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| Samper, Germán (1924--) |
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| Germán Samper Gnecco was born in Bogota, Colombia, on 18 April 1924. He studied architecture at the National University of Colombia. Shortly after finishing his education in 1947, he joined the workshop of Le Corbusier in Paris, where he worked until 1954 on projects such as Bogota’s Master Plan, the Court of Justice, the Palace of Ministries, and the urban plan of Chandigarh, India, among others. On his return to Colombia, and deeply influenced by Le Corbusier, he worked as an independent architect until he joined the firm Esguerra Saenz Urdaneta Suarez in 1958, where he became partner and design director. For forty years he designed and directed the construction of several projects in Bogota, Colombia, such as the Luis Angel Arango Library (1957), the Gold Museum (winner of the National Architecture Prize in 1970), the Avianca building (1968), the Banco de Occidente Building (1984), the Colsubsidio Citadel (1990), and Cartagena’s Convention Centre (1979). |
| Germán Samper Gnecco was born in Bogota, Colombia, on 18 April 1924. He studied architecture at the National University of Colombia. Shortly after finishing his education in 1947, he joined the workshop of Le Corbusier in Paris, where he worked until 1954 on projects such as Bogota’s Master Plan, the Court of Justice, the Palace of Ministries, and the urban plan of Chandigarh, India, among others. On his return to Colombia, and deeply influenced by Le Corbusier, he worked as an independent architect until he joined the firm Esguerra Saenz Urdaneta Suarez in 1958, where he became partner and design director. For forty years he designed and directed the construction of several projects in Bogota, Colombia, such as the Luis Angel Arango Library (1957), the Gold Museum (winner of the National Architecture Prize in 1970), the Avianca building (1968), the Banco de Occidente Building (1984), the Colsubsidio Citadel (1990), and Cartagena’s Convention Centre (1979).  File: Samper\_Luis\_Angel\_Arango\_Library\_1956-1961.jpg  Figure 1: Samper, Luis Ángel Arango Library, Bogota, Columbia (first and second stage) (1956-1961). http://www.germansamper.com/images/galerias/fotografias/seleccion/vsig\_images/bibliotecaluisangelarango01\_612\_416\_90.jpg  During this period, Germán Samper began an investigation of self-construction, progressive development and productive housing, and of urban development and public space in Latin American cities. The result of this research is a set of books he authored, which were published by Editorial Escala, and the implementation of his reflections in such projects as the popular neighbourhood housing project of La Fragua in Bogotá, an initiative that was built by a community of low-income families between 1958 and 1961. Other housing projects followed, such as Carimagua (1968), a proposal for PREVI (a large-scale International Competition on Experimental Housing for Lima, Peru, 1969), and the Ciudadela Real de Minas in Bucaramanga, Colombia (1977), among others.  Germán Samper has devoted several years of his life to teaching. Between 1956 and 1959 he was Dean and Professor at the Faculty of Architecture of the Universidad de los Andes. In 1970 he was Visiting Professor of the course ‘Industrialization and Housing’ at the CINVA (Center for Inter-American Housing). Since then, he has taught several workshops in Latin American architecture faculties.  File: Germán\_Samper.jpg  Figure 2: Germán Samper. http://www.germansamper.com/images/galerias/fotografias/retratos\_nigaleano/vsig\_images/\_NIC5193\_285\_428\_90.jpg  Other notable products of Samper’s career are his sketchbooks and project drawings. Starting with his arrival to Le Corbusier’s workshop, and uninterruptedly since then, he has made sketches and drawings on each and every journey undertaken and project developed.  The buildings that Germán Samper developed with Samper Esguerra Saenz, which are now landmarks in the civic and public landscapes of Colombia’s major cities, are representative examples of the country’s modern movement. Due to their economy and strict use of architectural elements, they are buildings that exalt the value of simplicity.  In 1995 he founded — together with his daughter Ximena — the GX Samper Architects Ltd. firm, where he continues to work. Since then, the development of their projects transmits a progressive detachment of the modern rationalism that typified his early work. They propose, in opposition to the isolated buildings that characterised modernity, a return to the development of neighbourhoods made of contiguous and continuous housing, architecture where pedestrians and automobiles coexist, urban areas that exalt public life and offer humane alternatives in the consolidation of cities. Residential projects are thus thought to improve community life and promote social integration and solidarity — aspects that characterise Samper’s built legacy, and that are a significant contribution to the present thinking and making of collective and residential spaces in Colombian cities.  File: Samper\_Sena\_building\_1956.jpg  Figure 3: Samper, Sena building, Bogota, Colombia (1956). http://www.revistaaxxis.com.co/file/Galeria/SENA\_foto\_Germ\_\_n\_Tellez.jpg  File: Samper\_Gold Museum\_1963\_first\_stage.jpg  Figure 4: Samper, Gold Museum, Bogota, Colombia (first stage) (1963). http://www.germansamper.com/images/galerieas/fotografias/seleccion/vsig\_images/museodeloro07\_545\_428\_90.jpg Selected List of Works:With Esguerra, Sáenz and Samper Sena building, Bogota, Colombia (1956)  Carmel Country Club, Bogota, Colombia (1956)  Luis Ángel Arango Library, Bogota, Colombia (first and second stage) (1956-61)  La Fragua, self-building housing, Bogota, Colombia (with Yolanda Martínez de Samper) (1958)  Gold Museum, Bogota, Colombia (first stage) (1963)  BCH building, Bogota, Colombia (1965)  Pan American Life Insurance building, Bogota, Colombia (1967)  Administrative Centre for the Municipality of Cali, Colombia (with Ricaurte Carrizosa Prieto) (1968)  Avianca building, Bogota, Colombia (with Ricaurte Carrizosa Prieto) (1968)  Carimagua neighborhood, Bogota, Colombia (1968)  Sidauto neighborhood, Bogota, Colombia (1968)  Experimental Housing Project (PREVI), Lima, Peru (1969)  La Alhambra neighborhood, Bogota, Colombia (1970)  Coltejer building, Medellin, Colombia (with Fajardo Vélez Ltd. and Jorge Manjarrés) (1970)  Irotama Hotel, Santa Marta, Colombia (first and second stage) (1971)  Santa Anita neighborhood, Quito, Ecuador (with Banderas Vela Arquitectos) (1972)  Tibaná – Intervil neighborhood, Bogota, Colombia (1972)  Engineering Laboratories, El Valle University, Cali, Colombia (1973)  Banco Popular building, Medellín, Colombia (1974)  Real de Minas Citadel, Plaza Mayor and Los Naranjos neighborhood, Bucaramanga, Colombia (1979)  Colseguros competition, Bogota, Colombia (1979)  Convention Centre of Cartagena, Colombia (with Taller de la Ciudad. Eduardo Samper and Carlos Hernández) (1979)  El Tiempo building, Bogota, Colombia (with Cristian de Groote) (1981)  Financiera de Valores Seguros Andina building, Bogota, Colombia (1981)  Ciudad Guasare, Maracaibo, Venezuela (1981)  Calle 100 Residential Complex (CVM), Bogota, Colombia (1981)  Banco de la República, Barranquilla, Colombia (1984)  Banco de Occidente building, Bogota, Colombia (1985)  El Universo Newspaper, Guayaquil, Ecuador (first and second stage) (1980)  Las Brujas housing cluster, Medellín, Colombia (1985)  Colsubsidio Citadel Master Plan, Bogota, Colombia (1985-90) G.X. Samper Architects Colsubsidio Housing Blocks, Bogota, Colombia (1995-2011)  Ciudad Meléndez, Cali, Colombia (with Raúl Ortiz) (1995-96)  Los Hayuelos neighborhood, Bogota, Colombia (with Economistas Urbanos, Mario Noriega and Miguel Télllez) (1995-97)  Tierragrata neighborhood, Bogota, Colombia (2001-06)  Las Mercedes – Icarus neighborhood, Bogota, Colombia (2007-08) |
| Further reading:  (Angel, Arias and Aschner)  (Samper, El Recinto Urbano, la Humanización de la Ciudad)  (Samper, La Arquitectura y la Ciudad, Apuntes de Viaje)  (Samper, La Evolución de la Vivienda) |