

Events

# EGraFia Congress, Argentina 2018

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After the previous successful Congress held in Argentina in 2012, the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning (National University of La Plata) was again chosen as the venue for the International Congress of Graphic Expression (VII International Congress of Engineering, Architecture and associated careers) jointly organised with EGraFia (XV National Congress of Engineering, Architecture and associated careers). The Congress was held on 4-5 October 2018.

The Congress, held annually, was entitled *Campos, thresholds and poetics of drawing*. Many interesting presentations regarding research, training and professional activities were delivered during the meeting. The expositions, conferences and exhibitions organised during the Congress focused on projects, drawings and graphic elaborations, including work executed during the *Caravana Grafica*, an itinerant tour of important buildings in La Plata. Thanks to the enormous appeal of the topical issues on the agenda, the meeting was a domestic and international success triggering considerable interest amongst teachers from several Universities as well as local professionals.

The topics discussed during the two-day event were divided into four

groups: research, teaching, transmitting culture to society, and profession.

In the section on research participants tackled problems regarding analogical and digital graphics; they examined new tools and the potential of different, increasingly sophisticated graphic systems. They also focused on the role of graphic expression, as a cultural manifesto, in the various disciplines of drawing as well as regards its future.

Teaching was given a broader palette so that participants could discuss the role of graphic expression in careers linked to the disciplines of drawing as well as the role of public education and new pedagogical teaching techniques, also compared to the reference guidelines of sectoral curricula.

The group discussing the transmission of culture to society assessed the relationship between society and education regarding graphic expression, its extra-disciplinary dissemination and the participation of the public in all ensuing experiences.

Finally, for the last topic (our profession) participants presented their own professional experience regarding graphic expression and the problems they faced in transferring their academic training to profession. They discussed the interaction between Universities and the Professional Categories, the relationship between social demand and professional supply, as well as what the future has in store for Latin American professionals.

Fig. 1. Poster of the event.



Last year the EGraFia association celebrated its 20th anniversary. During this period, it has become an important, undisputed reference point in the field of architectural graphic expression in Argentina.

Established in 1998, one of its major objectives is to promote the field of graphic expression in various disciplines such as engineering, architecture, drawing, natural sciences, astronomy, computer science and all their associated disciplines taught in Universities and schools in the Republic of Argentina. Its union and multidisciplinary nature always encourage and enrich coordination activities by promoting teaching, study, scientific research and the dissemination of graphic expression in the field of science and technique with a focus on the social needs of the population. In addition, cooperation agreements encourage teachers and students to participate in exchanges with national and international experts. One of the speakers reviewed the work done by the EGraFia association in the last twenty years; he listed all the places where the congresses have been held and the topics tackled each year. He emphasised the objectives, strategies and work methods as well as some of the less positive aspects, especially the fact it was sometimes difficult to reach several of the congress venues. From Cuba, Rio Cuarto, Catamarca, Rosario, Salta, Olavarría, Tucumán and General Pico, and then back to La Plata in 2018.

Drawing as the ultimate primary form of expression has always been the major protagonist of all the congresses and a key player in all cultural events. It is not only a tool used in numerous disciplines, but also a discipline in its own right; it carefully records reality and the built structures, either in a ma-

nual or tactile manner; it is supported by practical skills, but also plays a strong role in experiments on the potential of digital and integrated representation.

A significant number of students attended the Congress. Like the load-bearing columns of University life, they took part in the various activities together with professors, researchers and technicians: conferences, poster presentations, film projections, guided visits to important buildings in La Plata, and the now consolidated *Caravana Gráfica* event. Another graphic tour was also organised during this Congress; it involved the use of drawing to interpret several buildings close to the faculty in downtown (including the Partenón and the National College of La Plata). During the

analytical process drawing was used to capture the relationships between the buildings, their architectural consistency and state of conservation. It was a way to visually interpret and understand their visible material aspects as well as an attempt to interpret the immaterial values inspired by direct analysis. The last stop on the tour was the famous Curutchet House; the Argentine architect Amancio William built the house based on a design received by mail from the French architect Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris, Le Corbusier.

As in the past, the tour lasted throughout the congress and was a crucial moment of aggregation for the group, especially the younger participants. Everyone, who took part in the graphic

Fig. 2. Freehand drawings made by the participants in the graphic Caravan in the city of La Plata.



rally, used sheets of paper pinned together like an accordion; they used different tools to draw consecutively on these sheets so as to, also, probably, highlight the links between the buildings and the urban landscape.

The participants' work was presented and commented during the meeting.

The numerous contributions to the proceedings (e.g. the presentations delivered during the two-days meeting) provided an in-depth, multifaceted review of the congress topics. Each in their own way, the presentations highlighted the multiple options of how to narrate our cultural herita-

ge by documenting and conveying its history.

Several visits to important places in the city of La Plata also took place during the Congress. They included: the Planetarium, the Museum of Natural Sciences, the Teatro Argentino and the Cathedral.

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