

THE ARCHITECTURE OF LUIS BARRAGAN

Emilio Ambasz

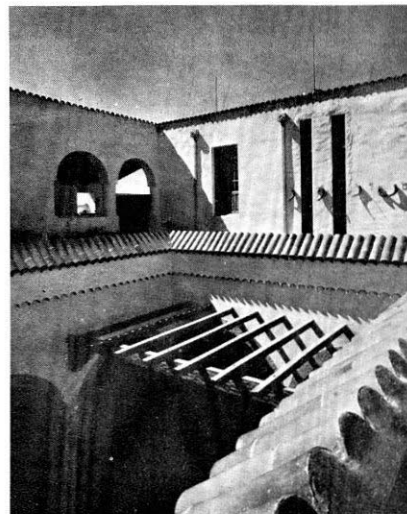
The Museum of Modern Art, New York

List of Works

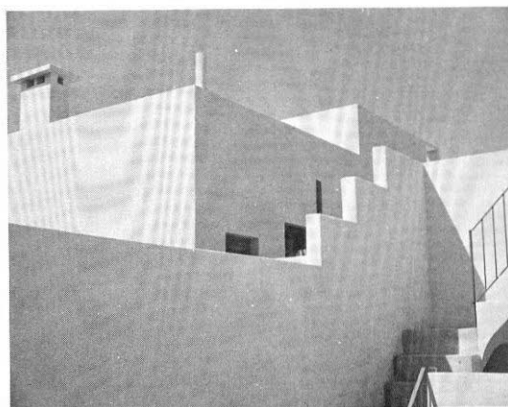
Period 1927 to 1936

The houses Barragán designed in this period, before leaving his native Guadalajara for Mexico City, reflect his fascination with Moslem architecture, especially that of Morocco; these patios and gardens are Barragán's romantic evocation of Mediterranean terraces.

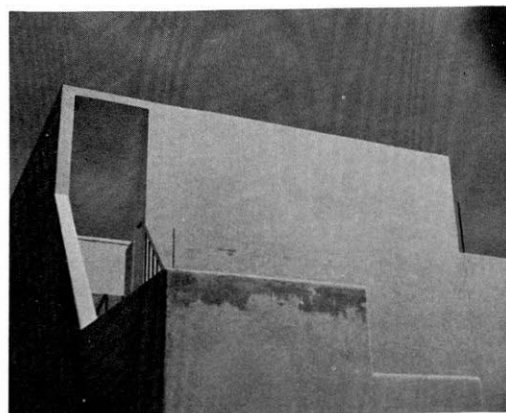
House restoration for Mr. Robles León, Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1927.



Rental houses for Mr. Robles León, Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1928.



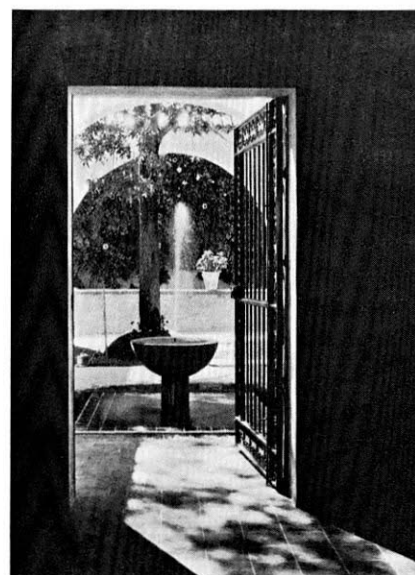
House for Mrs. Harper de Garibi, Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1928.



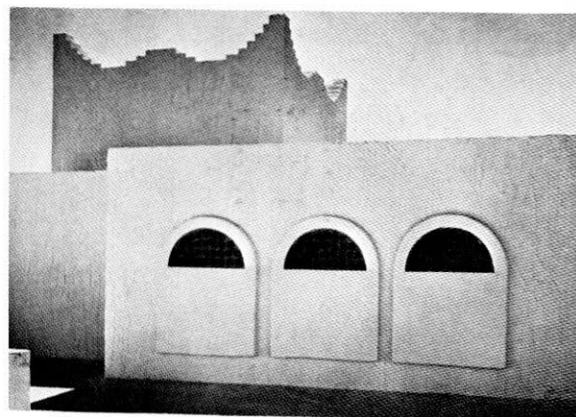
House for Mr. E. González Luna, Guadalajara,
State of Jalisco, 1928.



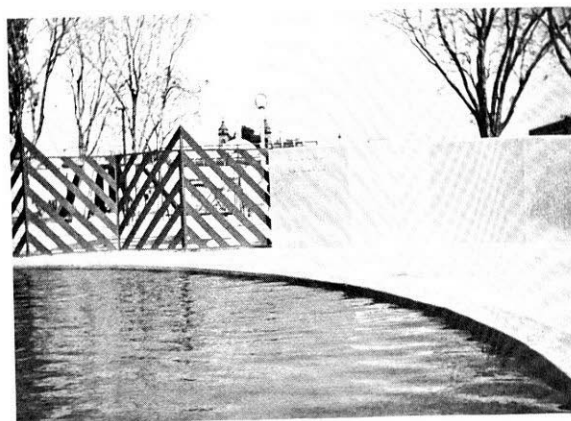
House for Mr. Enrique Aguilar, Guadalajara,
State of Jalisco, 1928.



House for Mr. G. Cristo, Guadalajara,
State of Jalisco, 1929.



Children's playground in the Parque de la Revolución,
Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1929.

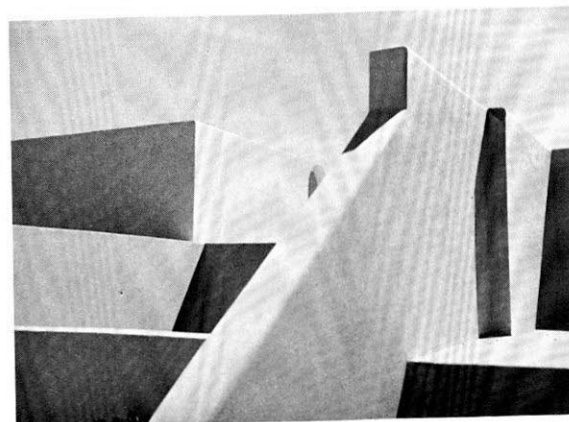


Two rental houses, property of Mr. E. González Luna,
Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1929.

House restoration for the Barragán family, Chapala,
State of Jalisco, 1931.



House restoration, Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1932,
in collaboration with engineer Juan Palomar.



Period 1936 to 1940

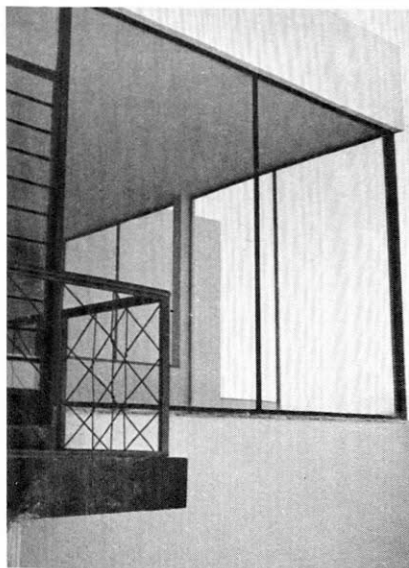
The projects of this period, designed for Mexico City, evidence the influence of the International Style in architecture, especially Le Corbusier's work. Carefully composed and meticulously detailed, they already contain the germs of Barragán's later conceptions, as revealed, for example, by his treatment of the buildings' façades. Remarkable among these projects is the apartment building on Plaza Melchor Ocampo for the manner in which Barragán bends the façade to emphasize its planar quality, and the delicacy with which the balconies are cut out to suggest transparency.

House for two families in Avenida Parque Mexico, Mexico, D.F., 1936.



Two rental houses, in Avenida Mazatlán, Mexico, D.F., 1936.

House for Mr. I. Pizarro Suárez, Las Lomas de Chapultepec, Mexico, D.F., 1937.

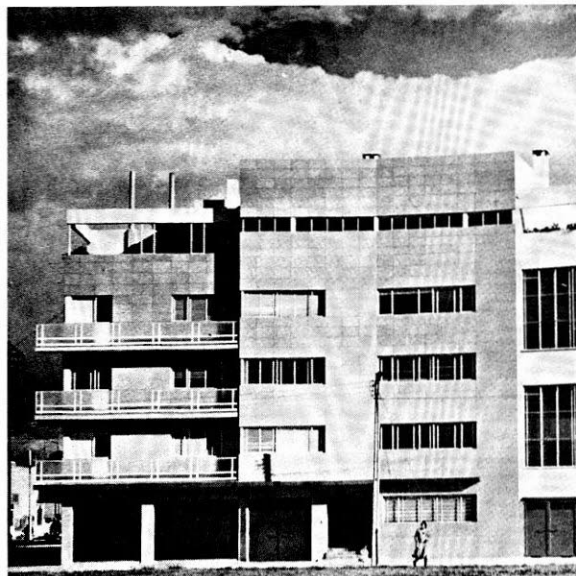


Apartment building on the corner of Calles Lerma
y Guadiana, Mexico, D.F., 1936-40.

Rental house on Calle Guadiana, Mexico, D.F., 1936-40.

Apartment building on Avenida Mississippi,
Mexico, D.F., 1936-40.

Apartment building on Plaza Melchor Ocampo,
Mexico, D.F., 1936-40, in collaboration with
architect José Creixell.



Apartment building with adjoining single house on
Avenida Mississippi, Mexico, D.F., 1936-40.

Building composed of four painters' studios on Plaza
Melchor Ocampo, Mexico, D.F., 1936-40.

Three low-cost apartment buildings on Calle de Elba,
Mexico, D.F., 1936-40.

Period 1940 to 1945

Four private gardens on Avenida Constituyentes y Calle General Francisco Ramírez, Mexico, D.F.

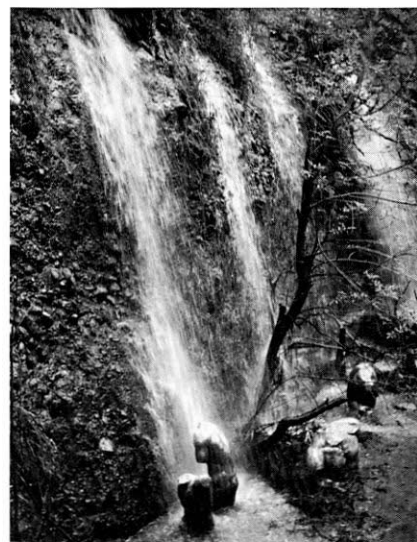
During this period Barragán created four contiguous private gardens on a property he owned in the Tacubaya section of Mexico City. One of those gardens formed part of a house he reconstructed and lived in until it was later sold (illustrated, right). The other two were also sold for residential use. The fourth garden became part of the house he built for himself and where he presently lives (pages 33–43).

This early garden already reveals Barragán's emphasis on the use of planes, not vertical, as those he utilized in later work, but horizontal, defining three terraces connected by stone retaining walls. Without using high walls, Barragán achieves a feeling of enclosed garden space by means of an open composition of multileveled planes which suggest an ever more intimate feeling the further the visitor descends toward the pool.

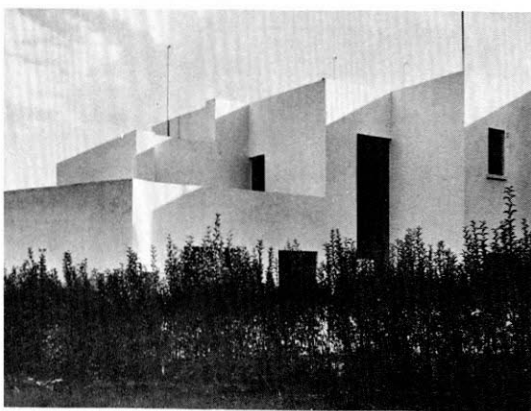


Three private gardens on the Avenida San Jerónimo in San Angel, D.F., on land contiguous to El Pedregal de San Angel, D.F.

In 1944 Barragán bought a piece of land, called El Cabrío, on the outer edges of what was later to become the subdivision of El Pedregal. His intention in acquiring El Cabrío was to create a series of enclosed garden spaces where he could retire from time to time to meditate and enjoy nature. In designing these gardens Barragán took advantage of the marvelous terrain and big evergreen oaks, using the water of the bordering river to feed pools and artificial waterfalls. Nowhere in his other work has Barragán's imagery resembled so closely that of the Surrealist painters and film makers than in these gardens.



House for Mr. Eduardo Villaseñor, San Angel, D.F., 1940.

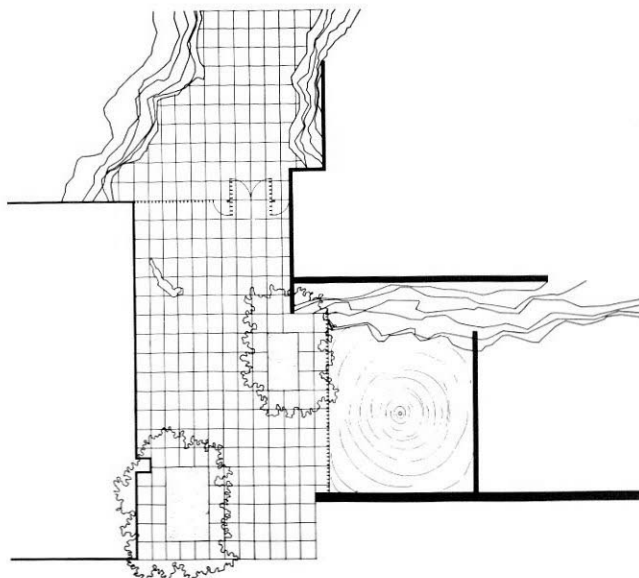


Period 1945 to 1950

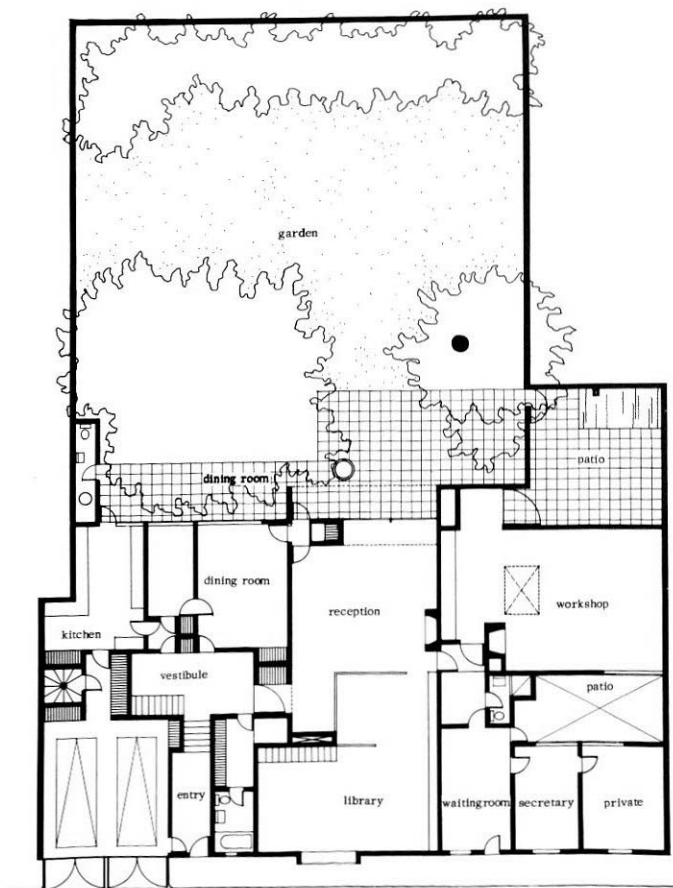
El Pedregal (The Rocky Place), formally known as Parque Residencial Jardines del Pedregal de San Angel, periphery of Mexico, D.F., 1945–50 (pages 11–27).

Barragán subdivided this volcanic area into suburban plots, also designing the road system, the water supply layout, and all works of public landscaping and ornamentation.

His designs for El Pedregal consisted among others of three demonstration gardens, one of which features the Fuente de los Patos (Fountain of the Ducks, page 20), a pond among the lava rocks (page 21), and several walkways among the rocks (pages 16–19). He also designed the Plaza de las Fuentes (Plaza of the Fountains) which functions as one of the entrances to El Pedregal, featuring a water jet fountain (page 13), a sculpture by Mathias Goeritz, railings and tree groupings. A second entrance to El Pedregal designed by Barragán comprised an iron gate painted in phosphorescent colors and a red metal road-circle to organize vehicular circulation (pages 22–23). Another entrance, mainly used for service vehicles, consisted of two combs of vertical iron bars, which open by rotating on their middle points (pages 24–25).

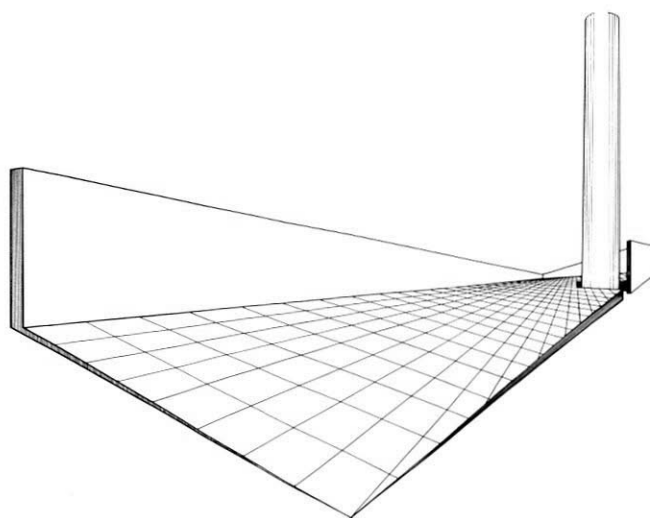


House for Luis Barragán, Tacubaya, Mexico, D.F., 1947 (pages 33–43).

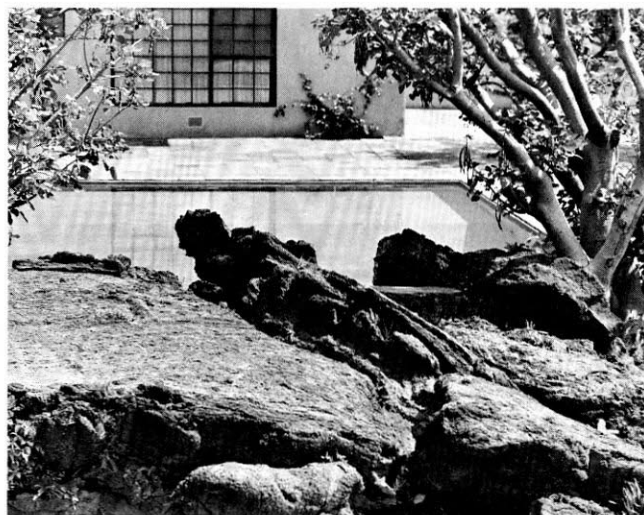


Plaza del Cigarro (Cigar Plaza), Parque Residencial Jardines del Pedregal de San Angel, San Angel, D.F.

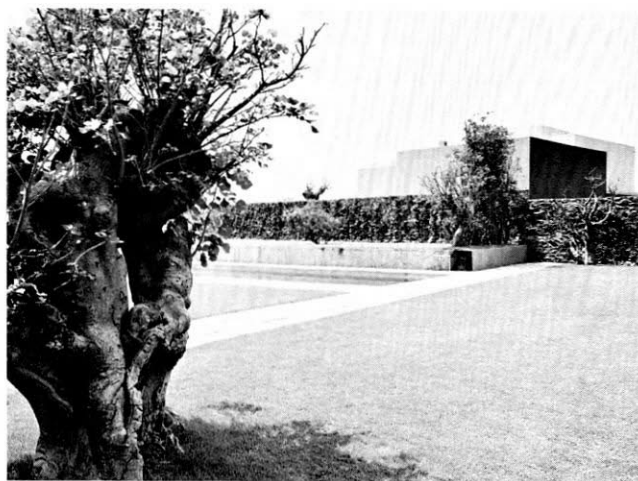
Designed to function as a water tank, the central element of this plaza was not built as per Barragán's recommendations. The platform on which the cylindrical water tank rests has become occupied in later years by unrelated constructions.



House for Mr. Eduardo Prieto Lopez, Parque Residencial Jardines del Pedregal de San Angel, San Angel, D.F. (pages 28–31).

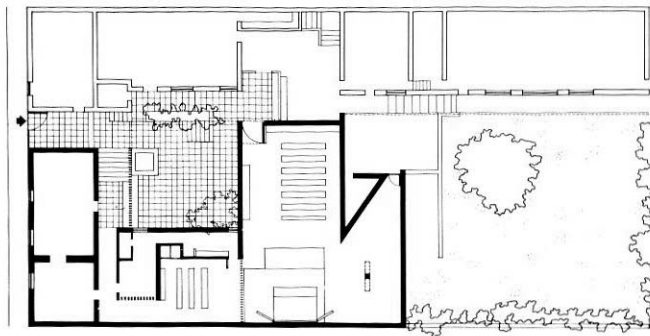


Two houses, Avenida de las Fuentes 10 and 12, Parque Residencial Jardines del Pedregal de San Angel, San Angel, D.F., 1948. Max Cetto, architect, with the collaboration of Luis Barragán.

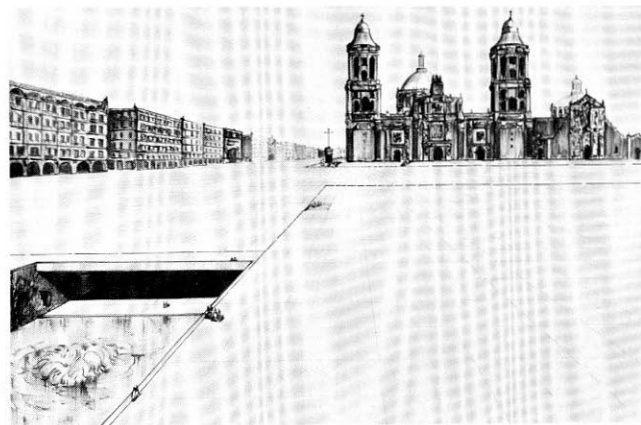


Period 1950 to the present

Chapel for the Capuchinas Sacramentarias del Purísimo Corazón de María, and restoration of their existing convent, Tlalpan, D.F., 1952–55 (pages 45–53).

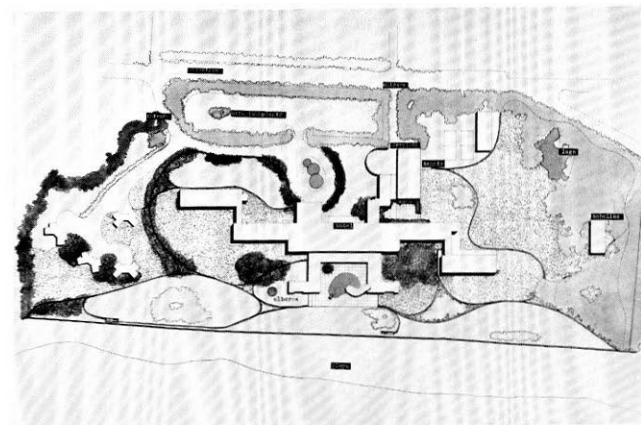


La Plaza del Zócalo, study for fountain and mall for Plaza de la Constitución, also known as El Zócalo, Mexico, D.F., 1953.

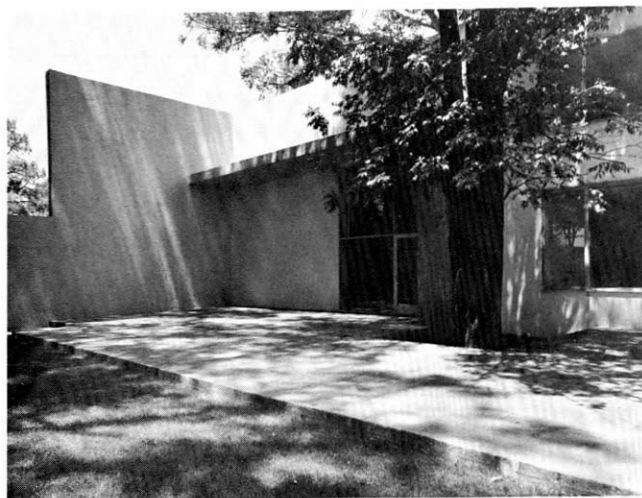


Gardens for the Hotel Pierre Marquez, Acapulco, State of Guerrero, 1955.

Barragán designed only the gardens of this hotel, planning the location of the entrance, parking lot, swimming pool, stables, lake, and tennis court.

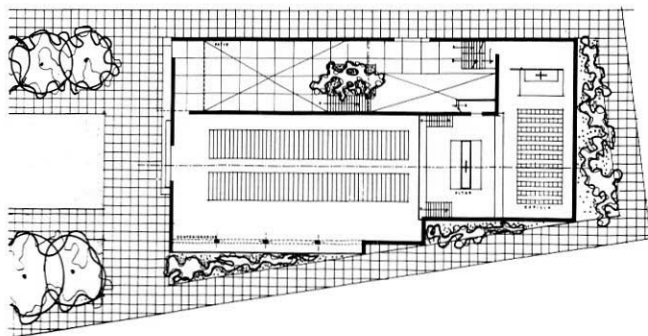


House for Mr. Antonio Galvez, Calle Pimentel 10,
San Angel, D.F., 1955.

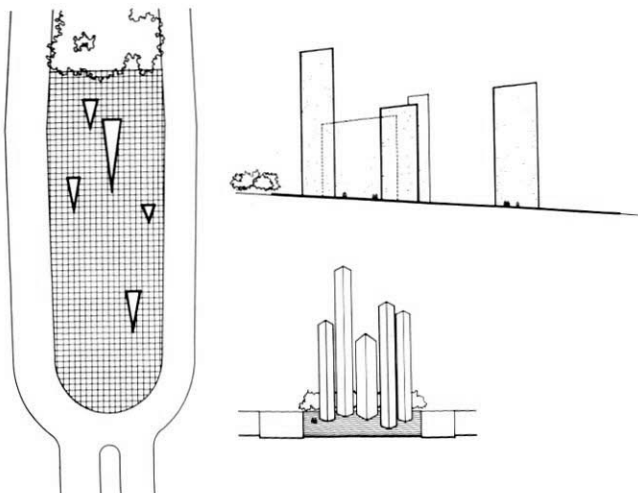


Jardines del Bosque, master plan for subdivision,
Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1955.

Capilla del Calvario, design of chapel for subdivision
Jardines del Bosque (not built), Guadalajara,
State of Jalisco, 1955.

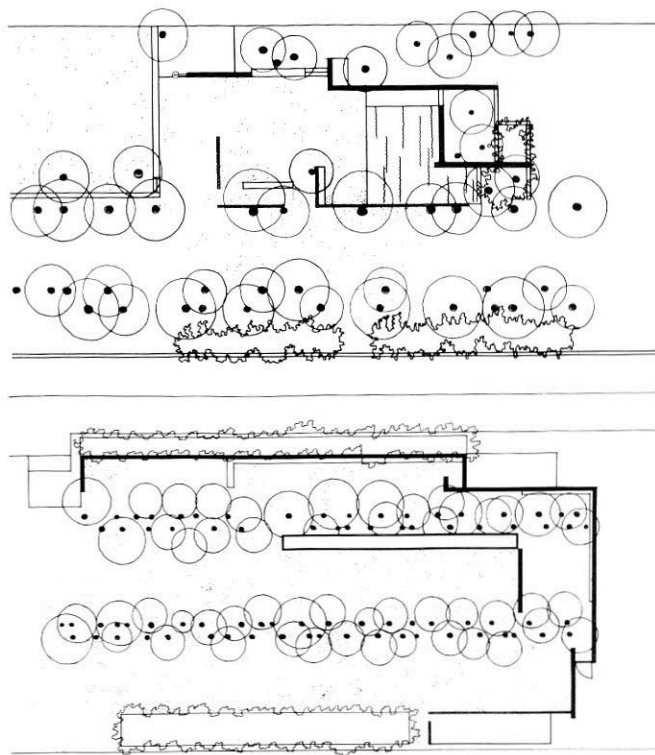


Towers of Satellite City, Queretaro Highway,
Mexico, D.F., 1957, in collaboration with
Mathias Goeritz (pages 55-61).



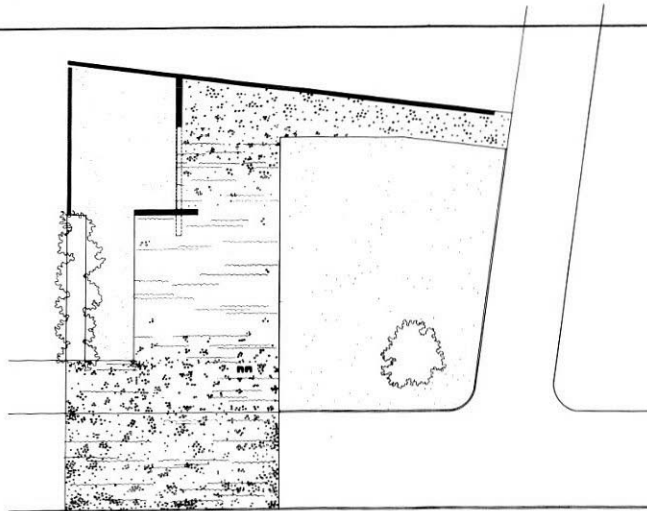
Las Arboledas, master plan and building code for residential subdivision, suburbs of Mexico City, 1955–61 (pages 63–71).

In addition to the master plan, Barragán designed for this subdivision El Muro Rojo (The Red Wall), 1958 (pages 70–71), the Plaza del Campanario (Plaza of the Bell), 1959 (plan top right, illustrated page 65), and the Plaza y Fuente del Bebedero (Plaza and Fountain of the Trough), 1959 (plan bottom right, illustrated pages 66–69).

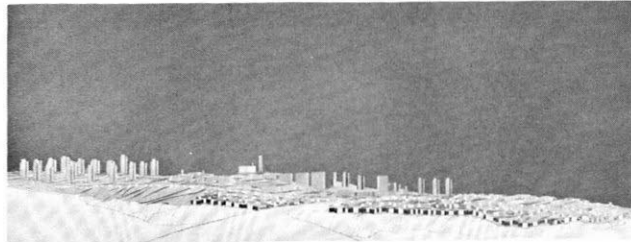


Los Clubes, master plan, public landscaping, and building code for residential subdivision, suburbs of Mexico City, 1963–64 (pages 73–89).

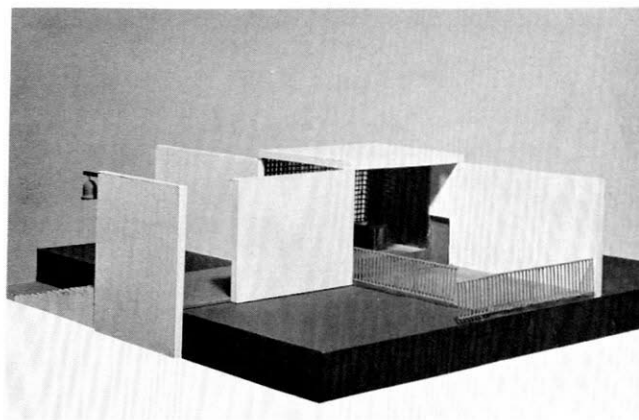
Barragán designed for this subdivision the Fuente de Los Clubes, also known as Fuente de los Amantes (Lovers' Fountain), utilizing two derelict troughs placed on their ends in the foreground. Later, in 1968, Barragán designed a service entrance (pages 86–89).



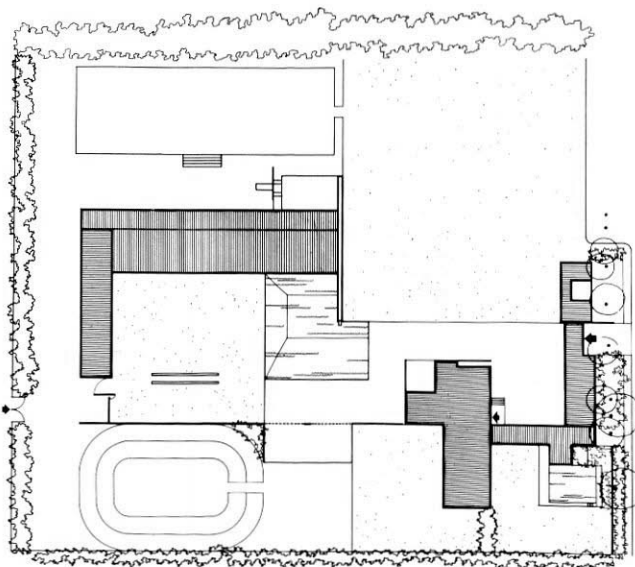
Lomas Verdes, master plan for residential subdivision, composed of twenty thousand dwelling units, draft of building code and design of "symbol" building, 1964–67, in partnership with architect Juan Sordo Madaleno.



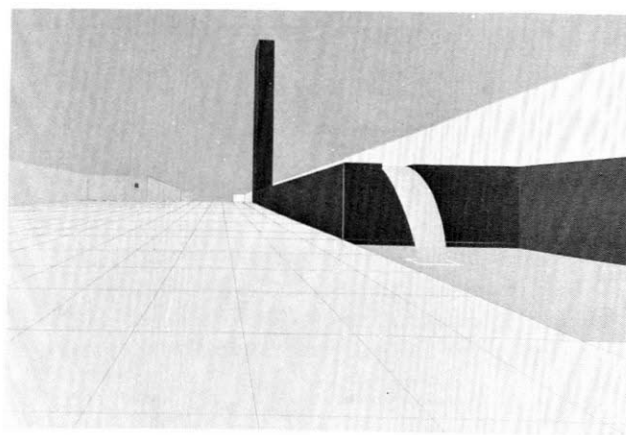
Design of open Chapel for Lomas Verdes, 1964-67.



San Cristobal, stable, horse pool, swimming pool and house for Mr. and Mrs. Folke Egerstrom, subdivision Los Clubes, suburb of Mexico, D.F., 1967-68, with the collaboration of architect Andrés Casillas (pages 91-103).



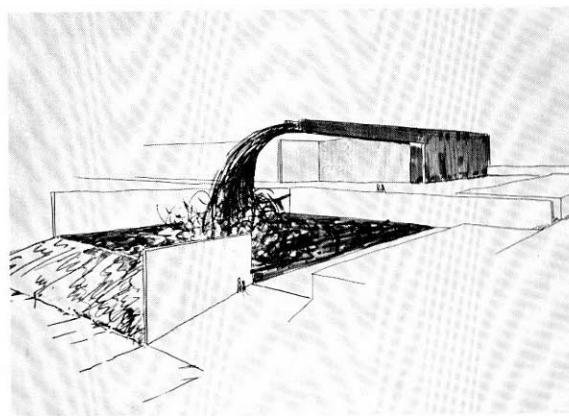
Cano, master plan and entrance to subdivision, near Tepotzotlan, 1969.



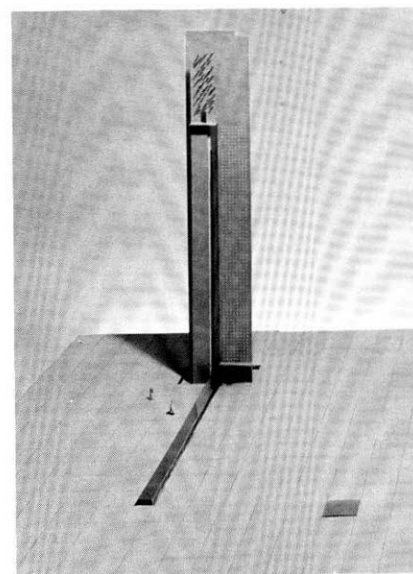
Preliminary design for a club and race track, subdivision, Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1971.

Monumental fountain for Lomas Verdes (not yet built), 1972, in collaboration with architect Ricardo Legorreta.

The water of this fountain cascades from a 75-foot horizontal cantilever onto an inclined plane, draining into a canal which carries the water to be recycled.



Preliminary design of a 165-foot symbolic tower to house pigeons in the residential subdivision, El Palomar, a suburb of Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, 1973, with the collaboration of architect Raul Ferrera.



House for Mr. Gilardi, Tacubaya section of Mexico City, construction to start spring, 1976.

Designed as a residence for a small family on a plot of land 30 feet wide and 100 feet deep, surrounded by buildings on three sides. Great attention has been given to the design of a covered pool which, in addition to serving as a swimming pool, will have alongside it an area for lounging which can also be used for dining.

