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| Vivas, Fruto (1928--) |
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| Urbanismo, Universidad Central de Venezuela  co-author: Viviana d'Auria, Department of architecture,urbanism and planning, KU Leuven  Successful architect born in the Venezuelan Andes, Fruto Vivas receives his training in Caracas during the city’s mid-20th century booming modernisation. His approach to popular culture was at the basis of his proposals for a national architecture, which is based on Venezuelan Hispanic typologies, traditional techniques and regional materials. Such references earn his architecture the label of ‘populist’ by critics.  Since the 1960s, Vivas applies these proposals to an architecture inspired by nature’s functional logic, from which two main theses arise: on the one hand, ‘structural types’ or ‘boundary structures’ and on the other hand, the idea of ‘living trees’. While the former analyses the subject of structural elements’ minimum dimensions and weights to enable self-construction for an ‘architecture of the masses’, the latter illustrates how houses can do without many devices for their conditioning and they can even be self-generative to guarantee the survival of their users. |
| Juan Jose Perez Rancel, Historia y Crítica de la Arquitectura, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Universidad Central de Venezuela  co-author: Viviana d'Auria, Department of architecture,urbanism and planning, KU Leuven  Successful architect born in the Venezuelan Andes, Fruto Vivas receives his training in Caracas during the city’s mid-20th century booming modernisation. His approach to popular culture was at the basis of his proposals for a national architecture, which is based on Venezuelan Hispanic typologies, traditional techniques and regional materials. Such references earn his architecture the label of ‘populist’ by critics.  Since the 1960s, Vivas applies these proposals to an architecture inspired by nature’s functional logic, from which two main theses arise: on the one hand, ‘structural types’ or ‘boundary structures’ and on the other hand, the idea of ‘living trees’. While the former analyses the subject of structural elements’ minimum dimensions and weights to enable self-construction for an ‘architecture of the masses’, the latter illustrates how houses can do without many devices for their conditioning and they can even be self-generative to guarantee the survival of their users.  These theses have been articulated by means of the extensive development of housing prototypes linked to political gestures of national and international solidarity in many Venezuelan and Latin American slums, post-disaster work (earthquake in Managua, 1980, floods in Ecuador or in Boconó, Venezuelan Andes), post-conflict construction (reconstruction of Sandinista Nicaragua) or support to the architectural experimentation in Cuba between 1966 and 1968 (Director of the Department of Constructive Techniques inside the Ministry of Construction, Havana).  The emphasis that Vivas has placed on housing throughout Venezuela is complemented by three spectacular non-residential projects: the paraboloid shell in Club Táchira (1954-1955), a structure intended to demonstrate the supremacy of architectural intuition over rational calculation, with the help of Spanish engineer, Eduardo Torroja; the Caroní Hotel (1963-1964, not built), a modular structure of triangular frames, facing the falls of Venezuelan Guayana; and ‘la Flor de Venezuela’ (*the Venezuelan flower*), the Venezuelan Pavilion built with Frei Otto, among others, for the Expo 2000 in Hanover, an architectural machinery with closings and roofs adapting to climate and lighting changes through movable ‘petals’ that imitate orchids (Venezuela's national flower) on a platform similar to ‘*tepuyes*’, table-top mountains found in the Amazonian Venezuelan rainforest.  Fruto Vivas graduated as an architect (1955) at the Central University of Venezuela, and that same year he collaborated with Oscar Niemeyer, when the Brazilian architect designed a Museum of Modern Art for Caracas. From that moment on, his architectural work is based on technological experimentation through prototypes that seek to integrate the concept of space and nature in a tropical environment, prefabrication and self-construction, technical reproducibility and self-management, architecture for the masses and national architecture, technological independence and ‘liberation’.  Since 1956, he has been Professor in the faculties of Architecture of numerous universities, such as Universidad Central de Venezuela (Caracas), Universidad de Los Andes (Mérida), Lisandro Alvarado (Barquisimeto) and other Latin American universities. In 1990, he was named director of the UN project for the Development of Productive Communities. In 1991, he obtained the National Prize for Architecture; in 2000, the National Habitat Award, given by the National Housing Council, and in 2012, he received an honorary doctorate from the Central University of Venezuela. |
| Further reading:  (Diccionario de las Artes Visuales en Venezuela)  (Vivas)    [http://www.frutovivas.net](https://owa.groupware.kuleuven.be/owa/redir.aspx?C=J8iAp0GnjEWkU9l6jNCj9GQo-q7eC9EIKC6RPaCE7CaUMgybhM0oA4MitjtxK0Yg7OCtJi9JPsU.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.frutovivas.net) |