

Franco Casaccia, an architect from Fimat, offers a different perspective on places and buildings around the world.

"Architecture and photography have much in common. At least, that's how Franco Casaccia, an architect from Fimat, Argentina, perceives it. For some years now, he has been offering a different perspective on places and buildings around the world through images and stories."

Franco Casaccia is 32 years old. He graduated as an architect from the National University of Rosario in early 2018. That same year, along with four university classmates, he decided to take a trip around Europe. It was his first time on that side of the ocean, and even his first time on a plane.

From then on, his life changed completely. He set foot in Germany, where he tried his luck, learned, fought, dreamed, and stayed. Today, he has been living in Cologne, Germany for almost three years, where he practices his profession, and in his spare time, brings us views of the world, especially Central Europe, through his camera.

In communication with El Correo, Franco, who is in the process of becoming a member of the German National Association of Architectural Photographers, provided details about his work and how the idea of combining these two disciplines came about.



"Depending on the context, sometimes I define myself as an architect and sometimes as a photographer. But it's very difficult to separate the two. With photography, the satisfaction and results of your work happen almost instantly. An architectural project takes years to complete and, depending on the context, often the final result is far from the initial ideas. Building is very complex," commented Casaccia.

"I like being able to bring architecture to other people, sharing my passion with everyone. I don't limit myself to large architecture projects or famous architects either; I've also done work for smaller studios, remodeling small houses, street photography, or simply things that have nothing to do with architecture. Whatever the subject, the goal is the same: to tell a story," he reflected.

Going Hand in Hand

Regarding his beginnings and how he combined these disciplines, Casaccia, who clarified that his full-time profession is architecture, said: *"Photography started as a hobby and, after seeing the acceptance from my acquaintances, colleagues, and on social media, I decided to give it a more professional focus, targeting the architectural studies one learns about in university."*

"The truth is that both disciplines have a lot in common and go hand in hand. An architectural project, besides functioning for the purpose it was designed for, also has to be well presented, from the early stages of the project until it is inhabited," Franco explained, and argued: *"A completed work that isn't photographed and distributed remains only for those few who have the chance to visit it, and that's not always an option, whether it's a country church in La Pampa or in Denmark."*



¹ Museum of Art, Bonn, Germany. Photo: Franco Casaccia

He also stated that *"photography in general, beyond its value as a communication and documentation tool, also allows for infinite interpretations, much like standing in front of a painting in a museum, and that's great."*

"A technically perfect photo, taken with the best camera, but that conveys nothing, is not interesting either," he posited, and supported: "As an architect, having developed an understanding and appreciation of how buildings are designed and how they interact with their surroundings gives me, in some way, the perspective to capture them in images."

Photographs, People, Stories...

Delving a bit more into his personal project, where he often shares stories and experiences from different parts of the world through his own photographs, the architect from Firmat explained in depth where he stands when tackling a new job.

"The first thing I identify are projects that interest me, either because they were done by a studio I admire, because I studied them in college, or simply because I am attracted to their design. It is also true that newly completed projects have a better chance of being published on some online portal or magazine than one that is 10 years old and has already been documented a thousand times," he specified.



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In that sense, he confessed: *"I usually go to the place only knowing how to get there and identifying possible interesting viewpoints to photograph, without prejudices. Once the tour is over, I like to read about the project and understand the reasons behind many design decisions."*

² Museum of Rock, Roskilde, Denmark. MVRDV | Photo: Franco Casaccia

"The fact that I can walk through them and photograph them from various perspectives and distances, talk to locals (as long as the language allows), see people interacting with them, and how the buildings mature and are affected by their use is fundamental to document a building," Franco analyzed regarding how he approaches each photographic project.

He also highlighted a fundamental factor when photographing, concerning his perspective. *"I am interested in how architectural spaces are used and inhabited by people. I believe a building comes to life when people use it, and I want to capture that relationship,"* he emphasized.



"I am not only interested in the shape and structure of the building, but also in how it integrates into its surroundings and how people make it their own. This interaction is what makes a building more than just a simple structure," Franco told El Correo.

"This is what I try to capture in my photos. If you pay attention, there's a repeating pattern, and it's the people. People give you, first, the possibility to understand the scale of a space and, second, to see how they interact with it," he indicated, and clarified: *"It doesn't always happen; sometimes the places are deserted, or one doesn't want to be intrusive, respecting the people who are using them."*

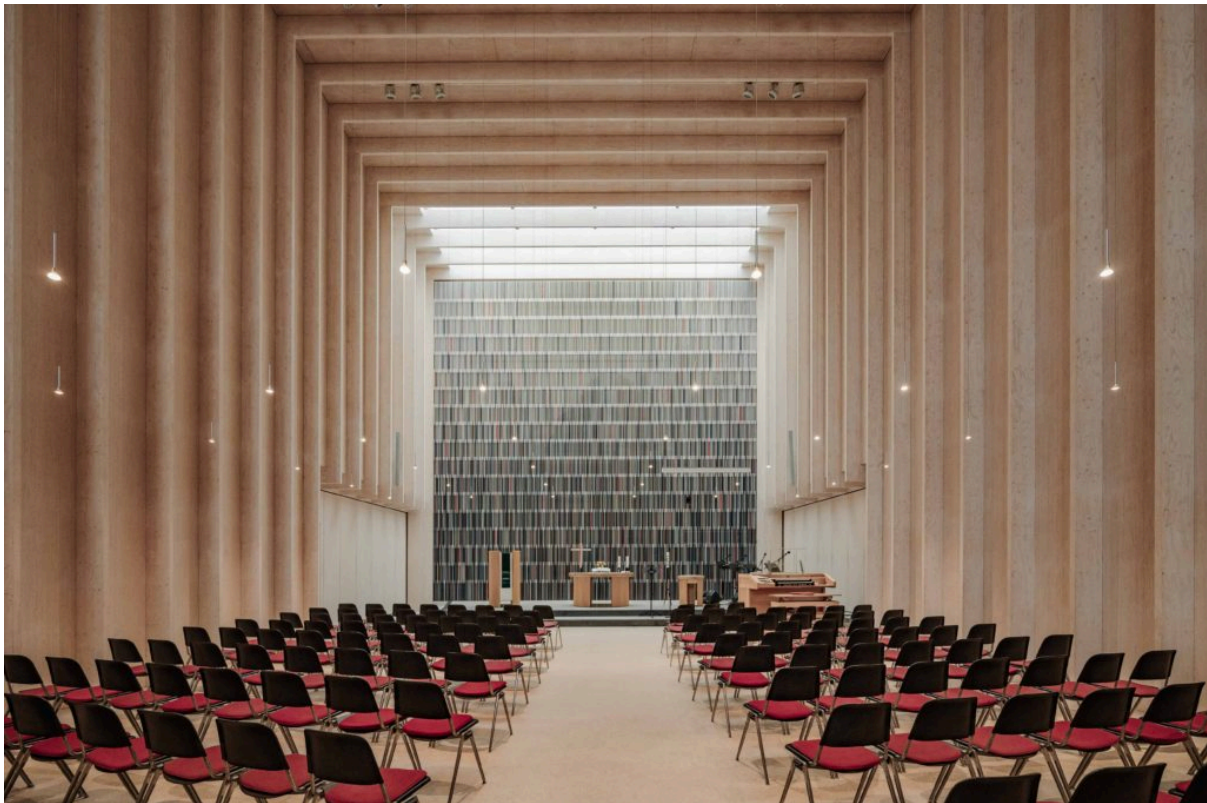
"The idea is to be able to tell a story with the photos, and not limit myself only to the structure itself, but also to show how it is used and lived in, or how it reacts to changes in light throughout the day and the year," Casaccia expressed.

³ *The Valley Residences, Amsterdam, Netherlands. MVRDV | Photo: Franco Casaccia*

Firmat in a Spanish Architecture Magazine?

Continuing the conversation with El Correo, another topic Franco delved into was the places he has had the opportunity to work in, and whether he has managed to do any photographic projects in our country, specifically in his hometown of Firmat.

"My work is mostly in Central Europe. And that's because, living in Germany, I always look for places I can go to over a weekend or a few days. As I mentioned at the beginning, it is still not a full-time occupation; I spend most of my time in the office making construction plans for the mega campus," emphasized Franco, who currently works at JSWD Architekten, an architecture studio in Cologne, where around 200 professionals work.



"Every place has something unique and special, but some of the most impactful are those that reveal a strong connection between the community and the environment," Franco reaffirmed, and contextualized regarding his latest experiences, specifically in Denmark: *"Cities are designed prioritizing public space, even when they are private investments. This is purely and exclusively the power of management and strong urban development policies that favor city development and aim to improve everyone's quality of life."*

On the other hand, Franco talked about Argentina and the possibility of carrying out his work whenever he returns to the country. *"It seems cliché, but after six years, every time I return to Argentina on my way to Firmat, I am impressed by the vastness in which we live in our country, the distances we deal with, plains that seem endless,"* he stated.

⁴ Immanuel Church, Cologne, Germany. Sauerbruch Hutton | Photo: Franco Casaccia

In this context, he recounted: *"The last time I was in Fírmata, I took some photos of one of the old "Taperas" (farmhouses) still standing on "the Rega road". Shortly after posting them on Instagram, I was contacted by a Spanish architecture magazine that wanted to do a feature on these farmhouses."*



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"We have to understand that what might be everyday life for one person can be extremely exotic in another part of the world," he reflected.

Finally, regarding the possibility of returning to live in the country, Franco said: *"I love coming back, and I would love to have the opportunity to work there as well."* Although he currently does not plan to return, as he wants to continue developing and growing as a professional in Europe.

In fact, it is worth mentioning that currently, Casaccia, through the studio where he works as a professional, is involved in one of Germany's largest projects, a Mega Campus for IT Development.

Original Article by Manuel Carreras. (El Correo de Fírmata)

- Learn more about Franco's work at: <https://www.franco-casaccia.com/>
- You can also see the work of the architect from Fírmata on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/francocasaccia/?hl=es-la>
- Original Article: <https://elcorreodigital.com.ar/franco-casaccia-un-arquitecto-firmatense-que-propone-una-mirada-diferente-sobre-lugares-y-edificaciones-del-mundo/>

Translate to English: ChatGPT

⁵ Taperas: Farmhouse. Normally built in adobe or brick, are symbols of Argentine rural life.