Fragments of marble stored in the basement at the Barcelona Pavilion. Andrés Jaque. 2011.

PHANTOM Pavilion
By Andrés Jaque

The Barcelona Pavilion is an arena of confrontation organised in the form of a two-story building, in which two interdependent notions of the political lie in dispute.
The well-lit upper floor revives foundational concepts of the political (in which the extraordinary, origins and essences lead the way for that which is common), while the dark basement was constructed using contingencies and provisional agreements. The upper floor is physically transparent, but it conceals the social pacts which occur inside, to provide access to an experience of everyday *non-calculability.* The lower floor is opaque, yet it is the place where the contracts, experiments and disputes which construct the Pavilion gain transparency. The Pavilion constructs a belief through the way in which its two floors operate: 'the exceptional emerges in the absence of the ordinary.' The intervention is based on the suspicion that the recognition and rearticulation of these two spheres can contribute new possibilities in which architecture finds answers to contemporary challenges.

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Mies in the basement

The Ordinary Confronts the Exceptional in the Barcelona Pavilions[1]

Andrés Jaque

1 — A first version of this text was presented at the Columbia GSAPP Seminar on Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Practices in Architecture 'Interpretations: Promiscuous Encounters' on March 23 2012. It was presented as an address that was confronted and discussed by Keller Easterling, Markus Miessen and Felicity D. Scott, among others.

The Unaccounted Inaccessible Basement

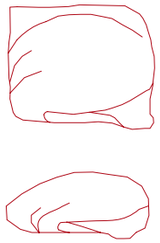
Even though it is not easy to recognise at first sight, this photograph depicts something that is decisively shaping the way most of us view a key item in the modern architectural legacy. I refer to the basement of the 1986 reconstruction of the German Pavilion that Mies van der Rohe originally built for the 1929 Barcelona International Exhibition, a reinforced concrete underground enclosure occupying the Pavilion's entire footprint. The pieces of broken glass leaning against the concrete wall are part of the grey-tinted panes that filter the light as one looks to the southwest from the Pavilion's main space (although their tinge is slightly lighter than in the original glazing brought from Germany in 1929).

Fragments of gray-tinted glass stored in the basement at the Barcelona Pavilion. Andrés Jaque. 2011.

In 2010 I was invited to work on an installation to be set at the Barcelona Pavilion itself in 2012. The Pavilion is one of the most venerated pieces of architecture, which means that any intervention in it is read not just as a self-referenced action but as a way to challenge architecture as a discipline, and as a factual manifesto of someone's practise and position. Any transformation in its image or spatial configuration, even if temporary, inevitably unchains debates on the way architecture evolves and how its boundaries are transformed. Seeking to avoid any fetishist or metaphysical approach to the Pavilion, however, I decided to initiate the process involved in designing the installation by first taking stock of the place as it stands now, in its actual materiality. I wanted to take an inventory of the Pavilion's basic facts on a wholly pragmatic basis: from materials, maintenance and management, to the way it is preserved and reproduced as a piece of real, everyday life architecture, and the forms of habitation into which it has been configured. And this is how I found myself down there doing something no one had ever attempted to do before: namely, taking pictures of the hitherto unnoticed basement of one of the most photographed architectural icons of Modernity.

The Pavilion's basement is the place where an assortment of derelict items is tucked away from visitors' eyes: red velvet curtains that are beginning to fade; worn-out white leather cushions from the famous Barcelona chairs and stools; broken pieces of travertine that have been replaced by new slabs.

A Curtains



When hit by sunlight, the red velvet curtains in the Pavilion's Carpet Room lose their color, and in the most exposed parts take on a hue which gradually shifts towards brown. The weight of the velvets available in '29, as well as those in the 80s, ended up tearing out the holders which attached the guide rail to the ceiling. Replacing the faded curtains has made it possible to acquire lighter types of velvet which has delayed the deterioration of the guide rail holders. However, many believe that by lightening the curtains, one of the Pavilion's attractive features has been changed, the burdensome movement of the curtains filled with momentum, vibrating in the wind. This minor dispute is actually a confrontation of two notions about the performative: one phenomenological and another constructive. The same dispute has created a division between those who see in Mies a direct display of construction logics and those who see in his work an insistence upon the creation of overlapping interfaces, in which the invisible is instilled with a certain expressiveness.

Transit seems to be the actual way for the Pavilion to be constructed. It has been seen many times as something that contains the unchanged legacy of Modernity, but it is actually made out of transitory realities. If it were a photograph of a moment, as it has been explained many times, it would of necessity be a blurred photo of a collection of moving and transitory realities. The pavilion was a project to bring the Weimar Republic into Barcelona, constructed by German architects, on transit in a foreign city, on the way to moving from one concept of architecture to another; representing a society starting to gain distance from the post war to become something new. It was made of materials travelling from Algeria, Italy, and Switzerland; opened by a king about to leave the country for good; reconstructed by architects willing to see their political and cultural environment evolve, with the support of institutions on the way to retelling the history of modernity. It was redesigned on the basis of a criteria which had already moved from Modernism to Postmodernism, and from there it moved to the 'landscape approach' that is now being challenged in the discussions unchained by new decisions required in the maintenance of the Pavilion, with arguments related to ecosystemic thinking. The two-storey Pavilion seems to be the specific architectural translation of an assembly of realities in the course of changing. Many things have happened in the last 40 years. Works like those by Cedric Price, Gordon Matta-Clark, the International Situationist, Stalker or Animal Farm – to list just a few –, or very recent social movements like 15M, Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, Fair Trade or LGTBQ have focused not on 'final states' or non-evolving entities but on the implications and features of symbolic, material,

Fading curtains stored in the basement at the Barcelona Pavilion. Andrés Jaque. 2011.

B Dog collar

The Pavilion of '29 has been seen as a test for and antecedent of the domestic courtyard-houses which Mies van der Rohe developed in the 30s. According to the security guards at the Pavilion today, a large number of the visitors, once inside, behave as if they were visiting a home. The Pavilion has been a home, too, at least for one night. One morning the guards found a couple sleeping on the floor in the Carpet Room, accompanied by a dog that rested as he was tied to one of the Pavilion's columns. The identity and testimony of these people is unknown, because they were immediately removed from the premises.

political and social transits. The Barcelona Pavilion, precisely because it was reconstructed for the impossible project of freezing May 1929 reality, required the development of a specific architecture to deal with and hide down the change. It is not the German Pavilion any more, but the translation of something that was perceived as an immutable reality (when it was not), precisely because it was effectively working as a device to manage change and make it invisibilised.

As part of a two-year research project I recorded long conversations with people who had been involved in the 1980s reconstruction of the Pavilion, as well as with those in charge of its management and maintenance, including architects, public administrators, security guards, gardeners, cleaning staff and managers. While in aspects such as form, composition and precious materiality the Pavilion has been massively documented, its ordinary life has remained an almost totally unstudied reality.[2] This explains why the basement has been an unknown entity for 25 years.

One would normally expect such things as distressed curtains and glass fragments to be either somehow reused or summarily thrown away, and yet the Pavilion's maintenance staff seem to feel the contradictory need to both preserve and hide this mass of assorted clutter. It is a strange feeling about the unseemliness or impropriety of all these items in their current state of decay, a feeling paradoxically accompanied by the countervailing awareness that, although as *aging* objects they may no longer be fit to respond to the immediate experience of the *never-aging* Pavilion (or Mies van der Rohe's sense of propriety, for that matter), they nevertheless retain a measure of value that justifies the effort (rather extraordinary in the case of, for instance, heavy travertine marble) required for their storage and preservation down in the basement. It is a game in which all these un-dead, un-discarded fragments of the Pavilion's original brilliance are hidden from view, allowing everyone to pretend they didn't exist, while their continued existence is ensured all the same. They are the architectural equivalents of the eponymous picture in Oscar Wilde's *Portrait of Dorian Gray*: in the eyes of the people in charge of maintaining the building. It's as though the dilapidated pieces of velvet, glass or travertine, by virtue of having once been part of the Pavilion's material substance, somehow magically retained its soul so to speak, i.e., the essence of Mies van der Rohe's critical programme. A programme which their visible presence on the ground floor would paradoxically jeopardise,

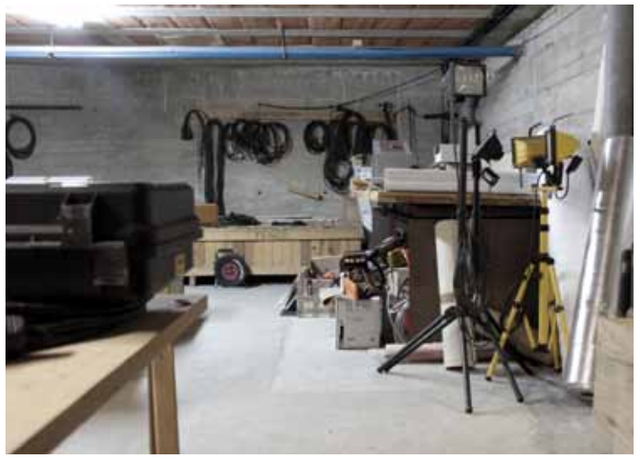
Selection of recorded conversations with people involved in the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion's daily life:

Fanny Nole, Cristian Cirici, Màrius Quintana, Isabel Bachs, Fernando Ramos, Víctor Sánchez, Ruth Castillo and Alejandro Raya.

2 — It is interesting to see how this ellipsis of the ordinary both in architecture and in its archives constituted a shared sensitivity in the 80s among many Spanish architects at that time. For instance, Alejandro de la Sota wrote in 1996: 'A scruffy person should not enter Mies' Barcelona Pavilion. This is important [...] This applies to people. It also applies to things. You should not have a house full of architecture that has been hidden, full of things that are visible. Architecture selects things and people. Then we see, in good Architecture, when it is empty, people and things that, without being there, are present. If they are not there, it is because their presence has been renounced and good architecture is full of all sorts of renouncements.' De la Sota, A. (1986). Pabellón de Barcelona. *Arquitectura* 261-63, p.4.

C Information panels

The Pavilion is a material construction, but it is also an institutional project and the testing ground in which innovative formulas for getting civil society involved in the transformation of the city of Barcelona were tested for the first time. In 1980, then Mayor Narcís Serra named Oriol Bohigas the Delegate of the City Government's Department of Urban Planning and Building, and together they once again set down the path begun in 1957 by Bohigas himself, who managed to get the epistolary support of Mies in rebuilding the Pavilion. They formed a team with Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Cristian Cirici and Fernando Ramos, and created an institutional form of engineering in which they associated with MoMA, the descendants of Mies van der Rohe and the government of the former German Federal Republic to build a framework of legitimacy to promote international acceptance of the reconstruction. However, it is also the project in which getting civil society involved in the construction of the new city of Democracy was tested. In 1982, Pasqual Maragall replaced Serra and asked the city's most important businesspeople, at a lunch after a presentation by Solà-Morales, Cirici and Ramos, to provide economic support for the reconstruction project. Two of these businessmen had confirmed their support beforehand and acted as bait to elicit a positive response from the others. A similar request, in which the use of bait is not known to have occurred, was repeated shortly after to launch Barcelona's Olympic Candidacy.



Props and equipment for events stored in the basement at the Barcelona Pavilion. Andrés Jaque. 2011.

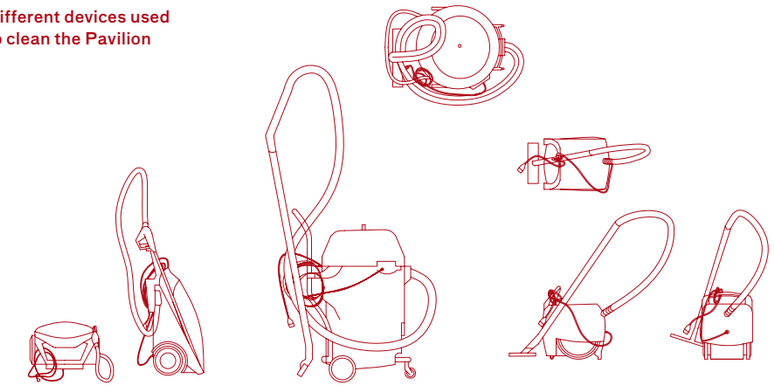
Filter system, sink, plate rack and exhibition wall used by employees of the Barcelona Pavilion at its basement. Andrés Jaque. 2012.

as they can no longer fully enact it in their current ruinous condition. Like the portrait in Wilde's novel, they must be simultaneously hidden and preserved for the sake of what they once ideally represented.
The Pavilion's basement is also the space where a number of other items are stored as well: mostly spare parts, tools and machines with the power to prevent us from seeing the qualities of objects in and around the building – from the purity and transparency of water to the shape of the bushes or the cleanliness of the glazing – as permanent states rather than evolving features. All the hardware required to manufacture a whole aesthetics of the unchanging, based on images of a fixed, predictable nature, needs of course to be kept out of sight to hide away evidence that the world does not actually match any of those properties. Likewise, in the basement's northwest area, the flags of Barcelona, Catalonia, Europe, Germany and Spain are preserved in brown boxes to dispel any perception of the Pavilion's politico-institutional contexts as multiple or controversial.[3] In the central room one can see a number of assorted props and gear (spotlights, pedestals, microphones, etc) employed in events for which the Pavilion is rented on certain occasions, and then immediately removed from sight and carefully stored right after the end of the function. At one end of the basement, connected to the water filtering system of the Pavilion's big pool, there is a sink where staff wash the dishes they use when they dine together around a plastic table. On the wall right above the sink, staff workers have carefully pinned photographs, portraits, exhibition flyers and newspaper cut-outs – not so different from those Mies himself employed to envision and materialise his un-built projects. Their shared intimacy and their affective ties gain visibility there in the basement, but leave no trace on the floor above.

When reconstruction of the Pavilion was going through the design stage in the 1980s, the point was reached where a critical decision had to be made. An issue came up which architects Cristian Cirici, Fernando Ramos and Ignasi de Solà-Morales – then in charge of the reconstruction – could not avoid: whether or not to adapt the staircase

3 — The difficulty may be considered of attending representations that have changed since 1929 as much as the German, European or Spanish, or as controversial as the Catalonian or, again, the Spanish. Furthermore, the Pavilion's entitlement has evolved and presents representational difficulties, in the way it passed from being the Weimar Republic's German Pavilion to becoming the Barcelona Pavilion. All these conflicts have a material witness in the collection of flags kept in the basement.

D Different devices used to clean the Pavilion



leading to the basement to the then current regulations on accessibility for people with disabilities. Eventually, after a number of alternative schemes were pondered, the team of architects decided that the only access to the basement would be via a rather dangerous and uncomfortable 63-cm wide spiral staircase. This design choice was deliberately intended to pre-empt the possibility that the basement should ever be included in tours for visitors to the Pavilion. Arguments were made as to the role possible exhibitions located in the basement might play in helping visitors understand various aspects of the original 1929 Pavilion and its 1986 reconstruction, such as their historical and political contexts; their underlying technological and constructional materiality; the landscapes evoked by the locations in Algiers, Germany, Egypt, and Italy where the building materials came from; or even the wealth of documentary resources potentially accruing from the partnership between New York's MOMA, the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin, the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Barcelona and the Barcelona City Council. All to no avail. The overriding concern was – and still is to this day – to preserve the 'original experience' of the building as a reception space, shorn of any attributes suggesting any other possible exhibition functions.[4] Commitment to that goal is renewed on a daily basis ever since the Pavilion was reconstructed. When interviewed, the architect currently in charge of supervising the maintenance of the Pavilion stated: 'When an event is organised [such as a cocktail party or the shooting of a commercial],[5] I make sure that the look of the place remains, as far as possible, the same you can see now: an empty space, let's say, with nothing in it. And what does that mean? It involves a host of functional difficulties, you know. But that [original look] is what I have to protect, preventing many things being placed here. [...] When it comes to intervening upon the building it's important to ask yourself what Mies van der Rohe would have done. Don't you agree?'[6] This reference to Mies' criteria was already vital during the process of reconstructing the Pavilion. The difference between Mies' aprioristic criteria and the interferences of ordinary circumstances in shaping the 1929 Pavilion became important from the very beginning of the reconstruction works.

Promotion of a SEAT car prototype at the Pavilion. © Fundació Mies van der Rohe.

4 — With the demolition of the Instituto Nacional de Industria building (a concrete structure located on the east side of the Barcelona Pavilion) and the ensuing opportunity to keep its basement as an interpretation centre connected with the Pavilion's basement, this possibility was re-discussed and again discarded. Fernando Ramos in conversation with Andrés Jaque. Barcelona, 2012.

5 — It is important to remark that even though the 1929 Pavilion was very much engaged with the task of selling the German industry of the times, and that it was part of a fair oriented to maximise commercial exchange, there is a hidden agreement among many people that it should remain liberated from any commercial or advertising engagement. Just to provide an example, Ascensión Hernández Martínez, in 2004, stated in an academic address: "[The Barcelona Pavilion] curiously because of its symbolic value as an icon of modernity is frequently used as the scene of numerous commercial shootings of very different products, that by the way produce in us certain sadness." Hernández Martínez, A. (2004). "¿Copiar o no copiar? He ahí la cuestión". Paper presented at the XV Congreso Nacional de Historia del Arte (CEHA). Palma, October 2004.

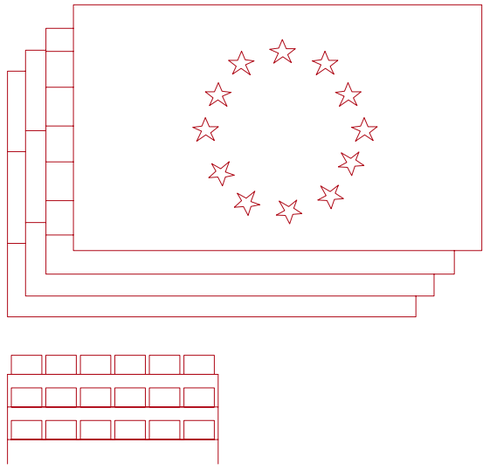
6 — Architect in charge of the maintenance of the Pavilion in conversation with Andrés Jaque. 2011.

E Black methacrylate coating

In the construction works, a black methacrylate coating was used on the inside of the inner pool. The rapid deterioration of this material made its replacement with a tinted glass covering advisable. The remains of the replaced materials have been kept in the basement since then, stored under the position which they held in the inside pool. This is just one of the aspects of the Pavilion's construction that have been managed on a trial and error basis. The Pavilion, far from being an automatic reproduction of what was made in '29, could be described as a laboratory in which the memories of discarded experiences are recorded in the building's basement.

F Flags

On the morning of May 27 1929, the Ambassador of Germany spoke the following words at the Pavilion's opening ceremony: "We would not have been true to ourselves if we had intended to show ourselves in a way different from how we see things in our own home. Our plan has lacked any slogan, but I will allow you to find in it the expression of our desire to be completely truthful, giving a voice to the spirit of the new era, whose symbol is this: Sincerity."[1]



The original Pavilion and, in a certain way, its reconstruction as well, have completed a mission of representation similar to that performed by flags. Not only because the Carpet Room (black) is reminiscent, in the composition which the carpet forms with the velvet curtains and the leather in the seats, of the flag of the Weimar Republic and today's Germany, but also because its main role has been to instill within experience the desires of the societies which promoted them, and to prescribe the conditions of their future evolved forms and their inclusion in international contexts.
The Pavilion of '29 was built as a construction which puts visitors in place in the way that the Weimar Republic was 'seen.' A way of seeing which gave expression to those who, through the architecture of clarity, perspective and luminosity, wished to leave behind "angular, obscure, opulent and encumbered" eras.[2] It is an architecture of aspiration and the project of that aspiration.
In 1999, Ignasi de Solà-Morales declared in *ABC Cultural* that, "The architecture of the past

The study of the documents and photographs that recorded the short existence of the 1929 Pavilion shows that its design and materiality was not as pure and coherent as the architects involved in the reconstruction initially thought. They decided to make a distinction between what they called 'Mies' idea' and what they thought to be the result of circumstantial accidents. 'Mies' idea' was what they had to reconstruct, and the other facts were what they had to eliminate in the reconstruction. This criterion was disclosed in an article published by Cirici, Ramos and Solà-Morales in 1983: 'If we talk about idea and materialisation, it is because from the study of the project documentation and other works by the architect from the same period, we learn that execution of the building – either for economic reasons, lack of time or simply due to technological limitations –, did not always imply realisation of the idea that before, during and after was proposed as characteristic of the building'.[7] A way of thinking, both in the reconstruction and in the maintenance of the Pavilion, that seems to believe in the improbable possibility of the autonomy between ideas and circumstances. It is also the evidence that during the process of reconstruction, the German Pavilion's value was considered to be that coming from the unmediated translation of Mies' thinking into material architecture. The Pavilion's value was not accounted as the result of the confrontation of a number of collective projects. Those collective realities, when considered, were mainly expressed in the shop-discussions, as problematic facts that prevented Mies' genius from fully developing. From my point of view, the story could be explained in a different way. Both pavilions might be seen as collective arenas in which a number of sensitivities, interests, projections where confronted and experimented with. From these perspectives, those conflicts between the preconceived ideas and the way they were responded – like the lack of time the fair authorities imposed in 1929, economical limitations, ideological conflicts or technical decoupling – are actually what would need to be granted as the authentic outcome of the two collective constructions.

7 — Cirici, C., Ramos, F., de Solà-Morales, I. (1983). Proyecto de reconstrucción del pabellón alemán de la Exposición de Barcelona de 1929. *Arquitecturas* 44, p. 10-11.

The Pavilion as Social Construction.
Collective Awareness vs. Shared non-Calculability

The function the basement serves can thus be summarised in the following terms: it is the mechanism whereby the traces and reminders of all the negotiations, experiments, accidents, discussions, evolutions and compromises that define the Pavilion's enduring existence – through time, in Nature, across different political contexts and varying economical schemes – are hidden from visitors and effectively rendered invisible; the Pavilion's basement, in other words, is the place where the evidences left behind by an important number of micro stories around the building's existence, preservation and performance are *black-boxed*.[8]
The Pavilion's 'Mies experience', as it is reproduced daily, seems not to be possible if all the negotiations, compromises, experiments and assemblages that outline the building's wider social footprint did not remain unaccountable, beyond scrutiny. Immersion in this 'experience' therefore seems to require the sustained omission of all that makes it possible in the first place. From this perspective, the architectural programmes enacted by the Pavilion's ground floor (the Pavilion proper as visitors see it) and its basement could not be more different in functional terms.
Considering the way visitors relate to the building, it might be said that the architecture of the ground floor (the Pavilion proper as experienced by the public) is designed to make visitors aware of a number of selected realities, people and stories (for instance materials – marble, onyx, velvet, glass –, Mies, minimalism, Georg Kolbe's *Dawn* – the sculpture standing in the green pond). This is achieved through the interaction of a number of carefully designed features, ranging from the Pavilion's location to its formal and spatial layout or its connection with the city. The basement, in the way it is used to hide ordinary facts from visitors' sight, generates unawareness in the visitors, something we might call *shared non-calculability*.
Managing collective awareness, making things visible, creating and challenging hierarchies, black-boxing or setting obligatory passage points through sections of reality, are tasks we normally assign to the domain of politics. Upon closer scrutiny, however, many of these practices are observable in daily life in connection with contraptions, technical systems and devices (in this case spiral staircases, concrete walls, sinks, filter systems, brown boxes with flags in them, etc) which, to a great extent, could be identified as architectural in nature.
Architecture tends to be understood as a sustained endeavour to create *new* realities- and yet, there is much to be learnt from the role architecture plays in making parts of daily life visible or invisible, calculable or non-calculable, prestigious or non-prestigious, accounted or unaccounted. Among many other things the Barcelona Pavilion, in its two-storey form, is doing this.

Departure of Spanish King Alfonso XIII after the presentation ceremony. May 27, 1929. Notice the presence of a camera man at the right hand side of the photograph. Digital image. © (2013) The Museum of Modern Art/ Scala, Florence.

Construction of the foundations for the Barcelona Pavilion. Notice how Mies van der Rohe accepted to do the foundations out of walls made of bricks, and not reinforced concrete as he originaly planned. Digital image, © (2013) The Museum of Modern Art/ Scala, Florence.

8 — 'Black-box' refers in network theory to a type of device whose inputs and outputs are accountable, but the transference process connecting them remains opaque and excluded from any form of scrutiny.

The German Pavilion as a Broadcasting Project.
The Unnoticed Importance of Lilly Reich

The precise location of the 1929 Pavilion (and the 1986 reconstruction was erected almost exactly on the same site) cut across a path leading to the west of the Montjuïc hills, and was chosen by Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich after rejecting the site first proposed by the Barcelona Exhibition authorities. As it turned out, the site they selected

must remain at the service of the present."[3] On September 27 1979, the Barcelona newspaper *La Vanguardia* published the following: "Arrangements were even made in the years immediately after Mies' death, which took place in 1969, [...] and the offer was made by Mies' studio in Chicago to cooperate on its reconstruction. However, all those attempts ran up against the apathy expressed towards these undertakings by the old municipal government, which was poorly equipped to understand the value of architecture as a cultural fact."[4]

In an open letter published in Barcelona's press in 1979, Emili Donato, Daniel Giralt-Miracle, Carles Martí Arís and Jaume Rosell said that, "The reconstruction of the Barcelona Pavilion, above and beyond the work's exceptional character, holds a symbolic value: rebuilding it may and must be understood as a gesture towards making amends to a city that has fallen victim to destruction and degradation [...] We believe that it constitutes one further step in the process of reassigning value to the identifying symbols of our urban culture, and at the same time a clear position taken in favor of anti-anachronistic and provincial architecture."[5]

Since it was reconstructed, the flags of the Federal Republic of Germany, Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain and the European Union have been flown on the Pavilion's flagstaffs.

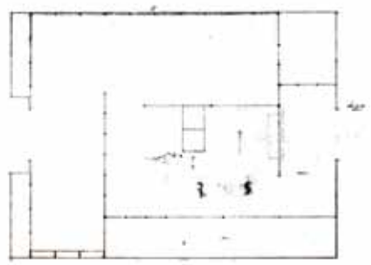
1. "The King, Queen and *Infantes* at the Exposition. Opening ceremony for the Pavilion of Germany," *La Vanguardia*, Barcelona, 28.05.29, p. 11.
2. *Idem.*
3. Interview of Ignasi de Solà-Morales, *ABC Cultural*, 02.10.99, p. 49.
4. "Reconstruction of the 'Barcelona' Pavilion is requested, *La Vanguardia*, Barcelona, 27.09.79.
5. "For the reconstruction of the Barcelona Pavilion by Mies," *Construcción de la ciudad, Opinion, 2C* 14, December 1979, p. 54-56.

9 — Beatriz Colomina has exposed the importance of Lilly Reich in the reorientation of Mies' esthetic and material course, and the decisive role she played in Mies' shift from the Biedermeier houses in Berlin and Potsdam to the architecture he developed in projects like the Velvet and Silk Café (1927) or the Villa Tugendhat (1928-30). Colomina, B. (2009). "Mies' house exhibitionism and collectionism" in *Mies van der Rohe. Casas / Houses*, *2G*, N. 48/49.

10 — The way packaging and marketing spatial techniques have been used to transparent and vehicle collective political projects is something that tends not to be fully explained in the mistaken assumption that understands the commercial and the political as independent and self-excluding spheres. For further explanation of their interdependence see: Cochoy, F., Grandclément-Chaffy, C. (2005). "Publicizing Goldilocks' Choice at the Supermarket. The Political Work of Shopping Pacts, Carts and Talk", in Latour, B., Weibel, P. (ed.). *Making Things Public. Atmospheres of Democracy* (pp. 628-633). Karlsruhe: ZKM Center for Art and Media and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

11 — In the opening of the German Pavilion in May 1929, the German Ambassador said: "We would not have been faithful to ourselves if we had shown ourselves in a different way of the way we see things in our home". Los reyes e infantes en la exposición. Inauguración del Pabellón de Alemania (1929, May 28). *La Vanguardia*, p. 11.

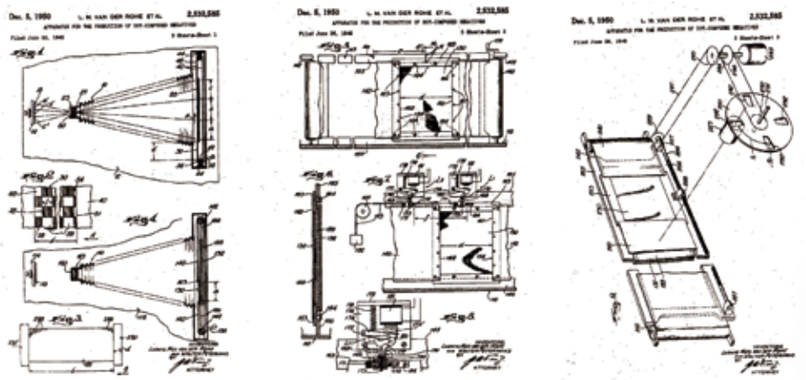
effectively turned the German Pavilion into a passage point on the route leading to one of the exhibition's main attractions, the *Poble Espanyol* ('Spanish Village').
Even though Mies' work tends to be explained by its engagement with modern technology, at that time he agreed that the Pavilion's base should be constructed not out of concrete walls and slabs, as was his first option, but out of ceramic brick walls and vaults. On the contrary – and this might be important when considering what his main priorities might actually have been –, the way the Pavilion was intended to intercept visitors' promenades became a non-negotiable condition that delayed and jeopardised its construction. The way the building intervenes on transit flows and vistas through the use of vertical onyx, travertine, marble, velvet and glass planes, arranged against one another, redirects the gaze and the movements of visitors. The spatial layout of precious materials in the Pavilion might be interpreted as a geometrical, semantic or metaphysical discourse; but they are also the result of a programme to account for, show, communicate, broadcast and somehow provide an appealing vision of what the Weimar Republic was at that time. From this perspective, the role Lilly Reich played in both the development of the Pavilion and the configuration of Mies' universe acquires new importance.[9] By that time she had already amassed great experience in the design of window decoration and trade fairs.[10]
The techniques applied to display the collection of noble materials in the German Pavilion and to imbricate their perception in visitors' promenades as they make their way to the *Poble Espanyol* had already been similarly explored in the 1927 'Glas Raum' – the setting Mies and Reich designed to show the products of the German flat glass industry at the 'Die Wohnung' exhibition in Stuttgart. The 1929 German Pavilion may be explained as a machine designed to make certain things visible by rendering others invisible. Its composition and the way vertical walls – used almost like architectural still-lifes – confront views as visitors traverse it can be explained as the implementation of the architectural techniques that developed with the rise of modern commercial architecture. Techniques that included the making of shop windows, corners and tortuous promenades to orientate buyers' perception, which were already codified in 1929 as a toolbox for commercial spatial design. In the official speeches delivered at the opening of the German Pavilion, the



Mies van der Rohe & Lilly Reich. 'Glas Raum', Stuttgart, 1927. Floor plan / Photo: Walter Lutkat, 1927.

G Original pillars

The Pavilion's original position was studied and debated throughout the reconstruction process. Although it was carefully borne in mind by those responsible for the reconstruction, the uncertainty was not resolved until the lower parts of two of the original Pavilion's pillars were found during the earthworks that took place to perform excavation of the basement.

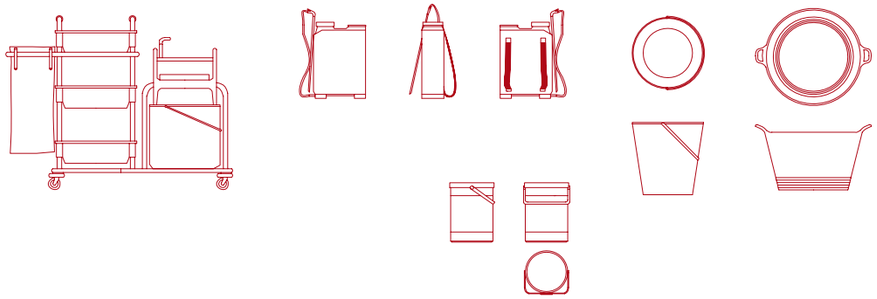


Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in association with Walter Peterhans. "Apparatus for the Production of Dot-Composed Negatives". Patented in the United States effective. December 5, 1950.

building was described as the device that moved the German 'way of seeing things'[11] into the Universal Fair. The architecture of the Pavilion was presented as an appliance to bring materials and realities into the open and make them visible to a broad, distant audience. If we carefully examine the photographs of the 1929 opening of the Pavilion, we observe cameramen located in strategic spots where people could be photographed as they interacted with the Pavilion. Those images were later disseminated in newspapers and magazines, thereby transferring use of the Pavilion into a new context. In my opinion, the Pavilion architecture and the situation it contributed to creating when it was opened – something that might be said of many other modern buildings of that time – constituted a precedent to the role TV would play seven years later with the first massive broadcast of the 1936 Berlin Olympics. And if this might be regarded as an adventurous opinion, the fact is that experiments and debates related to the manufacture of 'seeing' and the production of images and renderings of the social constituted a strong presence in Mies' environments both in Germany and in the US. Indeed, he was even involved in the development of a 'Method for the Photographic Production of large Screens and Large Screened Negatives' (which he patented in Germany in 1938 in association with Walter Peterhans), as well as of an 'Apparatus for the Production of Dot-Composed or Screened Negatives' (patented in the US by Mies and Peterhans in 1942) and a number of attempts, together with Lilly Reich, to produce wallpapers based on large photographs.[12] In Mies and Reich, and in the cultural environment they were part of, architectural practices were directly connected with the production and diffusion of edited and mediated renderings of daily life, which are not entirely different from the role recent TV productions like *Sex and the City*, *Girls* and *Jersey Shore* have played in the broadcast of edited versions of daily life.
The paleness of travertine and the reflections produced by the lakes cause the marble, glass, velvet, chairs, people and even Kolbe's statue to float in the photographs as

12 — Helmut Reuter and Birgit Schule give an account of these interests and patents in Reuter H., Schule B. (2008). *Mies and Modern Living. Interiors, Furniture and Photography.* Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz.

H Different products and tools used by the people who work on cleaning and upkeeping of the Pavilion

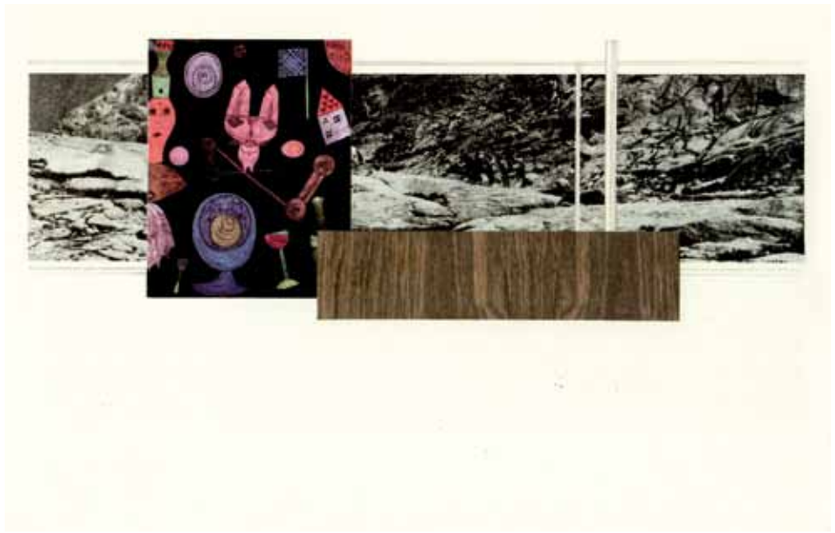


independent elements on a diffused cloud. The images recall the way heterogeneous elements are displayed against a white background in Mies' famous collages, such as the one for the living room and south glass wall of the 1939 Resort House Project. The Pavilion seems to be a temporary set for images of an archi-society in which different actors (people, materials, furniture, water, columns and sculptures) might be rendered in a very particular way to be immediately disseminated. The main aim of the Pavilion has always been to actually compose and edit daily life, to encapsulate it, to make it sexy and transferable; to render society.[13]

In the same way that shop windows anticipate a planned future – fashion is displayed in them before it is worn, thereby stimulating the desire to wear what is initially unworn, which eventually becomes worn –, the German Pavilion was part of a collection of projects Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich developed not so much to meet existing needs and demands but rather to produce new ones.[14] The Pavilion experimented with ideas and visualised desires regarding how society might be one day. Through the German Pavilion, on May 27 1929 the Weimar Republic, together with its industry, its culture and its institutions, was presented as a modern, industrial, progressing and improving society. It is true that the economy was better off in Germany and its industry was on the way to recovery; but the serious impact of the October 1929 Crash on the German economy revealed that such improvement was more a desire based on loans and plans for the future than a tangible reality. Mies and Reich, by means of their 1929 German

13 — This idea has already been put forward by Josep Quetglas: "Didn't Mies reveal throughout along his entire life his appreciation for collage, for combining in contact heterogeneous pieces of different materials to form matrices? Quetglas, J. (2001). *El horror cristalizado. Imágenes del Pabellón de Alemania de Mies van der Rohe*. Barcelona: Actar, p. 40-41.

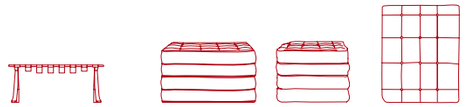
14 — Beatriz Colomina has explained how exhibitions, publications, renderings as the laboratory that enables them to anticipate and experiment innovative designs and sensitivities. Colomina, B. (2009), "Mies' house exhibitionism and collectionism" in *Mies van der Rohe. Casas / Houses*, *2G* 48/49.



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. *Resort House Project, Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Interior perspective of living room and south glass wall* (1939). Graphite, wood veneer, cut-and-pasted gelatin silver photographs, and cut-and-pasted photo reproduction (of Paul Klee's Colorful Meal, 1939) on illustration board. Digital image. © (2013) The Museum of Modern Art/ Scala, Florence. Archive, gift of the architect. 2013.

I Replaced cushions of the "Barcelona chair"

In 1954, Oriol Bohigas wrote an article illustrated with a photograph of the inside of an apartment in one of the highrises which Mies van der Rohe had built on Lake Shore Drive in Chicago, furnished with chairs identical to those he designed for the Pavilion of '29: "Throughout the history of the chair, there is one very important item known around the world as the "Barcelona chair".[1] At present, the chairs continue to hold appeal for a large number of the Pavilion's visitors, who regularly take advantage when the security guards are not paying attention to take snapshots sitting in the chairs. It is easy to find a large number of photographs of this type on the Internet and in social networks. Important scholars who study Mies' work have spoken of his architecture as the management of the frames through which reality is observed, but it is interesting how the use of social networks and media for transmitting images online allows the Pavilion to take a gradually increasing role as a desirable background for people to show off and send out images of themselves. Partially as a result of this process, the deterioration of the cushions on the chairs requires their replacement from time to time. The replaced cushions are kept in the Pavilion basement.



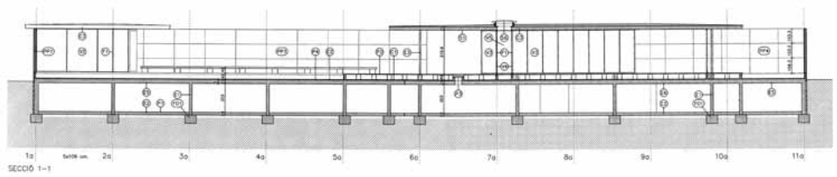
1. Bohigas, Oriol, *Destino*, Barcelona, 09.10.54.

Presentation of the model to the members of the Board of Trustees.

Construction site visit with Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Fernando Ramos, Antoni Dalmau and Rosa Maria Subirana.

'Morning sunlight', the replica of George Kolbe's sculpture donated by the German Federal Republic to the city of Barcelona.

Oriol Bohigas and local representatives at the opening ceremony on June 2 1986.



Longitudinal section plan of the reconstruction of the Barcelona Pavilion showing the basement. *Reconstrucció del Pavelló de l'Exposició Internacional de Barcelona del 1929. Projecte de Manteniment*. Cristian Cirici, Fernando Ramos, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Arquitectes.

Construction of the basement for the reconstruction of the German Pavilion in Barcelona. February, 1985.

All the pictures in this page © Fundació Mies van der Rohe.

J Dishes

The position of the Pavilion of '29 was carefully selected by Mies van der Rohe, who thought of the building as a required stopping point on the way to the *Poble Espanyol*, the attraction which would foreseeably attract the public to the Exposition. The need to create an entrance control for the Pavilion was solved by placing a shrubbery by the lower part of the Pavilion. However, a large number of cats enter the Pavilion on a daily basis, and it is they who continue to use the Pavilion as a thoroughfare during their walks. Many are the local residents who leave dishes full of cat food in the Pavilion garden, and by doing so they contribute to reinforcing this use of the Pavilion as a priority route for stray cats.

Pavilion, showed Germany in the way it wanted to be shown. The 1986 reconstruction of the Pavilion during the first decade of democratic Barcelona was also a plan to project Barcelona into the future.[15] The reconstruction was repeatedly explained as a 3-decade plan that struggled against the indifference of the Franco administrations.[16] Just as the German Pavilion attended a projection, its reconstruction was seen as a device by which to visualise the yearning for a Barcelona connected with the international, with democracy,[17] with modernity and excellence, far removed from its recent past of folklore and dictatorship.[18] The exciting project was regarded as an opportunity to trigger off a process by which the city would become something different by erasing a part of what still existed.[19]

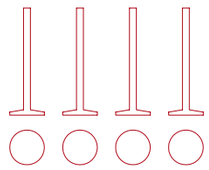
15 — In reference to the 1986 reconstruction of the German Pavilion, Ángel González wrote: "...I always loved that breeze that was playing with the German flag before the arrival of the hurricanes that destroyed it... I also remember that as I visited it, they were shooting in there the commercial of a super-sophisticated product whose name I do not recall... Thinking about it now, wasn't, the reconstruction of Mies Pavilion, the arrogant whim – *capriccio d'invenzione* – of a few sophisticated architects and politicians?" González, A. (2008). "Casitas". In *Pintar sin tener ni idea y otros ensayos sobre arte*. Madrid: Lampreave y Millán.

16 — Galceran, A. (1983, October 11). "Barcelona reconstruye la obra cumbre racionalista de Mies van der Rohe." *El País*: 'More than 30 years ago, a group of architects tried to reconstruct this pavilion without success due to the lack of public support, according to Oriol Bohigas, Urbanism Delegate of the Barcelona Council.'
Bohigas was actually the first promoter for the reconstruction. In 1955 he made public a first proposal and he obtained an offer by Mies van der Rohe to personally collaborate with the reconstruction of the pavilion [De Miguel, C. (1957). El Pabellón de Alemania en la exposición de Barcelona. *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 1-2].
Joan Bassegoda opened an intense polemic debate when stating that the Patronato Municipal de la Vivienda had put him forward for the reconstruction of the pavilion in 1970. In this case, heirs were consulted and they rejected the possibility of such a proposal claiming that Mies himself had been opposed to the reconstruction. [Bassegoda, J. (1979), October 6]. Historia y anécdota de una obra de Mies van der Rohe. *La Vanguardia*, p. 6). This claim originated numerous controversies, evidence of the importance attached to interpreting the reconstruction of the Pavilion as a project to connect Barcelona with the circles of international modernity and to dissociated the city from its recent past. From this perspective, the reconstruction was motivated not by a desire to reconstruct the past but rather to project the future of Barcelona society. Bassegoda's suggestion that Franco's authorities were interested in reconstructing the Pavilion in 1970 challenges the general interpretation of the political role the reconstruction played. It is important to note that a number of scholars, including Josep Quetglas have publicly cast doubts on the accuracy of Bassegoda's reports.

17 — In this context, Xavier Costa comments that when it was rebuilt in the 1980s, the decision to recuperate the lost Pavilion also followed a political agenda, having to do with Spain's return to democracy, and for the city of Barcelona recuperating its links to pre-civil war years. Costa, X. *Moments and Situations: The Pavilion and its Archive*.
18 — This idea was repeatedly expressed at that time. Jordi Pujol, then President of Catalonia, said in his speech at the opening of the reconstruction in 1986: "This work and its entire surroundings, completed in 1929, are fruit of the Catalan people's great spirit of creativity and inventiveness. In the fields of culture, economy and national self-awareness, is perfectly within our reach at this present moment." Antón, J. (1986, June 3). Georgia van der Rohe: "Hoy se ha regalado al mundo por segunda vez el pabellón alemán de Barcelona". *El País*.

19 — The 1986 reconstruction was not exempt from controversy, in which major architects and theoreticians like Ángel González, Imma Julián, Giovanni Klaus Koenig, Josep Quetglas, Alison Smithson and Manfredo Tafuri, were involved. An account of this controversy, see Montaner, J. M. (1988). "El pavelló de Mies a Barcelona: una reconstrucció polèmica". *Temes de Disseny* 2, p. 47-54.

K Extensible belts



The Pavilion's spatial organization, as a passageway to the *Poble Espanyol*, continues to exist, despite the way in which the entrances and exits have been concentrated at the foundation stairs. Everyday there are many people who attempt to climb directly up to this platform along its main face, ignoring the sign which announces the starting point of the visit. The need to create a closing time for the Pavilion, in a space which is designed to remain open, has been solved by using extendible belts of a small size which, coupled with the permanent presence of surveillance personnel, effectively reprograms the universal opening promoted by the Pavilion's architecture. This example makes it possible to detect how the functions of architecture tend to be the result of associative states between ensembles of human and non-human devices. In some way, this dispute between technologies in and of itself makes it possible to explain how the critical tradition of Architectural Composition has been challenged by the Actor-Network Theory.

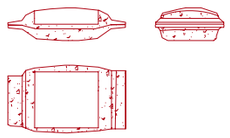
What does it mean to be an inhabitant of the two-storey Pavilion?
What can we learn from the encounter between both floors?
The significance of all these issues in the context of contemporary architectural practice needs further explaining. As is invariably the case, architectural formulations elicit responses, trigger off dissent, cause unpredictable effects, confront and negotiate with unforeseen facts, and then evolve into completely different end-results once they are put into practice, all of which requires analysis, as an explicit manifestation of the complexity that defines a society. When questioned on how the everyday needs of the Pavilion staff were taken into account when its reconstruction was designed and implemented (where, for instance, could they leave their clothes or have lunch? – issues the answer to which, as it turned out, was the basement), one of the architects involved in the process admitted: 'these concerns did not arise until much later; we did not consider these issues when we were reconstructing [the Pavilion]'.[20]
A staff worker explained: 'Working here is really tough sometimes. For instance, there is no heating or air conditioning, as there would be no way to conceal the appliances. So in the winter the place is freezing cold, and then in the summertime it becomes an oven. But I'm very much aware of how privileged I am. I still remember the first day I worked here and I got to see the sunset over the city for the first time. The whole Pavilion became an observatory'.[21] Another former employee added: 'Many times, after a difficult day, being there [in the Pavilion's central space] made me feel relaxed. I experienced things remaining as they were, and even though I might have had an awful day full of arguments, there were still places where one could get in touch with life's essence.'[22]
It would seem, therefore, that it is not the visitors but the staff who truly appreciate the complexity of the Pavilion's twofold structure: only they can see both aspects of the building and experience them both as opposing yet interconnected realities; only they can experience the Pavilion's architecture as the inhabitable controversy between two ways of socialising daily life: an autonomous, self-referential architecture based on the permanence of essences, framed within apparently unchanging notions, disconnected from conflict and contingencies, fixed in its precious materiality, aimed at excellence. Presenting itself as a universal and self-consistent architecture. This first approach, however, would not be viable without the support of everything that falls under the rubric of the contingent. For on the other side of the dichotomy there is another way of socialising daily life based on contingency and mutability; a different approach where inconsistency and *multiversality* – often resulting from a chain of events – have a part to play, and components are opportunistically assembled according to availability rather than suitability. This second architecture is composed of fragments in dispute, which are bounded only by the way they interact in daily life. It is only in this ordinary interaction where their functional or critical ensemble may be perceived.

20 — One of the architects involved in the direction of the reconstruction in conversation with Andrés Jaque. Barcelona. 2012

21 — A member of the pavilion staff in conversation with Andrés Jaque. Barcelona. 2012.

22 — A former member of the pavilion staff in conversation with Andrés Jaque. Barcelona. 2012.

L Salt for water purification



In the Pavilion of '29, there were no water purification systems for the pools. During the time in which the Pavilion of '29 was used, the water in the pools was constantly replaced using the drinking water supply. In the 80s, awareness about the need to rationalise the use of water resources had already taken root in European society. At this time, the water from the pools is treated regularly using a large number of products, such as the salt which is stored in the Pavilion basement.

On transparency

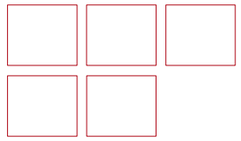
Transparency is a term traditionally related to modern architecture. The reconstruction of the German Pavilion was decided at a time when formal and geometrical analysis, as a perspective from which to approach modern architecture, was common. In 1963 Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky published in *Perspecta* the essay "Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal"[23] in which the transparency of materials was distinguished from a second notion of transparency related to the way in which underlying geometries emerge in the shaping of building layouts. The essay included a brief genealogy of the interest for transparency in the artistic European vanguards. It also recalled the words György Kepes included in his work *Language of Vision*. Kepes described how transparency is required when different figures demand a space of their own when inserted together in a common ground. Rowe and Slutzky used Kepes' statement as the basis for their description of the specific techniques modern architects – such as Gropius and Le Corbusier – developed to address transparency. Rowe and Slutzky's ideas were produced to analyse the formal and geometrical aspects of architecture. From the symmetrical perspective STS[24] provided to symmetrically approach objects and other social entities, Rowe and Slutzky's ideas might constitute another line of thought to reconsider the way transparency relates to society. In the same way that transparency of materials and geometries was explained not as something spontaneous but rather as the result of complex architectural techniques that took decades to develop, social realities becoming transparent by means of architecture is never a natural, unconstructed phenomena. The photograph Jeff Wall took in 1999 of a man cleaning the glass in the Pavilion's inner courtyard ('Morning Cleaning') is the result of a careful edition of daily life, not a spontaneously generated composition. It was not casual; it was prepared. As the Pavilion employees recall, it took more than a week for Wall to select the right time of day to shoot it, the position the cleaner would adopt, how to rearrange the furniture, how the cloth would be left on one of the chair backs or what the cleaner would allow to be seen peeping out of his back pocket.[25] The transparency of the social has been a matter of concern and construction in the recent history of Europe. By way of an example, we might take the network designed to facilitate information distribution in Europe: Eurovision (European Broadcasting Union), the 1950 agreement between the most important national European TV channels, was the first, foundational institution providing international cooperation in post-war Europe. It provided a precedent for the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community, predecessor of the current European Union. Transparency was presented as one of the main principles providing unity in the EU in the unratified Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe (TCE). If the literal transparency in the Pavilion has been extensively studied, it is also important to observe what challenges its performance faces as a device to deliver social transparency. The globally distributed movement to claim for a revision of the way the official world gets to deliver democratic representation might also include an address for architecture.

23 — Rowe, C. and Slutzky, R. (1963). "Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal." *Perspecta*, Vol. 8, p. 45-54.

24 — STS, Science, Technology and Society; constitutes a defined perspective to approach the sociology of technology. This perspective is based on a symmetrical account of humans and non-humans as agencies of societies.

25 — Different employees working at the Barcelona Pavilion in conversation with Andrés Jaque. Barcelona. 2011-12.

M Methacrylate boxes



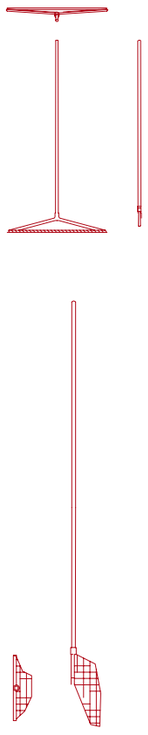
The Pavilion of '29 had lilypads in its outer pool. The use of products to preserve the water is incompatible with keeping lilypads. However, tests have been carried out to attempt to allow the pool to contain two types of water separated by invisible barriers built using methacrylate boxes. The solution, which provided apparent visual regularity, was made visible as a difference at the time when the lilypads grew and the leaves which came in contact with the treated water died. The experiment makes it possible to see the difficulty in maintaining the final image of the Pavilion of '29 without reconstructing its relational ecology.

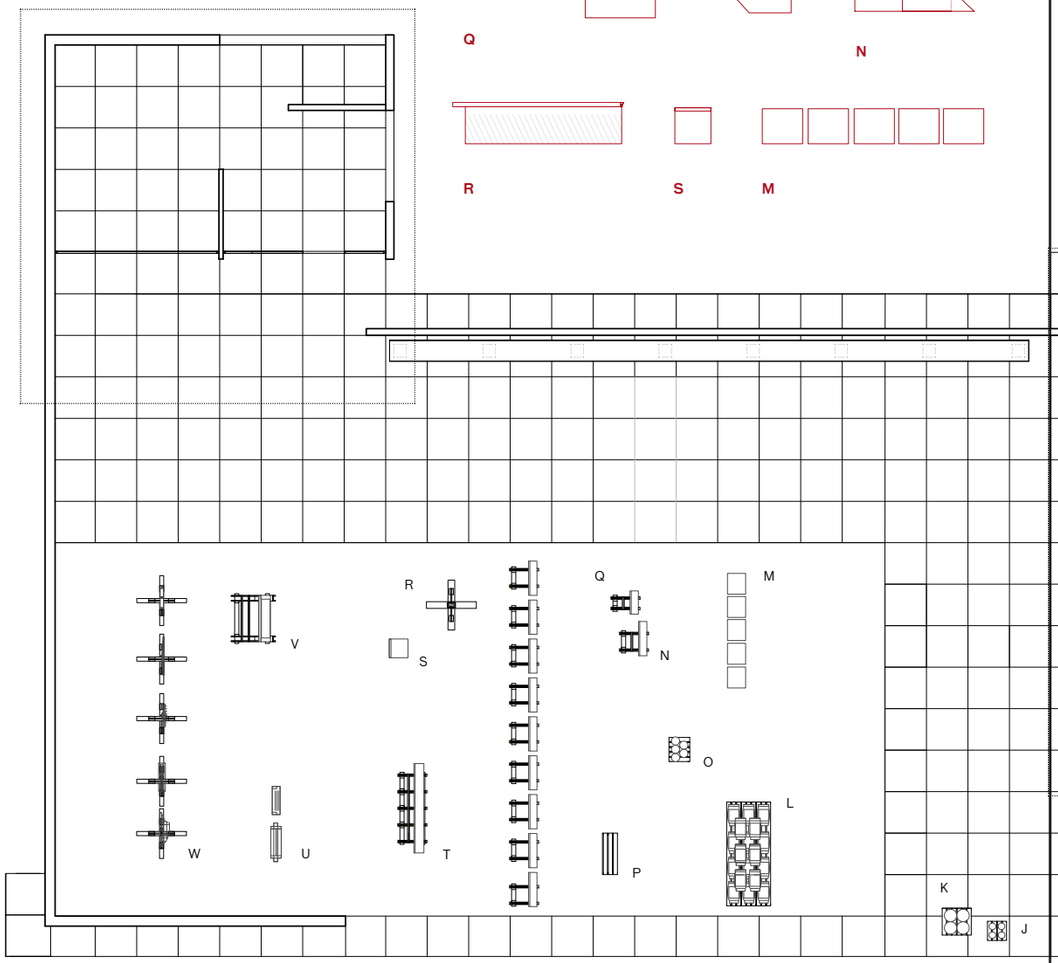
The tension between an architecture based on foundational politics and one constituted through contingent interaction makes the Barcelona Pavilion, in its current, living reconstruction, a possible scenario for significant contemporary discussion. It becomes part of the debate on how architecture relates to the common. The exceptional does not emerge from evacuation of the ordinary. Authors' enunciations are only one part of the story of architecture. Architecture is always a collective construction and is there, in the evolution in time and in the social response where discourses emerge. The speeches of the 1929 and the 1986 openings, and the wish-lists they contented, led to chains of reactions, completions, problematic interpretations, accidents, experiments, controversies, oppositions, love affaires, fan reactions and critical recounts that install daily life and ordinary collective tissues in architecture. A monumental capital of small stories that confront, but do not erase, the big words architecture sometimes includes. In 1925, three years before Mies and Reich travelled to Barcelona to start working on the Pavilion, Walter Lippmann doubted whether the public would gain awareness of and actually be involved in the relational complexities constituting societies.[26] The public remained like a *phantom* only partially present. That doubt is now as relevant as it was in 1925. The basement of the reconstructed Pavilion contains the material traces of that phantom. This intervention is about experiencing how it can become part of the way we account for daily reality.

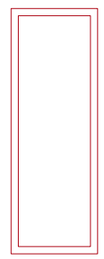
26 — Lippman, W. (1925). *The Phantom Public*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

Phantom
Mies as Rendered Society

Plan of the intervention
and exhibited elements



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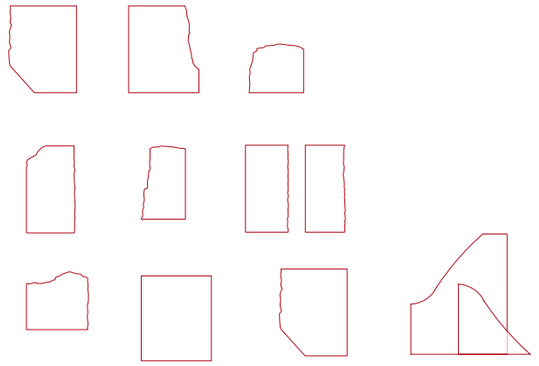
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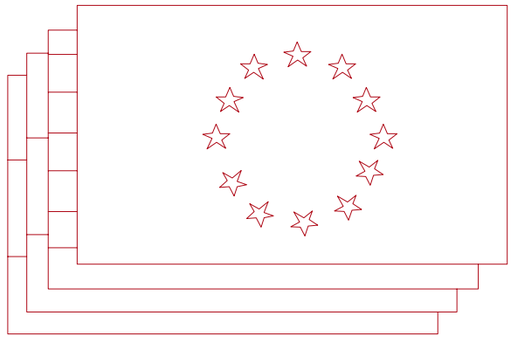
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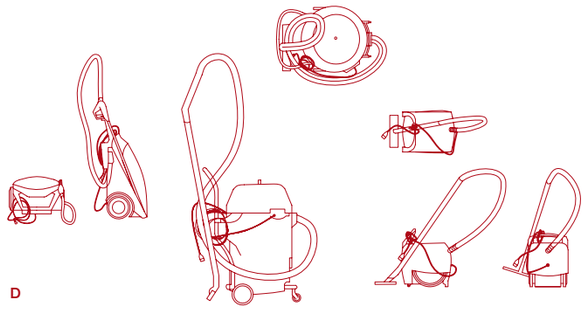
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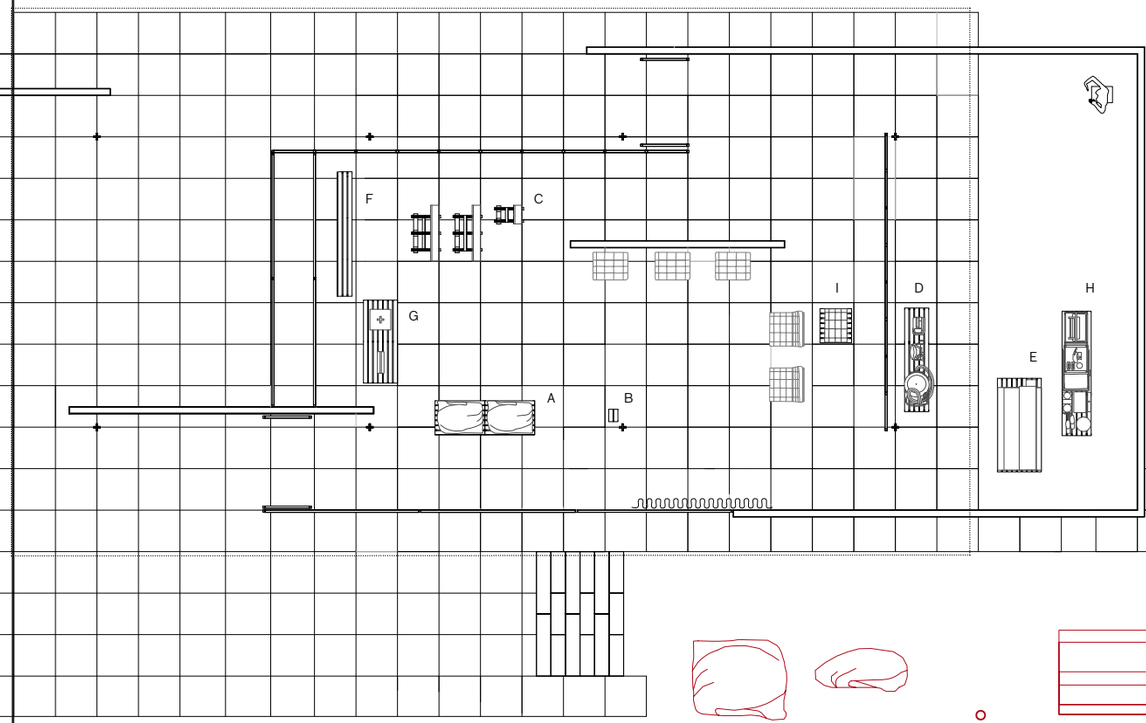


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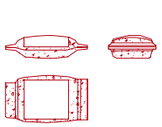
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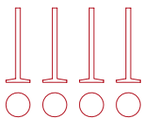
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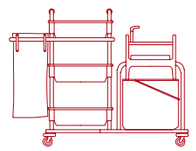
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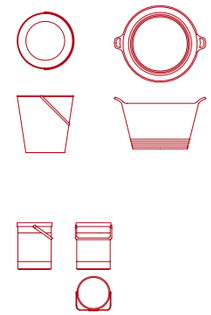

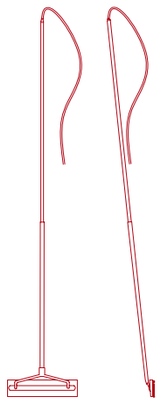
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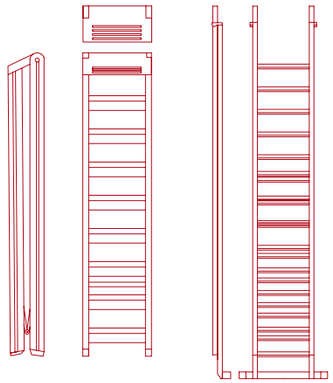
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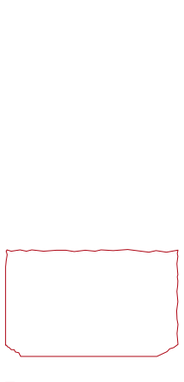
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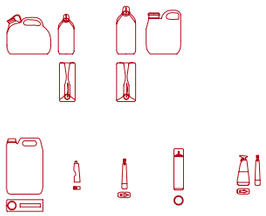
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