

Events

EGA 2026

XXI Congreso Internacional de Expresión Gráfica Arquitectónica

Marco Giorgio Bevilacqua

In the wonderful setting of the city of Barcelona, World Capital of Architecture 2026, the XXI Congreso Internacional de Expresión Gráfica Arquitectónica (EGA 2026) took place from May 28 to 30. Organized by the Departamento de Representación Arquitectónica (DRA) [1] of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), the congress was hosted by the Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura de Barcelona (ETSAB), precisely within the spaces of the famous extension of its headquarters built between 1978 and 1982 according to the design by José Antonio Coderch de Sentmenat.

The central objective of the conference was to promote a profound reflection on the different areas of the discipline of Expresión Gráfica Arquitectónica, balancing traditional disciplinary foundations and drives toward innovation. *Certezas e incertidumbre* (Certainties and uncertainty) was the programmatic title chosen by the curators – an explicit invitation to question the constants and consolidated paradigms within our specific field of knowledge (the certainties, indeed) in order to explore and address the uncertainty generated by contemporary and future processes of architectural ideation, modeling, and representation.

The numerous contributions received in response to the call for papers were selected by the scientific committee through

a peer-review process. Over 160 papers were compiled into the five volumes of the conference proceedings, published by Iniciativa Digital Politècnica and available open-access on the event's webpage. Among the accepted texts, only a selection was chosen for oral presentation in the form of short 5-minute pitches, distributed across parallel sessions in the Sala de actos and Sala de grados of the ETSAB. In each session, a member of the organizing committee, acting as a session chair, introduced the contributions that were not slated for oral presentation but were deemed scientifically worthy of publication.

The scientific program was structured around five thematic lines. The first – *Ante la enseñanza y el aprendizaje...* (On teaching and learning...) – focused on the long tradition of architectural graphic expression – a tradition understood not only as an integral part of architectural project development but also as a method for learning the professional practice of the architect. Within this scope, a reflection was proposed on the methodologies, approaches, and tools of representation in architectural training pathways.

The second line – *...Con información y datos...* (...With information and data...) – aimed to propose a reflection on new technologies applied to the field of representation, while also sparking debates on the real appropriateness of integrating

them into the creative process. Computational design and computing engines based on generative artificial intelligence (AI) represent a revolution that the academic Drawing community is called upon to face and assimilate.

The third line – *...De dibujos, geometrías y trazos...* (...Of drawings, geometries, and strokes...) – looked at the foundations of the drawing discipline and the documentary value of 'drawings of the past,' which are essential references in the cultural education of an architect. Geometry is central, understood as an organizing principle and a tool for controlling architectural form. In this context, the acceleration of digital evolution opens up new fields of uncertainty. The session explored the various techniques and mediums used to represent architectural projects, from antiquity to the digital era, including freehand drawing, 3D modeling, rendering, animation, virtual reality, and AI.

...Desde lo existente... (...From the existing...) – the fourth line – addressed heritage surveying, the analysis of built reality, and the role of drawing as a critical interpretive tool from transdisciplinary perspectives. This line welcomed studies that use graphic expression techniques to document, preserve, and reconstruct architectural heritage, as well as to explore new ways of experiencing and understanding history and culture.

The line ...*Hacia la sociedad* (...Towards society) closed the series by focusing on the social role of architecture and eco-social sensitivity as a fundamental component of professional practice. In the relationship between the architect and society, the role of communication is crucial for the dissemination and outreach of the project across all its dimensions and scales. Therefore, this line welcomed contributions addressing the environment, economy, and social context, as well as reflections on the dissemination of knowledge to society in the broadest sense: technology transfer, accessible and inclusive communication, participatory processes, the role of social media, the use of graphic expression as a communication tool, visual storytelling, and multimedia. The scientific program was enriched and enhanced by two distinguished keynote speakers. The inaugural lecture on May 28 was delivered by Carme Pinós i Desplat (National Architecture Award of Spain 2021). Trained at the ETSAB and an internationally renowned architect, Carme Pinós passionately described the compositional genesis of her projects: a rigorous process that starts with an in-depth reading of the context and initial plan sketches, followed by physical study models made with poor materials such as paper, cardboard, wire, etc., along with section, elevation, and detail sketches, in a continuous and iterative process that gradually refines the design idea toward its final form. The lecture on May 29 was given by Carlos Bañón Blázquez, a leading

figure in computational design and digital methodologies. Bañón (Associate Professor at the Singapore University of Technology and Design and Co-founder of FORMAS.AI) illustrated the frontiers of 3D printing applied to the building macro-scale, data-driven design workflows linked to the circular economy, and the use of generative algorithms in spatial configuration.

His presentation was followed by an interesting round table on the topic of digital technologies and AI applied to architecture, moderated by Karina Gibert i Oliveras (UPC professor and expert in computational statistics and AI), which featured, alongside Carlos Bañón, Héctor Mendoza Ramírez (co-founder of the Mendoza Partida studio and lecturer at the DRA-ETSAB) and Roberto Molinos Esparza (CEO of Modelical and lecturer at the IE School of Architecture and Design). In conclusion, recalling the opening speech by Isabel Crespo Cabillo, professor at the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura del Vallès of the UPC and member of the organizing committee, the conference sought to clearly state that, in a context dominated by uncertainty, architecture must reclaim its historic capacity to operate within contradiction, translating complexity into responses that are not necessarily unique, but certainly rigorous and meaningful. Drawing reaffirms itself as a fundamental tool for interpreting the future that awaits us and overcoming the 'uncertainties' that permeate our contemporary consciousness.

Note

[1] The Departamento de Representación Arquitectónica (DRA) of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) is a teaching and research structure present across all schools of architecture and building engineering of the UPC, such as the Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura de Barcelona (ETSAB), the Escola Tècnica Superior Arquitectura del Vallès (ETSAV), and the Escuela Politécnica Superior de Edificación de Barcelona (EPSEB).

Author

Marco Giorgio Bevilacqua, Dipartimento di Ingegneria dell'Energia, dei Sistemi, del Territorio e delle Costruzioni, Università di Pisa, marco.giorgio.bevilacqua@unipi.it



Fig. 1. Poster of the event.