ones. The use of colored glass was common in residential and commercial projects, having previously mentioned in this text the *Velasco* store at *Plaza Las Américas* as one example amongst many. Wood also appeared as wall facing and space divider (with colored glass) at the Student Center of Interamerican University in San Germán, by Vicente Muñiz Núñez, and many other buildings of the period. Wood granted human scale to these modern spaces, contributing depth and feeling, being considered a direct product of the natural world.

Stone was also favored as facing/finishing material. With most projects built in concrete, it became common practice to highlight key walls by covering them with a gray granite stone quarried locally. As early as 1951, Pedro Luis Amador covered the base of his library for Central High School in Santurce with it. Architect Angel Avilés used it in many residences; and *Amaral y Morales* applied it in front of one of the several model homes the firm designed for University Gardens, in Río Piedras. Referred to by architects as "*la piedra azul*", this so-called blue stone sheathes the base of the Dr. and Mrs. López Residence in Caguas, by Orval E. Sifontes Fontán; and the front facade of the house of Fernando Martínez and Zaida Ginorio, in Aibonito, among multiple other examples.

Beyond wood or stone, manufactured materials - more akin to progress, industry, and prefabrication - were often featured, regardless of building type or placement. Columns and walls of the open-air chapel at El Yeso Municipal Cemetery in Ponce, by Rafael A. López

¹⁴¹ John Peter, "The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century", 31.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 80.

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Marchand and George Z. Mark, were coated with GRANOLUX, a product that consists of a marble and granite aggregate in a plastic binder, favored by artists in the United States, particularly during the 1960's. (**Figure 44**) For an abstract mural at the entrance of his office in Hato Rey, architect Samuel G. Marra also used GRANOLUX.



Figures 44 and 45: EL YESO CEMETERY, Ponce. Close up of walls textured with Granolux and damaged areas.
Architects: Rafael A. Pérez Marchand, George Z. Mark. / RESIDENCE (?), Isabela. 1"X1" mosaics combined in a façade at the heart of town.
Owner and designer unknown. Photos: Jorge Rigau

Glazed ceramic tile in 1" x 1", preferred for accenting surfaces with color, was used for pure decoration in homes, apartment buildings, and commercial establishments. Many examples survive throughout the Island, some of the most notable remaining in Isabela (**Figure 45**), San Germán, Ponce, and Río Piedras. Being glazed, the 1" x 1" tiles made wall maintenance and cleaning easier. Jointly practical and esthetic, they proved functional in wainscots, as applied in the concession stands of the Hiram Bithorn stadium.¹⁴³ The minuscule *tesserae*, when used as mosaic, facilitated representation of shapes and figures, whether to reproduce a company logo or to incorporate a full-fledged work of art. The entrance of Banco de Ponce Building in Santurce, by architect Vicente Muñoz Núñez, included a two-story high wall, fully covered in aqua blue tile sporting the bank's trademark emblem. In another instance, for its fruit-juice processing plant in the outskirts of the town of Barceloneta, *Lotus Corporation* commissioned a 12'-0" high, 40'-0" long, outdoors, mosaic mural from Puerto Rican avant-garde artist Luisa Géigel Brunet. A tour de force in terms of size, chromaticism and intensity, it depicted those tropical fruits from which the company made juices in bold abstract manner. An even larger undertaking was Augusto Marín's 1968 mural entitled "Neptune and the Siren", for Surfside Mansions Condominium in Isla Verde, designed by architect Rodolfo Fernández.¹⁴⁴

Glazed tiles of unique shape and provenance were used to grant a most contemporary personality to the lobby mailrooms of *El Monte Apartments (South)*, in Hato Rey. Specified in the project's construction documents as "French Tile Pattern", blue and yellow round tiles from

¹⁴³ Orval E. Sifontes Fontán y Sara T. Aponte Meléndez. *Hiram Bithorn: Visión, icono y estadio*, 79.

¹⁴⁴ César Piñeiro González, "El mosaico como elemento decorativo en los espacios arquitectónicos: estudio de caso" in *Revista Patrimonio*, Vol. 3, Año 2011, 60.

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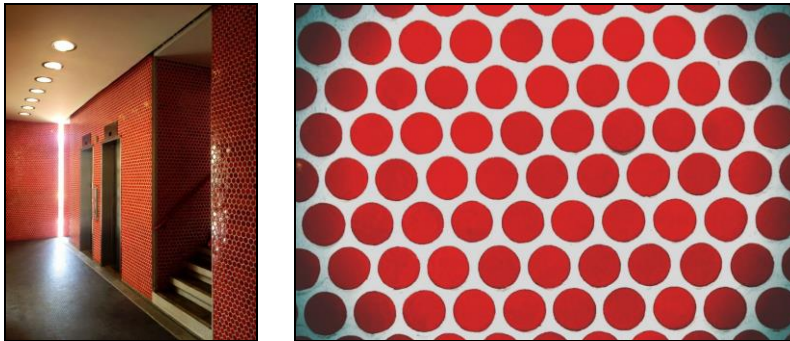
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the French label *DUCATS-BRIARE* were used; red vermillion ones to “coat” the elevator lobbies (**Figures 46 and 47**). In Op Art fashion, different shades of the same color were used to create movement visually. *Emaux de Briare*, the manufacturer, had subsidiaries in New York and Europe, and was highly regarded globally.¹⁴⁵



Figures 46 and 47: EL MONTE APARTMENTS, Hato Rey. *Emaux de Briare* ceramic tiles at elevators lobby. Architects: Edward Larrabee Barnes and Reed, Torres Beauchamp & Marvel. Photos: Santiago Gala Aguilera (SHPO)

Upon consideration of prevailing period materials, aluminum must be acknowledged as quintessential, having been featured in doors, windows, and their frames; stairs and balustrades; screens and other architectural components; as well as equipment and appliances. For *Iglesia de la Milagrosa*, architect Marra designed expansive A-shaped, two-story high, colored-glass windows whose aluminum frames were built in 1968 by Engineer Jesús (Chico) Sosa, to this day a leading, local manufacturer of architectural components in aluminum. Rohm & Haas, manufacturers of transparent, plexiglass acrylic, based in Philadelphia - produced the tinted glass pieces according to the architect’s specifications. Marra’s freehand sketches to that effect are precise and poetic, the product of hand and mind.

As for paving materials, poured-in-place terrazzo was fashionable; the width of its bronze joints was scaled proportionally to the space in which they were going to be installed. *Toro y Ferrer*, Vicente Muñiz Núñez, and Jorge del Río were but a few among others who favored terrazzo. In parallel, brick flooring was often used by designers opting for a “traditional” touch as complementary to modernity. *Amaral y Morales* specified it for Las Delicias Hotel, José Firpi for his restoration of El Convento Hotel, and Jorge del Río for the Daniel Montalvo Residence, in Aguas Buenas. At said dwelling, del Río used brick structurally - not just as facing - in several walls of the house, combining it with concrete components, wooden fenestration, and colored glass. (**Figure 48**) Tectonics were well served here. Let’s not forget that Le Corbusier had earlier popularized the use of brick and vaulted systems in brick in projects like Villa Sarabhai (1951-55), in Ahmedabad, India.

¹⁴⁵ Santiago Gala Aguilera, “Suburban Bliss: un [re]encuentro insospechado con el pasado reciente”, Ibid. 68-75. Architect Gala Aguilera, a resident of El Monte Apartments, coordinated a community-assisted, highly-regarded effort to bring back to life the original *ducats-briare* restoring them in place.

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Figure 48: RESIDENCE OF ENG. DANIEL MONTALVO, Aguas Buenas. Combination of concrete, brick, wood, and colored glass. Architect: Jorge del Río. Photo: Jorge Rigau

If specific materials, their physical properties, and mnemonic reverberances play a definitive role in the sensory experience of any space or construction, art objects contribute to further or enhance most architectural perceptions. As such, the muted, but esthetic assertiveness of local artists enriched many of the most representative buildings that came to be during the sixties. At *Iglesia de los Santos Angeles Custodios*, in Yabucoa, Arnaldo Mass designed stained glass windows and Stations of the Cross. For the inaugural ceremonies of the Central American Games, held in San Juan in 1966, ceramic murals were commissioned to the high profile Puerto Rican artists and installed at diverse entrances to the Olympic pool that was built to accommodate 3,500 people:

“The austere lines of the building will be only accentuated by five ceramic-tile murals to be placed between columns at the front elevation. These murals are being executed completely in Puerto Rico by Puerto Rican artists Myrna Báez, José Antonio Torres Martinó, and Lorenzo Homar, under the direction of Dr. Oliver, of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture.”¹⁴⁶

Lorenzo Homar also executed a mural at the entrance of the Víctor Parés Collazo School in Hato Rey, where bands of color circle planet earth.¹⁴⁷ For *La Cueva del Chicken Inn*, a restaurant in Hato Rey, Spanish artist Carlos Marichal painted an Andalusian gypsy scene, including portraits of the family of actor Raúl Juliá among the characters depicted. Rafael Seco, also from Spain, painted an allegorical scene at the mezzanine of the banquet hall of El Convento Hotel. Rafael Ríos Rey, local master muralist, alluded to progress and industry in

¹⁴⁶ Urbe. Núm. 19, Vol. 14: septiembre, octubre, noviembre 1966, 20 57-59. Also, Núm. 23, Vol. 5: junio julio, agosto 1967, 26, 66.

¹⁴⁷ Built on grounds donated to Puerto Rico’s Department of Education by the developer of El Monte, the school included sixteen (16) classrooms, two (2) kindergartens, an a library. Project plans date from 1969 and were penned by Architect Efraín Pérez Chanis, who included canopied arches in his design. The school was the last component built as part of the Hato Rey housing complex.

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several illustrative panels of his making inside Banco Crédito y Ahorro Ponceño, in Ponce, by architect Carlos R. Sanz. The open lobby of the Student Center at Interamerican University, in San Germán, also included a mural painting that disappeared in time and, to this date, without trace.

San Juan Medical Center was originally conceived as a seat for modern art. The lobby of the main building would house a mural by Luis Hernández Cruz; the *Casa de Salud* a figurative mural by Myrna Báez. Julio Rosado del Valle sketched a mural for the cafeteria. At ground level of the Nurses' Residence - along a longitudinal pond - stands a bas-relief frieze by José M. Iranzo, one of three brothers from Valencia who fled the Spanish Civil War, eventually settling in Puerto Rico.¹⁴⁸ At the International Business Center, the entrance was flanked with bas-reliefs authored by Burt Schwartz.¹⁴⁹ Elvira Coya was responsible several sculptures for Banco de Ponce at Santa María Shopping Center, and the entry mural in concrete at *Cementerio La Piedad*, all in Ponce.¹⁵⁰ Ramón Lapayese was the author of the image of Christ at the main altar of Samuel G. Marra's *La Milagrosa* Church, in Hato Rey. A Spanish sculptor, he is acknowledged for over a hundred sculptures at *Valle de los Caídos*, at the outskirts of Madrid. At the same temple, Dominican/Catalonian sculptor Antonio Prats Ventós did the Virgin Mary above the main entrance. He authored another image of Mary at the *Colegio de Lourdes*, adjacent to the church. For this school, he carved a crucified Christ in Dominican mahogany. Prats Ventós (1925-1999) arrived at the Dominican Republic as the son of Spaniard fleeing the Civil War and his abundant work includes the High Altar Altar Mayor de la Basílica de Higuey.

One last figure stands out among many: Rolando López Dirube, sculptor and muralist who, upon emigrating from Cuba, continued his prolific career in Puerto Rico. At Ashford Medical Building, an office tower by architect Joaquín Rodríguez Benítez, Dirube contributed outdoor sculptures and three-dimensional murals at each floor lobby. Similar abstract sculptures, somewhat larger, were also created by him for *La Arboleda*, a high end, single-family housing development (with some duplexes) in Guaynabo.

Before closing on the subject of trending tectonics, mention must be made of the use of water, not just as feature, but as presence. Use of extended water surfaces - understood as ever changing architectural planes - was an inheritance from the 1950's. *Toro y Ferrer* had incorporated them at the Supreme Court Building, at San Juan Airport, at the Annex Buildings of the Capitol, and at *La Concha* Hotel. By 1960, architect Paul Rudolph expressed the

¹⁴⁸ Urbe. Núm. 13: junio, julio, agosto 1965, 44-47.

¹⁴⁹ Urbe. Núm. 25, Vol. 5: octubre, noviembre 1967, 26, 27.

¹⁵⁰ Urbe. Núm. 7: diciembre 1963, 44.

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following about water: *"it takes the place of decoration, the same as the light does..."*, and as if excuses were needed, he underlined: *"we have to substitute enrichments of other kinds"...*¹⁵¹

At the *Asociación de Maestros*, Pedro Luis Amador included an extended pond between the two buildings that comprise the complex, bridging it with a light, open walkway. **(Figure 49)** At Costa Azul Condominium, Amaral y Morales introduce water outside the entrance, projecting its presence inside the lobby area, underneath a seemingly floating platform. William Sigal included water and bridges inside his Jack Desperak Residence in Santa María; Thomas Marvel did likewise at the house for Pedro R. Beauchamp in Río Piedras. Transparence carried the message of modernity; fluidity embodied progress as a continuum; and reflections spurred self-satisfaction or assuredness at all accomplished, collectively and individually.



Figure 49: ASOCIACIÓN DE MAESTROS BUILDING, Hato Rey. Period photo illustrating reflecting pond and crossover bridge.
Architect: Pedro Luis Amador

What happened after

As early as 1961, urban activist Jane Jacobs published her widely-disseminated book *"The Death and Life of Great American Cities"*, questioning and sentencing modern urbanism's impact on contemporary life. Times were changing. Walter Gropius died in 1969. Much architecture being produced was criticized as unappealing and impersonal. Some denounced great distance between professional/academic and popular perceptions. Sober, spare, abstract and - in its worst versions - cheap, barren, modern architecture seemed unconnected to culture. Corporate America had digested the externalities of the Modern Movement, ignoring its purpose and contents. In parallel, social movements grew stronger: antimilitarism; civil and gay rights and women's liberation; as well as an urgent concern for the human impact on the environment. Locally, professionals like marine scientist Máximo Cerame Vivas, economist Joaquín Villamil, and architect Gonzalo Fernós were concerned about the government's stubborn determination to establish petrochemical industries in the Island, advocating the need of studies regarding air and water pollution.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ John Peter, "The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century", 34.

¹⁵² Urbe. Núm. 37, Vol. 12: octubre, noviembre 1969, 16-21.

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Indeed, Puerto Rico felt some social shock waves, but - seemingly unflustered by it all - architects remained officially committed to the Island's future growth. Indifferent to a point at the world changing around them, local architects from the 60's are nevertheless to be credited for strength of purpose. By the end of the decade, local architects were being entrusted the design of ambitious master plans. Many of the projects conceived along the 1960's were completed then. The proposal for *Nuevo Centro de San Juan* suffered some changes, but nonetheless remained active as an ambitious undertaking throughout the 1970's. In 1968, Jesús E. Amaral was entrusted the development of a master plan to serve 3,000 students at UPR's *Colegio Regional de Humacao*. Many towns began to project their urban development well into year 2000.

In early 1970, "*construction in Puerto Rico exceeded the highest figures of production in history*", as stated by historian Guillermo Baralt.¹⁵³ Las Américas Expressway was completed and seed funds were allotted to buy properties along the proposed route for the future *Tren Urbano*, the capital's light rail system, eventually inaugurated in 2004. Between 1968 and 1973, the five Laguna Gardens Towers were built next to the International Airport, comprising 738 units.¹⁵⁴ As 1969 dawned, construction began on the pair of towers that would later be known as Minillas Government Center in Santurce.

Some architectural vocabulary from the sixties enjoyed extended life; so did several modes of production. Exposed concrete, Spanish-style ornamentation, and towers with plinth continued to be featured. Prefabrication had its followers. The bleachers at the Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium had been prefabricated.¹⁵⁵ Thomas Marvel was using precast sunshade screens in the Federal Building his firm designed in the US Virgin Islands.¹⁵⁶ In his Carmelite Nuns Convent, in Trujillo Alto, from 1969, the architect was already looking forward to a 70's idiom.¹⁵⁷ In fact, Marvel would unfold fully as a key, important designer along the seventies and in subsequent decades.

As for the built legacy of the sixties, much needs to be said about inherent preservation problems faced today by its endorsers, admirers, and custodians. Abstraction invites intervention. Plain to the point of boredom for the untrained eye, many modern buildings have been subjected to unfortunate, changes, demolitions, and additions. Puerto Rican architect Nathaniel Fúster Félix has decried "*the rejection or the laissez faire attitude (shown by many in the Island's professional architectural circles) in regard to the preservation of the La Concha Hotel, and by extension, to the rest of the heritage left by the Modern Movement in Puerto*

¹⁵³ Guillermo A. Baralt, *Una de cal y otra de arena: Panorama histórico de la construcción en Puerto Rico: 1943-2004*, 346-347.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 316-317.

¹⁵⁵ Orval E. Sifontes Fontán y Sara T. Aponte Meléndez. *Hiram Bithorn: Visión, icono y estadio*, 84.

¹⁵⁶ Rafael Pumarada, Ed., *Thomas S. Marvel Architect (Arquitecto)*, 54,55.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 74,75.

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*Rico.*¹⁵⁸ Moreover, deterioration accelerates disregard and, as a result of much of what has been mentioned, many modern buildings have failed the test of time. *Urbe Magazine* advanced related weathering concerns urging to fight "...the indifference towards care and maintenance... Interior and exterior maintenance are rarely included in budgets and, if included, it is in an amount sufficient to scrub the floor, not to keep it clean."¹⁵⁹

As early as 1956, architect Ladislav Leland Rado warned: "*I think one aspect where modern architecture somehow did not grow up yet is the aspect of aging gracefully.*"¹⁶⁰ If too general an accusation, the designer's words underscore the fact that *DoCoMoMo Puerto Rico* - the entity self-appointed to preserve the Island's modern heritage - has focused preferentially on the 1950's and still lacks public clout. As of yet, in fact, no modern building in Puerto Rico is considered a tourist attraction *per se*.

Coda

Many modern buildings in the Island used to sit in ample sites, reached by pedestrians in fluid manner, circulating from city sidewalks to their reception lobbies - blurring differences between public and private realms. The Supreme Court Building by *Toro y Ferrer*, the *Asociación de Maestros* by Pedro Luis Amador, and the *Condominio Universitario*, by *Amaral y Morales*, proved particularly successful at it, to name a few examples. In succeeding years, tall, security (and non-contributing) fences went up around these object buildings, excising most of them from the public sphere, often shrinking their monumentality, too often diminishing their urban presence. Future documentation, protection, and preservation of key examples will help to reinstate the architectural heritage of the 1960's as integral to city life and forward-looking, renewed civic ambitions.

¹⁵⁸ Nathaniel Fúster Félix, "Recovering the Modern Movement's Heritage: The Río Piedras Market", in Enrique Vivoni Farage, Ed., "*San Juan siempre nuevo: Arquitectura y modernización en el siglo XX*", 281.

¹⁵⁹ *Urbe*. Núm. 33, Vol. 8: febrero, marzo 1969, 60.

¹⁶⁰ John Peter, "The Oral History of Modern Architecture: Interviews with the Greatest Architects of the Twentieth Century", 34.

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F. Associated Property Types

For inclusion in the *National Register of Historic Places* under Criterion C, resources addressed in this Multiple Nomination must meet all or most aspects or qualities related to the property's integrity: *location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association*. Eligible properties convey their significance through integrity. Considerations of integrity in reference to eligible resources dating from the 1960's in Puerto Rico are grounded in an understanding of said properties' physical attributes, contextual and disciplinary relationships, as well as linkages to local and international building traditions. To assess integrity, we have established essential physical features that best represent design and construction concerns associated with architecture produced along the decade. These are visible, and capable of conveying the corresponding historical importance being claimed. When pertinent, virtues argued for the different types of resources have been assessed in comparison with similar properties in the Island or elsewhere. In most cases, the different aspects on which integrity of any property is based support, overlap or underline each other.

On the issue of **location**, properties built in the 1960's remain in place, except for those already demolished. Generally supported by structural systems in concrete, resettling is not feasible. The relationship between resource and place has been maintained, even if the surrounding context has been subjected to multiple, detracting transformations. (See ahead, "Setting")

Regarding **design**, the elements and strategies that shape and characterize most resources dating from the 1960's are plentiful and diverse in application as well as creative elucidation. Among others, these include: the conceptualization of structure as ornament, an unbridled manipulation of built forms, a marked preference for specific spatial typologies, the reinterpretation of traditional components like arches and screened walls, and consistency of choice regarding building tectonics. Multiple recurrent approaches – as evidenced in different resources - attest to conscious, yet shared, design decisions and spatial approaches prompted by the fulfillment of contemporary program functions. This applies to site design and composition.

The issue of **setting**, however, constitutes a most difficult aspect to argue in many cases. After the 1960's, transformations of the public realm and open spaces in Puerto Rico have been plentiful, more than often altering the character of the place in which the property played its historical role, weakening its relationship to surrounding features as these have disappeared. Both natural and manmade features have suffered as the result of urban makeovers, when not removed completely.

The subject of **materials**, in contrast, contributes significantly to the integrity of properties erected along the 60's. Designers were consistent – and in tune with colleagues in the United

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States – when selecting and combining materials, surface and wall finishes, and ornamental components such as aluminum screens and ceramic mosaic tiles, to mention a few. Eligible resources must retain the original key exterior materials.

Addressing **workmanship** in properties mechanically built - making the most of prefabrication and other standardized processes - must not occlude the fact that, along the sixties in Puerto Rico, construction brought together contemporary technological practices and sophisticated craftsmanship related to woodworking, ceramics, and mosaic, among other skills that require dedicated labor. These were featured in new buildings as well as conservation projects, revealing locally preferred aesthetic principles.

Feeling - understood as a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historical sense of a particular period of time - is conveyed by eligible resources from the 60’s through physical features and attributes that together succeed in eliciting said sensation. The coherent overlap of form, space, materials and artistry is a characteristic asset shared by many eligible sources from the period.

A property’s capacity to stimulate **association** kindles a direct link between an important historic event or person and the eligible resource’s appearance and bearing. Many buildings from the sixties are not yet earmarked as places where a specific event occurred: it could be argued that the period’s history has yet to unfold fully. However, today the associative power of eligible properties rests primarily on their capacity to bring to mind pleasant (sometimes naïve) memories of a bygone epoch, one remembered as the key instance in Puerto Rican history in which undeterred hope fueled unquestionable confidence in a future paved by Progress.

NOTE: In this Multiple Nomination, 1958-1972 are established as cut-off dates for the period of significance, given the coherence of architectural expression made manifest along those years, one that extended beyond specific chronological boundaries, given the long life of some design influences and stylistic vocabulary. However, any resource to be nominated before 2022 that falls into the *less than 50 years categorization*, has to justify exceptional significance and – as required - meet Criterion Consideration G: “*A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance*”. Resources nominated after 2022 do not have to meet Criteria Consideration G.

Data categories of **Associated Property Types** are listed below in the same order in which they appear in the National Register Bulletin, “*How to Complete the National Registration Form*”, revised in 1997.

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01. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960's.

Along the 1960's, Puerto Rico experienced unprecedented growth related to population, on one hand, and tourism in the other. Rising demographics and the government's determination to promote the Island abroad as a vacation paradise, fueled local construction of houses, housing, and hotels. New modes of habitation were promoted. To qualify for listing, related DOMESTIC resources must: 1) have been occupied/used for individual or collective dwelling (public and private), and temporary lodging for the local hospitality industry; also, 2) constitute an eloquent example of the period's prevailing standards of living regarding private aspirations and social/political responsibilities regarding public housing and hotel design. The properties must be substantial examples of one of the following types established by the National Register under this category: Hotel, Institutional Housing, Multiple Dwelling, and Single Dwelling. In these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (if retaining the character defining features and/or original appearance during the period of its association with an important event of the period), and **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

Subtype 1: hotels

Hotels are eligible under **Criterion A** in the areas of COMMERCE AND ENTERTAINMENT/ RECREATION as the physical, robust embodiment of Puerto Rico's mid-Twentieth Century pursuit of economic growth through tourism and its parallel commitment to Modernism as mirror of Progress. Large or small, some of them hosted important guests and events; many became symbols of Puerto Rico's transformation from a traditional country to a contemporary society. The subsequent development of areas like Condado and Isla Verde owe much to the impact of hotels in the collective imaginary of Puerto Rico. Resources under this category epitomize local and imported ideas about living in the Tropics entails, often profiting from the local climate, incorporating ample, semi-enclosed spaces, lush vegetation, and panoramic views. They may be located within urban contexts, next to the sea, or perched upon a hill. Properties eligible for significance under **Criterion C** should exemplify distinguishing typological characteristics, construction methods then preferred, also building materials. Stylistic preferences, and remarkable design authorship should also be considered. Many hotels represent the period's bent for integrating Spanish-historical features within the modern idiom. Even if having been subjected to internal spatial redistribution, and partial substitution of original materials and details, resources can be eligible if still preserving all or most qualities of integrity.

Subtype 2: apartment buildings [multiple-dwelling]

Apartment buildings endorsing diverse multiple-dwelling typologies are eligible under **Criterion C** in the area of COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING as the "incarnation" of what

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political powers promised at that time: an upgraded standard of living for everyone. The new status delivered for all: those living in slums were relocated to improved public housing; the ones who could afford it opted for condominiums, and the select ones profiting from Capitalistic forces at play, chose to live the good life in sophisticated private residences. Properties might be eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT if it can be demonstrated that they were part of an important planning process. Properties eligible for significance under **Criterion C** should exemplify many of the following: distinguishing typologies; a notable, geometric resolution of spaces in plan; a hierarchical lobby; an iconic urban profile; building sections of above-average spatial complexity; standard construction methods used at the time, but also structural innovation; and, choice building materials. Distinguishing modern features, and remarkable design authorship should also be considered. Resources under this category are often distinguished by attention to site and façade composition, stair design, and circulation sequences. They may appear in urban and suburban contexts. Resources that have been subjected to site interventions, spatial redistributions, and partial substitution of original materials, features, and details, can be eligible if still preserving all or most qualities of integrity.

Subtype 3: residence

Private residences are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE as the ultimate manifestation of Puerto Rico's upgraded standard of living under Commonwealth status. Free from the urban constraints of the traditional city, the modern house of the 60's in Puerto Rico usually appears as a free-standing object of sculptural qualities, including indispensable amenities, from multiple carports to live-in-maid quarters. Properties eligible for significance under **Criterion C** should typify many of the following: a distinguishing typological model; invention in laying out house components often connected by levels and/or pavilions; interior patio(s); and an emulation of the surrounding tropical countryside, as most were built in what were then rural areas. Resources under this category are often distinguished by ample, well-landscaped grounds; architectural complexity in terms of spatial design; and the use of select building materials. Patio and stair design are regularly awarded special attention, as these residences often prove to be the best canvas on which period architects openly express themselves, their ideas, recurrent motifs, and proclivities. In consequence, any distinguishing, signature features pertaining to design authorship should also be considered. If these resources have been subjected to site interventions or particular constrictions, spatial redistributions, and partial substitution of original materials, features, or details, they can still be eligible if to this day preserving all or most qualities of integrity.

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02. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH COMMERCE/TRADE IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960's.

Along the 1960's, the establishment of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the ensuing Federal fiscal support, public and private investment, as well as the rise of tourism, bolstered far-reaching economic development. To qualify for listing, related ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE resources must: 1) have been occupied or used by the commerce/trade industry for commercial, retail, banking, car dealership, trading, and organizational purposes; and, 2) must be publicly acknowledged as representative of the Island's growth and prosperity. The properties must be substantially representative examples of one of the following types established by the National Register under this category: Business, Department Store, Financial Institution, and Organizational. In these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

Subtype 1: office building

Office buildings are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE when they constitute a distinguishable entity within the urban fabric, or represent Puerto Rico's professional and fiscal growth with distinction, and/or embody the Island's mid-20th century economic and architectural aspirations. Properties eligible for significance should exemplify distinctive typological characteristics, illustrate the period's relevant methods of construction, and embrace the prevailing architectural vocabulary; having often been designed by notable architects. Resources subjected to subsequent redistribution of interior spaces, substitution of materials and architectural detailing, can be eligible if still retaining all or most aspects of integrity, the original uses, its characteristic massing and volumetric profile, also complementary or adjacent public spaces or features.

Subtype 2: professional association

Seats of professional organizations (for lawyers, teachers, etc.) are eligible under **Criterion A** in the areas of COMMERCE/TRADE or SOCIAL HISTORY when associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. They are also eligible under **Criterion C** when conspicuous within the surrounding context, and when they adopt prevalent methods of construction, and epitomize the period's architectural vocabulary or the work of noteworthy architects. Resources that have been subjected to the redistribution/alteration of interior spaces, and to the substitution of materials and architectural detailing, can be eligible if still retaining all or most aspects of integrity, the original uses, its characteristic massing and volumetric profile, including complementary or adjacent public spaces or features.

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Subtype 3: savings and loan association, bank

Banks and Savings and Loan Associations are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE if they played a key role in Puerto Rico’s mid-20th century urban evolution, based as it was on investment in construction, infrastructure, and extended suburban development. These resources personify prevalent economic and architectural aspirations, made evident in diverse municipalities and areas around the Island. Properties eligible for significance under **Criterion C** should exemplify distinguishing typological characteristics, preferred construction methods and building materials, also stylistic preferences, and remarkable design authorship. In spite of having been subjected to any rearrangement of interior spaces and partial substitution of original materials and details, resources can be eligible if still preserving all or most qualities of integrity.

Subtype 4: department store

Department stores in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE qualify for eligibility under **Criterion C** if they retain their original spatial/open plan distribution and key public circulation components, as well as the character of the façade and, if applicable, representative ornamental elements. If the resource represents the work of a noted designer, it may also be eligible. Resources qualify if still preserving all or most qualities of integrity. In some cases, **Criterion A** may apply for department stores that, rooted throughout the years in quotidian life, have left an imprint in the collective memory of more than one generation that have witnessed the transformation of local commerce from mom and pop stores, to market, to mall.

03. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH GOVERNMENT IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960’s.

Although by 1960 the most iconic buildings of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico were already in place, a few other important ones came to be some years later, but remaining true to the government’s chosen modern architectural idiom, simultaneously underlining a taste for sound and upmarket construction materials. Through the continued, official embrace of Modernity, the State made its presence felt, projecting efficiency, stability, and, of course, permanence. To qualify for listing, related GOVERNMENT resources must have been occupied or used by government to house government offices and/or facilities, and be publicly acknowledged as representative of the Island’s growth and prosperity. The properties must be substantively representative examples of the type established by the National Register under this category. In these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (if retaining the character defining features and/or appearance during the period of its association with an important event of the period), and **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property’s integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

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Subtype 1: government office

Government office buildings are eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of GOVERNMENT and under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE when they are appreciated as a discernible entity within their surrounding context, or represent Puerto Rico’s political and fiscal evolution with distinction, and/or exemplify the Island’s economic and architectural aspirations after mid-20th century. Properties eligible for significance should exemplify distinctive typological models, show the period’s relevant methods of construction, and embrace the prevailing architectural vocabulary; having often been designed by notable architects. Qualified properties should constitute examples of worth regarding the use of materials like marble, granite, stone, terrazzo, bronze, aluminum, and glass in governmental facilities. Resources subjected to subsequent redistribution of interior spaces, substitution of materials and architectural detailing, can be eligible if still retaining all or most aspects of integrity, the original uses, its characteristic massing and volumetric profile, also complementary or adjacent public spaces or features.

04. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH EDUCATION IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960’s.

Along the 1960’s, the Government of Puerto Rico focused on revamping the Island’s educational system, acknowledging the need to address the growing suburban population by siting new school buildings in new settings. Universities and colleges sponsored the construction of dormitory facilities and student centers. Institutions were expanding and transforming. Government also concentrated in the development of health-related facilities, assisted as it was in the effort by federal funds allotted for such purpose. It was a transcendental period for public health in the Island, linked to key public policies, and historical developments. At that time, the booming population required trained medical personnel and teachers to cover all related pedagogical offerings. Hospitals were then provided with educational components, integrating extended medical campuses, as it happened in San Juan, Ponce, and Mayagüez, among other locations. Housing for nurses was provided next to hospitals, needed as they were to support and assist MD’s. To qualify for listing, related EDUCATION resources must have been occupied or used by the field of education for schoolhouse, college, or education-related purposes. The properties must be substantially representative examples of one of the following types established by the National Register under this category: schoolhouse, secondary school, university, and college dormitory. Pertaining to these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (if retaining the character defining features and/or appearance during the period of its association with any important event of the period), and **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property’s integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

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Subtype 1: schoolhouse

Schoolhouses eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of EDUCATION illustrate pedagogical and architectural concerns pursuant to the period and **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE. By adopting a modern vocabulary (independent, clustered volumes; thin, “lally” columns and overhangs; breezeways; steel supports; but also prefabricated components and mural painting) schools underlined openness and independence, but also learning interconnectedness. Patios and hallways often read as one space, a perception granted by the articulation of the building’s use program into segmented volumes. Lobbies are often generous, contrasting with otherwise repetitive spaces like classrooms. Although primarily object-buildings, horizontality prevailed at these schools. Qualified properties should exemplify distinguishing typologies, characteristic construction methods, and often-present building materials, like wood, glass, and aluminum used for fenestration. Adoption of key, modern architectural features, including the evidence of remarkable design authorship should also be considered, when applicable. If throughout time, the resource has been subjected to redistribution of its internal spaces or partial substitution of original materials and details, it may nonetheless be eligible if it still preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

Subtype 2: secondary school

Secondary schools eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of EDUCATION echo pedagogical and design priorities that prevailed during the 1960’s and **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE. The most representative secondary schools are often cluster-type complexes made up of independent volumes, linked by covered-yet-open hallways, and patios or green areas in-between. Rich in modern vocabulary, they habitually include: thin, “lally” columns and overhangs; steel and concrete supports; but also prefabricated components and mural painting. Patios and hallways often become one space through the articulation of the school’s use program into segmented volumes. Lobbies are regularly generous, contrasting with repetitive classroom spaces. Horizontality prevails. Eligible properties should exemplify distinguishing typologies, distinctive erection techniques, and often recurrent building materials like wood, glass, and aluminum used for fenestration. Characteristic, modern architectural qualities, including the evidence of signature design authorship should also be considered. If throughout time, the resource has been subjected to any redistribution of its internal spaces or partial substitution of original materials and details, it may nonetheless be eligible for inclusion in the National Register if it still preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

Subtype 3: university

University resources eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of EDUCATION attest to the expansion of college education throughout the Island in the 1960’s and **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE. Adding then novel pedagogical offerings and buildings to house newly-expanded student

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bodies, public and private institutions experienced substantial campus growth. As common denominators, open-air lobbies, wide, open hallways, roof openings, brise soleils and other screen-like features enabled these buildings to make the most of natural ventilation and illumination. Concrete (polished and painted) was unabashedly preferred and used in round columns, extended cantilevers, parapets, floors, and/or sculptural architectural features. Eligible properties should exemplify the above mentioned distinguishing characteristics, feature noteworthy construction methods, and acknowledge those building materials and finishes commonly featured at the time, like wood, glass, and aluminum. Resources should incorporate modern details and any features that represent the original designer’s signature style, whenever applicable. Property eligibility should be considered even if, in its life span, the resource has been subjected to interior or exterior alterations, and/or partial retrieval/substitution of original details, materials and finishes but, in spite of it, still preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

Subtype 4: college dormitory [education-related]

College dormitory resources from the 1960’s in Puerto Rico - eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of EDUCATION – confirm the period’s endorsement of Architecture’s relevance to Academia and **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE. At that time, aware of the need to support (and lodge) a growing amount of aspiring pupils, institutions built dorms for undergraduates, future nurses, and theology students, among other candidates. These facilities performed as appendixes to academically-related, existing university and medical complexes. Adjacency rendered these “residences” practical for administrators and users alike. Eligible resources under this category should retain most of their key distinguishing features: a rather expansive lobby/receiving area; screened walls, and compact, efficient, repetitive living units. Moreover, properties should exemplify distinguishing housing typologies, preferred construction methods, choice building materials, and any important stylistic expressions. Qualified properties should incorporate modern architectural details and finishes, also any features that distinguish the original designer’s signature style, whenever applicable. If in its life span, the resource has been subjected to interior or exterior alterations, and/or partial retrieval/substitution of original details, materials and finishes, the property’s eligibility could still be considered if all or most qualities pursuant to integrity have been retained.

05. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH RELIGION IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960’s.

The 1960’s proved to be a transformative decade for the Catholic Church all over the world, including Puerto Rico. The Second Vatican Council promoted renewed theological stances regarding a perfected dissemination of the catholic faith and improved communication between clergy and the community, all supported by having the priest face his devotees, and holding mass in local languages, among other imperative standpoints. Said changes

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transformed religious church architecture. If existing temples had to improvise to comply with the required transformations, those built after the Vatican Council's pronouncements made most of the opportunity as a renewed design challenge. Countless designers around the globe engaged in the joint manipulation of traditional typologies and abstract expression, a creative search fueled and underpinned by the Modern Movement's tenets regarding form, tectonics, and the integration of art and architecture. In Puerto Rico, in general, churches were built in new neighborhood developments ("*urbanizaciones*"). To qualify for listing, RELIGION related resources must be substantial examples of one of the following types/uses established by the National Register under this category: religious facility and church school. In both categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (if retaining the character defining features and/or appearance during the period of its association with an important event of the period), and **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.) This property type fulfill the **Criteria Consideration A's** special requirements because its primary significance is derived from its architectural o artistic distinction.

Subtype 1: church school

Church schools eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE AND ART echo devotional and design priorities that prevailed during the 1960's. Those most representative ones are distinguished by inclusion of a chapel within the building program or adjacency to a church, covered-yet-open hallways, classrooms, patios and some green areas. Patios and hallways grant spatial fluidity and openness. Rich in modern vocabulary, they may include: thin, steel columns, but also robust ones in concrete; overhangs, canopies, and cantilevers; prefabricated components; and non-luxurious finishes. Eligible properties should exemplify characteristic typologies, any distinctive erection techniques, and those building materials, like wood, glass, and aluminum customarily used for doors, windows, and built-in features. Characteristic architectural qualities, including the evidence of signature design authorship should also be taken into account. If throughout time, the resource has been subjected to redistribution of its internal spaces or partial substitution of original materials and details, it may nonetheless be eligible for inclusion in the National Register if it still preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

Subtype 2: religious facility

Religious facilities are eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of SOCIAL HISTORY as the physical manifestation of the impact and legacy of the Catholic Church in 20th-century architecture – and life in general - in Puerto Rico. Resources under this category epitomize local and imported ideas about modern religious design. The institution's commitment to the modern idiom helped validate a taste for it, if not simply its relaxed acceptance. Large sized or small, these churches have hosted countless celebrations, public and private, thus becoming part of the nation's collective memory. In addition, properties eligible for significance under **Criterion C** should exemplify characteristic typologies, construction methods pursuant to the

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period, also building materials. Stylistic preferences, and remarkable design authorship should also be considered, as many architects engaged enthusiastically in formal and compositional experimentation when designing modern churches, underscoring structural/sculptural supports, idiosyncratic roofs and canopies, profuse fenestration, screens and breezeways, often highlighting color, among other design strategies. If during its life span the resource has been subjected to interior or exterior modifications, and/or partial retrieval/substitution of original details, materials and finishes, the property’s eligibility could still be considered if all or most qualities pursuant to the property’s integrity have been retained.

06. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH FUNERARY IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960’s.

For a long time, most Island municipalities buried their dead in 19th century cemeteries. By mid-20th century, many of these were filled to capacity, or had become godforsaken places. Demographics and secularization also fostered the construction of new, non-denominational, resting places, both public and private. Land to build was only available away from the now dense center of town; acreage was also cheaper at the outskirts. Along the 1960’s, contemporary cemeteries were designed in the modern idiom; statuary tradition being set aside and replaced by renewed preference for open, grassy fields, and discreet marble slabs on ground. To qualify for listing, related FUNERARY resources must have been occupied by the funerary industry for use as cemetery, and also be a substantial example of the type established by the National Register under the Cemetery category. Property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property’s integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.) This property type fulfill the **Criteria Consideration D’s** special requirements because its significance is derived from its distinctive design features.

Subtype 1: cemetery

In order to be eligible under **Criterion C**, cemeteries must incorporate myriad design characteristics pursuant to graveyard design during the 1960’s in Puerto Rico. These include the grouping of functional and meditative components amid a green, flowing, landscaped area used for ground burials. Components customarily included in these resting places are: an entry feature, administrative and maintenance buildings, public restrooms, a service yard, storage, burial areas and/or sections with grave markers in marble or another material; also a committal service shelter (akin to an open-air chapel). This shelter -freestanding, object-like - generally occupies a hierarchical place within the overall site composition. Designers – not obliged to address religious tradition - usually make the most of it by engaging in highly idiosyncratic, sculptural manipulations of form. Properties eligible for significance under **Criterion C** should exemplify most of the following: a distinctive typological model of funerary site design and related individual components (like the shelter); generous landscaped

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grounds; and an architectural design of compositional and/or tectonic merit. Because, in general, shelters in cemeteries “invite” architects to make manifest alternate ideas about form and materiality, any signature features pertaining to design authorship should also be considered in determining eligibility. When these resources have suffered site interventions or particular constrictions, spatial redistributions, and/or partial substitution of original materials, features, or details, they can still be considered eligible properties when having managed to preserve all or most qualities of integrity.

07. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH RECREATION AND CULTURE IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960’s.

During the 1960’s, the government of Puerto Rico and diverse Island municipalities saw fit to promote engagement of the Island’s population in sports, encouraging individuals to be more than spectators, also competitors. Involvement in sports could contribute to distance youth from idleness and delinquency. Population growth and fondness for sports led to the proliferation of facilities like baseball fields, basketball courts, and an Olympic pool, among others. In parallel, interests in culture and art were fostered by several, already-existing museums, some moving to new premises. Films enjoyed great popularity then, and movie houses multiplied in San Juan and other cities. To qualify for listing, related RECREATION AND CULTURE resources must: 1) have been occupied or used as museum, sports facility, or theater, and; 2) must be publicly acknowledged as having played a key role in the Island’s cultural, artistic and/or sporting development. Eligible properties must be substantially representative examples of the above-mentioned types established by the National Register under this category. In these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (when retaining the character defining features and/or appearance during the period of its association with an important event of the period), and **Criterion C** (if complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property’s integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

Subtype 1: museum

Museums are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE AND ART and under **Criterion A** in the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION when they constitute a distinguishable entity within the urban context in which they sit, and/or represent Puerto Rico’s cultural and artistic maturity with distinction. Properties eligible for significance should exemplify distinctive typologies and highlight the period’s relevant methods of construction, also embrace the prevailing modern architectural vocabulary. They were often designed by notable architects with their own signature style. Prefabrication, molded/poured concrete, a sculpted building profile, and textural richness (terrazzo, bronze...), have a significant bearing on these resources’ character and quality. Properties that in time have experienced the redistribution of interior spaces, substitution of materials and/or architectural detailing, can be

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eligible if still retaining all or most aspects of integrity, the original uses, its characteristic massing and volumetric profile, also complementary or adjacent public spaces or features.

Subtype 2: sports facility

Sports facilities are eligible under **Criterion C** in the area of ARCHITECTURE AND ART and under **Criterion A** in the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION when they constitute a distinguishable entity within the urban context in which they sit – a feature in the landscape - and/or represent Puerto Rico’s sporting traditions with distinction. Eligible resources are expected to exemplify prototypical building typologies and highlight the period’s common and experimental methods of construction, while embracing the prevailing modern architectural vocabulary. Some of these resources were often designed by notable architects interested in the structural and sculptural possibilities inherent to the property’s function. Prefabrication, molded/poured concrete, a sculpted building profile, and screened wall surfaces, have a substantial bearing on these resources’ architectural character and quality, properties not completely independent of the engineering solutions that led to the final product. Those resources that in time have experienced changes in the disposition of interior spaces, substitution of materials and/or architectural detailing, can be eligible if still retaining all or most aspects of integrity, the original use, its distinctive massing and volumetric profile, as well as the character of adjacent public spaces.

Subtype 3: theater

Theatres eligible under **Criterion C** in the area of ARCHITECTURE and under Criterion A in the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION should exemplify distinctive movie house typologies and highlight the period’s relevant and recurrent methods of construction, and also bear witness to the 1960’s modern architectural vocabulary. Several film theaters embody creative solutions as insertions into the previously existing urban fabric. Prefabricated components in concrete, textured surfaces, and extant period ornamentation have a weighty bearing on these resources’ character and quality. Movie houses are periodically subjected to refurbishments and/or overhauls. Properties that in time have experienced the redistribution of interior spaces, substitution of materials and/or architectural detailing, can be eligible if still retaining all or most aspects of integrity, the original use, its characteristic massing and volumetric profile, also ornamental features.

08. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH INDUSTRY / PROCESSING / EXTRACTION IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960’s.

Along the 1960’s, Puerto Rico ‘s industrial profile was highlighted by processing and manufacturing of diverse products, from clothing to rum, and pharmaceutical drugs and medical devices, most of them for exportation. In previous years, the State had jumpstarted industrial growth by building prototypical facilities for potential investors in almost every town. Said practice continued during the 1960’s. Private enterprise also committed funds for

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construction of industrial plants. On the other hand, the advent of television in the 50's, paired with the Island's subsequent booming economy proved catalytic to the evolution of communications and advertising. To qualify for listing, related INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION resources must: 1) have been used for industry, processing and/or extraction purposes, particularly as manufacturing and/or communications facilities, also; 2) must be publicly accredited as representative of the Island's growth and prosperity. The properties must be cogent architectural examples, capable of representing one of two types established by the National Register under this category: processing plant, and television station. In these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (if retaining the character defining features and/or appearance during the period of its association with an important event of the period), and **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

Subtype 1: communications facility

As icons (also vehicles) of progress and change, communications facilities eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING and under Criterion A in the areas pertaining to INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION, adopted modern design trends, often jointly "appeasing" these by incorporating Spanish colonial motifs or derivatives of these. The most representative communications facilities in Puerto Rico house television stations. Lobby spaces are relatively open, contrasting with the solid, non-descript character of transmission studios or news bureaus, walled up without openings for functional reasons. Communications facilities can be housed in enclosed buildings, but also laid-out in clusters of independent volumes, linked by covered-yet-open hallways and small green areas in-between. Eligible properties should exemplify prototypical typologies, distinctive erection techniques, and the recurrent use of specific building materials. The evidence of signature design authorship should also be considered, taking into account the use of the period's architectural vocabulary of choice: horizontal massing, thin, "lally" columns, canopies, and cantilevers; steel and concrete supports; but also prefabricated components. If throughout time, the resource has been subjected to redistribution of its internal spaces or partial substitution of original materials and details, it may nevertheless be eligible for inclusion if it preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

Subtype 2: manufacturing facility

Manufacturing facilities that are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING and under **Criterion A** in the area of INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION, adopted modern architectural trends, best made evident on their building elevations and inside public reception areas. The spaciousness of lobbies often contrasts with the walled-off character, non-descript character of processing and manufacturing areas whose design is ruled by functional priorities. Manufacturing facilities can be housed in separate buildings, sometimes linked by hallways and green areas in-between. Qualified properties should typify prototypical architecture/engineering models, any distinctive

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erection techniques, and the recurrent use of specific building materials. Reliance on prefabricated construction elements, usage of the period’s most popular architectural vocabulary, as well as evidence of signature design authorship should be considered. Manufacturing facilities are continually subject to transformations due to ever-changing technological considerations. If the resource has been subjected to internal spatial changes or partial removal/substitution of original materials and details, it may nevertheless be eligible for inclusion if it preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

09. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH HEALTH CARE IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960’s.

Along the 1960’s, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico sponsored the construction of multiple health-care facilities throughout the Island. The State was assisted in the effort by the US Government and encouraged to do so by the enactment of the *Hill-Burton Hospital Survey and Construction Act of 1946* by the 79th USA Congress. The law promoted the construction of hospitals, clinics, and health care facilities. It was in effect until 1974. Said legislation established health care as a prime governmental responsibility, allotting funds for the construction of medical buildings during almost three (3) decades. The initiative was not unrelated to the government’s interest in ensuring a healthy workforce for investors, but the 60’s profited vastly from it, as health-care services not only diversified, but also expanded to cover much of the territory. To implement and further the reach of the Hill-Burton Act on the Island, Puerto Rico’s Legislative Assembly approved Law No. 101 in June 26, 1965, known as “*Ley de Facilidades de Salud*”, defining different types of health facilities in linkage with the federal legislation. Previously, in the 1920’s, regionalization of health care led to building District Hospitals in several towns, but now – by establishing Medical Centers - attention to complex chirurgical and trauma cases, as well as opportunities for training medical personnel were decentralized from San Juan. It was a period of effervescence for public health in Puerto Rico, inspiring leadership, and furthering debate about public health policy. In order to qualify for listing in the National Register, related HEALTH CARE resources must have been occupied by the field of health care for use as clinic, hospital, or sanitarium. Pertaining to these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (if retaining the character defining features and/or appearance during the period of its association with any important event of the period), and **Criteria C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property’s integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

Subtype 1: clinic

Clinic resources from the 1960’s in Puerto Rico - eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE AND ART and under **Criterion A** in the area of HEALTH CARE – came to be under the *Hill Burton Act*, a measure committed to improving the health and health-care of Americans. States and territories paired funds federally apportioned, being simultaneously

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required to contribute “*a reasonable volume of free care*”. Clinics handled outpatient cases, offering routine check-ups and medical exams, mostly at municipal level. Eligible resources under this category should retain most of the clinic’s distinguishing features: a compacted internal distribution and screened circulation hallways. Moreover, qualified properties should exemplify prototypical health-care typologies, construction methods that prevailed at the time, building materials of choice, and single or repetitive stylistic expressions. Qualified properties should also incorporate modern architectural details and finishes, also any qualities that distinguish the original designer’s signature style. If during its life span, the resource has been subjected to interior or exterior alterations, and/or partial retrieval/substitution of original details, materials and finishes, the property’s eligibility could still be considered if all or most qualities pursuant to the property’s integrity have been retained.

Subtype 2: hospital

Hospital buildings from the 1960’s in Puerto Rico are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE and under **Criterion A** in the area of HEALTH CARE. They came to be under the *Hill Burton Act* of 1946, a measure promoted by Congress to improve the health and health-care of Americans. States and territories had to match federal funds and eventually contribute public, uncompensated care. Hospitals were well-equipped, clean and modern, providing medical services, simultaneously granting real-life experience to students working in them as practice centers. Some of these hospitals were erected within existing medical campuses, others independently. Eligible resources under this category should exemplify prototypical health-care typologies, illustrate construction methods of choice at that time, and highlight the particular architectural treatment of structural supports, building roofs and canopies, fenestration, screens and breezeways, among other prototypical elements. Qualified properties should also incorporate modern materials, details and finishes, also any qualities that distinguish the original designer’s signature style, when applicable. If during its life span, the resource has been subjected to interior or exterior modifications, and/or partial retrieval/substitution of original details, materials and finishes, the property’s eligibility could still be considered if all or most qualities pursuant to the property’s integrity have been retained.

Subtype 3: sanitarium

Sanitarium resources that date from the 1960’s in Puerto Rico are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, ART AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE and under **Criterion A** in the area of HEALTH CARE. Law No. 101 from the Puerto Rico Legislative Assembly - known as “*Ley de Facilidades de Salud*”, approved in June 26, 1965 – acknowledges sanitarium among other pertinent types of health facilities in the Island. As long-term health residences, they include living areas, both communal and private; open and outdoor spaces; medical support units for routine check-ups and medical exams; and areas for visitors. Eligible resources under this category should exemplify prototypical typologies for sanitarium, also illustrate construction methods of choice, and highlight the particular architectural treatment of structural supports, building roofs and canopies, fenestration, and

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screened circulation hallways, among other elements often protagonical. Qualified properties should also incorporate modern architectural details and finishes, also any qualities that distinguish the original designer's signature style. When the resource has been subjected to interior or exterior alterations, and/or partial retrieval/substitution of original details, materials and finishes, the property's eligibility could still be considered if – in spite of it - all or most qualities pursuant to the property's integrity have been retained.

10. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH TRANSPORTATION IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960's.

Before and throughout the 1960's, the Government of Puerto Rico insistently promoted the Island's geographic importance in relation to geopolitical/security concerns, commerce, and the tourism industry. Whether for military personnel, businessmen, or visitors, displacement to the Island was largely facilitated by air travel. For the local population – those many now owning a car - parking garages were built, satisfying the growing urban need for temporary storage of automobiles. To qualify for listing, related TRANSPORTATION resources must have been occupied or used by transportation industries for airport, airport-related, or parking storage purposes. The properties must be substantively representative examples of one of the following types established by the National Register under this category: air-related, and road-related. Under these categories, property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

Subtype 1: air-related

Air-related properties eligible under **Criterion C** in the area of ENGINEERING, regularly adopted prevailing modern design trends. Their lobby spaces were relatively open, contrasting with the solid nature of other programmatic components, non-accessible to the public. Eligible properties should exemplify prototypical typologies, distinguishing notable construction techniques, and building tectonics. The evidence of signature design authorship should also be considered, taking into account the repeated use of the period's architectural vocabulary of choice: horizontal massing; arches and cantilevers; steel and concrete supports; but also prefabricated components. If throughout time, the resource has been subjected to redistribution of its internal spaces or partial substitution of original materials and details, it may nevertheless be eligible for inclusion if it preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

Subtype 2: road-related

Road-related properties eligible under **Criterion C** in the area of ENGINEERING, consistently embraced modern design ideas and techniques. Serving purely functional purposes, parking garages often incorporated prefabricated components, molded/poured concrete, and screened

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wall surfaces. As such, these elements have a substantial bearing on these resources' architectural character and quality, properties not completely independent of the engineering solutions that led to the final product. Eligible properties should represent notable design strategies for insertion of parking garages within an urban context, also exemplify prototypical typologies, distinguishing notable construction techniques, and building tectonics. The evidence of signature design authorship should also be considered, taking into account the repeated use of the period's architectural vocabulary of choice: concrete slabs and supports, arches and cantilevers; and prefabricated components. If throughout time, the resource has been subjected to redistribution of its internal spaces or partial substitution of original materials and details, it may nevertheless be eligible for inclusion if it preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

11. Name of property type: RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER IN PUERTO RICO DURING THE 1960's.

During the 60's - to counterbalance the societal and physical impact of modernization, the Government of Puerto Rico officially established and disseminated programs for the preservation of historic architecture throughout the Island. Many public spaces and buildings were rehabilitated or restored by the State; private owners were encouraged to join the effort by benefitting from related tax exemption legislation. Spanish colonial architecture enjoyed a comeback, not only through the implementation of conservation projects, but also as thematic source for the decoration of new, modern interior spaces. Designers saw fit to incorporate traditional elements like roof clay tiles, wooden beams, brick, colored ceramic tiles, colored glass, wrought iron grilles, and other similar elements in hotels, banking institutions, retail stores, apartment buildings, and residences alike. To qualify for listing, resources under the OTHER category must have been subjected to an architectural conservation process, and be publicly acknowledged as representative of the Island's pioneering commitment to historic preservation. Properties must be archetypal examples of the type established by the National Register under this category. Property types built between 1958 and 1972 may be eligible under **Criterion A** (if retaining the character defining features and/or appearance during the period of its association with an important event of the period), and **Criterion C** (when complying with all or most aspects and qualities related to the property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.)

Subtype 1: conservation

Conservation resources that are eligible under **Criterion C** in the areas of CONSERVATION, ARCHITECTURE, ART, AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, attest to official and private endorsement of local preservation policies and their widespread impact in Puerto Rico during (and after) the 1960's. Different typologies were then addressed through conservation initiatives: open spaces, institutions, business establishments, apartment buildings, and individual dwellings. Much was learnt about the Island's architectural heritage along the

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process. Eligible properties should incorporate several of common design denominators like: revealed and/or rescued features from the original construction subjected to intervention; use of red clay roof tiles, wooden beams, rafters, and bricks; marble flooring; balustrades, steps, and fenestration in calibrated wood; wrought iron grilles and structural supports; and ceramic tile used as facing at kitchens, bathrooms, and stair risers, among other locations. Property eligibility should be considered even if, in its life span, the conservation work at the resource has been subjected to modifications, and/or partial retrieval/substitution of original details, materials and finishes but, in spite of it all, still preserves all or most qualities pursuant to integrity.

Statement of Significance

Architecture and Landscape Architecture influenced significantly architecture built in Puerto Rico along the 1960's. Urbanism and interior design also enjoyed professional prominence. Political, economic, and cultural forces proved to be catalytic influences with direct influence in design, construction, and dissemination of related ideas. Buildings erected during the decade – and a few before and shortly after – answered to a frenzy about the Island's progress and an even better future.

Late Modern ideas found fertile ground in a territory growing and changing under the United States tutelage. Confidence, daring, and wealth were made evident in the scope, complexity, and finishes of important civic and private buildings, from medical centers to cemeteries to private residences. Architectural detailing was sophisticated like in no previous period in the Island. Key public and artistic personalities, often in tandem, played a substantial role.

Property types associated to this period are plentiful; institutional, religious, health and housing related, recreational, and commercial, along others. The decade was nourished by the work of local architects, loyal to many precepts of Late Modernity in terms of use programs, techniques and technology, materials and strategies for composition and ornamentation. Consistent motifs are favoured by designers: conceptualization of structure as ornament; freedom in the use of the form; sculptural treatment of building profiles; tower/plinth structures; "veils" or "filters" used as ornament; the incorporation of arches and vaults; an affinity for prominent stairs, sumptuous single-family residences, and; consistent tectonic options.

The architecture of the 1960's integrates a legacy that is now the object of public interest and 20th-century preservationists and organizations like *DoCoMoMo*. The work of figures like Jesús Eduardo Amaral, Horacio Díaz, and Jorge del Río have been the subject of monographs, exhibits, and site visits, acknowledging a revisionist bent regarding the decade's accomplishments. The three architects – authors of institutional, corporate, and residential work – were skilfull in architectural composition, volume proportioning, and the use of concrete in conjunction with other materials. Today, their undertakings enjoy respect from their peers,

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as well as from younger generations convinced there is much to learn from this local masters.

Registration Requirements

1. The building must have been built between 1958 and 1962. If dating from a later date, it must exemplify the same architectural traits and strategies pursuant to the architecture produced in Puerto Rico during the 1960's.
2. The building must retain its original volumetric expression and properties. No significant alterations or additions must now challenge the overall shape of the original design, unless removing them is possible without ulterior effect.
3. The resource must still retain the distinctive features of its original facade treatment, particularly all around in the case of an "object" building, whose sculptural character was so in-tune with 60's architectural imagery. Any restraining site walls or fences should be eliminated. Overhangs, original openings, wall textures and floor paving and patterns should still convey their original purpose and properties.
4. Openings – doorways and windows– must retain their original proportions, even if the original fenestration has been lost and/or substituted. Original voids should not be shut in, but could be treated with glass. Patios should retain their openness. However, retrievable (i. e. easy to remove without further damage) alterations to openings are acceptable.
5. Original colors, wood panelling and similar components, textured finishes and mural paintings must be preserved. Paint on reinforced concrete originally designed to be exposed should be removed.
6. Mechanical and security systems were, in general, added post facto to many of the buildings dating from the sixties. Contemporary integration of these systems must take into account the preservation of any building's spatial qualities.

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods.

This project was carried out according to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification and Evaluation*, (*Federal Register, Archeology and Historic Preservation, Sept. 29, 1983*) and Bulletin #24, *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning & How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. A Multiple Property Documentation Form* was developed to assist in the nomination of properties pursuant to the period in the *National Register of Historic Places*. A list of 102 buildings, a preliminary inventory of 20 significant examples, and a bibliography were compiled as part of the project and will prove useful in the future to elucidate criteria and conditions for evaluation. The political, social, and cultural background against which professionals operated was studied to best understand the context against which their works were produced.

The process included several meetings with representatives of the State Historic Preservation Office, as well as orientation sessions with the work team. Documents, original plans, texts, and magazines were consulted. Interviews with architects allowed to corroborate as well as to expand the information obtained from secondary sources. In a second stage, common denominators of the period were established, some of them also shared by designers from the same period in the United States.

Historical research initiated with the identification of relevant political, social and cultural conditions in the 50's, as a preamble before thoroughly examining the subsequent decade. The work of local authors, such as María Dolores Luque, Francisco Scarano and Blanca Silvestrini was examined. Through consideration of specific issues, a panoramic vision of influential historical forces at an international, regional and local level was developed, from the Cold War to the collaboration of Puerto Rican architects with American firms. Subjects of ample public debate were identified, among these: Progress; Puerto Rico as a showcase for Democracy; and the (im) possibility of harmonizing tradition with modernity.

As expected, critical analysis of international texts proved fruitful: "*Architecture in Puerto Rico*" by José A. Fernández, "*Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*" by Reyner Banham, "*Latin American Architecture*" by Henry Russell-Hitchcock, and others. The parallel consideration of the impact of emblematic buildings from the 50's, such as the Caribe Hilton and the Supreme Court – but also hotels such as *La Concha* and the Ponce Intercontinental, made it possible to underline differences in approach of the 60's generation. It proved useful to correlate themes related to Architecture and Urbanism with Literature and Art produced during the same years.

Throughout the investigative process, *Urbe*, the most important architecture magazine was consulted; also collections at the Architecture and Construction Archive of the School of

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Architecture at the University of Puerto Rico and at the Historical Archive of Ponce. Information from the Archive of the American Institute of Architects in Washington, D.C. proved extremely useful. Information provided by personalities interviewed and relevant research work by students of the School of Architecture at Polytechnic University provided valuable information.

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