

## **Special Mention. Master's Thesis**

**Garoé**

**Marta Morato Costa**

School of Architecture: ETSA Madrid

### **DESIGN REPORT: GAROÉ**

This is a proposal for a contemporary temple on the site of the Valleseco quarries on Tenerife, a territory where freshwater has historically been an invisible resource, obtained through the condensation of fog and underground collection. Inspired by the Garoé tree – capable of condensing air and turning mist into water – this project transforms three former volcanic quarries into a single climatic infrastructure where the space is shaped by matter, humidity and gravity.

In this geological landscape, ceramics become the central material: rather than an ornamental covering, they act as a continuation of the red quarry and means of condensing, channelling and storing freshwater. Volcanic tuff from the quarries is crushed and mixed with local clays to produce territorial ceramics fired at high temperature; the ferruginous tone echoes the colour of the land, while the technical properties enable water conduction.

The ceramics act on three levels:

#### **1. Territory — Ceramic basins**

Large ceramic basins moulded in situ collect the runoff and channel it towards the storage system. Each unit is adapted to the topography, merging infrastructure, landscape and craft.

#### **2. Pathways — Permeable ceramic paving**

The path leading up to the temple is covered with permeable ceramic tiles (Lifecersuds). Their geometry and open joints capture rain and condensation, and the force of gravity channels them back to the crops planted in the ravine. The ceramic paving works simultaneously as a collection layer, surface drainage and hydraulic conductor.

## Interior — A ceramic spiral in the crypt

In the main hall, a ceramic floor arranged in a spiral pattern directs condensed water towards a central core. This geometry responds to hydraulic and climatic criteria: each tile directs the flow, regulates temperature and modifies the crypt's acoustics, placing ceramics at the thermodynamic heart of the project.

Taken as a whole, ceramics articulate each phase of the water cycle — condensation, direction, filtration and storage — becoming a structural, climatic and symbolic material, closing the geological cycle of volcanic stone. In this case, architecture functions as a reversible organism – capturing moisture from the air, channelling it along ceramic surfaces, before returning it to the agricultural landscape that surrounds it.

The project thus transforms an extractive quarry into a living atmospheric laboratory, where ceramics perform the concurrent roles of technical matter and geological memory, while also providing a cultural narrative of water in the Canary Islands.