

VILAMAJÓ HOUSE

In 1929, at age 35, Vilamajó began to build his house in the corner of Domingo Cullen and Av. Sarmiento. Setbacks from both streets force Vilamajó to concentrate the indoor premises of his house in a useful area of 29 x 21 feet, natural base of the residential tower around which revolve a series of platforms increasing in height that provide space for outdoor living whilst preserving privacy.

Its massive size is pierced with openings of different shapes and sizes which anticipate changes in the nature of its interior spaces of which the exterior reveals very little.

A regular pattern of ceramic quarter-spheres (small ship bows) project shadows on the facades that progressively mutate throughout the day and a wide ledge ends the composition high above. Above us there is a medusa head which guards the entrance to the building.

The house's sparing volume in its interior hides a thoroughly studied sequence of scenery for the development of everyday life. Each level boasts its own identity which differentiates it from the rest in terms of function, material and space. In turn, each level appears divided, invariably, in two sectors: the noble, wide and open towards the corner, and the one for service nestled on the boundary walls. Spatial perception favors cross visuals and dynamic tension.

In the House the importance of movement is inherent and unavoidable. However, the dynamics of motion are far from becoming repetitive or self-absorbed. The repetition of the staircase's geometric shape is accompanied by key variations in bends and openings (real or illusory) in its integration with each level's circulation system and the use of materials and colors.

Vilamajó deploys a true and certainly "scripted" process of spatial knowledge that enriches the architectural and sensory experience. Before being a house, his home is architecture, "the" architecture, all the architecture that Vilamajó admired: the French Academy, the Italian Renaissance, Rome, the Moor villages in Spain, the Andalusian gardens, popular knowledge and the regulating outlines of classic architecture. His spirit is humanistic, tolerant and comprehensive, eclectic and he does not deny or despise any source of inspiration or reference. As a result, Julio Vilamajó's house manages to successfully break through the barriers of time (over 80 years) and in addition to becoming an undisputed icon of modern architecture in Uruguay, it is also an extraordinary testimony regarding the role of our discipline.

JULIO VILAMAJÓ ARCHITECT

Uruguayan architect Julio Vilamajó (1894 – 1948) is a leading figure in architecture national history in the history of national architecture.

Having graduated in 1915 from the School of Architecture of Uruguay, he was educated according to the conventional guidelines of L' Ecole de Beaux Arts, in a time of transition towards modern architecture. Hence the eclectic nature of several of his works including historical references inserted into innovative formal and spatial concepts.

In 1920 he won the "Architecture Grand Prize" School competition and was awarded a trip to Europe (1921-24).

He ventured into programs of varying complexity, such as buildings for the Centro de Almaceneros Minoristas (1929); Banco de la República Oriental del Uruguay, Agencia General Flores (1929); Gimnasio Club Atlético Peñarol (1930); Garaje para la Asistencia Pública Nacional (1931); Emilio Fontana (1931); Juncal, with P. Carve (1936); Ventorrillo de la Buena Vista (1946) and Mesón de las Cañas (1947) among others.

In his humanistic approach to architecture, he gave great emphasis to handcrafted details, incorporating sculptural and ceramic elements, designed by Antonio Pena. His works possessed the characteristics of the period and region, of an Americanist and appropriate architecture.

As an urban developer, he drafted plans and theoretical principles with a regional imprint, considering the site -weather, topography, vegetation, view- and the proper use of materials, techniques and forms of tradition. These ideas were implemented in the urban development of Villa Serrana (1946).

He was an outstanding professor of the School of Architecture, in the Architectural Design Workshop.

His work gained international recognition. He made the Monument to the Argentine-Uruguayan Confraternity (1936), in Buenos Aires together with sculptor A. Pena. The School of Engineering (1936-45), designed with Engineer W. Hill, was pioneer in the world in the use of concrete for expressive purposes. He was part of the international group of architectural consultants for the construction of the United Nations headquarters in New York (1947), among Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer.

HOUSE MUSEUM

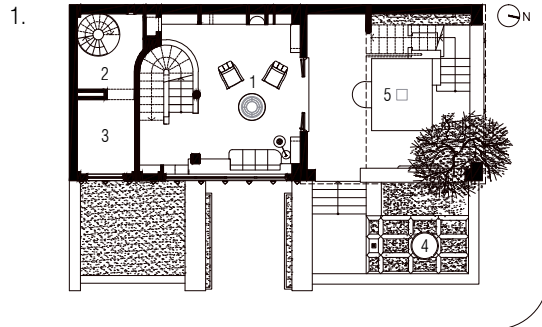
The Vilamajó house museum is the materialization of an initiative of the School of Architecture at the University of the Republic which, in agreement with the Ministry of Education and Culture, owner of the property, opens its doors to the public in May 2012. The museum has been envisaged as an investigation and promotion center of the life and work of architect Vilamajó and of Architecture and Design as disciplines which are open to society.

The house that Vilamajó Architect built for his family in 1930 in Montevideo is the first modern dwelling to open its doors as a museum house in Uruguay. It is part of a growing circuit of akin initiatives which have arisen around the globe and have intensified in the last decade, including among other international autobiographical examples, the homes of Wright, Le Corbusier, Schindler, Gropius, Neutra, Eames, etc.

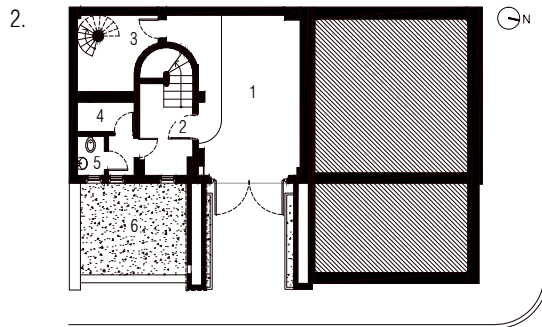
The recovery, restoration and adaptation of Julio Vilamajó's house for its new role as a museum house, celebrates with its public opening an essential stage. The building and its facilities have been fully recovered and through a thorough project for the restoration of its interior spaces, which comprises the recovery of its original furniture, artistic pieces and personal belongings, the domestic atmosphere designed and inhabited by the professor can be appreciated. Its gardens have also been remodeled, reincorporating plant species which were initially part of its landscape.



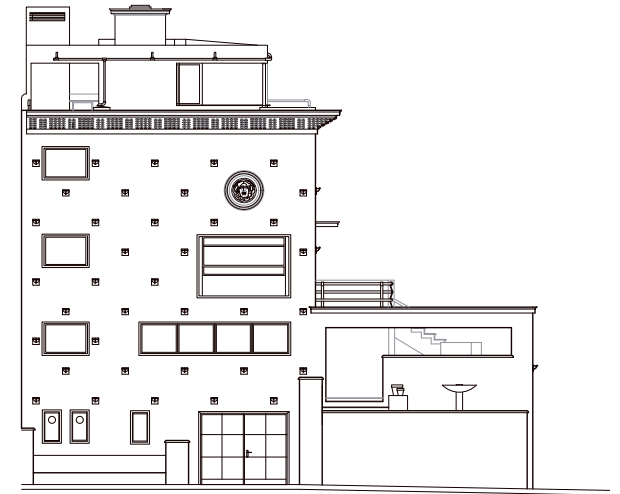
1. LEVEL 1 / Living room 2. GROUND FLOOR / Access 3. HISTORIC PHOTO



1- Living room 2- Service circulation 3- Service dormitory 4- Elevated garden 5- Terrace



1- Access / Garage 2- Principal access 3- Service access 4- Deposit 5- Ss.hh. 6- Garden



MCV / Fadu - Universidad de la República

[mail] museovilamajo@fadu.edu.uy

[web] www.museovilamajo.edu.uy

[fb] Museo Casa Vilamajó

[ig] museocasavilamajo

[tel] +(598) 2711 1232

[add] Domingo Cullen 895 esq. Av.Sarmiento
Montevideo, Uruguay

Opening hours:

Wednesday and Saturday from 10am to 4pm.

Visits starting at 10, 11 and 12am; 1, 2 and 3pm.

Guided visits for groups, from 3 people.

