



JOSÉ LUIS BORAU JORDÁN

Position: Head of Build Environment Accessibility Department_ Accessibility and Innovation Directorate_ Fundación ONCE.

He earned his Degree in Architecture from Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. His more tan 20 years of experience working in different accessibility fields within Fundación ONCE and its corporate group has spanned through different stages.

During this time, he has been consultant for different public and private entities in the implementation of actions in urban, architectural and natural areas. He has also been a member of different European standards committees as well as Master coordinator and lecturer, and speaker in several conferences and seminars on accessibility (heritage sites, protected natural areas, Design for All, etc.), both at national and international level.

Borau has also participated in different accessibility and Smart Human City projects (Colombia, Ecuador, Qatar, among others) and in a multitude of projects on accessibility in urban planning, building, transport, tourism and social policies. He is also author of different publications on different accessibility areas (natural areas, Design for All, labor environment, urban design, etc.).



MARIAN PALÁNQEX VALLES

Position: Technician_ Built Environment Accessibility Department_ Accessibility and Innovation Directorate_ ONCE Foundation.

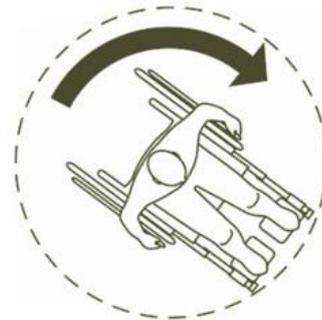
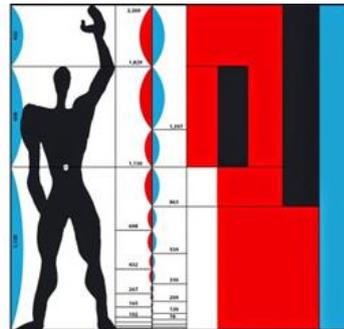
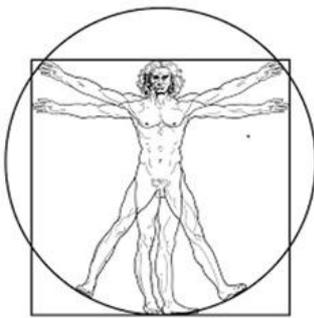
She is graduated with a double degree in Tourism and Business Administration and Management from the Rey Juan Carlos University and has a master's degree in Corporate Social Responsibility from the Open University of Catalonia. During the last three years as part of the Accessibility and Innovation department at ONCE Foundation she has carried out various projects related to accessibility to the physical environment and tourism both nationally and internationally.

1. #CanonMetroYMedio

(#MeterAndAHalfCanon): resizing society after Covid-19

Author : JOSÉ LUIS BORAU JORDÁN

Author: MARIAN PALÁNQEX VALLES



Our society is changing. Or it must change as a result of this global pandemic and health crisis caused by Covid-19.

150 cm... 150 cm have never been so fashionable... even many years ago it was proposed as the standard measure to build spaces which could be used by wheelchair users or white cane users, parents with baby trolleys, and in general everybody regardless their specific needs. How curious! Now the *meter and a half canon* appear again... a meter and a half that was previously proposed as a measure to allow everybody to enjoy, move around and use the built spaces, has become a meter and a half of security against a lethal enemy. A meter and a half that was though to allow everybody to enjoy their life on equal terms, has become a meter and a half that allows you... to live? Has a new design canon appeared?

#CanonMetroYMedio (#MeterAndAHalfCanon).

A new dimension appeared that may mark the definition of environments like when the Vitruvian man or Le Corbusier's

Modular appeared. After all, those canons marked a revolution in the architecture's world.

Overnight, technology has been relegated to a secondary role after a new protagonist has entered the scene, health and safety.

This time of change is similar to the one produced in society by the industrial revolution, the automobile revolution or the technological revolution. It is time for a global revolution whose primary objective is to protect human beings against possible attacks such as the one suffered by Covid-19 or others that may come. A revolution that brings to light the ability of the human being to adapt to new situations and that places the resilience of the species as the objective of each person.

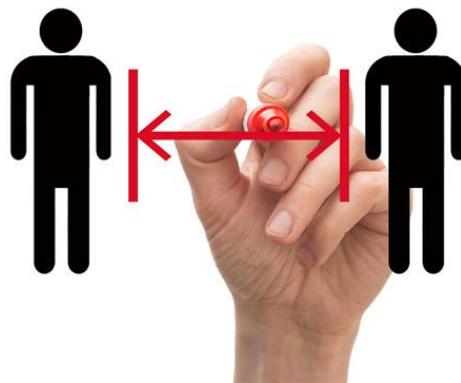
Resizing our cities, our living space...

There was dispute during the lockdown about time slots, permitted and banned spaces, safety distance... How many times have we heard in last months the minimum safety distance to prevent transmission of the virus? Surely the entire population knows that the distance of one and a half meters is what the health authorities propose as a minimum to avoid contagion between people.



We have seen how during lockdown streets in our cities were crowded by people walking or playing sports, using spaces that surely few months before they barely used to access their private vehicle or to do some nearby shopping. The space intended for running vehicles was occupied, people complained about the narrowness of the sidewalks, the situation of their pavements, the maintenance of the gardens and their invasion in transit areas, the danger of the pits unprotected... Never before those 150 cm had been missed so much, free of obstacles, without projections on the pavement, with a stable surface...

We have a new challenge in front of us: resizing of cities and spaces allowing their use and enjoyment to all people. A challenge in which we "should" have been involved for a long time, but now, with the appearance of this new variable of sustainability and health security of the human species, there is no time for delay.



Resizing our public buildings, our shared spaces

Also that *#CanonMetroYMedio* should be the measure that establish the design and adaptation of buildings for public use to ensure the use and enjoyment of them by all people in the maximum conditions of usability, safety and comfort.

Buildings have been rethought to meet the safety and hygiene measures not only for their workers but also for their visitors.

Meeting and crowded spaces need to be resized from that meter and a half, as well as the way of interacting with its different elements avoiding direct contact.

Traditional support elements need also to be rethought. Elements such as handrails, electronic terminals, relief maps or elevator buttons, how can they be activated and manipulated safely nowadays? Innovative technologies should be the main allies of these "more traditional" elements. Without forgetting that the use of these technologies should not be a barrier but available to everybody.

What about elevators? These are essential elements to allow vertical communication in buildings, especially in high-rise buildings for people who cannot use stairs. Will #CanonMetroYMedio be the new design pattern? Understanding that, in many cases, due to obvious dimensional limitations, it will not be possible, it will be necessary to look for alternatives.

The case of elevators needs a deeper reflection. Its limitations in existing buildings will pose a problem for people to use. Since the implementation of the #CanonMetroYMedio seems difficult, it will be necessary to restrict its use to people who really need it. Other measures should be complementing the size to minimize the impossibility of collective use such as sanitation systems, materials to be used, activation systems...



Resizing our homes, our safest space and where we should feel more protected

Housing is the space in which people should feel more protected but are they really prepared to assume the functions imposed by this type of situation? Who has not set up a corner in their house to be able to work from home while children were playing or doing their homework? All of us have had to redistribute the spaces of our home to adapt to this situation.

Once again: will it be necessary *#CanonMetroYMedio* to be used for the design of new houses? I doubt that this pattern can be used for the houses themselves, but of course for the common areas. The houses themselves must be considered as multipurpose spaces, with the possibility of adapting to the needs of the people who inhabit them, due to whether temporary, permanent, caused by a limitation of skills or movements or by their own aging.

A new challenge has been arisen to ensure that homes are adapted to the life cycle of their inhabitants, with inclusive spaces and away from situations of unchosen solitude, to enhance interaction in coexistence, preventing confinement from entailing a loss of autonomy or difficulty at receiving assistance.

Resizing our transport networks

Another area in which the immediate challenge of downsizing is clear is public transport networks, both at the urban and interurban levels. Both the management of these networks, as well as the physical infrastructure or rolling stock, must be reconsidered (with the *#CanonMetroYMedio*?). It is necessary to take innovative measures to ensure the use of transport by all

people in the maximum conditions of comfort, safety and usability. The entire chain of the travel cycle must cover these three aspects to the maximum, therefore, the various issues that affect this process must be reconsidered.

Perhaps the time has come to question if the urban means of transport will be able to continue to function as they did until now. Appearance of Covid-19 must be the most absolute confirmation that it is not.

The same happens with intercity and international connections in transport elements crowded with seats with little space to move during the journey and disabling their use for many people for this reason. Perhaps the time has come to rethink whether the transport business should take precedence over usability, comfort and safety. Of course, global sustainability will have to be put in the balance, but for this, innovative initiatives must be launched to ensure that global sustainability in parallel with the issues that really satisfy the people who use these means of transport.

#CanonMetroYMedio existed for many years. Let's use it now to protect, ensure usability and inclusion of all people in this "new" society

Resizing our way of working

Workspaces as we have known until now are going to cease to exist?. What is clear is that Covid-19 has annihilated the adaptation time that digitization required of companies or organizations for its definitive implementation. The most obvious example is telecommuting. A way of working remotely that was gradually entering our working life (although in many other countries it was more advanced) and that suddenly has made a

hole in our homes and in our lives. In a certain way, teleworking (for those of us who are lucky enough to be able to do so) has protected us from the attack of the virus.

But, just as I indicated when referring to the adaptability of our homes, our equipment, communication networks, virtual platforms... must be accommodated for usability by all people in the maximum conditions of comfort and safety. And here we refer to security against other types of viruses and threats against users.

This area will also have to be resized and redesigned... not with the meter and a half canon this time, but with all the necessary measures to avoid the digital gap.



Resizing our activity and our customs

We are listening everywhere to changes in society, changes in customs and uses, what is clear is that something is going to change and needs to change. And not only what affects the most superficial (but no less important) such as security against contagion, but also in what has to do with the core of activities, the why and what for of things.

But to do so, it is not necessary to start developing new rules and regulations from zero, just let´s rethink what we already have. By way of example, #CanonMetroYMedio have existed for many years. Let's use it to protect as while ensuring usability and inclusion of all people in this "new" society.

#CanonMetroYMedio? Has a new dimension appeared that should mark the definition of environments like when Vitruvian man or Le Corbusier's Modulor appeared?