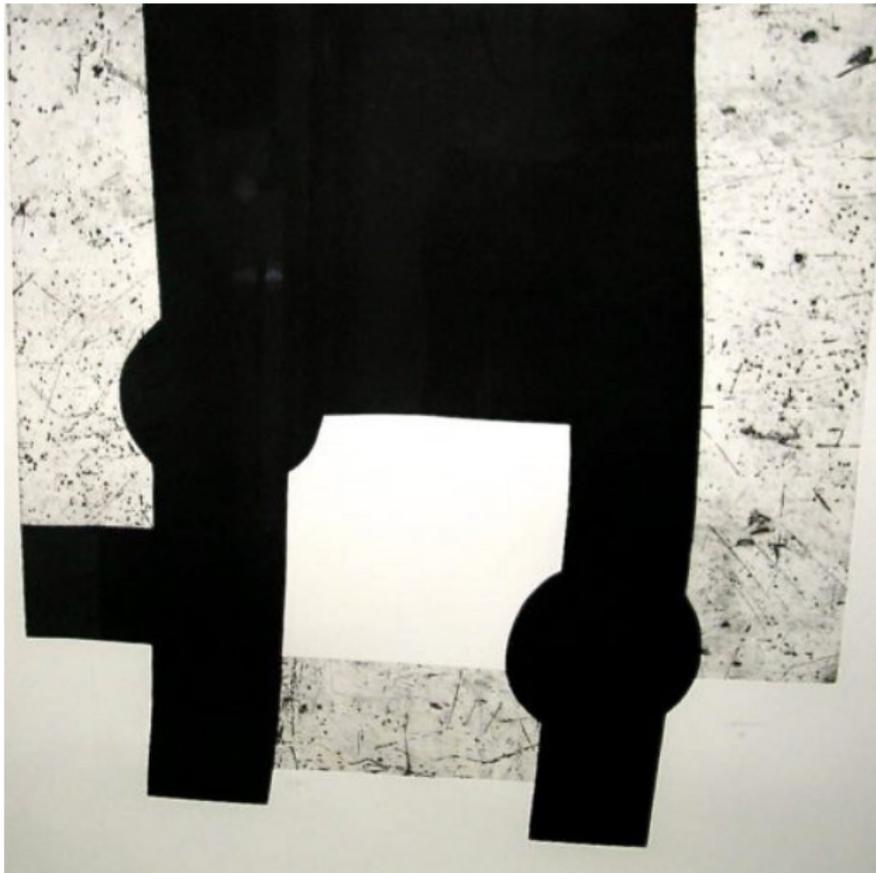




UNIVERSIDADE
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MUSEUM STUDIES AND HERITAGE

C H I L L I D A
L E K U



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Introduction

This research work is a process that through the methods of description and analysis acquired in the class of museum and heritage we will expose Leku Chillida museum as a unique piece of art.

The case of the Chillida Leku is considered an exceptional place that breaks out with the concept of a current museum, since its idea of art involves nature and philosophy in one space. Also the display of each piece of the artist's art works confirm Chillida's authenticity to communicate in an alternative way in contrast to other museums.

1. Eduardo Chillida

Eduardo Chillida's was a Spanish architect and sculptor known for his works in iron, wood, plaster and stone, although iron was the material with which he better communicated his themes.

His style was characterised by the simplicity and authenticity of expressing universal messages related to the intangible and undefined such as freedom and the difference between reality and the imaginary, all them found in poetry, here is where the magic of his art lies and the reason why his work had something poetic and inexplicable.

He carried out his works as universal questions that the viewer had to solve themselves, this is why the title of his sculptures will always induce the viewers to think what are they contemplating and to imagine something that goes beyond those abstract forms. One of his best known works "*Los peines del viento*" is a great example of his magical character as it induces to have personal meditation to understand his artistic work in a personal, unique and intuitive way.

Eduardo Chillida, became one of the most famous artist internationally because of his of expressing himself enveloping the tangible and intangible world in a especial way that involves the visitors of this works to delve into his spiritual and mystical world

2. Museum description

Chillida Leku is a special museum known as a unique piece of art. The fusion between art and nature occurs in a natural way.

The hole construction of the museum has a logic, from the construction to the location. It is located on the outskirts of Guipúzcoa between a hillside to reach closer his main themes such as freedom, spiritualism, experimentation, grandeur...

The construction of the building itself cares and specifies the materials used as it does in its sculptures, mixing iron, wood and stone in the same way, to continue with the harmony that his works are made. Both buildings in the museum, the welcoming one and the farm house have large windows that allow direct natural light to his works and thus make the museum as natural and spiritual place like Eduardo Chillida desired.

3. Museum management:

“A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”

Chillida leku offers arts such as drawings, paintings, sculptures and great architecture. As we previously mentioned the welcoming building and the farm house are make with similar materials to Chillida’s art works to create an harmonic environment.

Apart from big sculptures the museum has crafts, decorative arts, textiles, ceramics, decorative documents and any other design or embellishments used as utilitarian items or decorative purposes.

3.1 Architecture

The museum itself is another visual piece of art. Mainly the museum consists of two different spaces the outdoor area located in a garden and the indoor area which is in a farmhouse.

The welcoming area attend the subtle details of Chillida with white colours, large windows, iron and wood constructions to preserve the essence of the author. This area also contains a room with benches and television that informs the visitors Chillida's trajectory.



Once you leave this welcome area, you step out into the gardens a beautiful place where the sculptures coexist among the trees and bushes as one more element of nature. The farm house is also in this garden where the artist keep his most precious works sensitive to climate change or other damage. This space is built with different materials from the main building. It is a stone and wood building with large windows that illuminate the art work in a natural way and as Chillida believed in a spiritual way too.

For this reason, we conclude that the architecture of the museum is one more element of the art of Chillida, because not only is it built with similar materials but it also complies with the ethics and morphology of its creations.

3.2 Organisation of spaces

Eduardo Chillida creates spaces through the placement of limits as for him "the limit is the true protagonist of space"

The two different spaces the outdoor and the indoor area were renovated since the opening of the museum. On one hand the construction of the farmhouse building was considered by the artist as a perfect place tailored to his works where it could be permanently exhibited. The farmhouse experienced an architectural renovation directed by Luis Laplace whose work are distinguished by

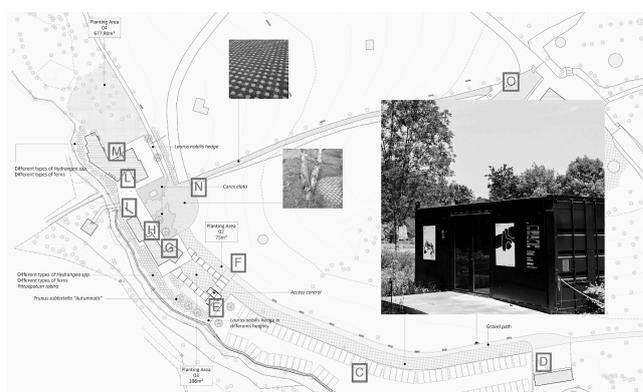
the intuitive and harmonious integration of architecture, art and design... Laplace shared with Chillida the main aspects that had to do with lighting, tone and texture, three main aspects that Chillida gave a lot of importance.

About the landscape and the gardens. The interest were different, introducing lightness, movement and change were the key characteristics of the work of the renowned landscape.

The design started from working with nature to create pictorial effects that, as vegetation grows, evolves and dies, also the passing of the seasons will be reflected in the plants, shrubs and grasses that make up your planting plan, as a reflect of the pass of time.

The organisation of space in Chillida Leku is **Grid** which means is impossible to visit in an orderly sequence, this is because the museum doesn't have explanatory signs or panels to not disturb the museum essence and also fulfil the objective of the sculptor, which was the viewer to make their own path in the museum in an intuitive way. As we previously mentioned Chillida created his art works as questions that the visitor had to response themselves, following his intuitive way of thinking, this is why is also reflected in the museum path, created to be an intuitive museum.

This is explains the organisation of the spaces complies the **Churning effect** which is the people who enter the in the museum together split onto different paths and will get together with each other probabilistically at some point of their time in the museum.



4. Art work Display

The exhibition of his works varies among themselves, since some of them are outside and others are inside, although all of them respect Chillida's main aspects.



The garden has the big sculptures and the farmhouse has smaller works and materials such as alabaster or paper are kept, some of them kept in vitro, like the conventional exhibition of objects. In the farm house the art works are displayed in tables, in shelvings accomplish the free standing and wall-mounted. The work display in the farm area fulfil the preventive conservation, as it protect the works from any damage and any weather condition.



We mentioned that that the museum doesn't have one path that guide de museum trajectory, but in the farm house the works exhibition are exposed in chronological order, so the visitors can see the artist journey and trajectory. This is a more personal area, as the viewer can also discover important archive material that includes photographs, original manuscripts, correspondence or catalogs of exhibitions from the first years of his artistic career, all of them belonging to the Eduardo Chillida archive, **permanently preserved in the museum.**



4.1 Materials

The material used in the museum works bring together works made with iron, granite, alabaster, plaster and paper, (without neglecting significant series such as Gravitations, **paper sculptures where relief and emptiness are especially important**) and Lurras and Oxides (pieces made with chamotte earth).

4.2 Works display and communication

The organisation of the object also accomplish the main object of communication. As we previously mentioned the museum consist in two main areas, that offers different experiences related to the intuition and the indoor area related to the observation. In addition to the experience of objects there is another critical dimension to the way of experience that is perfectly thought to provoce one feeling or another in the spectators.

4.2.1 Objects used to create space

The objects are also used to to create spaces, that constitute different experiences, since some objects force the visitor to return once or regularly to the same space.

5. Communication

It is a museum with different communicational narratives, some of which differ only by the location that they occupy in the museum.

The way the works are disposed in the museum has a lot to do with communication. It is considered as an intramural communication, where the visitor constructs their own private speech. Both maintain introspective and autonomous monologues. Chillida Leku museum is an **interactive** museum where people can touch the works and have better understanding to the artist's intention. This interaction of the visitors with the works makes a closer communication than the current museums, since some of the work aren't **arranged in a vitrine where the viewer can only look at the work.**

The outdoor area consists of a group of sculptures that doesn't a single piece with a signal that communicates to the viewer the art work, the spectators are the ones who evaluate and experience for themselves the quality and constitution of the art pieces differentiating the textures and shapes of the works of art, iron, stone or granite. Repeating again Chillida's sculptures reflect an own language that the artist had created according to his poetic philosophy.



The farm house area, consist of a building divided in two floors which has inside different art works works and exhibitions. In contrast with the exterior, the works cannot be touched, unlike what happens in Chillida Leku's garden.

Despite being two very different spaces, one open and one closed, they both communicate in a very clear and simple way, the works are charged with light, and express the same style of the artist in different ways.

The museum accomplish a didactic presentation as it shows the originals works from Chillida, but is also has multimedia part, as it has an informational tv and QR code to read and understand the artist work.

The museum accomplish the constitute factors in an act of communication, the Addresser which os the artist sends a message to an addressee, the visitors. The museum dose the act of communication with a monologic discourse, as ten museum sends a message to the public. It also has and educational department as it has its own organisation to educate and teach to kids and adults.

6. The Museum and its philosophy

Eduardo Chillida defines Chillida-Leku as “a place where my sculptures could rest and the people could walk through them like in a forest”. The museum was firstly used as place to store the pieces of art, later in 2000 the museum opened to the public as way to “universalise” the life and art of Eduardo Chillida.

The orientation towards the public, towards citizens of the Chillida-Leku Museum is not something isolated but is framed within a panorama in which museums, by virtue of their democratic responsibility, incorporate education as one of their functions essential.

The most primary form of relationship between objects and people refers to the sensory. In the programs, one of the main objectives is the development of perception: in the museum we experiment with the senses (it is allowed to touch most of the sculptures), paying attention to the

sensations that direct contact with the work produces. A very important part of the program is learning to look, to “fill the eye”, as Eduardo Chillida would say.

After this sensory approach and its expression through language, it is important that the process continues, contextualising the object and linking it with the knowledge and previous experiences of each person. However the approach to the object can be given from many different perspectives and, in the case of Eduardo Chillida's sculptures, not only from their aesthetic or artistic value.

In the case of the Chillida-Leku museum, the exhibits are works of art. Works of art are special objects in which artists reflect their conception of the world, their way of living, thinking, feeling ... Furthermore, according to Gracia Lafuente, “the work of art proposes us to investigate reality as as perceived by others, often forcing us to compare it with our own ideas or opinions about the world, and often forcing us to argue them "and the aim of a visit to the art museum should be" to stimulate reflective activity, observation and the imagination ”(Lafuente 1997: 36-3a)

In the case of a monographic museum, the Chillida-Leku sculptures refer us to Eduardo Chillida's worldview.

Eduardo Chillida did not elaborate a systematic theoretical corpus; We can approach his thinking through his writings (often annotations on loose pieces of paper), statements in the media, interviews by other authors, performances and, of course, his work. Through his family, who currently run the museum, and others who have worked directly with him. Within his thought, his work and his life, the values that are at the base of democracy had an enormous weight: fraternity, freedom, equality, cultural diversity, solidarity, cultural identity, respect for cultural and natural heritage ...

This worldview of the artist is the frame of reference when it comes to designing museum policy in general and, in particular, educational activities, on the one hand, with regard to methodological aspects and, on the other, too content.

Eduardo Chillida did not believe in teaching art. In his words "Art is not taught, it is learned." That is, each person must be responsible for their own learning and experiment for themselves.

The artist proposes other means to approach knowledge in addition to reason. In his work, “intuition” was of great importance, guiding him in a creative process, without a purpose known a priori. At Chillida-Leku reason is used to approach the sculptures but without underestimate other approaches based on sensations and feelings. The sculptor said: “From death, reason tells me: definitive. Of reason, reason tells me: limited”.

Eduardo Chillida was more interested in processes than in results. He wrote: “The desire to experiment, to know, has always made me carry a discontinuous march. Isn't this because I'm more interested in experimentation than experience, just as I prefer to know knowledge?”

“For the artist, art is a question, is the succession of questions our answer?” Eduardo Chillida has an investigative attitude, of coexistence with doubt and of rejection of any fundamentalism.

- **The sculptor seeks self-knowledge and does so through interaction with objects.** “I struggle with things perhaps more than to know them, to know why I cannot know them. That is, to get to know me ”

- **"It looks good having an eye full of what you are looking at"** Perception will be the sculptor's tool to get to know the environment.

Eduardo Chillida is oriented towards citizenship, he thinks that “What belongs to one is almost nobody's”. His eagerness to make the largest possible number of people participate in his work, led him to direct his interest mainly towards the field of public sculpture, where he preached with values of fraternity, equality, freedom ...

The values that are at the base of democracy or human rights had a great weight in his life and work. The museums is loyal to this values:

- **Identity:** “I understood that I was a tree from that place, that that was my vital atmosphere. I realized my situation in the world, I don't know in what sense to express it: existential, political, social ... I don't know but there I am, I belong to this, I usually say that I am a citizen of the world, but from here, what is my site “

- **Cultural diversity:** “We have a way of interpreting culture, of feeling the world. But we are also men and we are part of universal culture. Every people contributes something to universal culture. You can speak in different languages. This is a very important aspect, but I can draw many

consequences, as a man who believes in freedom and coherence, from all independent positions and respectful of contrary ideas ”.

- **Freedom:** "Isn't the only way to freedom to love the freedom of others?"
- **Dignity, right to life:** "Isn't a man, any man, worth more than a flag, than any flag?" "Is there a reason great enough to be superior to the smallest life?"
- **Respect for human rights:** “For man, for human rights. A complaint, a hug, a cry, an echo, a refuge, a cross, a flower. ”
- **Peace:** "There is no cause that justifies the use of violence."
- **Equality:** "All men are brothers, won't the horizon be our common homeland?"
- **Tolerance:** "My work" Monument to Tolerance "tries to say how important this virtue is and my desire for it to be manifested in everything I do."
- **Respect for the environment:** "We are part of nature, let's defend it." Participation and solidarity: "The sculpture must always show it's face, be attentive to everything that moves around it and makes it alive.”

7. Additional Information

7.1 The Foundation

The Eduardo Chillida-Pilar Belzunce Foundation was created in parallel to the museum with two objectives of different nature, according to its initial project:

- **"deepen the study of the artistic work of Eduardo Chillida and promote its knowledge and dissemination"**; This first objective refers to Eduardo Chillida and his work, that is, to the heritage that the museum must preserve and disseminate.
- **"make others share in the benefits that can be derived from it, since art makes people great"**; This second objective therefore refers to people, citizens.

In that same project it is declared that "Eduardo Chillida's sculpture is not easy to understand and a large percentage of people do not benefit from it" and that for that reason an "Area of Artistic and Cultural Education" is necessary. The objectives of this area would be:

- “Bringing art closer to people, helping them to eliminate prejudices and fears and providing clues for their relationship with the work”.
- "Revitalization of Chillida-Leku".

- “Establish meeting places through nature and art, necessary for a plural society and, sometimes, confronted. ”. And its methodology:
- “Active participation of the spectator”.
- "Enhancement of perception capacity".
- "Enhancement of contact with one's own sensations”.
- "Expression and communication of sensations”.

Throughout its six years of existence, the museum has undergone many changes in its structure; but these principles, collected in the initial project, are those that govern the Department of Education, which currently acts as an intermediary between the work and the people, between patrimony and citizens.

7.2 Human Rights

In the Eduardo Chillida and Human Rights shows the committed and supportive facet of the artist in relation to the defense of Human Rights and the values that inspire them was highlighted. To develop this theme we paid attention to two aspects: on the one hand, in the work of Eduardo Chillida, who incorporates human values and rights in many of his works. On the other hand, in the life of the author: as an example of some of his actions, there are numerous economic collaborations with NGOs or associations in favor of human rights, such as the Red Cross or CEAR; the use of his public notoriety to petition ETA for an end to the violence or, at the time of the transition, to King Juan Carlos I of Spain, in favor of amnesty; or works in which life and work come together and that explicitly contain claims, such as the amnesty logo, the one for the University of the Basque Country, the posters for Amnesty International, among others.

7.3 Environment

The relationship between the environment and nature with the work of Eduardo Chillida and with art in general is very close. In the case of Chillida-Leku, it is already evident through the treatment of space, which seeks the balance between art, nature and architecture. The theme is present, as in the case of Human Rights, both in the life of the artist, a lover of nature and committed to its protection through different organisations, and in his work that draws on it: on the subject , in the materials or integrating it within the pieces as is the case of public monuments.

7.4 Urban Space

In public projects, and specifically in the sculpture *El Peine del Viento*, space plays a very relevant role: on the one hand, the sculptor seeks a balance between the work and the environment and, on the other, the sculpture incorporates and it transforms the real space with an architectural treatment that forces people to interact with the body and not be passive spectators. *El Peine del Viento* is located in the public space and aims to be a place open to citizens, without whom it would not make sense: it has the vocation of a meeting point, contemplation, reflection or enjoyment.

The place comes to life and is defined by the people who contemplate it, who inhabit it, at a given moment and requires a bodily interaction from them.

8. Conclusion

From the aforementioned we can confirm that the Chillida Leku museum is a work of art in itself, and speaks for its own. The construction itself maintains a philosophy that is transferred to the art works as they manifests themselves as questions that the viewer has to solve by himself as a way of learning, and learning to feel. In such a way Chillida-Leku is a landscape or a group made up of artistic objects: the natural environment and the historical farmhouse, a synthesis of art, nature and tradition, elements like these are also present in his work.

At the same time, the extension of the collection gives us the opportunity to get to know the artist and the person in depth and to establish connections with other disciplines or themes. This interdisciplinarity is present in the work of Eduardo Chillida, an avid self-taught reader, who drew from the sources of philosophy, literature, natural sciences, religion or music, and made exceptionally contributions in the politics and education fields.

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