



Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia, Teixeira de Pascoas School, Lisbon, Portugal, 1956-1961. © Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia archive.



Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia, Sande e Castro House, Guincho, Cascais, Portugal, 1956. © Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia archive.



Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia, Teixeira de Pascoas School, Lisbon, Portugal, 1956-1961. © Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia archive.

Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia (1919-2006) In memoriam

To pay tribute to Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia, the modern innovative architect born in Macao 100 years ago, the researchers and professionals engaged with his work were called upon to write about the importance of his legacy on the contemporary theory and practice.

Born in Macao, Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia (1919-2006) was a great and talented architect, whose name is irrevocably associated with modernity. He was an architect of the world, who put Portuguese architecture onto a contemporary footing. A designer of great versatility, he knew how to combine a powerful energy with an inventive creative genius. He left us an expressive legacy of constructed works.

He studied at EBAL (Beaux Arts School of Lisbon) but it was at EBAP (Beaux Arts School of Porto) under the master Carlos Ramos, where he graduated in 1948 with a grade of 18/20. From those student days, he often remembered his friend João Andresen, "Jóni", as he was called, who died so young. This capacity for relationships and collaboration was revealed throughout his lifetime in the various partnerships that he entered into (with F. Sanchez, F. Silva, A. J. Pessoa or P. Cid) without once losing the unmistakable line of his work. He belonged to the brand-new generation of the 1948 CIAM, the generation of "Verdes Anos" [Green Years], which established modern architecture in Portugal, drawing on the modern architecture of Latin-America, but also on the structural and classical minimalist silence of Mies van der Rohe, the powerful formalism of Le Corbusier, and the fluid space of Frank Lloyd Wright.

A born creator, his capacity for inventiveness was revealed, firstly in the *Estacas* Housing Development (with F. Sanchez), the first urban complex in Lisbon to apply the principles of the Athens Charter. Instead of traditional blocks, it was composed of a series of blocks perpendicular to the circulation axis, creating an extensive garden platform extending unobstructed under the buildings. Internationally publicised through the French magazine *Architecture d'aujourd'hui* and the Swiss *Bauen und Wohnen*, this work was awarded a prize in the 1954 São Paulo Biennale by a jury composed of Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, Sert, and Rogers. At that time, the *Diário de Lisboa* declared that the "moment has been reached in which the modern architecture of our country is in the process of bringing us a radical and healthy transformation", and for this reason this award was "a triumph". Athouguia considered that "the architectonic aspect is the result of the simplicity of the plastic processes used. Playing only with the constructive elements and with the contrast between solid and void, contrasting planes of light and shade, and with different colours and materials, we created an ensemble following the pure principles of contemporary architecture".

His contribution to the renewal of school architecture is also outstanding: in its search for clarity and rigour in the study of the classrooms, from the details of the furniture to solar incidence, for which a system of pivoting fins was designed to ensure comfortable lighting [S. Miguel Neighbourhood School (1949-1955)]; in the interior-exterior relationship explored in the pavilion system [Teixeira de Pascoas School]; and in the organisation of the volumes with solids and voids (*Padre António Vieira* High School).

But, it is above all the Headquarters and Museum of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (1959-1969; with P. Cid and A. J. Pessoa) that represents the accomplished climax of a modern discourse revealed in the rationalist principles of its organisation of abstract and dry volumes employed in pursuit of an organic continuity and therefore subtly adhering to the land with a thoughtful site plan, following a philosophy of restraint manifest-

ed in the careful integration of the built mass into the surrounding park.

Ruy de Sequeira Manso Gomes Palma Jervis d'Athouguia Ferreira Pinto Basto, to give him his full name, or *Xai*, as his close friends affectionately called him, was an elegant aristocrat. His studio, on the S. Pedro de Alcântara Street, accurately reflected both his character and the simultaneously exquisite and radical taste of the architect. The baroque atmosphere of the Andrade Lumieira Palace, in which it was housed, was transcended on passing through the studio door towards the magnificent entry hall with a curved wall at the back. The furniture, framed accordingly, emphasised the markedly horizontal, modern scale, which was completed by paintings by Menez, and by himself and his friends. His archive, rigorously and meticulously systematized, reflected the great care that he put into the organisational process. This fabulous legacy was transferred at the beginning of 2001, due to the collapse of the Palace, to the Historical Archive of Lisbon Municipality, where it remains stored.

His work has become increasingly admired by the younger generations of architects who have undertaken studies, theses, and exhibitions. In 2005 the attribution of the AICA Award brought recognition to this unique career. Gifted with an unerring pictorial genius, as revealed in his drawings, Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia was an extraordinary and inventive modern architect who knew how to work with total inventive freedom, without ever losing the rigour, clarity or objectivity that always characterize great architectural work. – AT

To Write a Testimony about Ruy Athouguia.

I believe I wrote more about him than anyone else so far, but will that be my testimony? About testimony, the Priberam dictionary says: "witness testimony in court". By coincidence, in the same week this request arises, one could read "Escrito na Pedra" [Written in Stone], in *Público* newspaper, the words of António Lobo Antunes: "When we criticize, we are judging. If we judge, we don't understand anymore, because judging implies condemning or absolving". It became clear to me that I wanted to testify (what Priberam says to be), "to manifest" or "to reveal" why I wrote so much about this architect and, even more, about the importance of doing so not to "criticize", but to "learn and produce knowledge" in architecture.

I was interested in architecture produced in Portugal during the 50s – before Fernando Távora (1923-2005) and Siza Vieira (1933-) – and realized that there was a project published in the French magazine *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, internationally awarded by a jury constituted by the II Architecture Biennale in São Paulo, which included, none other than architects such as Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, José Luís Sert and Richard Rogers. It was the project we all know as *Bairro das Estacas*. I immediately called the architect whose name I knew better, Formosinho Sanchez (1922-2004), explaining my interest to "explore project by project the path of an architect and learn...". Right there over the phone, Formosinho without hesitation says: "If it's not about me that you have to research, it's about Ruy Athouguia. He was the greatest architect of those years, with his projects, his work, his resilience, and he was the only one who knew 'how to assemble and keep an office until the end', I don't know if you know what that is?". Yes, in 1997, I had already left Eduardo Souto Moura's office in the urgency of opening my own and I already knew how hard it was. "I" – he continued – "was an itinerant, worked in many places, sometimes at home, but when I was in greatest need, he was the one who gave me work...".

This was true. Later on, I could testify such a fact by the innumerable work hour sheets over many years that Formosinho had signed and that I found in different architecture processes in Ruy Athouguia's office.

The shyness, disbelief and courtesy with which Ruy Athouguia received me and gave me his office keys would almost justify why the most distracted didn't realize the force of his character and, for that, by judging without understanding, in the urgency of "condemning or absolving", have forgotten for more than three decades one of the most significant architectural productions in Portugal. In such way that every Monday and Thursday, when Ruy Athouguia arrived at his office and we went to lunch to *Bota Alta* restaurant, in Bairro Alto, he insisted: "Miss, you are wasting your time... no one is interested in these projects, listen to what I say!".

It was not true, I insisted, and I learned. Very much, consolidating my architecture, completing my knowledge from FAUP or, in collaboration with Eduardo Souto Moura, finding my own path.

It was a fact that the critics tried to condemn – maybe not explicitly, with a disturbing selective forgetfulness – but the eyes of those who really need to learn to produce and teach architecture couldn't stay indifferent to the relations that Ruy Athouguia managed to establish in the innumerable places that he characterized in Lisbon or Cascais. They relied on the correctness of his proportions, on the precision of the scale he has so well given to them, or on the coherence of his construction systems and attention to details that ensured the continuity of a significant set of works that, even when forgotten and abandoned, could withstand the test of time.

It will be by the materialized testimonial in the works of an already internationally recognized generation of architects – Gonçalo Byrne, Carrilho da Graça, Manuel Mateus, João Pedro Falcão de Campos, Inês Lobo, Ricardo Back Gordon and José Adrião – whose eyes could not remain indifferent to these works which they come across every day, that the heritage of Ruy Athouguia will be identified, setting up a historical picture that Ana Tostões re-writes every day. – GC

Resources for a New Visuality

As a design studio teacher, in my PhD thesis I was mainly interested in understanding the "genealogy of aesthetic principles and the ways in which the design of objects is supported". Once my design studio was focused on housing, inevitably I discovered the buildings of Ruy Athouguia, exemplary in the rigor of drawing, in the forms of modern dwelling and in the sense of construction.

Ruy Athouguia began his career after the First National Congress of Architects (1948), becoming one of the silent, but not minor, protagonists of the sedimentation of design methodologies centered on modern drawing.

He contributed, discreetly but determinedly, to the "re-foundation" of a modern identity based on the visual control of architectural forms – the physical properties of architecture – and established with it, and through it, systems of compatibility between the different scales of the city.

One of his first experimental laboratories, together with Formosinho Sanchez, will be the "Estacas" quarter (1949/55) inserted in the *Alvalade* Plan of Faria da Costa (1946). Even with the limitation of the four floors laid down in the plan, the simple decision of opening the tops of the buildings and suspending the volumes on "pilots" [*estacas*] transforms the internal space of two common aggregate blocks, in an intercommunicating public space over a garden, following the Athens Charter principles. Thus, the radical idea of the passage "de l'ilot à la barre" is materialized in a very "logical" but sensitive way, and will open the door to all other modern operations in this neighborhood. In them we will find again collective housing buildings designed by Ruy Athouguia with Fernando Silva.

In all his buildings he conceived the form and organized the space based on a geometry that not only regulated the construction but, above all, supported a



Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia, Moisés Eugénio de Almeida House, Cascais, Portugal. © Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia archive.



Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia, Padre António Vieira high school, Lisbon, Portugal, 1959-1964. © Ana Tostões archive.



Alberto Pessoa, Pedro Cid, Ruy Jervis d'Athouguia, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal, 1959-1969. © Gulbenkian Archives, PT FCG FCG: SPO-S001-P0016/09-FOTO00590.

visual aesthetic principle of unequivocal authorship. Perception of spaces and their hierarchies from the exterior, succession and intercommunication of the spaces in the interior, and investment on few, but expressive finishing materials, give the buildings a paradoxical characteristic of identity and anonymity.

The efficacy of (his) modern construction manifesto will lead some critics to the "artistic" fear of the aesthetic banalization associated with the standard. Unlike the Brazilian experience, criticism of modern architecture would leave no room among us for specific disciplinary issues, centered on design and composition. Consequently, the formal qualities of architecture were identified with a certain "bourgeois" position, mistakenly inferring that the smaller the aesthetic concern, the greater the social skills. Designing the city became a "sin" that cost its inhabitants an unstructured architectural and urban model.

50 years after its construction, in commemoration of its birth centenary, his architectural and urban patrimony arises with the strong architectural relevance it has always had and, through the critical comparison of the disaster that has succeeded it, recalls Habermas's question about the principles and foundations of modernity that have not yet been fulfilled (Habermas 1980: 1006,1007). – JFG

At the start of the 1990s, to walk through the *Alvalade* district of Lisbon meant to have the largest and deepest meeting with the modern city. This is the place where the Garden-City model had found experiences derived from the Modern Movement. In a heterogeneity of buildings and architects, of positions and ways of making, a housing complex and three schools stood out for their design and capacity to contain life. Later I realized that an architect was behind these buildings, which had caused me to stop by and look again. His name was Ruy Jervis Athouguia.

His work had been absent from academic debate and his name was rarely mentioned in architecture schools. On the occasions where it appeared, it was associated to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation project, which he co-authored. The book *Verdes Anos* of Ana Tostões opened the work of Ruy Jervis Athouguia to debate and, for the majority of people this book revealed an extraordinary architect. Later, the interest manifested by Eduardo Souto de Moura in this architect, and the academic investigation of Graça Correia, continued a process of divulgation between architects. In 2003, I curated (with Joana Vilhena) the first exhibition that was dedicated to his work: *Architects of the Modern Generation: Ruy Jervis Athouguia*.

During the preparation of the exhibition, I visited the architect in his Cascais house, where we talked about the city and the architecture with which we identify, and also about the city and architecture with which we do not. I found him to be an understated, yet assured architect. He was not accustomed to the idea of his work captivating several generations. We jointly decided to exhibit his architecture using video, with the intention of showing the spatial experience in the city – in its greatest richness when laconically living day to day life. Even these days, when I think of schools, I think of the *Bairro de S. Miguel* School (1949), the *Teixeira de Pascoaes* School (1956), and the *Padre António Vieira* Secondary School (1959). When I think of where I would like to live in the modern part of the city, I think of the *Estacas* Neighborhood (1949) or the *Roma Building* (1959). I also think of what Ruy Jervis Athouguia told me: "we should always talk about what makes us happy". His work stands to prove this. –RC

The Conservation Project at EPFL by the Falcão de Campos Architectural Studio

We wish to pay tribute to the work of Ruy Athouguia, by reporting on a gratifying academic experience conducted in the *École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne* (EPFL), together with Thierry Manasseh, assistant architect from

EPFL, in the 2016 autumn term. In this workshop, part of the "Théorie et Critique du Projet – Orientation Sauvegarde" module of the MA in Architecture, we challenged the students to design a Conservation Project for the *Teixeira de Pascoaes* school (1952-1956).

The idea for this project came from Wilfred Wang's statement "before you contribute, construct your culture", in line with the spirit of the "projet de sauvegarde du patrimoine moderne", which has been developed since 2005, by the *Laboratoire des Techniques et de la Sauvegarde de l'Architecture Moderne* (TSAM) of EPFL, under the guidance of Professor Architect Franz Graf.

Detailed analysis of the work produced by the workshop substantiated our views on Athouguia's work, namely on his being one of the greatest architects of his generation. An "absolutely modern" architect, according to Eduardo Souto Moura's, whose polished, refined and elegant design is remarkable. He possessed a wide ranging architectural culture, in tune with the best architecture produced in the mid-20th century. Ruy Athouguia's school projects were unique in their creation of humanized spaces that sought to bring living spaces into a continuum with the outside world.

The functional organization of the *Teixeira de Pascoaes* School reflects the "open air school" model where classrooms open on to private patios. In the scope of modern school projects, the *Teixeira de Pascoaes* school's project fully incorporates the best practices set out in the book by Alfred Roth (1903-1998)⁶, which disseminated the new pedagogical practices in which the child's needs for affection and comfort were placed at the core of the school project⁷. – JFFC, JSR

Notes

- 1 Helio Piñon, *El Sentido de la Arquitectura Moderna*, Catalunya, UPC Ediciones, 1997.
- 2 Philippe R. Panerai, Jean Castex, Jean-Charles Depaule, *Formes Urbaines: de l'ilot à la Barre*, Marseille, Editions Parenthèses, 1997; Philippe R. Panerai, Jean Castex, Jean-Charles Depaule, *Formas Urbanas: de la Manzana al Bloque*, Barcelona, Gustavo Gili, 1986.
- 3 About the Happiness of Daily Life
- 4 Conference delivered in the *Ultzama Campus* 2015.
- 5 Franz Graf, Christian Bischoff, Giulia Marino, *Un chef-d'oeuvre de l'architecture des années 1950 à Genève: les Salles de Sport de la Rue du Stand: Paul Waltenspihl, architecte, 1951-1953*, Lausanne, EPFL, 2008.
- 6 Eduardo Souto de Moura, "Athouguia e o 'Mapa'", in Graça Correia, Ruy d'Athouguia, *a Modernidade em Aberto*, Casal de Cambra, Caleidoscópio, 2006.
- 7 Alfred Roth, *The New School/Das Neue Schulhaus/La nouvelle école*, Zurich, Girsberger, 1950.
- 8 According to João Paulo Martins, in 1957, Roth came to Oporto at Carlos Ramos' invitation to attend the First Summer Course of the UIA dedicated to the subject of "school buildings", in João Paulo Martins, "Arquitectura Moderna em Portugal: Dificil Internacionalização. Cronologia", in Ana Tostões (ed.), *Arquitectura Moderna Portuguesa, 1920-1970*, Lisboa, IPPAR, 2003.

Ana Tostões

(b. Portugal, 1959). PhD, architect, architecture critic and historian, chair of *docomomo* International and editor of *docomomo Journal*. Full Professor at Técnico, University of Lisbon, where she is in charge of the Architectural PhD programme. Her research field is the theory and history of architecture and construction of the 20th century. Ana Tostões' groundbreaking research on Athouguia, published in *Os Verdes Anos na Arquitectura Portuguesa dos Anos 50* (1997 [1994]), was responsible for bringing his work to public attention. She was awarded the title of Commander of the Order of Infante Dom Henrique (2006), the APH Gulbenki-

an Prize for History (2014) and the BIAU Prize (2016). She is honorary member of the Portuguese Chamber of Architects.

Graça Correia

(b. 1965, Portugal). Architect (FAUP, 1989) and PhD in architecture (UPC, 2006). She has collaborated with Eduardo Souto de Moura (1989-1995). She is professor at FAUP and Lusófona School of Architecture where she is director of the PhD course. In 2005, she founded the architecture studio Correia/Ragazzi Arquitectos, together with Roberto Ragazzi. Her work has been awarded: Europe 40 Under 40 (2008), III Prémio ENOR Portugal (2007), Golden Medal of the Bienal Miami+Beach (2007), 16 Best Architects Awards (2016), Prémio Nacional de Reabilitação Urbana (2017). She published the book *Ruy Athouguia: A Modernidade em Aberto* (Casal de Cambra, Caleidoscópio, 2008).

José Fernando Gonçalves

(b. 1963, Portugal). Architect (FAUP, 1988) and PhD in architecture (UPC, 2007). Since 2007, he has been assistant professor at the Faculty of Sciences and Technology of the University of Coimbra (DARQ-FCTUC). He was visiting professor at the *Facoltà di Architettura Aldo Rossi* (Università Alma Mater Studiorum, Bologna, 2011-2012) and at the *École Spéciale d'Architecture* (Paris, 2015-2016). He was president of the Northern Chapter of the Portuguese Order of Architects (2010-2013), he is founding member of AEAULP (Academia de Escolas de Arquitectura de Língua Portuguesa, Brazil, 2009).

Ricardo Carvalho

(b. 1971, Portugal). PhD in architecture (IST-UTL, 2012). He is an architect, professor and curator. In 1999, he founded the architecture office Ricardo Carvalho + Joana Vilhena Arquitectos. His office has been responsible for public and private work and has been shown in international exhibitions, having been nominated for the Mies van der Rohe 2015 Award. He is the head of the architecture department at Autónoma University of Lisbon. He taught at the international master program *Achitektur Studium Generale* at Brandenburg University BTU Cottbus (Germany, 2009-2013). He was visiting professor at the Navarra University (Spain, 2013) and at the Carleton University (Canada, 2016-2017). Together with Joana Vilhena, he curated the exhibition *Arquitectos da Geração Moderna: Ruy Jervis Athouguia Arquitecto* (2004).

João Pedro Falcão de Campos

(b. 1961, Portugal). Architect (FA-UTL, 1984) practicing in his own office since 1987. He has collaborated with Álvaro Siza and Gonçalo Byrne. He is visiting Professor at Técnico – University of Lisbon and Navarra University. In 2015-2016, he was visiting Professor at the *École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne*, where undertook the safeguard project of *Teixeira de Pascoaes* School (Ruy Athouguia, Lisbon, Portugal, 1952-1956) as one of the course exercises. His work has been awarded with several prizes: the BS1 Swiss Architectural Award (2010), the FAD Award (2014) and the AICA Award (2013).

João Santa Rita

(b. 1965, Portugal). Architect (EBAL, 1989), Master in Construction (IST-UTL, 1999), PhD candidate (IST-UTL). Since 1989, he has been active as an architect. He has been invited professor at Autónoma University of Lisbon (2007-2010), School of Arts of the University of Évora (2015, 2017) and *École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne* (2015-2016).