

Irena Visa. Casa Bloc

19 January – 8 May 2016

Press Release

The Fundació Joan Miró presents *Casa Bloc*, a photographic series by Irena Visa that explores the relationship between space, memory and identity.

Visa portrays the inhabitants of the Casa Bloc building – which was designed by GATCPAC architects in the thirties – through the traces that each family has left in the apartments over time, making them unique.

***Casa Bloc* will be on display until 8 May 2016 in the space set aside for photography exhibitions in the lobby of the Fundació Joan Miró.**

The Casa Bloc is a residential block built in the thirties in Barcelona's Sant Andreu district. The building was designed by the architects Josep Lluís Sert, Josep Torres i Clavé, and Joan Baptista Subirana according to the ideology of GATCPAC (Grup d'Artistes i Tècnics Catalans per al Progrés de l'Arquitectura Contemporània) and the principles of rationalist architecture: the importance of function over form, the absence of ornamentation, and a preference for simplicity.

The project was originally intended to provide social rental housing to meet the growing demand from workers in the factories at Sant Andreu. But with the outcome of the Civil War and the start of Franco's regime, most of the apartments were allocated to military families instead.

Some of the descendants of these families still live in Casa Bloc, and they have come to embody the spirit of a building that Irena Visa says extends "beyond the architectural structure and becomes a container full of experiences and memories." She points out that some of the residents have shared their lives for more than seventy years. The Casa Bloc is their home, and even though they have always been tenants rather than owners, each of them has left a unique trace in their apartment.

Many of the tenants are old now, and some are the last of the first generation of inhabitants of the Casa Bloc. The traces of their lives over the years stand out more clearly in contrast with apartment 1/11, which the Museu del Disseny de Barcelona

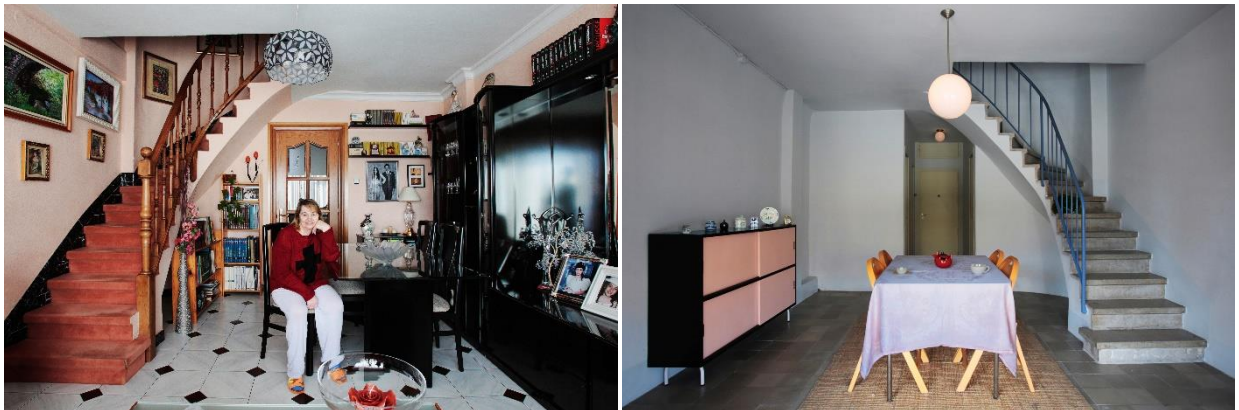
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fitted out as an apartment-museum in 2012, and which shows the simple, functional aesthetic imagined by the GATCPAC architects when the building was originally built.

The photographic series *Casa Bloc*, which will be on display in the lobby of the Fundació building until 8 May, portrays these last tenants and their “dwellings” – their apartments –, as well as their ways of inhabiting them.

Irena Visa (Banyoles, 1985) is a visual artist and sculptor who lives and works in Barcelona. She studied Audiovisual Communication at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, and sculpture at the Llotja School. Her work has been exhibited in many galleries including Casa de Cultura de Girona, ArtFad, Galeria Muto in Barcelona, and La Puntual in Sant Cugat. Her works often explore visual conventions associated with landscape and territory, as well as the relationship between space and memory. She uses the imagination, memory and experience as tools for working on projects that address shared experience, using individual and familiar elements as a point of departure. The photographic series *Casa Bloc* was selected by the Sala d'Art Jove programme in 2014.

Since 2012, the Fundació Joan Miró programmes photography exhibitions in its lobby. Through an agreement with the heirs of the photographer Joaquim Gomis and the Catalan Government, the Fundació manages the Gomis Archive, disseminates it, and promotes the study of his work. To this end, temporary presentations of Gomis' work alternate with exhibitions of photographic projects by other artists.



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