



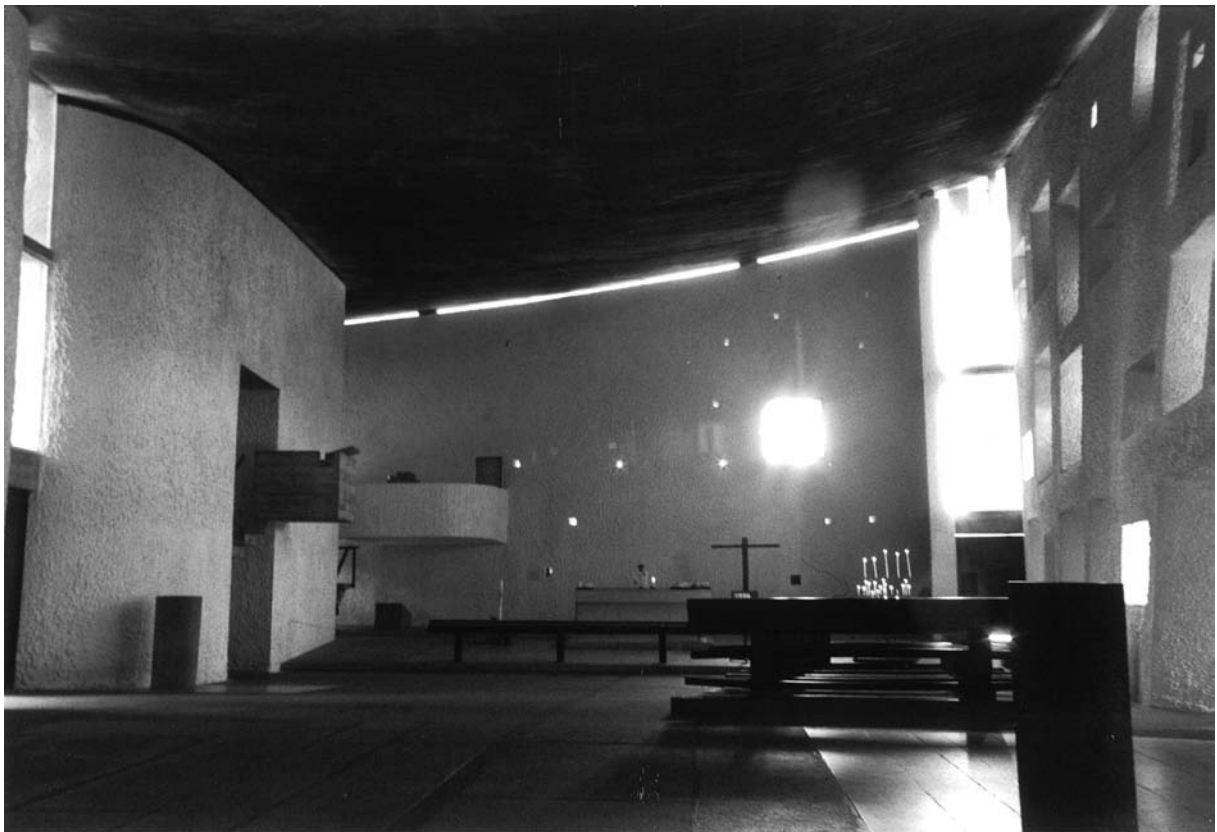
La Tourette 1997

**Photographs of light, darkness and space**

## **The atmosphere of the chapel La Ronchamp, Le Corbusier**

I use the word atmosphere to describe a physical, spatial and emotional moment of a place. Something has a good or bad, a warm or cold, a wide or narrow, a sympathetic or frightening atmosphere.

*Le Corbusier* created an atmosphere he wanted people to perceive and feel; a place of rest, joy, lightness, mystery, diversity and peace. *La Ronchamp* is an unconventional building, because of the freedom of design. With freedom I mean, that *Le Corbusier* had the courage to take the freedom to design a building in the fifties that had an extraordinary concrete roof, organic moulded walls and deep lying, small, and large framed windows in a very thick wall. Because of her unusual appearance in shape and the difference of each side, she has charisma, lying in the green on top of the hill overlooking the valley, being white. Designed for the big masses of pilgrims outside as well as for the single visitor who seeks peace and silence inside. The rhythm and order of the windows, walls and furniture are a lively composition.



***There is no photograph that makes you feel what you see***

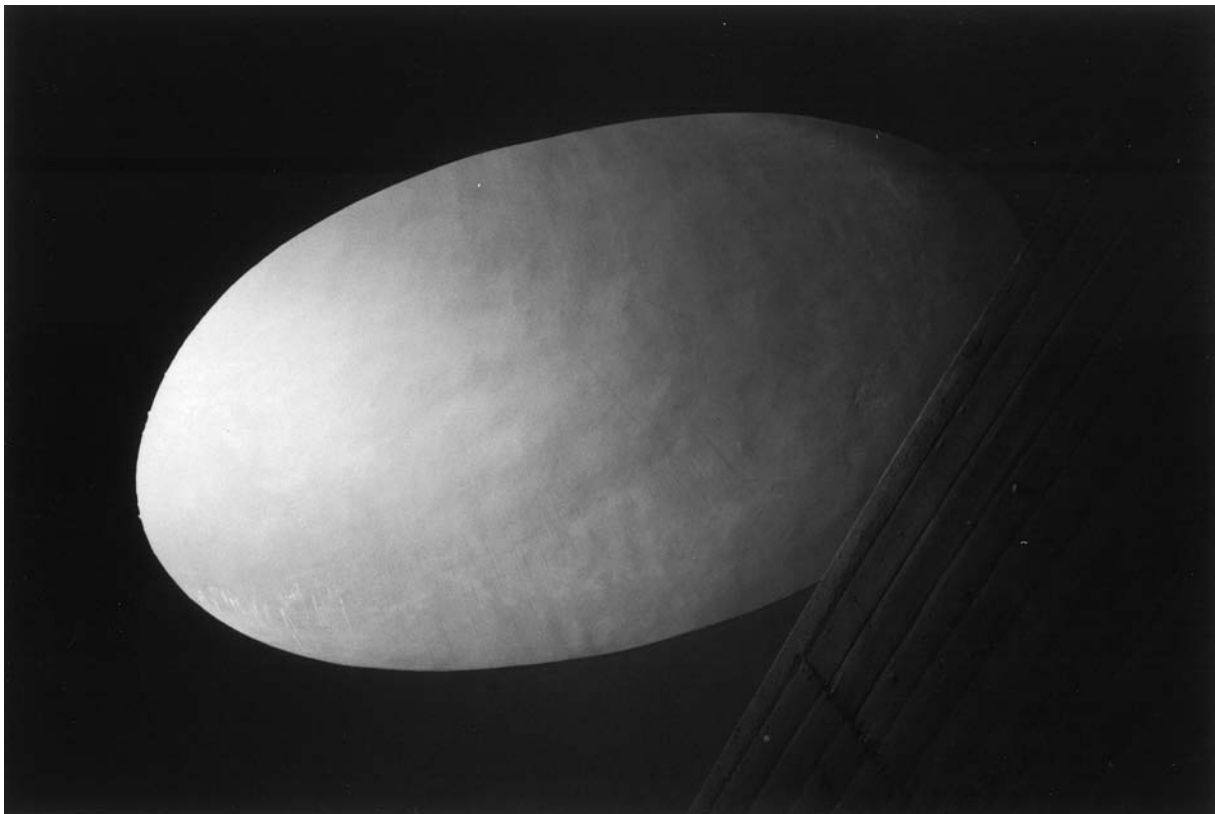
N. Küderli

### **The light effect**

In *La Ronchamp* the light does not appear as light, but as a story. The void is not just a void to let light enter, it is about how it enters. Light enters as a dynamic transformation. The places for light to enter, are instruments to create a spacial and perceptual effect. For example the little lights around the madonna appear more like stars. The light of the window is made for shining at the madonna and not for itself. The horizontal light gaps between roof and wall are for the effect of lightness and separation. Each wall has a different concentration of light and density through the unique order and shape of the windows as well as the empty spaces.

## **The convent La Tourette, Le Corbusier**

*Le Corbusier* designed the light effects of the side chapel of the convent *La Tourette* like a sculpture. The light reflects the surface, the edge creates the form. The light opening is curved and its surface is smooth, the edge shows the change of direction, from light to dark, from curved to flat, from horizontal to vertical.



### **The world of light and edges**

What would space, light and darkness be without edges? It is at the edge light and darkness are separated. An edge is only a very thin line that separates one side from the other. And so it confronts both sides to one another. Without edges no borders, no borders no direction, no direction no vision. Without edge there is no dark nor bright, no black nor white. How fortunate there are many edges; big edges and small edges! Edges produce conflict, friction and pain. One can avoid them, as well as go around them. Edges create changes and differences, new surfaces, stories and ways of looking. There are also soft, tiny and repetitive edges which create a wonderful structure of light and shadow.

## Luis Barragán House, Mexico city

*It is alarming that publications devoted to architecture have vanished from their pages the words beauty, inspiration, magic, spellbound, enchantment, as well as the concepts of serenity, silence, intimacy and amazement... they have never ceased to be my guiding lights.*

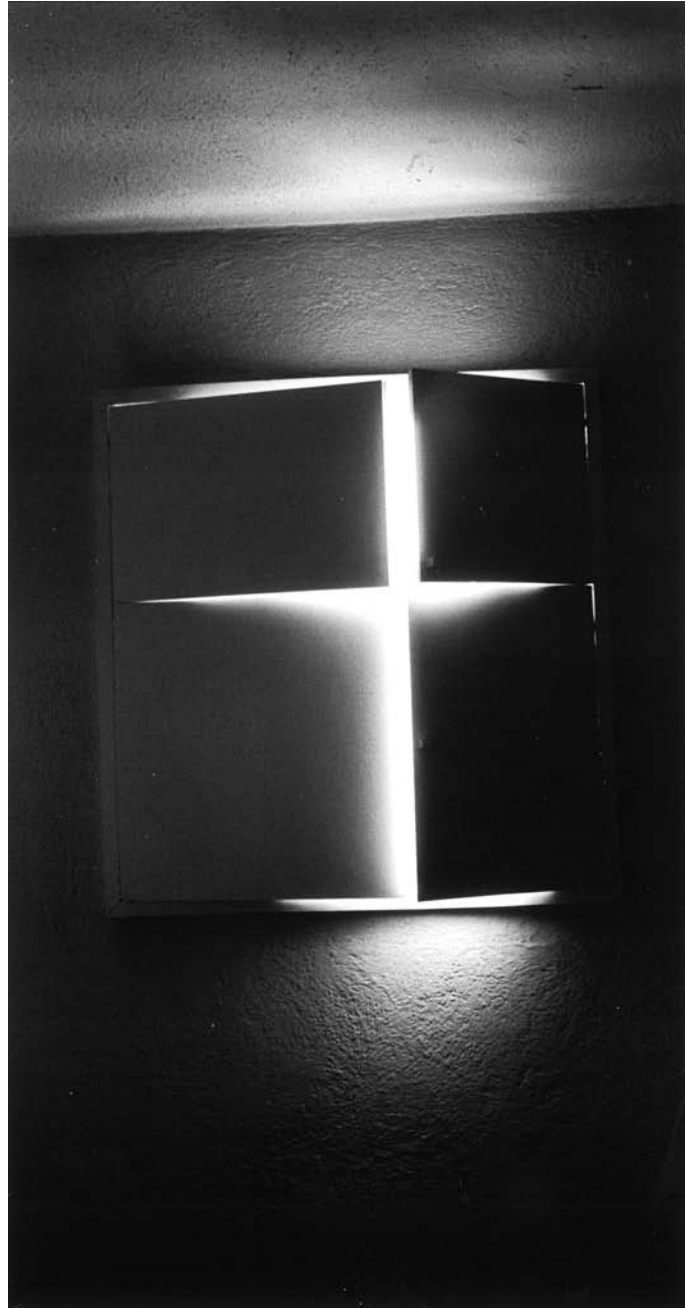
Barragán, Pritzker Prize-speech

Luis Barragán used different materials and shapes to filter, direct and organize light in order to create a certain atmosphere that is at the same time romantic, gentle and peaceful as well as lively.



### Two light sources

The different ways of using light creates the atmosphere. Light not only as a source of brightness, but also as a spacial instrument. In *Barragán's* house the atmosphere is partially created by soft light. The picture below has this soft and smooth appearance, it is romantic! There are two light sources, one natural, one artificial. Both are shining in their particular way. The connection between the two is hidden. The floor in the front reflects the natural light, it shows the way. The mystery of this image lies in the darkness between the two light sources; one from above and the other from the opposite side. Items appear as if they always have been there and nothing has changed. The moment of just being approaches and makes you feel at ease and enjoy the beauty.



### **The mystery of a closed window**

An open window enables you to look outside, but it has not the secrecy and questioning of a closed window, like this one. Because a certain amount of light enters, it makes you wonder what lies behind. The shutters are like shadows in the light: sharp, square-edged as well as imprecise. Precise where you see the essence of the form, and imprecise where the light floats around the edges; a smooth transition from bright light into darkness. The light creates the edges. Light is spread over the wall and the ceiling, which gives the image a certain kind of lightness. The rest lies in darkness.



### **The window in the window**

In this image you look through the front window of Barragan's living room, you get a glimpse of the interior and notice the window of Barragan's studio in the background. But you do not know what lies in-between. At the same time you see the reflection of the sky and the trees in the garden.

I enjoy the beauty of the different lights: the light on the floor, the light of the back window and the mirroring light of the sky as well as the silhouettes of the trees. The dynamic of this picture lies partly in the different light sources; the warm light on the floor and on the wooden furniture in contrast to the cool light of the window in the back and the sky. And partly, because in this picture the crossbar forms the image. At the same time the window seems to be without a frame, which gives you the feeling of stability as well as the freedom of a non-defined space, a place without boundaries.

## A timeless space or a space of its time

Every time has its own time  
But sometimes  
our time does not want to have its time  
But what is the own?  
Language, country, home?  
Not anymore

This space speaks a language for all times  
A space of timelessness,  
determination, continuity and  
p e a c e  
Someone just left the place in order to return  
The possible return gives hope  
hope gives courage  
courage gives strength

and the persistence to keep waiting...

## The still life, the silent space

There is silence here

p e a c e

The atmosphere standing still  
Treasures from life

Not that I care for silence in itself  
but the silence of light  
space and atmosphere

A place to think and reflect  
to rest and find peace

Darkness and light can meet



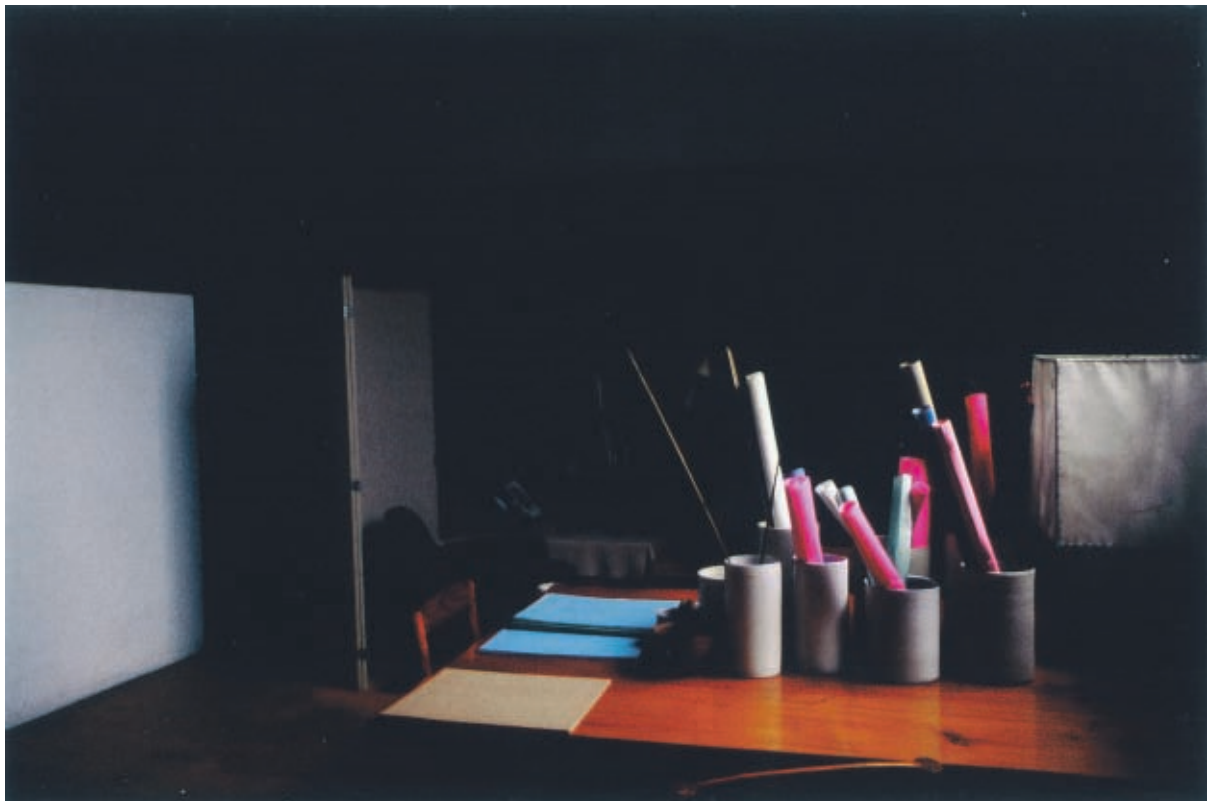
**THE REAL AND THE UNREAL**

**THE UNDEFINED SPACE  
NOT KNOWING WHERE YOU ARE  
SECRET DARKNESS**

**BEAUTY SEEN AND UNSEEN  
WHAT IS IN BETWEEN  
THE EMPTINESS IN THE DARK  
THE SPACE OF THE HIDDEN**

**THE SOUL  
IN THE SOFTNESS OF DIFFERENCE  
IN THE SIMPLICITY OF NOTHINGNESS  
AND IN THE MODESTY OF THINGS**

**PEACE**



**May light and darkness never cease to be**

