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| Cuellar Serrano Gomez (1933-1982) |
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| CSG is a colombian architectural, engineering and construction firm, funded in Bogotá, 1933, by engineer José Gómez Pinzón, the engineer - architect Gabriel Serrano Camargo, and the architect Camilo Cuellar. The first formed in the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, and the third, in London Architectural Association. In the 40’s become part of the staff the architect Gabriel Largacha, who had also been formed in the U.N Bogotá. Cuellar Serrano Gómez played the lead role in the modernization of Bogotá – the colombian capital – and the country in general. His extensive work includes projects spreading all around the country, as much architectural as engineering, leading the technological development in the local construction, either importing modern technology, or implementing new technologies tinged with local design, making CSG one of the cutting-edge Latinoamerican firm by mid-century XX. |
| File: staff.jpg  Figure 1 Cuellar Serrano Gomez staff  Source: Paul Beer Archive  CSG is a colombian architectural, engineering and construction firm, funded in Bogotá, 1933, by engineer José Gómez Pinzón, the engineer - architect Gabriel Serrano Camargo, and the architect Camilo Cuellar. The first formed in the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, and the third, in London Architectural Association. In the 40’s become part of the staff the architect Gabriel Largacha, who had also been formed in the U.N Bogotá. Cuellar Serrano Gómez played the lead role in the modernization of Bogotá – the colombian capital – and the country in general. His extensive work includes projects spreading all around the country, as much architectural as engineering, leading the technological development in the local construction, either importing modern technology, or implementing new technologies tinged with local design, making CSG one of the cutting-edge Latinoamerican firm by mid-century XX.  In *Historia de la Arquitectura en Colombia* (1989) S. Arango considers CSG is ‘Colombian International Style’s highest point’ as a result of the character of the era, in which the figure of the individual architect is replaced by large companies, as happens with SOM in the United States. However, we believe this is not so (remember that SOM was founded in 1936). More than a company, CSG resembles a medieval workshop, in which under the guidance of a master craftsman, a piece of work is done by a team; a hierarchical organization that allows to go forward a technically rigorous job, involving both architectural and engineering knowledge, achieving high quality work as a result of experimentation and master Serrano`s own empirical actitud.  Distinction between CSG and Serrano personal figure seems to be complex. Even though his workshop encircles his figure around, he was not interested in highlighting his own individuality. This fact among other things, makes Serrano be the master of the workshop, and not the architect-artist who seeks recognition. The large group of architects, engineers and technicians that were formed beside him would be responsible to disseminate the teachings of this particular modernity that CSG professed: traditional and avant-garde, conservative and experimental at the same time: a local modernity. Gabriel Serrano was also a great guild promoter, as both local as continental: he was the founding member, national president and lifelong partner of the Colombian Society of Architects, and similarly, of the Colombian Society of Engineers; honorary member ‘College of Fellows’ of The American Institute of Architects; member of The Brazilian Institute of architects, The Architect College of Chile, The Mexican Society of Architects, and The Venezuelan Society of Architects, among others; and finaly, president of Panamerican Association architects, between 1965 and 1968.  Serrano / CSG’s architecture is strongly influenced by Marcel Breuer work’s – a great artisan – as well as the modern brasilian architecture. Serrano traveled many times to Brasil, which deeply influenced his work: the formal correspondences between his work and paulista’s architecture and carioca’s architecture is evident.    His work is characterized by tectonic condition, in sense given by Semper, for its textile character; while in his early Works – through the 50s – the presence of the revetment is very important, in 60’s and 70’s works, the concrete take protagonic rol. In compositions terms, we can say that Serrano composed by *assemblage*, although less marked in golden age.  File: SerranoHouse.jpg  Figure 2 Serrano House, Bogotá, 1939  Source: Copyright: TELLEZ (1988)    At the present, Cuellar Serrano Gómez is a company with a corporative profile, but with the death of Gabriel Serrano in 1982, clearly this great workshop ended.  File: collaborators.jpg  Figure 3 Serrano andhis collaborators.  Source: Hernando Camargo Archive List of Works: The early work of CSG was mainly housing assignments. By the end of 40’s the firm was entrust with the construction of several institutional buildings. CSG’s golden age began in the 50’s, with a long scale projects.    Hospital San Carlos, Bogotá, COL (1941)  Club los lagartos, Bogotá, COL (1947-50)  Edificio Camacho, Bogotá, COL (1948)  Serrano House, Bogotá, COL (1951)  Edificio Seguros Bolivar, Bogotá, COL (1956)  Edificio Ecopetrol, Bogotá, COL (1957)  Aeropuerto El Dorado, Bogotá, COL (1954-60)  Sede Sociedad Colombiana de Ingenieros, Bogotá, COL (1957-59)  Edificio Manuel Mejía, Bogotá, COL (1962)  Edificio Bachué, Bogotá, COL (1963-64) |
| Further reading:  (Arango)  (A. Saldarriaga)  (A. Saldarriaga)  (Serrano camargo)  (Tellez)  (Ulloa) |