Until the beginning of this century, user participation was a way to lower costs and reduce the housing deficit more quickly. However, it was almost never understood as a horizontal relationship between the state and its beneficiaries, one in which their dignity was assured. In this project, the demand organized by committees of *allegados*, together with the support of an architecture practice, managed to put the state at the same table, enabling a social housing project developed with exemplary care.

**The Project**

Maestranza is a social housing project located in the very heart of Santiago, in the district of Estación Central, on the former grounds of the State Railway Company.

With a density of 700 inhabitant/ha, the complex was designed as a type A condominium made up by 424 apartments of 62 m² (three bedrooms, a bathroom, living-dining room, kitchen, and loggia). Following the principle that the active participation of families in the creative process is fundamental to build community, the interior spaces for common use, the civic square, and the horizontal circulations are designed to separate the streets and parking lots from the pedestrian circuit, thereby strengthening the development of community life without the contamination of external agents.

This social housing project is the first in recent decades to gain permission from the State to build units of 62 m² instead of the usual 55 m² for this type of housing solutions, while also using pipe gas.
instead of gas cylinders, and direct internet and television connection for each apartment.

The buildings have 5 floors that privilege horizontal circulations over vertical ones (which cross the entire area), securing the permanent relationship between neighbors on their way home. The buildings are constructed in reinforced concrete and brick walls, a material deeply rooted in the life of the Chilean people, and have gable roofs with red roof-tiles reminiscent of the traditional houses that their parents and grandparents used to inhabit.

The project sought to respect the existing conditions of the neighborhood, replicating the continuous facades and height of other preexisting housing projects in the area.

The Process
A social housing complex originated in demand has not been done in Chile since the coup d’état. Until this
project, the State was content to offer solutions to the most vulnerable families through private companies. Maestranza managed to change this paradigm by framing itself in the "DS 49," which has a subsidy of approximately US$ 38,000 per family to finance the land and construction.

The initiative was carried out by the families grouped under the Ukamau organization, former inhabitants of the commune, who lived in occupied land or in overcrowded conditions for decades. The families organized a Housing Committee with the aim of attaining decent housing. They found available land and received help from a technical team who was willing to accompany them in the process free of charge, carrying out the development of an architectural and structural
Planta primer nivel Comunidades Ukamau I y II / Ground plan

E. / S. 1: 750

Lote 4
Comunidad Ukamau II
104 familias
Comunidad Ukamau I

Etapa I
160 familias

Etapa II
160 familias

Comunidad Ukamau II
Planta emplazamiento / Site plan
S. E. / N. S.
Planta cuarto nivel Comunidad Ukamau I / Fourth level plan, Ukamau I
E. / S. 1: 750
工程项目已提升到Serviu Metropolitan所要求的可行性水平。

这是一个颠覆性的想法，住房与城乡建设部非常不愿意采用参与式工作模式。然而，在居民多年压力下，国家授权了该项目的发展，并资助其建设。经过大约10年的过程，2020年11月，Maestranza在家庭和国家当局在场的情况下正式开幕。

从这次经验发展起来的参与式模式已经成为其他情况的可参考案例，强调了组织‘无家可归’家庭进入住房委员会以寻求解决方案的重要性。目前，有超过20个住房项目正打算利用这一模式作为参考。

工程、建筑、城市规划和协调项目

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Arquitectos / Architects: Emilio Becerra, Cristian Castillo, Pamela González
Ubicación / Location: Nueva Exposición 1830 y 1809, Estación Central, Santiago, Chile
Cliente / Client: Comité Ukamau, Serviu RM
Cálculo estructural / Structure: Matías Yachán Vera
Construcción / Construction: Constructora Loga, Constructora OVAL
Instalación sanitaria / Plumbing: SERVIU
Instalación eléctrica / Electrical engineering: SERVIU
Otras especialidades / Other specialties: SERVIU

Sistema constructivo / Construction system: Hormigón armado y albañilería / Reinforced concrete and masonry
Presupuesto / Budget: 420,000 UF
Área construida / Built area: 28,846,55 m²
Área de terreno / Project area: 33,888,24 m²
Año de proyecto / Project year: 2015-2018
Año de construcción / Construction year: 2018-2020
Fotografía / Photography: Cristian Castillo, Emilio Becerra, Pamela González

Architect, Universidad de Artes y Ciencias Sociales ARCIS, 2013. He was an exhibitor at the 21st Congress of Brazilian Architects 2019 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and participated in the 20th Biennial of Architecture and Urbanism of Chile “Diálogos Impostergables” 2017 with the Comunidad Ukamau project. He currently works in the Oficina FCV and carries out construction works with his company a.c.e.a. Diseño y Ejecución.

Arquitecto, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 1972. Diploma in Housing, Architectural Association School, 1977. He is a member of the Colegio de Arquitectos de Chile, and Vice-president of the Board of Directors of the Villa Grimaldi Corporation for Peace. He was a researcher at the Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Nacional (CENES), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (1971-1975), and full professor at Universidad ARCIS (2005-2018). He currently works in the Oficina FCV.

Architect, Universidad de Artes y Ciencias Sociales ARCIS, 2014. She participated in the 20th Biennial of Architecture and Urbanism of Chile “Diálogos Impostergables” 2017 with the Comunidad Ukamau project. She currently designs social housing projects in Oficina FCV and works as an architect of the study department at GPS Property Solutions, Santiago 2021.