

OE HOUSE

A TECHNO-PEASANT ODYSSEY IN THREE ACTS

Fake Industries Architectural Agonism, Aixopluc

Tarragona, España



This house comes from a cross between several imaginaries: the traditional house and the modern house; local technique and industrial technology; the winter house and the summer house; Le Corbusier's Maison Jaoul and Craig Ellwood's Stahl House; everyday life in the countryside and global media exposure. Starting from these crossings, the project consistently negotiates these imaginaries giving birth to a completely unprecedented result.

KEYWORDS · copy, tradition, open systems, crisis, Spain

FAKE INDUSTRIES ARCHITECTURAL AGONISM

Fake Industries Architectural Agonism is an entity of variable boundaries and questionable taste that provides architectural tools to mediate between citizens, institutions, the public sphere and disciplinary knowledge. Created by Cristina Goberna and Urtzi Grau from their headquarters in New York, Sydney and Barcelona, FKA A bridges the professional world and the environments of architectural academia to reclaim the architect's role as a public intellectual. In 2014, FKA A won the AIA New York New Practices and was shortlisted for the MoMA PS1 YAP and the Art-Basel-Miami Design pavilion. In 2015 it was finalist for the Guggenheim Helsinki Competition and represented Australia in the Chicago Architectural Biennial with the Indo Pacific Atlas. In 2016 its OE House was exhibited in the Spanish Pavilion exhibition at the Venice Biennial that won the Golden Lion Prize and was invited to participate in the Oslo Architecture Triennial and the Istanbul Design Biennial.

CRISTINA GOBERNA PESUDO

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Architect, University of Seville, Spain. Ms in Advanced Architectural Design and Advanced Architectural Research Certificate, GSAPP, Columbia University, NY, USA. PhD candidate in the School of Architecture of Barcelona, Spain. She is co-founder of Fake Industries, Architectural Agonism, an architectural practice based in Barcelona and New York, awarded with the 2009 Young Architects Forum Prize of the Architectural League of New York and winner of the European competition in 2003, 2005, 2009 and 2012. Her work and writings have been published in different international journals and exhibited in several events such as the biennials of Shenzhen (2012), Istanbul (2012), Chicago (2015), Venice (2016) and the Oslo Triennial (2016). Currently, she is Adjunct Assistant Professor at the GSAPP, Columbia University, NY, USA, and Senior Lecturer at the UTS, Sydney, Australia.

Arquitectos / Architects

Fake Industries Architectural Agonism, Aixopluc

Ubicación / Location

Camí de Sant Antoni, 26, Alforja, Tarragona, España

Arquitectos a cargo / Architects in charge

Cristina Goberna, Urtzi Grau, David Tapias

Colaboradores / Collaborators

Ricard Pau, Jordi Royo, Josep Maria Delmuns

Superficie construida / Built area

330 m²

Año de proyecto / Project year

2010-2015

Año de construcción / Construction year

2011-2015

Cliente / Client

Familia OE, Borruet, Aluminis Ortiz,

Fusteria Florentin

Constructor / Builder

Familia OE

Contratistas / Contractors

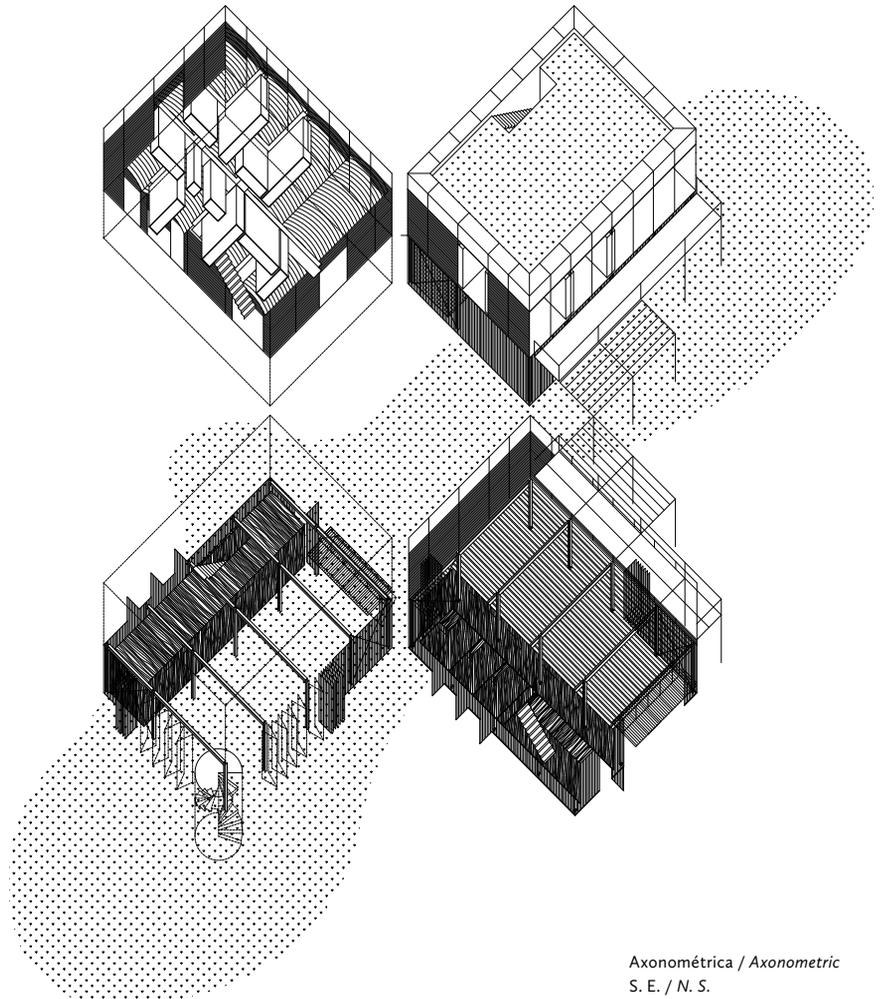
Construcciones Saura SL

Presupuesto / Budget

us\$ 970 / m²

Fotografías / Photographs

José Hevia, Raúl Ruz



Axonométrica / Axonometric
S. E. / N. S.

URTZI GRAU

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DAVID TAPIAS

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Architect, ETSAB, Barcelona, Spain, 1999. PhD, ETSAB, Barcelona, Spain, 2013. He is accredited as a Full Professor by the ANECA (Spanish Ministry of Education). David has taught at the EAR URV (Reus), ESARQ UIC (Barcelona) and The Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture (Talesin West, Arizona); and lectured in several international architecture schools, institutions and congresses. His works have been published in several peer-reviewed journals, received multiple recognitions, and exhibited at the Venice Architecture Biennale, the Cité de l'architecture & de patrimoine in Paris or the Hokkaido University in Japan. David is founder and director of Aixopluc.



SCENE 1

Well, here I am. I arrived at the OE house. I think so at least. Yes, this is it. I wonder if anybody else is coming. The commission was bizarre. Bizarre in a good sense. So, I have all the camera gear with me. I brought it all the way from Barcelona. I'm supposed to take pictures of the house during a *calçotada*, that is, while the owners and their friends roast onions on a fire. Ok. Onions and architecture. Perfect combination for these 'hunger game' times, I guess.
 (...)

Good morning. I am the photographer. Have you seen the architects or the contractor?

(...)

Good morning, you should be the owner of the house. I am the photographer. Yes, I will take nice pictures of your family, of course. Yes, of the dog too. Hey, I am looking for the architects

and the contractor. What is that you say? The contractor is non-existent. What do you mean? And, the architects? So, they are not coming? Are you sure? Oh, are they currently abroad? Ah, one of them is local and is around.

(...)

Really? Did a school of architecture come the other day to see the house? I guess they knew it was exhibited at the Venice Biennial this year. Of course, but wait, they were not interested in the design you say. That is strange. Yes, I would love a roasted onion, thank you. A glass of wine would also be nice. I wonder how it is possible that the students of that architecture school were not curious about its design... the house has been published everywhere. So, they came to see how the rooftop or Catalan vaults were built using a local vernacular technique. What about the fact that it is conceived following a free replica



of the Maison Jaoul by Le Corbusier and the Californian Case Study Houses? Yes, yes, I am also an architect. You don't know about that... that is fine. Give me another onion. You don't have to pose, just eat normally for the pictures. Perfect, thank you. (...)

Oh, hello. So, are you the builder of the famous Catalan vaults? It is nice to meet you. I heard your work has many fans. I see, so it is a technique that is disappearing. Do you want more wine? Yes, me too. So, you spoke with those local architecture students I understand. Oh, I see, they wanted to forget about books and concentrate in bricks... that might be either a local interest or, now that I think about it, it might be related to the wave of anti-intellectualism that we have seen in some places, especially after the financial crisis. Fewer books and more hands on bricks... a voluntary oblivion of a whole field. Scary

but spread out. A DIY fever and the return of the vernacular. Well, the house is definitely not explained as such. Oh, sorry I was speaking to myself. Forget about it and give me that onion... yes, the whole bunch would be better.

(...)
I think I have already spoken with everybody, I'm not sure I can drive back though. The pictures look fine but it's not possible to eat roasted *calçots* and work really.
(...)



SCENE 2

Bon dia,¹ so here we are. We made it. O and E finally moved in. You said it would take only a year to build the house and it has been four years and a half! The *calçots* look good, don't they? I just picked them up this morning with my own hands, here, at the orchard. Can you help me with the fire? Now that we know each other better, may I ask you why did you come to the construction site everyday? While I was taking care of the vegetables I saw you coming even the days when the contractor didn't show up. Do you remember when the neighbors came by asking if we were building a rural warehouse or a *mas*?² Which one is it, really? I never understood what you architects were doing. This house doesn't look like a house!

You say that it's not a house but a habitat? Be careful with the fire! Oh, I'm sorry for your trousers, didn't mean to make you nervous! I see, so it's none of them. But where do you get inspiration from when you start a project? Oh, so you were looking for a habitat in good weather conditions? Did you want to make it warm when it was freezing and windy outside? I see... and cool in hot summer days... like houses used to be in the old days. And it had to be really easy to build. I would argue that! Did you learn all these things at the University? Smile at the camera... smile a little. *Mosso*³ get some more wine... yes, it is made in this town!
(...)

1 Good morning.

2 Traditional country home in Catalonia.

3 Fella, men.



(Laughing). Architects are really strange. But I must give you that; it was a beautiful idea to organize this celebration! Look at the photographer, isn't she drinking too much? Hey builder, don't give her the whole bunch! Now young man come with me, we have some lamb to grill!



SCENE 3

(...) *Buf, quin rollo,*⁴ all guests left really late yesterday. I wonder if the photographer was able to make it back home. Time to get up. My friends are coming and we'll play around the hazel trees. Yes, daddy, I'll bring you an aspirin... Do you have a hangover? What is that?

(...)

What a nice weather: It is January, sunny and not too windy... We started talking about this house when I was very little, I can barely remember. I have some recollection of drawing my own dream home at the architect's office. My parents were telling them that they wanted half the house for summer and half for winter. Sometimes it was really hard for them to understand the architects'

ideas, their references or something like that. They were expecting a traditional *mas* like the one next door. My father says we were lucky enough to live across the street during the construction so we could slowly get used to these thing that we didn't quite understand. And we did some work ourselves. Damned contractor! But my parents say that the house now finally makes sense to them. It exceeds their expectations, or something like that... Oh, there's lots of birds today!

(...)

Bon dia mom, give this pill to pop. I'm going downstairs. Yes, it's sunny. I don't need my sweater then.

(...)

I have made this lower half my playground. Now that the sun is shining, it is quite warm in here. But wasn't it

4 It was so boring.



supposed to be just for summer? And on the top floor in summer is cool and silent. It's nice to spend some time there when everybody has moved downstairs. But wasn't it just for winter? Maybe the architects messed up... they were too serious... the builder was kind though...

(...)

Good morning uncle! Are you already working in your orchard? Do you remember when that architecture school came? They said there was a lot of research in the design of this house... something about putting together handcrafted and industrialized materials and answers to different climates. What else uncle? "Open systems," they said. I wonder what does it mean.

(...)

Angus,⁵ what are you doing with that camera? Gimme that! Oh, look... these are some cool pictures!

(...)

Hey uncle, who's that modern girl sleeping under a hazel tree? Get a bucket of ice; let's wake her up... **ARQ**

⁵ The OE's dog.