

A photograph of a room's interior. In the center is a dark-stained wooden door with a six-panel design, set within a matching wooden frame. Above the door hangs a circular, fan-shaped woven object. To the left of the door, a framed picture hangs on the wall. Below it, a colorful, patterned decorative object sits on the floor. Next to it are two umbrellas and a woven basket containing more baskets. To the right of the door, another woven basket is visible. The walls are a light, neutral color.

# A Photographic Investigation:

## César Manrique's Intervention on the Overdevelopment of Lanzarote



Author's own (2023) Tahíche House - Inside a Lava Bubble 1.

To what extent has César Manrique achieved success in his architectural interventions aimed at preserving the natural and cultural identity of Lanzarote and establishing a sustainable tourism model?

This thesis explores how the artistic influence of César Manrique ultimately shaped the entire architectural, cultural, and touristic landscape of Lanzarote. The analysis of the original photographic archive reveals that through Manrique's art and architectural contributions (such as the creation of the CACTs) he was able to increase environmental and cultural awareness by celebrating the island's unique features and heritage. This in turn aided in the formation of a sustainable tourism model.

This thesis also stands as a testament to the importance of collaboration between designers and policy makers and, when coupled with the photographic archive, serves as an accessible reference for how a sustainable tourism model can be achieved through sensitive and thoughtful design.


*Authors own (2023) Material Composition Detail.*



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#### **Statement of Own Work**

This dissertation was completed as part of BA (Hons) Interior Architecture at the University of the West of England, Bristol. I declare that this work is my own and where the work of others is used or drawn on, it is attributed to the relevant source.



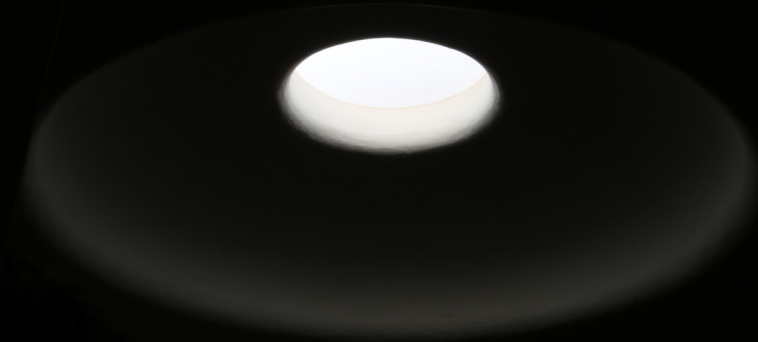
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#### **Word Count**

5481 (introduction to conclusion, excluding titles and annotations)







Authors own (2023) Haria House Guest Bedroom.

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Acronyms	11
Introduction	14
Literature Review	17
Methodology	31
<b>Part 1: Manrique's Vision / Synergy</b>	<b>39</b>
Themes: use of nature, organic, incorporating instead of destroying, materiality	
<b>Part 2: The Legacy / Heritage</b>	<b>59</b>
Themes: tradition, materiality, architectural style, colour, planning	
<b>Part 3: The Architectural Landscape / Sustaining Paradise</b>	<b>75</b>
Themes: comparative, archival, historical, progress, development, tourism	
Conclusion	87
Bibliography	93
List of Figures	99
Appendix	100





## Acronyms

CACT- Centres of Art, Culture and Tourism

PIOT- Plan Insular de Ordenación del Territorio

UWE – University of the West of England





Authors own (2023) Jameos del Agua Mirrors.

## Introduction

Between 1966 and 1992, the architect and artist César Manrique had an extraordinarily profound effect on the development of Lanzarote. One of the key influential factors was his own aesthetic ideal of 'Art-Nature/Nature-Art' (Pezzi, 2013) which he implemented for the acquisition of environmental awareness within his community, through art. It is paramount to recognise that humans are by far the most powerful cause of change on the planet. Our actions fundamentally reshape the very landscape of the earth, altering the patterns and rhythms, gouging, and raising the terrain. Based on the premise that land should be left no worse than an architect finds it (Wells, 1991) it seems ever more important to delve into the concept of creating



architecture that is symbiotic with nature instead of replicatory. César Manrique's compositions reflect this, with a calm vision and ability to work with the landscape instead of against it. From the 60s onwards, Manrique assisted the Cabildo de Lanzarote (the island government) in the creation of a network of publicly owned spaces in which natural and cultural values were central, *Centres of Art, Culture and Tourism* (also known as CACT). The primary purpose of these centres was to nurture a sense of cultural pride and to encourage the arrival of visitors from the newly emerging tourism industry, while additionally improving the rough socio-economic condition of the island (Ferrer Peñate, 2019). Significantly, this concept encompasses the modern requirement of an emigration to a more environmentally conscious and culturally sensitive practice within architecture and the tourism industry. Lanzarote has become an outstanding example of a sustainable tourist destination (Salvi, 2021) due to this. The intention of this thesis is to aid in highlighting the relevance of this legacy and create an example of how to safeguard for the future by learning how to respect what

must be protected (Sabaté Bel *et al.*, 2015). This dissertation will investigate, through an original photographic archive, how César Manrique protected against the excesses of mass tourism in Lanzarote by taking a look at some of these cultural centres. It will also explore the general architectural landscape and examine the in-situ application of Manrique's ideals. The original photographic archive will act as a reference to be viewed alongside its accompanying analysis.



Authors own (2023) Tahiche House - Above the Lava Bubble.



Authors own (2023) Haria House, Manrique's Studio.



Authors own (2023) Development in Arrecife.

# Literature Review

To first set this dissertation in context and to understand its purpose a selection of academic works has been consulted.

## The Dangers of Overdevelopment:

Nestled in the Canary Islands, Lanzarote boasts pristine beaches, rich cultural heritage, and a dramatic volcanic landscape- described by Houellebecq (2004) as a 'bizarre lunar landscape' in the fictional book *Lanzarote*. If it is considered that tourists choose a place based on the 'unique image of a destination' (Qu *et al.*, 2011), and the fact that UNESCO (2017) designated the island as a Biosphere Reserve in 1993 for its unique ecological

characteristics, it was perhaps understandable to foreshadow the struggle that the extraordinary island would endure during the late 20th century between economic growth and authenticity.

The battle with overdevelopment and the tourism industry has been a well-documented one throughout the Mediterranean and serves as an anecdote to the dangers.

The Mediterranean has been a long-standing centre of tourist curiosity since Antiquity, writes Gordon (2003). According to the World Tourism Organisation (2003), the destinations of Italy, Greece, Portugal, and Spain alone account for 29% of international tourist arrivals. It therefore seems unavoidable that tourism development would take place in an 'extremely dynamic and competitive environment', as described by Pechlaner and Tretter (2013). According to Enright and Newton (2004), the relative competitiveness of tourism destinations in the world market is directly linked to their success. However, this competitive

nature has also perhaps been a catalyst for the rampant overdevelopment of vulnerable spaces. Gaviria (1974) highlights the political element of this practice by referring to it as 'Neocolonialism'. He goes on to say that the change has been characterised by extensive urban development, dominated by larger hotels, and standardised apartments. Bianchi (2004) also notes that the emphasis has shifted increasingly towards the construction of cheap apartment complexes, in order to reduce costs and keep up with the rapidly increasing demand.

The damage of allowing private greed to solely dictate the tourism industry is emphasised by Bartolozzi (2023), who documents how the erosion of local cultures and traditions becomes inevitable. The author explores how the commercialisation of culture often only captures the superficial, due to misunderstanding the deeper nuances and values, as well as exacerbating existing socioeconomic disparities and lessening local empowerment. In the book *Spain*

*Is (Still) Different*, Afinoguénova and Martí-Olivella (2008) pose the idea that tourism tends to commodify abstract configurations, natural phenomena, and that which makes a destination unique. Dragstedt (1976) defines commodities as things which can be exchanged and consumed to satisfy human needs. When this angle is considered, the commodification and monetisation of that which is also an integral part a community's culture- climate, landscape, history, identity – it becomes clearly understood how tourism can facade as a thin veil for Marxian theory exploitative capitalism.

#### **Benefits of Sustainable Tourism:**

On the other hand, it cannot simply be said that all tourism and development is negative. Boisevain (1992) states, in the book *Revitalizing European Rituals*, that one of the most striking characteristics of tourism is the way it promotes self-awareness, pride, self-confidence, and solidarity among those being visited. Belisle and Hoy (1980) have documented, through case study, that tourism leads to a set of improvements in community

infrastructure and public facilities, as well as increased employment opportunities, income generation, tax revenue, and overall standard of living (Liu and Var, 1986). These studies accentuate the necessity for a careful balance between the two extremities of irresponsible overdevelopment and complete neglect of the tourism industry. As is written by Streimikiene *et al.* (2020), sustainable tourism development should '[increase] consciousness under issues of sustainability, and [propagate] practices of sustainable tourism' in both the role of the visitor and the resident.

#### **Environmental Effects:**

The environmental impacts of development must also be considered. As Sunlu (2003) writes, many of the impacts are linked with the construction of general infrastructure. This includes the land needed for accommodation, traffic infrastructure (airports, railways, roads, ports, and marinas), and golf courses (Gössling, 2002). While requisite to support an influx of tourists, an unavoidable consequence is destruction of the local environment and



and natural resources – this must therefore be controlled and carefully managed to avoid over exhaustion. Buckley (2011) concludes that government regulation is the most effective method of control.

### **The Efforts of César Manrique:**

Lanzarote is possibly the region that has dealt with the tourism industry the most uniquely. César Manrique’s artistic work was a great contribution to that effect. Born in 1919, and a native to Lanzarote, Manrique was an artist and architect who is wholly associated with the development of the island- in particular with the intervention on overexpansion from the beginning of the 60s up until his death in a car crash on the island in 1992 (Zamora Cabrera, 2014). Manrique once wrote to a friend ‘man in New York is like a rat’ (Wainwright, 2020). After having been faced with a standardized architecture, like the one he had seen in New York and many other cities around the world, he returned to Lanzarote in 1966. Meyers (2020) writes that Manrique was horrified by the already apparent impacts of mass tourism on the island and became devoted to protecting



FIGURE 1: Manrique protesting development in Los Pocillos (1988).



the landscape from suffering the same fate as other islands, such as Gran Canaria, where urban tourism was eradicating local identity (Zamora Cabrera, 2012). To begin his intervention on Lanzarote, he started to implement an aesthetic ideal which he called 'Art-Nature/Nature-Art' which he used to promote environmental awareness (Giulia Pezzi, 2013).

Manrique's consideration of the natural as inherently beautiful is reminiscent of aspects from Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier who have also celebrated intertwining nature with architecture. Wright considered indigenous structures to be natural, as an original indication to their relationship with the environment, and which usually generates results full of beauty (Wright, 1955). This opinion was also echoed by Manrique who recognised and idolised the beauty within Lanzarote's traditional architecture. He expressed this in his book *Lanzarote. Arquitectura Inedita* (Manrique, 1974) in which he immortalises a collection of his own photographs, texts, and poems surrounding Lanzarote's vernacular

architecture between the 1950s and the 1970s. As Pezzi (2013) writes, this book constituted an ideal visual standard as locals could see pictures of their houses and community spaces published, leading to a positive effect on self-esteem and aiding in the cultivation of pride around the buildings that were perhaps before subconscious and purely functional. Khalid *et al.* (2019) note that empowered communities are able to gain benefits from tourism development and utilise those opportunities in a more effective way. Miralles Garcia and Brebbia (2015) expand that community empowerment comes about when people realise their own uniqueness and value their culture, natural resources, as well as traditional knowledge.

Manrique understood this concept and possessed a clear view of what represented authenticity to the island: its architecture, its colours and the materials used. He encouraged the local council to adopt and adhere to a strict set of principles that would help to preserve the character of Lanzarote, and from the 1960's onwards the developmental



FIGURE 2: Popular Architecture, *Memoria Digital Lanzarote*.

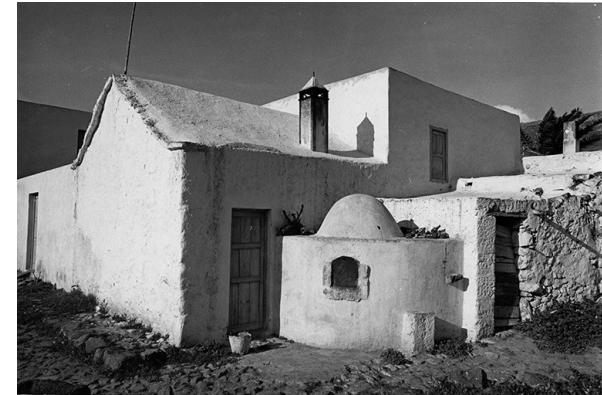


FIGURE 3: Traditional Architecture, *Memoria Digital Lanzarote*.

regulations which determined such, the *Plan Insular de Ordenación del Territorio (PIOT)* (Gran Canaria Cabildo Insular, 1995), was revised to align with Manrique's aesthetic ideals. The revision contained a selection of significant architectural and cultural elements present in Lanzarote that Manrique felt were endangered due to the increasingly rapid development of tourism facilities (Pezzi, 2013). In order to protect these attributes, the new regulations set out that any construction in rural areas would need to be built in keeping with Lanzarote's traditional architecture – low profile, whitewashed, with a flat roof designed to reflect the sun's rays and to keep the interiors cool. Manrique had studied the Canarian vernacular intensely through the medium of drawing (Plowden, 2023) which he used to advocate for dark timber doors and shutters, with distinctive green external paintwork, or blue paintwork in the case that the home faces the sea. It was important that indigenous materials, textures, and finishes must be implemented. The number of floors for specific buildings was also to be limited: four for hotels; three for institutional

buildings; and two for private houses (Sintes Zamanillo, 2001). It was also noted as imperative to protect the environment, as well as the visual landscape – billboards were banned from urban areas, and no advertisement of any kind would be allowed in any rural areas. Telephone and electricity cables would have to be considerably hidden. Manrique described how the roads should 'be rolled out like carpet with white lines at the edges and the black lava coming to meet them, with nothing in between' (Plowden, 2023). It was also implemented that only local plants and flowers should be used in gardens, and only volcanic stones should be used when building fencing walls.

### **The Opposition:**

While César Manrique's ideas have been aimed at helping to preserve a strong sense of cultural identity and tradition, it cannot be said that there has not been resistance to the perhaps overly restrictive specifications. As McKercher (1993) anticipates, in the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, tourism is a multifaceted industry and is impossible to completely control.

García-Quesada *et al.* (2014) details how from 1998 to 2006 Lanzarote has been immersed in a series of political scandals concerning the issuing of illegal permits to build large scale tourist complexes in several of the municipalities of the island. As recorded in *Canarian Weekly* (2023), 44 illegal tourist complexes with demolition orders are still standing and operating on the island. This symbolises the most corrupt era of Lanzarote, beginning in 1988, when former mayor José Francisco Reyes granted a mass of illegal licenses in Yaiza and Teguiise for personal profit- a crime repeated by many other government officials over the following years. This data perhaps indicates that it is not the undivided desire of the population to halt the development of large touristic centres which also have the capacity to generate local wealth and employment opportunities. Gössling *et al.* (2009) furthers that resistance to the concept of remaining purely traditional can occur from the view that the regulations can become weighted towards restriction and eventually become a hinderance towards progression and financial gain. As Swarbooke (2023)

writes, this kind of developmental restriction can become elitist, patronising, and at its worst anti-democratic. It could further be argued that the strict building regulations have facilitated the increase in corruption within Lanzarote, a notion explored by Chong Soh and Amin (2020).

In the *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2005), Budeanu makes the point that residents may potentially be opposed to increasing tourism on the island as most jobs in this sector are seasonal, often with low wages, and no guarantee for future employment. Furthermore, a large part of tourist generated income is exported from the destination due to foreign ownership of hotels or large holiday corporations. The World Trade Organization (1998) estimates that 50–70% of the gross tourism profits leak out of the country through imports. The glamour of tourism can also divert crucial workforce and resources from other economic sectors in the region, which may result in the neglect of services that locals rely on.

On another note, when considering

opposition to Manrique's architecture it is important to mention Brutalism. While César Manrique's architectural style roots itself in a harmonious integration of modern design with the natural environment, Brutalism prioritises a stark urbanism, industrial aesthetics, and fundamentally lacks the contextually sensitive design. Unlike Manrique's emphasis on blending with nature and employing organic materials, Brutalism leans more towards monumental, heavy, stark, and often conveying an imposing and utilitarian aesthetic- a sharp contrast from the organic and integrated ethos of Manrique's architectural vision, however, celebrated as the way forward by many architects.

### **What is Required for a Sustainable Tourism Industry?**

Within this review of literature, it has been established that in order to successfully create a sustainable tourism industry many factors must be considered. There should be advocacy and integration of that which makes a destination unique and distinctive. The concept of Place Branding

is defined by Aaker (1991) as 'a set of assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name, and symbol, which add or subtract from the value'. For Lanzarote this may be the dramatic landscape and cultural aspects, such as its traditional architecture. Cheirchanteri (2021) notes that iconic architecture assists in the identification of a place, and therefore should be protected.

Historic culture and heritage must also be protected so as not to damage, dilute, or exploit the existing indigenous communities. Boley and McGehee (2014) write that resident empowerment is the most important aspect and that without it, sustainable tourism is difficult to attain. Any development must add community value and help foster a sense of pride.

Finally, it can be deduced that it is imperative to consider the long-term of the industry, and while the rate of development should be controlled, the values that direct it should not be allowed to stagnate. As evidenced by Butler's Tourism Life Cycle Model (1980), it is during this period of stagnation that the strains

of over tourism will become apparent- of which the consequences will be economic, environmental, and social. It is important to understand that the destination requirements will evolve over time (Butler, 1991) and the values should develop alongside this, supporting both the resident and the visitor. It is not a static environment and needs responsible and continuous management.

*Key findings from the literature review are:*

- Tourism is a very competitive industry and has to be unique to be successful
- The destination must embrace what already exists as a product of the historic culture and heritage so as not to damage indigenous communities
- Development must add community value
- The rate of development must be sustainable and last long term – environmentally and developmentally







Authors own (2023) | Haría House Living Room.

# Methodology

For this dissertation, the research method that will be undertaken is photography. The act of taking a photograph freezes a single moment in time, capturing a subject and exposing unseen characteristics, allowing a deeper understanding of the true nature of a subject. Through multiple photographs, an original archive will be formed to go alongside the accompanying analysis. There also exists an online photographic archive of Lanzarote, *Memoria Digital Lanzarote* (2009), as well as photographs from César Manrique's book *Lanzarote - Arquitectura Inedita* (1974). These will be explored alongside the original research to show collective past and present memory of Lanzarote culturally and architecturally. This type of

“

Michael Houellebecq

*Lanzarote (2004)*

I laid down and meditated on the confrontation, so direct here in Lanzarote, of two elemental powers: the creating one of the volcano and the destructive one of the ocean.

”

photographic investigation provides a visual and insightful perspective on César Manrique’s architectural legacy in Lanzarote, highlighting the beauty and impact of his designs on the island’s landscape and culture.

The resource of archival photography is perhaps one of the most useful research methods. An ‘archive’ is defined by the Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries (2021) as a ‘group of things or people’ - something which is preserved from the past and therefore acts as a representation of memory. This is surely an invaluable resource to the process of learning as it allows direct access to primary sources of information, which are also the least biased. Niall Hobhouse (2016) takes the view that archives of ‘workings out’ have the ability to show the process before the designers even realised what they were trying to say themselves. In other words, the images serve as evidence and have the ability to back up the final outcome, which therefore helps in its understanding. This harks to Nietzsche’s (1887) *On the Genealogy of Morals*, where all of society

and culture exists as a struggle between two structures. This can be further understood as everything is a response to something else, therefore owing the previous thing their entire existence. An archive or collection records the process of this struggle – and therefore verifies how the outcome came to be.

With this in consideration, the research will now determine whether the intervention of César Manrique on overdevelopment in Lanzarote has been successful, through the medium of photography. To achieve this, three main factors must be considered: has Manrique been successful in preserving the environment, cultural identity, preventing overdevelopment, and consequently in creating a sustainable tourism?

### *Aims and Objectives:*

**1)** To research and show how César Manrique has carefully balanced functional architecture with the unique landscape and nature of Lanzarote.

This will be done by conducting a photographic investigation into existing examples of Manrique's work throughout Lanzarote, which will then be analysed. This will delve into Manrique's philosophy of seamlessly integrating architecture with Lanzarote's natural environment and how it has been used in a way to raise awareness of environmental values.

*Themes: use of nature, organic, incorporating instead of destroying, materiality*

**2)** To explore how César Manrique has helped to conserve the cultural identity of Lanzarote through respecting and celebrating the islands architectural traditions and native materials.

This will be done through photographic investigation which will highlight the use of traditional architectural styles, local materials, and indigenous building techniques. This includes the use of white and green colours, wooden balconies, and courtyards. It will be noted how Manrique has created a subtle balance between architectural tradition and the modern and how has it evolved over time.

*Themes: tradition, materiality, architectural style, colour, planning*

**3)** To explore how the architectural landscape has changed due to César Manrique embracing these ideals and whether it has slowed gentrification and helped to create a sustainable tourism model.

This will be done by using historical photographs from online archives (secondary research) as a reference to capture comparative shots. The shots will be aligned with the author's own photography (primary research) to highlight changes or conservation efforts within the architecture of Lanzarote.

*Themes: comparative, archival, historical, progress, development, tourism*







To achieve the above aims and objectives the researcher is required to travel to Lanzarote. In order for the trip to be viable, many factors must be considered. A careful budget for any research related expenses should be recorded. An itinerary should be devised from research conducted prior to commencing the trip to allow for sufficient time to collect the data. Opening times for the cultural centres (both daily and seasonally) must also be considered. In terms of ethics and safety, the *Approval request for Student International Travel UWE* was completed (see Appendix A). Ethics approval was not sought as the research does not involve speaking to any person.



# Part 1: Manrique's Vision/Synergy

*Themes: use of nature, organic, incorporating instead of destroying, materiality*

To demonstrate how César Manrique has carefully balanced functional architecture with the unique landscape of Lanzarote, this dissertation has photographically illustrated some key examples within his work.

This includes imagery from the Fundación César Manrique in Tahíche, which was Manrique's home between 1968 and 1988, eventually being turned into a museum after his death. The Tahíche house was picked as an example as one of the best representations of Manrique's artistic and personal ideals, situated in the midst of a lava coulee formed during the violent eruptions that rocked the island

Authors own (2023) Tahíche House - Inside a Lava Bubble 2.





between 1730 and 1736 (Fundación César Manrique, 2023). The upper floor displays a subtle balance between local architectural traditions and the modernity of certain functional elements such as wide windows, large rooms, and overhead lighting. The lower floor provides possibly the strongest display of Manrique's fascination with linking architecture and nature, as it is built within five natural volcanic bubbles interconnected with passages cut into the basalt rock. The open ceilings roughly frame clouds and sky while providing natural light into the dim cave-like interior. The exposed rock emanates a warm atmosphere of being grounded within the earth. The outdoor space boasts a sparkling pool with a water feature, providing an aural backdrop. Every single natural aspect of Lanzarote (the blue sea, the sky, the volcanoes, and rough rock) has been considered and represented in some way throughout the materiality, colour, or texture used.

Museo LagOmar (1968) also stands as a thoughtful representation of biophilic architecture. From entry it is difficult to



discern where the natural rock formation ends, and the building begins. The dramatic spaces create a labyrinth, formed from old quarry caves, incorporating the red volcanic walls, and completing them with white plaster and green plants. There is little human intervention into nature's design, apparent in the lack of straight lines and square designs. The imposed journey of the user through the spaces is like that of lava, flowing through and over the rock.

There is a theme of Manrique utilising the existing rock as a preformed wall. El Mirador del Río (1973) stands on the northern end of the island, an old military fort transformed into an architectural café with large windows offering beautiful panoramic views of the island. It is almost entirely camouflaged within the cliff face with only a small protruding cylinder at the top which houses a stairwell that connects the interior to the exterior balconies. This comprises of glass panes, topped with basalt to blend it into the surrounding rock. This really gives the sense of seamlessly blending the two spaces by bringing the outside in. On the lower balcony there is

a large rock almost entirely blocking the pathway and partially blocking the view from the café, demonstrating Manrique's refusal to unnecessarily destroy what naturally exists.

The Jameos del Agua (1966) is another CACT which features an underground concert hall, restaurant and a Salt Lake built within a 6km lava tube. Previously an old rubbish tip filled with rubble (Sabaté Bel *et al.*, 2015), César Manrique transformed the space into an abstract journey, funneling visitors in one end of the lava tube and along to the main jameos. There sits a mirror-like pool, reflecting the sky, blurring the lines between up and down. The whole journey and route are manufactured to be seen in very specific way and is a perfect example of how a natural cave can be made useable for modern functions.







Authors own (2023) Tahiche House - Sculptural Entrance into Passageway.

“

César Manrique

*Taro, el eco de Manrique (2012)*

In this place there is such a natural visual art, it is impressive to me. I come sometimes here to enjoy- this place is like an art museum where no painter or sculptor is able to get this texture, colour, power that we see around. This natural wealth enriches my own painting, my art, my own fantasy to make new structures that are all solved here.

”





All authors own (2023) Tahiche House Exterior Space.

*Exterior recreation space - Fundación César Manrique, Tahíche (1968).*

- Using basalt as pre-formed walls
- Mix of natural and contemporary design
- Reclamation of materials (wooden beam from shipwreck)
- Use of native vegetation



*Authors own (2023) Tahíche House - Cesar Manrique, Celebration of Wind Toy.*

*Every single natural aspect of Lanzarote (the blue sea, the sky, the volcanoes, and rough rock) has been considered and represented in some way throughout the materiality, colour, or texture used.*



Authors own (2023) *Tahíche House Pool.*





All authors own (2023) *Tahiche House - Consideration of the Natural / Passageways Between the Lava Bubbles.*

- *Celebration of cave-like atmosphere through lighting*
- *Use of what exists naturally*
- *Mix of natural with manmade elements*
- *Reclamation for human functionality*
- *Organic shapes and textures*

*Mueso LagOmar is a beautiful example of altering the natural environment for the purpose of a useable, humanised space. There is a careful consideration of colour throughout; earthy brown, green, and blue - broken up by bright white, highlighting the walkable space. The shapes that exist are curved and organic, respecting the natural formations.*



All authors own (2023) Various Museo LagOmar Spaces.



*The Stratified City is a volcanic area of geological formations found in Teguise. These images present an example of how Manrique has taken inspiration from the environment around him when designing.*



Authors own (2023) *Stratified City, Formation.*



Authors own (2023) *Entrance in Quarry Wall, Museo LagOmar.*



Authors own (2023) *Sculptures from Museo LagOmar.*



Authors own (2023) *Space within Mirador del Río.*



Authors own (2023) Exterior of Mirador del Río, Top of Stairwell.

“

César Manrique

*Escrito En El Fuego* (1988)

We had to collect and learn from our own environment to create, without having to start from any established idea. This has been the fundamental reason that has reinforced [Lanzarote's] personality. We didn't have to copy anyone. That they came to copy us. Lanzarote taught that alternative.

”



## Part 2: The Legacy/ Heritage

*Themes: tradition, materiality, architectural style, colour, planning*

To demonstrate how César Manrique has helped to conserve the cultural identity of Lanzarote through respecting and celebrating the islands architectural traditions, this dissertation has photographically illustrated some key examples within his work.

At the beginning in the 1960s, the Cabildo de Lanzarote (chaired by José Ramírez, together with César Manrique and many other designers) set out to recover various areas of the island that stood out for their peculiar landscape and features. Following Manrique's vision to deepen the potential of Lanzarote as a global paradigm for sustainable tourism (Centros de Arte , Cultura y Turismo, 2023)

Authors own (2023) | *Tchiche House, Reclaimed Wood Detail.*





seven sites were created: La Cueva de los Verdes (1964), Los Jameos del Agua (1966), La Casa-Museo del Campesino (1968), El Diablo Restaurant (1970), El Mirador del Río (1973), Museo Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo (1976), and El Jardín de Cactus (1991). These seven centres now stand as celebrations of Lanzarote's cultural and artistic heritage and as a standard of touristic development which stands to benefit the local community instead of erasing it.

For example, Manrique emphasised the use of local materials in his designs, such as basalt rock and wood from shipwrecks found off the island's coast (as seen in Museo LagOmar) – not only contributing to the sustainability of the projects, but also in helping to preserve traditional construction methods by using materials that are intrinsically linked to the cultural identity of Lanzarote. Another element of the CACT is the adaptation and enhancement of existing traditional spaces, such as agricultural buildings and caves, while maintaining their historical significance. There is also commitment to merging art

with functional structures to ensure that cultural expressions are woven into the fabric of everyday life, promoting local artistic traditions and reinforcing a sense of identity.

An outstanding example of this is La Casa-Museo del Campesino (The House-Museum of the Farmer), located in the geographical centre of Lanzarote, the municipality of San Bartolomé. Standing just outside the Casa-Museo and surrounded by vineyards, the Monumento a la Fecundidad (Monument to Fertility) sits at an integral crossroad of the island- an avant garde sculpture designed by Manrique as a tribute to the efforts of the farmers of Lanzarote, who faced the most adverse conditions to provide life to the territory (Turismo Lanzarote, 2023). The small plot of land it occupies is covered in the black volcanic *picon* (ash) that is used for mulch in the fields, giving the illusion of a bright white stem pushing up from the black ground. From the monument a path of carefully laid volcanic slabs pave the way into the Casa-Museo, a life-size reconstruction of a typical farm of the past, replicating how former





inhabitants would have lived (Lanzarote Guidebook, 2023). The outer buildings are constructed around a traditional courtyard, providing an exterior workspace that is sheltered from the wind, and have been inhabited as workshops for local artists and craftsmen who can showcase their work to visitors. Architecturally, the most culturally significant aspects have been considered in their entirety- all the buildings are single story and a bright white, adorned with emerald green doors and windows (having traditionally utilised the leftover paint from fishing boats). The spaces are also decorated with traditional farm equipment and tools. The use of indigenous materials, like volcanic rock and wood, not only helps to reflect the landscape and honour the traditional style but also to limit the generic developments that come with gentrification. In the centre of the compound, a staircase made from basalt spirals into a large underground venue space with a restaurant which serves Canarian dishes and a stage where folklore groups often perform traditional Canarian music (Lanzarote Guidebook, 2023). The skylights in the domed ceiling are hung with



fishing sails. This space provides a platform for local artists, musicians, and performers to showcase their talents, helping to foster a sense of community and ensure the continuation of cultural practices.

El Jardín de Cactus is another example of a traditionally focused CACT. Following the regulations of *PIOT*, in place of fencing, local volcanic stone has been used to boundary the garden. Within sits an enormous collection of cactuses - a celebration of the life that can still bloom despite the otherwise inhospitable conditions. Watching over the garden sits a restored 19th century windmill, *el molino*, a type of windmill specific to Lanzarote.



Authors own (2023) *Tahíche House Traditional Entrance Detail.*



Authors own (2023) *Casa-Museo del Campesino, Green Paintwork.*



“

César Manrique

*Lanzarote - Arquitectura Inedita (1974)*

[we need] to avoid the destruction of every old wall, every layout, every home where time has left historical traces. Its disappearance would forever erase a past full of meaning and wisdom learned through centuries of experience in observing and needing its climate, its latitude, its wind, its light and an incredible landscape that determined a [...] way of doing things, which cannot be improvised in a short space of time.

”





Authors own (2023) *Haría House, Traditional Terrace and Courtyard.*



Authors own (2023) *Museo LagOmar, House Skylight Detail.*



Authors own (2023) *Tahiche House Window.*

*Various traditional architectural elements, designed by César Manrique:*

- Courtyard with a covered terrace
- Use of reclaimed wood
- Exposed wood
- Decoration with native plants
- Traditional skylight
- Green external paintwork
- Basalt rock used for walls / creating boundaries





Authors own (2023) *El Molino*.



Authors own (2023) *El Jardín de Cactus*.



Authors own (2023) *Haría House Details*.



Authors own (2023) *Tahiche House - Volcanic Representation*.





All authors own (2023) Various Studies of Materiality.



*A photographic collection of different materials, captured across several CACTs. All of the rock is volcanic and sourced from all over Lanzarote.*





Authors own (2023), Arrecife Residential Spaces.

## Part 3: Sustaining Paradise

*Themes: comparative, archival, historical, progress, development, tourism*

To explore whether César Manrique has helped to prevent overdevelopment by embracing his artistic ideals and pushing for a more sustainable tourism, this dissertation will compare the authors own original photographs with those from the historical photographic archive *Memoria Digital Lanzarote* (2009) as well as photography from Manrique's book *Lanzarote - Arquitectura Inedita* (1974). This will aid in identifying which elements have become protected characteristics of Lanzarote and assist in the observation of any changes or conservation efforts throughout the island's architecture.

When considering the general architectural landscape of Lanzarote, it is interesting to note the mix of traditional and contemporary styles. While one revision of the *PIOT* (Gran Canaria Cabildo Insular, 1995) stated that ‘no new buildings should be higher than a palm tree’, it is clear to see when surveying Arrecife that perhaps this is one aspect of Manrique’s ideal that has not resisted modern requirement. While the overall urban planning and architectural ethos in Lanzarote still tends to favour traditional and low-rise development, in urban centres like Arrecife, the practical demands of a capital city have resulted in the construction of taller buildings, both commercial and residential. Notably, however, the Arrecife Gran Hotel is considered the only high-rise in Lanzarote, which becomes apparent when studying the skyline. Completed in 1974, before the revisions in *PIOT* would no longer permit the construction of high-rise buildings, it stands as a towering example of the potential fate of Lanzarote in the absence of Manrique’s intervention. The rest of the island, however, is still generally low-rise

and in keeping with the traditional style of Lanzarote.

An interesting study on whether overdevelopment has occurred regardless of the massive growth of the tourism industry would be Puerto del Carmen. Until the 1960s Puerto del Carmen was a small fishing village which had only a few homes along where the port now sits. In place of the airport there was a salt plant and otherwise unused land where it was difficult to grow produce (Puerto del Carmen, 2017). In the modern day it is now the touristic centre of the island with 38.7% of tourists staying in Tías, the municipality containing Puerto del Carmen, according to the latest published dataset from Turismo de Islas Canarias (2021).

Although undeniably massive development has occurred within the area since the 60s, it has almost entirely comprised of residential construction-carefully planned to form easily traversable grids of houses and streets inhabited by both tourists and locals, and most importantly, adhering to the traditional

Canarian architectural type. The sea front accommodates a strip packed with restaurants and tourist centric shops. As described by Quinn (2024), Puerto del Carmen is ‘where traditional customs meet modern-day tourism’. When harking back to Belisle and Hoy’s (1980) opinion that sustainable tourism development should lead to a set of improvements in community infrastructure, public facilities, as well as increased employment opportunities, and income generation, it becomes clear that while gentrification has occurred, overdevelopment has not.





Authors own (2023) Arrecife Skyline Study / Arrecife Gran Hotel.



Authors own (2023) Arrecife Gran Hotel.

*In this study of the Arrecife skyline it becomes clear to see that low-rise buildings are in the majority. The Arrecife Gran Hotel stands as an example of what the beach front could have looked like, if it were not for the PIOT height restrictions in place.*



*Example of residential buildings taller than two floors in Arrecife, the capital city of Lanzarote. Practical demands of a the city have resulted in the construction of taller buildings. However, the style is still reminiscent of a traditional architecture - clean, simple, and white with a flat roof.*



“

César Manrique

*Taro, el Eco de Manrique* (2012)

Everywhere there is loads of concrete, traffic lights, prohibitions where it is difficult to even see any flower or to watch the stars in the night. We need urgently an island where people can relax. [...] The Canarians aren't aware of what we have. In order for us to make use of it we must create a smart tourism industry for a proper development for our inhabitants.

”

FIGURE 4: Arquitectura Popular, Lanzarote. *Arquitectura Inedita* (1974).FIGURE 5: Caminos en Tao (Roads in Tao), Lanzarote. *Arquitectura Inedita* (1974).





Authors own (2023) *Tahiche, Architectural View.*



Authors own (2023) *Casa-Museo del Campesino.*

*Comparison of important architecture from 1974 to the general vernacular landscape of 2023:*

- Simple white cubes
- Flat roofs
- Volcanic rock as walls
- Modern walls and buildings have a lot cleaner cut lines, increased technology
- More windows on the modern buildings
- Increased size of building over time
- Overall a very similar style and profile



Authors own (2023) CACT installation of a Volcanic Tunnel.

## Conclusion

Lanzarote is an example of successful intervention on overdevelopment for the preservation of natural and cultural identity, thereby creating a sustainable tourism model; the destination is uniquely branded and a successful holiday destination, the environment is treated in a sustainable manner, and the development that occurs adds community value by intertwining with the existing indigenous heritage. This thesis presents that Manrique's influence (via the *PIOT*, creation of the CACT's, and individually) has had a profound and widespread influence across the entirety of the island, architecturally and culturally, thereby providing the qualities required for sustainable tourism to occur. This is an extremely important

example of how over gentrification, conformation, and consequently loss of culture can be prevented when awareness and pride is central to development. This thesis also speaks to the outstanding achievements that can be obtained when collaboration between designers and governing powers occurs.

This thesis demonstrates via the photographic investigation that Manrique helped to foster a sense of pride in the inhabitants of Lanzarote through art, design, and architecture. By considering every aspect of his designs- from materiality and colour, to form and how the interior spaces are decorated and what that represents- he has created many memorials that will continue to inform and inspire tourists and locals on the core values of Lanzarote. This community pride can thereafter nourish itself and creates a perpetual state for the legacy to live on.

If further research were to occur, it would be invaluable to monitor the evolution of Lanzarote's tourism model. As stated by Butler's Tourism Life Cycle Model

(1980), destinations evolve over time and require continuous management to avoid stagnation, which is when the strains of over tourism will become apparent. This inquiry into the temporal dynamics of Manrique's legacy and the tourism model would provide valuable insights into the long-term sustainability of Lanzarote's unique approach.





Authors own (2023), Abandoned Farmhouse, San Bartolomé.

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# List of Figures

**FIGURE 1:** Anon. (1988) Protestas en Los Pocillos III [photograph]. Memoria Digital Lanzarote [online]. Available from: <https://memoriadelanzarote.com/buscar?s=manrique+protesta#descripcion11510> [Accessed 07 January 2024].

**FIGURE 2:** Anon. (n.d.) Imagen de una vivienda popular campesina de Lanzarote [photograph]. Memoria Digital Lanzarote [online]. Available from: <https://memoriadelanzarote.com/item/1293-arquitectura-tradicional-de-lanzarote-ii> [Accessed 04 January 2024].

**FIGURE 3:** Anon. (n.d.) Imagen de una vivienda tradicional campesina de Lanzarote [photograph]. Memoria Digital Lanzarote [online]. Available from: <https://memoriadelanzarote.com/item/1296-arquitectura-tradicional-de-lanzarote-iii> [Accessed 04 January 2024].

**FIGURE 4:** Manrique, C. (1974) Arquitectura Popular [photograph]. In: Manrique, C. (1974) Lanzarote- Arquitectura Inedita. Cabildo Insular De Lanzarote: Lanzarote.

**FIGURE 5:** Manrique, C. (1974) Caminos en Tao [photograph]. In: Manrique, C. (1974) Lanzarote- Arquitectura Inedita. Cabildo Insular De Lanzarote: Lanzarote.

## Appendix

### Appendix A - Approval request for Student International Travel

Kate Barnes has submitted an approval request for student- Kate Barnes to travel to ["Spain"]- N/a departing on 2023-11-05. This has been recorded. No further approval is required as the travel is not to a high or extreme risk destination.

### Student Information:

ID Reference 61

1. Name of Student Kate Barnes
2. Email address of Student kate4.barnes@live.uwe.ac.uk
3. Phone number
4. Emergency contact and number Darryl Adams
5. Faculty/Service CATE School of Architecture and Environment
6. Name of Principal Investigator Kate Barnes

### Student Travel Details:

1. Type of Activity Research
2. Please provide details on the purpose of travel Undertaking overseas trip to Lanzarote, Spain to undertake research for the purposes of undergraduate dissertation - UBLMSJ-15-3
3. Date of Departure 2023-11-05
4. Date of Return 2023-11-09
5. Country/ies of visit ["Spain"]- N/a
6. Destination/s within country Lanzarote, Canary Islands
7. Is quarantine or self-isolation required at any point during the trip? No
8. Drum-Cussac Rating- Country Light Green (Low)

9. Drum-Cussac Rating- City/Region Light Green (Low)
10. Current Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office travel advice for your destination No restrictions

**Costs:**

Is the student funding their own travel? (if yes, the section below will be blank) Yes

1. Travel- £
2. Accommodation- £
3. Event fee- £
4. Other- £
5. Subsistence- £
6. Funding available- £
7. Carbon Footprint (Kg)-
8. Name of Budget Holder-
9. Cost centre-

**Country risk rating review:**

1. Is the destination on the university's list of characteristically low risk destinations No
2. Conflict Light Green (Low)
3. Criminality Light Green (Low)
4. Terrorism Light Green (Low)
5. Unrest Light Green (Low)
6. Seismic Light Green (Low)
7. Storm Systems Light Green (Low)
8. Climatic Light Green (Low)

9. Manmade Light Green (Low)
10. Aviation Light Green (Low)
11. Overland Light Green (Low)
12. Utilities Light Green (Low)
13. Cyber Light Green (Low)
14. Government Stability Light Green (Low)
15. Corruption Light Green (Low)
16. Rule of Law Light Green (Low)
17. Sanctions Light Green (Low)
18. Disease Light Green (Low)
19. Facilities Light Green (Low)
20. Pharmaceuticals Light Green (Low)
21. Water Light Green (Low)