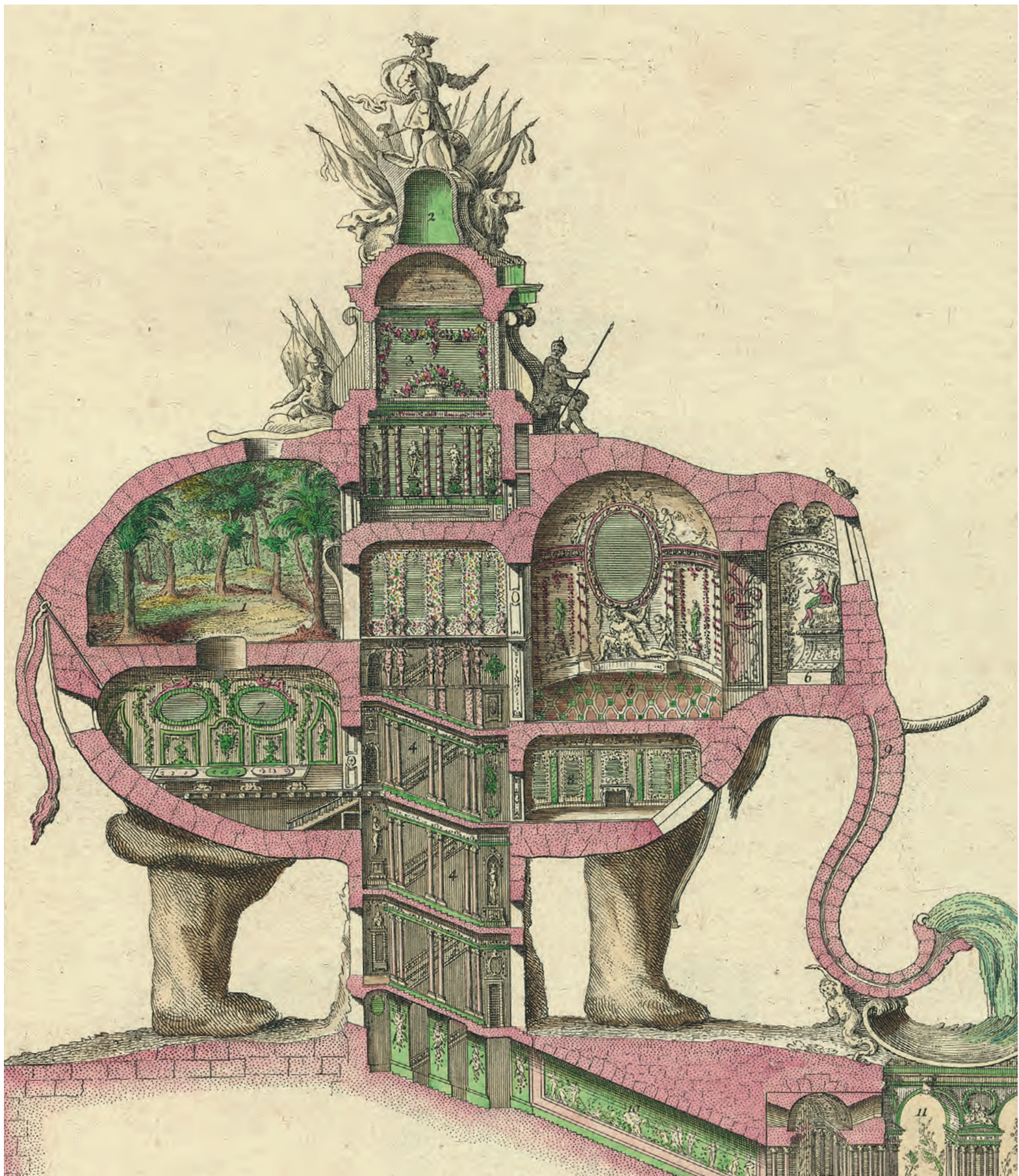




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Back cover illustration: Kneeling female figure, 15th–early 16th century. Mexico, Mesoamerica, Aztec. See fig. 5, p. 17.

Illustration on p. 2: Pierre Patte after Charles François Ribart de Chamoust. Section view of Ribart's elephant monument from Ribart 1758, pl. VI. Hand-colored etching. See fig. 4, p. 86.

Illustration on p. 4: Mask. Mexico. Olmec, 900–400 B.C. Jadeite, H. 5¼ × W. 5½ × D. 3 in. (14.6 × 14 × 7.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Alice K. Bache, 1977 (1977.187.33)

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MANUSCRIPT GUIDELINES FOR THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM JOURNAL

Founded in 1968, the *Metropolitan Museum Journal* is a peer-reviewed scholarly journal published annually that features original research on the history, interpretation, conservation, and scientific examination of works of art in the Museum's collection. Its range encompasses the diversity of artistic practice from antiquity to the present day. The *Journal* encourages contributions offering critical and innovative approaches that will further our understanding of works of art.

The *Journal* publishes **Articles** and **Research Notes**. All texts must take works of art in the collection as the point of departure. **Articles** contribute extensive and thoroughly argued scholarship, whereas **Research Notes** are often smaller in scope, focusing on a specific aspect of new research or presenting a significant finding from technical analysis. The maximum length for articles is 8,000 words (including endnotes) and 10–12 images, and for research notes 4,000 words with 4–6 images. Authors may consult previous volumes of the *Journal* as they prepare submissions: www.metmuseum.org/art/metpublications. The *Journal* does not accept papers that have been previously published elsewhere, nor does it accept translations of such works.

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ABBREVIATIONS

MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MMAB *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*
MMJ *Metropolitan Museum Journal*

Height precedes width and then depth in dimensions cited.

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The Vélez Blanco Patio and United States–Cuba Relationships in the 1950s

TOMMASO MOZZATI

In May 1933, Walker Evans traveled to Havana to collect images for *The Crime of Cuba*, a book by journalist and historian Carleton Beals. Written when Franklin D. Roosevelt's support of the Good Neighbor Policy was dictating the agenda of the North and South American continents, Beals's essay would be a denunciation of American imperialism and the increasing economic control of Washington, DC, over the Caribbean state. Evans's agreement with the publisher J. B. Lippincott was signed with a clear condition: "I am not illustrating a book. I'd like to just go down there and make some pictures, but don't tell me what to do."¹

During a stay lasting four weeks, the photographer captured about four hundred images, focusing on Havana's people and daily life. Through portraits and

fig. 1 Walker Evans
(American, 1903–1975).
Havana Shopping District,
1933. Gelatin silver print,
9 5/8 × 6 1/2 in. (24.4 × 15.5 cm).
The J. Paul Getty Museum,
Los Angeles. © Walker
Evans Archive, The
Metropolitan Museum of Art

cityscapes, often taken along the streets of the capital, Evans was able to underscore the ambiguous and complex state of the island under the dictatorship of Gerardo Machado y Morales (who would choose exile only a few months later, in August 1933). The extensive photographic campaign revealed Evans's empathy and nuanced political awareness. One of the most moving shots is the tender, lively, and beautifully framed image titled *Havana Shopping District*, its severe compositional scheme disrupted by animated human presence (fig. 1).

Such oppositions are the means by which Evans translated political and cultural tensions into formal terms. The two boys occupying the space at the bottom right become emblems of the multiracial and multicultural heritage (*mestizaje*) of Cuba's inhabitants. In the



opposite corner, the Coca-Cola brand dominates a varied display of local publications: the independent weekly *Bohemia*, illustrated with the national flag; the conservative *Carteles*, with an elegant Deco cover; and the popular *Cinelandia*, pretending to be “publicada en Hollywood.” Within the fairly rigid compositional grid (the only element indicating motion is the tow-headed boy), Evans isolates the principal competing forces in the polyphonic panorama of contemporary Cuban society: beguiled and dependent on overwhelming U.S. influence while committed to defining its own unique culture and place on the international stage.²

The climate of political tension in which Cuban governments remained viable only by becoming part of the seemingly benevolent protectorate of Washington, DC, forms a chapter in the history of one of the grandest works of art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the patio from the Spanish Castle of Vélez Blanco (fig. 2). Walking through the serene gallery built to house the marble architectural elements from Vélez Blanco, one admires the elegant proportions of the two-story arcade, the simple rhythms of the baluster staircase, the sheer beauty of the carving on the doors and window frames, and the magisterial lettering on the crowning inscription. It is difficult to imagine that this Renaissance masterpiece remained in storage at The Met for almost two decades or that the Museum considered donating it to Cuba in the late 1940s. But such was the case. The original meaning of a work of art, determined by the culture that produced it, is changed over time by the cultures that inherit, appropriate, buy, loot, steal, care for, neglect, or destroy the work. As the Vélez Blanco patio passed from Spain to France to the United States, its changing meaning was inflected by the values of those who owned it and those who desired to possess it. Perhaps at no time was this process more blatant than before the 1953–59 Cuban Revolution, when the Vélez Blanco patio was understood as a prize in the international game of Cold War politics.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE VÉLEZ BLANCO PATIO

The internal courtyard of Vélez Blanco's citadel in the south of Spain originally was commissioned and built to send a strong political message. In 1503, Isabella of Castile granted the fortress to Pedro Fajardo y Chacón, whose family played a major role in the Christian conquest of that region and who was given the title of marquis of Los Vélez in 1507.³ Following his acquisition of the lands once dominated by the Nasrid dynasty, Pedro Fajardo began to completely renovate the castle. Executed between 1506 and 1515, employing classical



fig. 2 Patio from the Castle of Vélez Blanco. Spanish, Almería, ca. 1506–15. Marble of Macael (Sierra de Filabres), H. (to top of cornice) 33 × W. 44 × L. 63 ft. (10 × 13.4 × 19.2 m). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of George Blumenthal, 1941 (41.190.482)

architectural forms and decorative reliefs inspired by Renaissance Italy, the patio was conceived as an emblem of Spanish hegemony that linked the Christian conquest of the Iberian Peninsula to that of imperial Rome.⁴

Pedro Fajardo's descendants cared for the fortress, considering it an indispensable relic of dynastic prestige. However, with the end of the Fajardo line between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Vélez Blanco entered a slow, inexorable decline.⁵ In 1904, the patio was sold to the dealer J. Goldberg. The outcry against the sale transformed the patio into a politicized symbol of the flagrant neglect and abuse of the Spanish national patrimony. In the court of public opinion in Spain, the sale was considered an act of spoliation and vilified as a surrender to the lure of francs and dollars: “the power of gold . . . the zeal of a wealthy, foreign amateur, a more sincere admirer than we of our national glories” had accomplished “this last attack against the precious monument.”⁶ In 1904, Fernando Palanques Ayén,

one of the most active voices against the sale, emphasized the Spanish government's culpability, stating that even against the “rights of the legitimate owners,” the government could have protected a work of art that “national love, more than anything, has had to perpetuate . . . because its salvation was not only an honor for this region, but for Spain as a community.”⁷

From Vélez Blanco, the patio was sent, via Cartagena and Marseille, to Paris, where it was purchased in 1910 by George Blumenthal. A wealthy, famous banker born in Frankfurt am Main in 1858, Blumenthal built his fortune in the United States through his strong working relationship with J. Pierpont Morgan. At the time of the patio's acquisition, Blumenthal and his wife, Florence, were assembling an immense collection of art treasures, most of them secured on the European market. The Blumenthals' acquisition of the marble elements of the patio from Vélez Blanco testifies to the couple's *au courant* tastes.

fig. 3 Mattie Edwards Hewitt. Vélez Blanco patio in the Blumenthal house, New York, 1928. Photograph. [Hewitt] 1928, pl. 10

fig. 4 Vélez Blanco patio in the Blumenthal house, New York, 1941. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, curatorial file for 41.190.482

Americans were paying increasing attention to Iberian art, a phenomenon that reoriented the purchases of important collectors such as William Randolph Hearst, Archer M. Huntington, Isabella Stewart Gardner, Henry Clay Frick, and Charles Deering.⁸

When conceiving contemporary enterprises like the Spanish patio at Fenway Court in Boston (planned by Gardner in 1908) or Palau de Maricel in Sitges (built by Deering between 1910 and 1916), it is not surprising that Blumenthal earmarked the Vélez Blanco marbles to furnish his new home on 70th Street and Park Avenue. Design of the house began in 1911, led by the prominent architectural firm Trowbridge and Livingston in collaboration with L. Alavoine & Co. and Arthur S. Vernay Inc. for the interior decoration.⁹ In the opulent mansion, the patio was located in the ample space of the central hall, where it imposingly organized the building's open multistoried interior (figs. 3, 4).¹⁰ Following the architects' design, the original marble components from Vélez Blanco were combined with additional modern elements, since not all parts of the patio had been removed from their original location in Spain, including a portion of the frieze with waterspouts in the form of gargoyles.¹¹ While the residence's facade was inspired by a severe neo-Renaissance style, the lavish central hall echoed the rich picturesque effects of the Spanish Colonial Revival, which was uncommon in New York's luxury homes.¹²

PLANS TO RECONSTRUCT THE VÉLEZ BLANCO PATIO AT THE MET

Blumenthal, who was president of The Met's Board of Trustees from 1934 until his death in 1941, bequeathed the Upper East Side mansion and its contents to the Museum. After carefully deliberating whether to develop the residence into a branch of The Met, as Blumenthal had requested, the Board decided that it would be more fiscally prudent to sell the ex-president's mansion.¹³ Blumenthal himself had contemplated this outcome and, in his pragmatism, even provided instructions for the sale.¹⁴ A comprehensive series of conversations and site visits beginning in autumn 1943 ensured that the home's important structural fittings, including the patio, were gathered, packed up, and safeguarded before the building was demolished to liquidate the plot of land.

The efforts were led by Francis H. Taylor, who had been appointed director of The Met in 1940, Horace H. F. Jayne, vice director, and Preston Remington, curator of the Department of Renaissance and Modern Art. An initial inventory, signed by Remington and dated September 17, 1943, notes among the other significant works of art under consideration: "1) the stonework of the patio, including all stone elements in the adjoining corridors and staircases which originally belonged to the patio . . . 2) the curved wood ceiling of the patio proper and of the galleries surrounding it . . . 3) the patio fountain, and any antique stone elements such



as portrait roundels, coats-of-arms, etc. incorporated in the patio and adjoining galleries, but not originally part of it.”¹⁵ The furniture and works of art not chosen by the Museum’s staff were entrusted to art dealers French & Company, to be sold on the international market.¹⁶

As incoming director, Taylor set an expansionist mandate. The future of the Blumenthal mansion and its collection was under consideration during the same time that the “new” Metropolitan Museum was being planned. The intention was to enlarge the Museum and bring coherence to the overall architectural appearance and internal layout of a complex of buildings that spanned more than seventy years and that had been designed and constructed in various styles by Calvert Vaux, Jacob Wrey Mould, Richard Morris Hunt, Richard Howland Hunt, and the firm McKim, Mead, and White (among others).¹⁷ The Met courted major gifts with the promise of new galleries. An impressive model of the project was placed on display in the Great Hall in 1945, when it seemed that Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney’s collection might come to the Museum if a wing were built to house it.¹⁸ This must have seemed a favorable moment to consider the fate of the Vélez Blanco patio, one of the most important and largest showpieces from Blumenthal’s vast bequest that, based on the consistency and quality of its works, distinguished itself as one of the notable additions to The Met’s collection in the history of the Museum.¹⁹

The inventory drawn up by Remington in September 1943 was shared at the beginning of 1944 with Benjamin W. Morris, the architect in charge of The Met’s expansion.²⁰ The firm’s youngest architects, Robert B. O’Connor and Aymar Embury II, were tasked with finding a way to accommodate “those built-in elements” considered to be of interest, among which was the patio. The architects defined the patio’s “architectural interest” in practical terms, determining that it should be “built into a court” as “a very helpful feature . . . open to the sky.” As such, the patio would provide “psychological relief,” and a “desirable and attractive oasis for the weary visitor.”²¹ Their proposal treated the patio as a form of distinguished decoration and ignored the work’s importance as an architectural monument in its own right and with its own history. It is no coincidence that in a letter from January 25, 1944, to Taylor, O’Connor was determined to discuss the patio’s destination “without arguing [its] archeological value.”²² His words leave no doubt as to the firm’s intent to display the patio as it had been in Blumenthal’s home, using it once again as a picturesque architectural backdrop.

The marble blocks were packed and transported to The Met in summer 1945 and were temporarily stored in the “court space west of the Boiler House.”²³ Between November 1945 and January 1946, the curators of the Department of Renaissance and Modern Art—first and foremost Preston Remington—were still gathering information about the construction of the patio in the Blumenthal house in order to facilitate its eventual reconstruction in the Museum. However, the plan for the renovation advocated by Taylor involved a fund-raising campaign in honor of the Museum’s 75th anniversary. When the campaign failed to secure the necessary funds, the director and the Trustees were forced to modify their initial aspirations. The building project, redeveloped between 1948 and 1950, became one of modernizing the preexisting wings and no longer included the creation of a new space for the installation of the Vélez Blanco patio.²⁴ As Taylor’s ideas about the future of The Met were being drastically scaled down, conceptions about the patio’s fate began to extend beyond the Museum, first with ideas related to its potential relocation in Washington, DC, and eventually in Cuba.

TOWARD THE MUSEO NACIONAL DE BELLAS ARTES, HAVANA

In a letter to Taylor dated July 9, 1948, from Harbeson, Hough, Livingston & Larson—an architectural firm based in Philadelphia—William Manger, assistant director of the Pan-American Union (PAU), inquired whether the patio might be available for installation in “one of the buildings in Washington of the Union,” most likely the administrative building that was under construction and recently assigned to the firm.²⁵ Significantly, the principal Organization of American States (OAS) headquarters on Constitution Avenue, inaugurated in 1910 and designed by Paul Cret and Albert Kelsey, included an internal courtyard (fig. 5) that clearly alluded to North American stereotypes of colonial architectural traditions in the Caribbean and South America.²⁶ The courtyard also paid symbolic tribute to the mission of the organization, which had been founded in 1890 to bridge the north and south of the continent in a network of cultural and commercial solidarity under the guiding influence of the United States.²⁷ The political and cultural benefits to be gained by the Pan-American Union’s initiative must have caught the attention of the Museum’s administration. Taylor’s response supplying the requested material and verifying the feasibility of the proposal was rapid. However, in less than a month, it became clear that the Pan-American Union’s proposal was not viable, due to

fig. 5 Paul Cret (French, 1876–1945) and Albert Kelsey (American, 1870–1950). Patio of the Pan-American Union Main Building, Washington, DC, 1910

fig. 6 Evelio Govantes (Cuban, 1886–1982) and Félix Cabarrocas (Cuban, 1887–1961), updated by Manuel Febles Valdés. *Projects for the Museo de Bellas Artes*, 1925–48/49

“limitations of both space and funds.”²⁸ The failed episode became an important precedent for considering the patio as a politically significant diplomatic gift to a nation located in the Southern Hemisphere.

The question of the patio’s fate was reopened when Taylor was invited to Cuba at the end of 1948 by Antonio Rodríguez Morey, a painter and important Havana intellectual. Born in Cádiz, Spain, in 1871, Morey moved at a young age with his family to Cuba and trained in the *Escuela de Pintura y Escultura de San Alejandro* in Havana. In 1912, after having visited Europe and sojourned in Rome during the 1890s, he was appointed a teacher at the school in which he had studied and became increasingly involved in the intellectual milieu of the Cuban capital. He was a key member of many institutions, from the *Academia Nacional de Artes y Letras* to the *Corporación de Bibliotecarios, Archiveros y Conservadores de Museos del Caribe*.²⁹ In 1918, Morey was appointed director of the *Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes*, inaugurated on April 28, 1913, and he held the post for almost fifty years. From this official position of cultural preeminence, Morey sought to realize his dream of providing Havana with an adequate building for the art collections of the *Museo Nacional*, which were then displayed at no. 108 Calle Aguilar in galleries considered indecorous and inappropriate.³⁰ Promises made by Ramón Grau San Martín, the outgoing president of the Republic, and Carlos Prío Socarrás of the *Partido Auténtico*, elected president in October 1948, offered Morey a new starting point.

When the project for a modern building again was proposed during these months, it was entrusted to Manuel Febles Valdés, former head of urbanism for the Grau San Martín government and minister of public works under Prío Socarrás. Febles Valdés intended to

update the project presented in 1925 by the architects Evelio Govantes and Félix Cabarrocas readapting the old *Mercado de Colón*, built between 1882 and 1884. This plan would have preserved the portico structure in the *Plaza del Polvorín* by transforming it into the ground level for a new second floor designed in a *mélange* of *Beaux-Arts* and *Deco* styles that conformed to architectural tendencies widespread in Havana at the time (fig. 6).³¹ Morey bolstered his contacts with foreign mediators, including Taylor, in order to augment the repertoire of works that would be displayed in the new structure.³² Not coincidentally, according to an article in the magazine *Carteles*, one of Morey’s collaborators had been sent to Paris to the meeting organized by *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)* between June 28 and July 3, 1948, and had presented Govantes and Cabarrocas’s design, measuring it against other international proposals for museums.³³

The extent to which the United States dedicated attention to Cuban art during those years cannot be

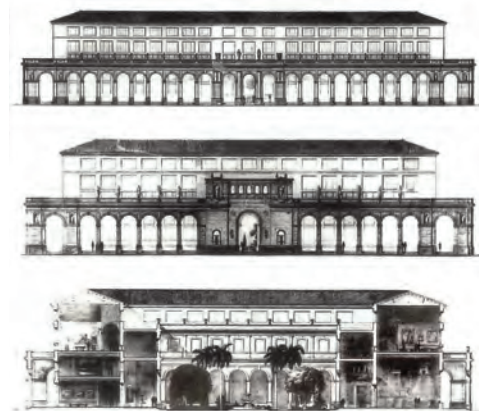




fig. 7 Caricatures from the newspaper *Información*, sent by assistants of Antonio Rodríguez Morey in Havana to Francis H. Taylor, March 1949. MMA Archives

overestimated.³⁴ The government's interest expressed a precise policy of cultural influence, ratified in 1933 by Franklin D. Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy, that supported a long-standing imperialist strategy with its roots in the 1898 victory of the United States in the Spanish-American War. An example of this policy at work is the exhibition "Modern Cuban Painters" that opened in March 1944 at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and was organized by Alfred H. Barr Jr. in collaboration with the Cuban intellectual and art critic José Gómez-Sicre following Barr's visit to the island in August 1942.³⁵ A reduced selection of the works presented in New York subsequently toured U.S. cities, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Port au Prince, Haiti. Similar political intentions animated the promotion of Cuban art by the PAU Visual Arts Unit, directed since 1946 by Gómez-Sicre.³⁶ In the period following World War II, the organization dedicated several exhibitions to South American and Caribbean artists such as Felipe Orlando, Cundo Bermúdez, and René Portocarrero. The program adhered to international trends of Modernism, and its preference for abstraction encouraged Gómez-Sicre to favor the Cuban *vanguardia* over Mexican muralism.³⁷

The dynamics of cultural imperialism led by the U.S. government and the PAU Visual Arts Unit under the label of pan-Americanism are also seen at work in the exhibition "32 Artistas de las Américas," presented in 1948 in Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Chile (renamed "33 Artistas" for the second leg of the tour in Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras in 1949).

The show merits attention because, for the first time, Gómez-Sicre developed a strategy anticipating the dynamics that would be set in motion by Taylor's offer of the Vélez Blanco patio to the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Havana. Under the aegis of the U.S. government and PAU, Gómez-Sicre's new strategy aimed at presenting South American and Caribbean artists in their home countries together with North American counterparts (in this case Stuart Davis, Arthur Dove, and Karl Zerbe). The new program was based on the concept of cultural importation rather than exportation and sought to connect native artists to sources of U.S. patronage. Loans were selected exclusively from U.S. collections (in particular MoMA). The show and the tour were supported by major multinational companies with South American interests, such as Grace Line and the United Fruit Company. The countries selected for the tour are also telling. Gómez-Sicre and the PAU targeted governments undergoing political consolidation, leaving aside established democracies such as Mexico or Brazil. The location for the Havana exhibition, which opened between August and September 1949, was strategically chosen. The Lyceum and Lawn Tennis Club was a prestigious cultural venue frequented by the capital's bourgeoisie who shared the platform of modernizing liberalism promoted by President Prío Socarrás and his pro-U.S. government.³⁸

Upon his arrival in Havana in January 1949, with The Met's plans in hand for Morey's consultation, Taylor participated in an informal conversation at the Lyceum Club. The event was sponsored by the Patronato Pro Museo Nacional, a foundation dedicated to raising the funds to build the new museum for the Cuban art collections.³⁹ Evidence of this meeting can be found in caricatures that appeared in the periodical *Información* and that were sent to Taylor by Morey's assistants in March (fig. 7). Some months later, Morey followed up on his discussion with Taylor by writing a cordial letter in which he firmly sought a donation "for the Museum, the structure of a courtyard, belonging to an old Spanish palace," that is, the patio of Vélez Blanco, an offer informally anticipated by his American colleague.⁴⁰ Granting the request would have fulfilled the distinct and shared needs of the directors and the institutions they represented. The Cuban art collections and the unbuilt National Museum would have been immeasurably enhanced with the addition of the Vélez Blanco patio. Donating the patio would have provided the solution to the Metropolitan Museum's inability to find adequate space for its installation in New York.⁴¹ Most importantly for both institutions, the gift symbolically would have reinforced the

strengthening political relationship between the United States and Cuba on the international stage.

The geopolitical background to Taylor's meeting with Morey and the resultant request for the patio was set in place in December 1948 when Cuban president Prío Socarrás was received in Washington, DC, by Harry S. Truman. His trip was intended to endorse Cuba's political allegiance to the American administration that reinforced American control over the island nation.⁴² That same month, the Cuban president signed the Rio Treaty, or Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, which gave cover to U.S. military intervention in the Southern Hemisphere.⁴³ In his October 10, 1948, message to the Congreso de la República, Prío Socarrás made reference to the future foreign policy of his new government. He stated his intention to fight against dictatorships and "on the side of democracy,"⁴⁴ a phrase interpreted by the officers of the U.S. Embassy in Havana as an unexpected pro-Washington, DC, statement in the very first days of his term of office,⁴⁵ as a declaration of "anti-communism," and as an expression of "active sympathy for those fighting 'dictatorial' regimes."⁴⁶

Plans for Havana's National Museum kept pace with these political events. In its May 1948 issue, *Carteles* featured the construction of the new modern building above the monumental arcades and central courtyard of the old Mercado de Colón. The design symbolically integrated the island's colonial heritage with the prestigious contemporary style associated with Havana's ambitious urban development.⁴⁷ According to *Arquitectura*, the journal of the Colegio de Arquitectos in Cuba, the plan incorporating the old Mercado was intended "to take advantage of the magnificent conditions of a tropical and classic building that the city had," especially enhancing its "beautiful patio with its gardens, an open-air museum where sculpture could find its own element, [a] Havana patio lined with arcades."⁴⁸

Including the marbles from Vélez Blanco in the structure in progress gained rapid support from the minister of education in the Prío Socarrás government, Aureliano Sánchez Arango. Following the logic of the museum's symbolism, which combined existing architectural traditions with the new, the patio's acquisition could even be deemed necessary. Already by 1947, *Carteles* had published an interview with Jesús Casagrán Safont, the sculptor assigned as project manager, who, under the presidency of Grau San Martín, had affirmed that the museum would need to function not only as the "engine and the center of the country's

cultural movement in its most specific aspect," but also as "the clearest and most vivid witness of our love for the sister nations of America."⁴⁹ In this context, the patio would have evoked Cuba's Spanish colonial past with its strength in form and tradition, according to a cultural perspective mirrored in other Latin American institutions (for example, the Museo de Artes Plásticas, Mexico City).⁵⁰ At the same time, the U.S. gift would have represented the northward shift of the continental axis and the interest of Washington, DC, in nations formerly under Spanish dominion.

These same themes underscored the exhibition "La pintura colonial en Cuba" that had been presented during spring 1950 in the Capitolio Nacional in Havana. The show, acclaimed by critics and a popular success, was linked to the rebirth of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes as a brand-new showcase for contemporary Cuban art, as well as for the venerable collections that represented the island's artistic and cultural heritage. The designer and architect Rafael Marquina stated: "One of the countless consequences of this great exhibition is a vigorous plea in favor of a national museum. The Patronato Pro Museo [among the organizers of the event] has been able to use a good argument in favor of this sake."⁵¹

Despite widespread consensus about the need for a renovated museum and the numerous public demonstrations in support of the building project, such as the one that took place in October 1949 in front of the presidential palace in Havana, construction was forced to cease in the late 1940s due to a chronic lack of funds.⁵² Consequently, negotiations with The Met came to a halt. All the same, the request for the Vélez Blanco patio was not forgotten. Cuban authorities proposed it again during the subsequent phase of the museum's construction in the 1950s, which was very different from that of the previous decade. In 1949–50, when Alfonso Rodríguez Pichardo assumed leadership as the *arquitecto notable* of the Ministry for Public Works, the building project, supported with fresh resources, radically changed direction.⁵³ Pichardo drafted a completely new, ambitious design that was inspired by the functional lexicon of the Modernist movement, an architectural language that was changing the face of Havana. Buildings like the Cabaret Tropicana by Max Borges Jr. and the U.S. Embassy by Harrison & Abramovitz were giving Havana a so-called international appearance modeled after U.S. southern cities,⁵⁴ while many other important U.S. firms and prominent architects recently settled in North America, such as Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, also were active in the city.⁵⁵

fig. 8 Photograph showing the proposed location for the Vélez Blanco patio for the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, 1950s (view from first floor). Enclosed in the letter from José A. Mendigutía to Francis H. Taylor, June 6, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives

fig. 9 Photograph showing the proposed location for the Vélez Blanco patio for the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, 1950s (view from second floor). Enclosed in the letter from José A. Mendigutía to Francis H. Taylor, June 6, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives

Pichardo was immediately sent to New York with an introduction by Morey to Taylor, dated October 11, 1950, in order to study “the lighting of the rooms” of The Met.⁵⁶ The museum’s construction in Havana was accelerated, so that on the night of December 11, 1951, the buildings of the Mercado de Colón, which had undergone extensive consolidation, were demolished without any warning. The destruction led to outrage on the part of the local intelligentsia, in particular those of the journal *Arquitectura*.⁵⁷ The journal spearheaded a significant media campaign and gave space to controversial pieces like a memorable article by José María Bens Arrarte that openly opposed the government’s actions.⁵⁸ Arrarte, an esteemed professional and member of the Academia Nacional de Artes y Letras, emphasized that when the new project was originally drafted for the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, institutions with notable international prestige such as the Academia had been consulted neither by the ministry nor by Pichardo, who in those years was scorned by the Cuban association of professional architects.⁵⁹

The Vélez Blanco patio reentered the newly embittered debate surrounding the construction of the museum. Pichardo in the weeks following his visit to New York received assurances that The Met was seriously considering the matter.⁶⁰ At the same time, however, he felt obliged to remind Taylor of the extent to which the Ministry for Public Works was pressing to obtain a masterpiece “about which a great propaganda

has been made in Cuba, as a valuable donation by the City of New York.”⁶¹ On February 8, 1952, Cuban president Prío Socarrás sought out Mayor Vincent R. Impellitteri to put pressure on The Met’s Board of Trustees.⁶² But that March, Cuba was rocked by the coup d’état led by Fulgencio Batista, who was keen for U.S. support to establish a military dictatorship.⁶³ On April 28, Pichardo wrote to Taylor with impeccable aplomb: “unfortunately, unpredicted circumstances prevented our plans.”⁶⁴

The Met’s governance had been concerned about the negotiations prior to the coup d’état. A memorandum of March 17, 1952, indicates that Taylor did not want to address the Cuban matter with the Board that day, noting as the justification the “Political situation in Cuba!!”⁶⁵ To reassure his New York associates that construction would continue, Pichardo, in his April 28 letter alluding to the coup, promised photographs charting the progress of the patio’s intended site. These images were sent to The Met in June by the newly elected minister of public works, José A. Mendigutía, to demonstrate how an “appropriate and covered place, according to the structure and dimensions” of the patio, was being built (figs. 8, 9).⁶⁶ The patio’s intended location is significant in itself: the photos apparently show the monumental vestibule of the museum, later decorated with a mosaic by Enrique Caravia symbolizing the history of global civilization. From this central position, the patio

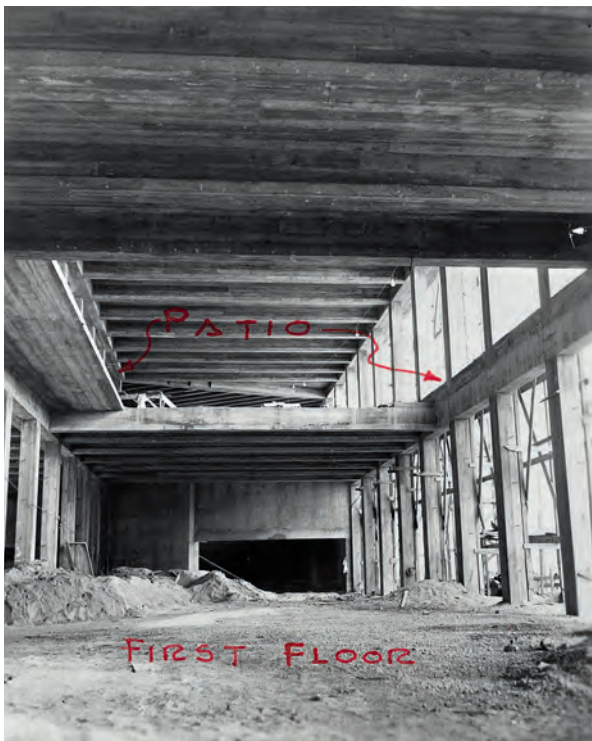




fig. 10 Alfonso Rodríguez Pichardo (Cuban, 1918–1980). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1950–54, Havana, Trocadero. Photograph, 1950–54. Archivo Centro de Información, MNBA

fig. 11 Alfonso Rodríguez Pichardo. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1950–54, Havana, Trocadero. View of the inner patio. Photograph, 1954. Archivo Centro de Información, MNBA

would have welcomed visitors, introduced them to the national collections housed in the museum, and served as a monumental threshold to the history of the whole island.

The inauguration of the new building was planned for the opening of the second *Bienal Hispanoamericana de Arte* in May 1954. Museum galleries were intended to display works largely from Francoist Spain, a controversial choice for the Cuban intelligentsia.⁶⁷ In the meantime, various Cuban artists such as Rita Longa, Juan José Sicre, and Enrique Caravia also had been commissioned to create permanent works of art in the modern style to adorn the museum.⁶⁸ Finally, near the colonial center of the city, the compact Modernist building (fig. 10) would have appeared divorced from the surrounding traditional architecture. Although the project was appreciated by some intellectuals, it mainly provoked widespread hostility.⁶⁹ Tellingly, even though the museum won the main prize in architecture at the *Bienal*, Pichardo failed to receive the award for the best building of 1954 from the local *Colegio de Arquitectos*.⁷⁰

Pichardo defended his design. In a manuscript kept in the archives of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, he argued that “Cuban architectural colonial tradition” had been aligned to the new building’s progressive structure. In his peroration, the architect specifically mentioned “the large central patio as well as the high struts and the firm cubic appearance . . . [that are] characteristic of the Creole architecture”⁷¹ (fig. 11). By linking the style of the central modern courtyard to the Creole tradition, Pichardo responded to the public *lamentatio* about the loss of the colonial market and justified the insertion of his Modernist building into the fabric of the old city. His comments also demonstrate the persistence of the earlier plan’s architectural symbolism. In Pichardo’s idea, the central patio on the museum’s ground floor, which had been adorned by an Ernesto Navarro frieze, would have substituted for the old Mercado’s arcaded courtyard. The whole architectural design and selection of permanent artistic works created to decorate the new building similarly would have evoked Cuba’s historical circle.⁷²

The motif of a courtyard, surrounded by arcades or galleries, had assumed a particular value in the Cuban Modernist tradition that is consistent with the claims, assertions, and theoretical arguments that Pichardo raised in defense of his design. Civil and residential structures built between the late 1930s and 1950s such as the Eutimio Falla Bonet House by Eugenio Batista, completed in 1939; the Isabel and Olga Pérez Farfante residence by Frank Martínez and the Félix Carvajal

House by Mario Romanach, both raised about 1955; and the famous Eugenio Leal House, built in 1957, all include a central arcaded courtyard. The design not only provided a practical getaway from the tropical climate, but also a relevant traditional theme for twentieth-century reinterpretations.⁷³

As a strong, metaphorical symbol of Cuba's historical, "Spanish" past, the patio of Vélez Blanco might also have alluded to the controversy among avant-garde groups of the *habanera* scene during the 1940s. In general, the faction gathered around the Galería del Prado (led by Gómez-Sicre since 1942) favored the broad concept of pan-Americanism, while the editorial staff of the magazine *Orígenes* supported the European Modernist movement (under the guidance of the poet and novelist José Lezama Lima). However, at a time when the island was renegotiating its own international position, each faction agreed on the paramount importance of the unique cultural genesis of the Cuban spirit (*cubanía*). The gift of the patio by the United States to the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes could have symbolically mediated this intellectual rift by reinserting a shared heritage in the triumphant line of modernity.⁷⁴

Subsequently, the pressures from Cuba on Taylor and the Board at The Met continued well into 1952. However, toward the end of the year, negotiations met unexpected resistance from certain trustees who, adhering to a more restrictive interpretation of Blumenthal's will, were determined to keep the marbles in the United States.⁷⁵ Matters abruptly were closed with a letter of December 4, 1952, from the Secretary of the Board Dudley T. Easby Jr. to the minister of public works of Havana that stated the Board would not concede the patio.⁷⁶ The decision, reached at a meeting on November 17, 1952, is summarized in Roland L. Redmond's message of the following day to the powerful Robert Moses, Mayor Impellitteri's right-hand man:

The Trustees concluded that there was no practical chance to incorporate the patio in the [Met] Museum's buildings. They likewise felt that it should not be stored indefinitely. Therefore they directed the staff to see whether an offer for the patio could be secured from some other public institution where it can be shown safely and appropriately. . . . The Board was strongly in favor of retaining the patio in the United States and the director was asked to terminate any negotiations with the museum in Havana, Cuba.⁷⁷

Such tension reflects deeper conflict in the Museum's executive body, specifically Taylor and his management.⁷⁸ From the documents, Easby emerges as a

mediator between those who were opposed to giving the patio to Havana and Taylor and president Roland L. Redmond, who favored the gift. The Board's dissent, however, was so solid and decisive that in the end Cuba was denied the patio.

Another layer of complexity had been added to the negotiations during the previous summer. While discussions with the Cuban authorities were still ongoing, New York's Parks Department (traditionally represented on the Board) had turned to Redmond at the behest of Moses.⁷⁹ Moses had suggested that efforts to donate the Vélez Blanco patio be redirected toward Puerto Rico, "the most Spanish part of the Caribbean,"⁸⁰ adding:

Moreover, the suggestion I made is one which would attract widespread favorable comment. Puerto Rico . . . is part of the United States. It has genuinely Spanish traditions. . . . The Puerto Ricans are enormously sensitive about things of this kind and their gratitude for recognition is out of all proportions to the dollar value of the gesture. A gift of this kind might attract great attention throughout the entire Spanish speaking world south of us. We do a great deal of talking about spreading culture, education in the arts, sharing our treasures, and about happier hemisphere relations. Here is an opportunity to do something about it.⁸¹

In the numerous messages between Moses, Redmond, and the administration, the commissioner did not seem to consider the possibility of a refusal. Instead, confident about being supported, he went so far as to indicate possible locations such as Fort El Morro in San Juan.⁸² Impellitteri signed an endorsement that was sent to Redmond in October of that year.⁸³ However, during the November meeting the Board decided to turn down even this proposal, once again appealing to a restrictive interpretation of Blumenthal's will. Moses's sharp reply leaves no doubt about the political importance he attributed to the entire enterprise, and it underscores once again the diplomatic relevance of the negotiations: "Let me express my astonishment at the belated information furnished us . . . on the suggested gift of the Blumenthal patio. I am not going to argue a question of law. . . . The matter seems to me to be strictly one of policy."⁸⁴

FINAL INSTALLATION AT THE MET

The Vélez Blanco patio thus remained at The Met. After having been for such a long time at the center of political attention, it would find a place in the history of art. In the second half of the 1950s, Olga Raggio, assistant curator in the Department of Renaissance and

Modern Art, began the archival and on-site research in Spain that would lead to her seminal *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* article on the patio's history that guided its subsequent reconstruction.⁸⁵ Raggio's research was initiated for pragmatic rather than for purely scholarly reasons. By the mid-1950s a location for the patio in The Met was being planned. How much this decision to display the architectural monument had been based on a desire to end the risk of future high-level diplomatic claims for the work remains an open question.

The space required to present the Vélez Blanco patio inside The Met's Fifth Avenue building was integrated into the restoration plans entrusted to the architectural firm Brown, Lawford and Forbes in January 1954. The project focused on providing a new vision for the open areas between the wings of the old building.⁸⁶ The gallery created for the patio's display was intended to serve as the main entrance to the new library (inaugurated in January 1965). According to a brochure published during the patio's reconstruction, the space was also envisioned to be a venue for concerts and gatherings, and a pleasant, restful area that included a fountain, benches, and flourishing vegetation.⁸⁷ The construction of the Vélez Blanco patio at The Met depended on Raggio's research, but it was never intended or understood to be an accurate reconstruction of the original patio. It even was known at the time as the "Blumenthal courtyard," a name that echoes its more recent history as a central gathering space in a New York mansion.⁸⁸

The rebuilding of the patio at The Met was the fruit of thoughtful compromise. The magnificent marble elements originally had been designed to mask the asymmetrical plan of the existing courtyard in the sixteenth-century Spanish Castle of Vélez Blanco.⁸⁹

At The Met, adjustments were made to accommodate the architectural fragments into the regular plan of a contemporary building. Efforts also were made to ensure the patio's completeness. The Met attempted to acquire portions of the castle that had stayed in situ (in particular the missing pieces of the upper cornice).⁹⁰ That the request—destined to fail with the ministerial bodies in Madrid—was made at all was likely possible because of the recent reintegration of Francoist Spain with the international community (ending with the accession of Spain to the United Nations in 1955).

Contemporary documents about the reconstruction provide accounts of mediated integrations and cautious substitutions, along with well-considered decisions about the addition of complementary elements such as the ceiling and the flooring. The aim was to carefully insert the patio into the space conceived to host it.⁹¹ Today it is difficult to evaluate the scale of the operations entrusted to the architects.⁹² However, visual evidence of the effort placed on rethinking the patio inside a museum while maintaining the work's artistic integrity can be found in an illustration included in the brochure. Here, the firm Brown, Lawford and Forbes demonstrates the adaptability of the patio to the covered courtyard in front of the library (fig. 12).

The report sent by Raggio to Met director James J. Rorimer on June 8, 1960, explains: "our installation project would seem to be more correctly described as a re-adaptation of the Vélez architectural elements rather than as a strict architectural reconstruction. . . . Seen as a gallery, simply suggestive of a Spanish Renaissance *Patio*, the Museum's installation project appears as a harmonious and attractive area."⁹³ The inclusion of the Vélez Blanco patio in the Museum changed the mid-twentieth-century perception of the work from a geopolitical Cold War game piece to a grand element in The



fig. 12 Drawing by Brown, Lawford and Forbes for the installation of the Blumenthal Patio. Metropolitan Museum [1962], unpaginated

Met’s encyclopedic project. The patio’s “Spanishness,” once removed from current political events, slowly came to be appreciated in the context of the wider history of art. Embraced within the Museum’s canon, it became a rich subject for the speculations and inquiries of scholars. Nevertheless its complex provenance—spread across various continents through three-quarters of the twentieth century—raises for modern viewers important questions around the shifting values attributed to works of art by different epochs and about different political and cultural perspectives that can affect the gaze of a whole community of viewers.

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NOTES

- 1 As quoted in Kent 2019, 22. Beals 1933.
- 2 See, for example, Martínez 1994, especially 50–94.
- 3 Sánchez Ramos 2007, 36–46.
- 4 Ruiz García 1999, 43–62; Sánchez Ramos 2007, 44–53, 57–60.
- 5 Lentisco Puche and Roth 2009, 8–29.
- 6 Palanques Ayén 1904a.
- 7 Palanques Ayén 1904b. See also Lentisco Puche 1999, 98–104.
- 8 See Merino de Cáceres and Martínez Ruiz 2012; Reist and Colomer 2012; Jiménez-Blanco 2017; and Kagan 2019. On the sale of the patio, see Mozzati 2019; Mozzati 2020a; and Mozzati 2020b.
- 9 See Patterson 1930; Seligman 1961, 142–45; Kathrens 2005, 294–304; and Cleland 2015, 150, 158n15. On the installation of the patio in the house, see Hietikko 2017 and Mozzati 2020b.
- 10 For details about the construction, see Mozzati 2019; for photographs, see Hewitt 1928.
- 11 Motos Díaz 2014; see also Mozzati 2021.
- 12 Gebhard 1967.
- 13 See “Principal and Income Transactions Relating to the Sale of the Blumenthal Property at 50 East 70th Street, Bequeathed to the Museum under the Will of George Blumenthal,” memorandum by J. Kenneth Loughry to Francis H. Taylor, March 24, 1945, Office of the Secretary, Correspondence Files, 1870–1950, Blumenthal George, Bequest – Patio (and Pipe Organ) 1952, 1954, 1963–64 (hereafter cited as Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence), MMA Archives.
- 14 Blumenthal’s will also specified which parts of his house should be transferred to the Museum; see the memorandum to the Board of Trustees, November 1, 1952, Francis H. Taylor Records, National Museum (Cuba), Secretary’s File, 1948–53, MMA Archives. See also the memorandum by Loughry to Taylor, March 24, 1945, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1952, 1954, 1963–64, MMA Archives.
- 15 See, with further documentation, Preston Remington, Inventory, September 17, 1943, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives. On the ceiling, see Motos Díaz 2018, 204–5.
- 16 See letters from L. Harrison to Taylor, May 15, 1944, and Harrison to John J. Wallace and Preston Remington, April 5, 1945; Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives. On this sale, see Motos Díaz 2018, 204–5.
- 17 Heckscher 1995, 30–53.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 59–63.
- 19 Taylor 1941, 193, 195–98.
- 20 Memorandum signed by Remington, September 17, 1943, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 21 O’Connor to Taylor, January 25, 1944, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 See letter to John J. Wallace, February 15, 1945; see also Harrison to Wallace and Remington, April 5, 1945; both Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 24 Heckscher 1995, 62–63.
- 25 Harbeson, Hough, Livingston & Larson, Architects, to Taylor, July 9, 1948, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 26 White 1973.
- 27 For a useful summary of the relations between the United States and the Caribbean, see Randall 1997, 51–83.
- 28 Harbeson, Hough, Livingston & Larson, Architects, to John Goldsmith Phillips, July 19, 1948, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 29 See Matamoros and Rippe Moro 2001, 10; and Matamoros 2014, 27–28.
- 30 See Museo Nacional de Cuba 1955, s.v. “Palacio de Bellas Artes – El Museo Nacional – Habana”; Museo Nacional de Cuba 1978, 6–7; Matamoros and Rippe Moro 2001, 9–11; Rippe 2001, 11–14; Linares Ferrera 2003, 32–34; Laguna Enrique 2013, 65–211; Matamoros 2014, 27–29; and Alonso González 2016, 19–33.
- 31 Linares Ferrera 2003, 40–41. On Febles Valdés’s activity as “director de urbanismo,” see *Arquitectura* 1948 and Linares Ferrera 2003, 34–37.
- 32 Morey to Taylor, October 19, 1948, Francis H. Taylor Records, National Museum (Cuba), Secretary’s File, 1948–53, MMA Archives.
- 33 Maribona 1948, 14–15.
- 34 See Smith 1960; Franklin 1997, 1–17; Morales Domínguez and Prevost 2008, 21–35.

- 35 Barr 1944. See Florio 2009a and 2009b. See also McEwen 2016, 120–21.
- 36 Fox 2013, 3–4.
- 37 See Wellen 2012. See also McEwen 2016, 120–21.
- 38 Fox 2013, 116–22.
- 39 On the Lyceum and Lawn Tennis Club, see McEwen 2016, 63, 68–78. On the Patronato Pro Museo Nacional, founded in 1926, see Rippe 2001, 14–15; Matamoros 2014, 28–29; and Alonso González 2016, 49–58.
- 40 Morey to Taylor, August 22, 1949, Francis H. Taylor Records, National Museum (Cuba), Secretary's File, 1948–53, MMA Archives.
- 41 The deaccession had already been discussed in a letter from Taylor to William H. Parker, Harbeson, Hough, Livingston & Larson, July 12, 1948, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 42 Morales Domínguez and Prevost 2008, 34.
- 43 Franklin 1997, 15.
- 44 “Cuba ha tomado posición en el complejo panorama mundial situándose con toda entereza junto a la democracia y frente a las dictaduras de todo tipo . . .” Prío Socarrás 1948, 4.
- 45 Office Memorandum from Mr. Mackay to Mr. Price, Mr. Walker, Mr. Woodward, October 28, 1948, Cuba Internal and Foreign Affairs, Confidential US State Department Central Files (hereafter cited as CUSSDCF), <https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/embassy/R7-Memo-10-28-1948.pdf>.
- 46 Office Memorandum from Mr. Mackay to Mr. Walker, Mr. Woodward, Mr. Daniels, September 9, 1948, Cuba Internal and Foreign Affairs, CUSSDCF (<https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/embassy/R6-Memo-9-9-1948.pdf>); see also US Embassy, Despatch 810, October 1, 1948, Cuba Internal and Foreign Affairs, CUSSDCF (<https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/embassy/R6-810-10-1-1948.pdf>).
- 47 *Carteles* 1948, 42–43. For the building works on the Mercado de Colón, see Linares Ferrera 2003, 38–39.
- 48 Bens Arrarte 1951, 540–42.
- 49 De Pozadelas 1947, 20–21.
- 50 Garduño 2018.
- 51 Marquina 1950. See also Maribona 1950 and Pogolotti 1950.
- 52 Alonso González 2016, 54–55. *Carteles* (30, no. 40 [October 2, 1949]: 64) anticipates the programmatic text written for the event.
- 53 Arroyo 1956, 4.
- 54 Rodríguez 1998, 192–205.
- 55 *Ibid.*, 236–67.
- 56 Morey to Taylor, October 11, 1950, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 57 Linares Ferrera 2003, 40–42.
- 58 Bens Arrarte 1951; see also Martí del Castillo 1952.
- 59 See note 71 below.
- 60 John Goldsmith Phillips to Pichardo, January 19, 1951, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 61 Pichardo to Taylor, April 28, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 62 Prío Socarrás to Impellitteri, February 8, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 63 On the coup d'état of Batista and his relations with the U.S. administration, see Cirules 2015, 74–88.
- 64 Pichardo to Taylor, April 28, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 65 Memorandum, March 17, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 66 Mendigutía to Taylor, June 6, 1952; Raúl Hermida Antorcha to Taylor, June 24, 1952; both Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 67 McEwen 2016, 79–81, 98–102.
- 68 Linares Ferrera 2003, 50–53. See also Caravia 1954, 403–8.
- 69 Carpentier 1993, 213–14. For examples of critical articles, see Jorge Mañach's “Un monumento a la telaraña” (1955) and Carmelo González' “Árbol que nace torcido” (1955); reprinted in Merino Acosta 2015, 2:353–55, 379–81.
- 70 Del Castillo 1954, 117. Pichardo, on the basis of this success, would have traveled to Europe to “study the different techniques of museographic installation”; *Goya* 1954, 126. *Arquitectura* 1955, 7–13. Significantly, Pichardo is not highlighted by the magazine *Arquitectura* in the commentary describing the Cuban architecture exhibition that opened in New York on October 5, 1954; see *Arquitectura* 1954.
- 71 “la tradición cubana colonial”; “el gran patio central así como los altos puntales y la firme apariencia cúbica . . . han sido . . . características . . . de la arquitectura criolla”; quoted by Linares Ferrera 2003, 44–46.
- 72 On the ideological project translated by the architectural structure of the museum, see Elliott 2018.
- 73 Rodríguez 1998, 240–41, 253–56, 279–83, 302–3.
- 74 Anreus 2011.
- 75 Their resistance was strengthened following a \$10,000 cost to transfer the crates to storage space in the Museum's tunnels; see letter from Taylor to Aureliano Sánchez Arango, February 13, 1952; letter from Taylor to Impellitteri, March 10, 1952; letter from Dudley T. Easby Jr. to Mendigutía, June 20, 1952; and the memorandum to Easby, October 29, 1952; all Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 76 Easby to Mendigutía, December 4, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 77 Letter from Redmond to Moses, November 18, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives. For more on Moses, see Caro 1974. On the mandate of Impellitteri, see LaGumina 1992. Interestingly, during this negotiation, the Board turned to the opinion of some merchants to establish the commercial value of the work (certainly to use this data against Taylor's proposal): the MMA archives still retain a letter by Mitchell Samuels of French & Company Inc. (“in view of its size and the difficulty of placing such a large object, I would place its value at \$ 50,000.00 to \$ 60,000.00 as an appraisal”) and one by Leslie A. Hyam, vice president of the Parke-Bernet Galleries (“there is no existing market for a monument of this size and type”); see Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 78 Tomkins 1989, 265–313.
- 79 See memorandum recording a message from Francis Cormier to Moses, July 31, 1952; memorandum recording a message from Moses to Cormier, August 1, 1952; memorandum recording a message from Cormier to Moses, August 8, 1952; letter from Albert T. Gardner to Cormier, August 14, 1952; memorandums by Gardner to Easby, August 28, 1952, and September 15, 1952; all Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 80 Letter from Moses to Redmond, September 19, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 81 Moses to Redmond, September 30, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.

- 82 Letter recording a message from Moses to Cormier, August 1, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 83 See letter on headed paper “City of New York – Office of the Mayor” from Impellitteri to Redmond, October 17, 1952; see also letter from Redmond to Impellitteri, October 20, 1952; both Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 84 Moses to Redmond, October 29, 1952, Blumenthal Bequest, correspondence, 1942–46, 1948–51, MMA Archives.
- 85 Raggio 1964. See Mozzati 2021.
- 86 Heckscher 1995, 64–65.
- 87 See Metropolitan Museum [1962]. Documents in the curatorial files of the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts (ESDA) attest that the reconstruction of the patio started to be planned at the beginning of 1958, involving Olga Raggio (Blumenthal – installation-photos/notes/correspondence; ESDA Curatorial Files, 41.190.482).
- 88 Canaday 1964, 106–7.
- 89 Raggio 1964, 144, fig. 4.
- 90 Motos Díaz 2014, 51–73; see also Mozzati 2021.
- 91 See, for example, Joseph V. Noble Records, Architecture, Blumenthal patio 1963–1965: punch list, rubber stamp: September 1964, MMA Archives.
- 92 See memorandum to J. Kenneth Loughry, Arthur F. Klein, May 10, 1963, and letter from Loughry to Brown, Lawford and Forbes, March 18, 1963; both Office of the Secretary, Subject Files, Building – Reconstruction, 1963–1964, MMA Archives. Documents in The Met Archives show that during the reconstruction the original structure of the patio was integrated with new elements.
- 93 Report by Raggio to Rorimer, June 8, 1960, Blumenthal – installation-photos/notes/correspondence, ESDA Curatorial Files, 41.190.482.

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Max Hollein

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RESEARCH NOTE

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