European Prize for Urban Public Space

Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona / CCCB – Exhibition

27 Apr 2014

European Prize for Urban Public Space in 2014 Winners

European Architecture Competition Winners

The form of the city is intimately related with democracy. This is the thesis of the Prize which, since 2000, has recognised and publicised the results of transformations and improvements in the public spaces of Europe. Cities are far from being idyllic paradises. Some of the most serious problems of today’s society are concentrated and expressed in their public spaces. Fortunately, however, Europe also offers many exemplary cases of improvement in its public spaces, which are sensitive to the context and respect the collective and social dimensions of urban life. From Glasgow to Istanbul, from Lisbon to Bucharest, and over the fourteen years of its eight awards, the European Prize for Urban Public Space has become a privileged observatory of European cities.

CONVENING INSTITUTIONS The Centre of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB) organises this prize together with six European institutions: the Deutsches Architektur­museum of Frankfurt (DAM); the Museum of Finnish Architecture of Helsinki (MFA); the Museum of Architecture and Design of Ljubljana (MAO); The Architecture Foundation of London (AF); La Cité de l’Architecture et du Patrimoine of Paris (Cité) and the Architekturzentrum Wien of Vienna (AzW).

INTERNATIONAL JURY The president of the international jury for the eighth award of the Prize was Carme Ribas, representing the CCCB. The jury was comprised by Matevž Čelik, director of the MAO; Sarah Ichioha, director of the AF; Juulia Kauste, director of the MFA; Francis Rambert, director of the Cité; Peter Schmal, director of the DAM; and Katharina Ritter, head of exhibitions at the AzW. David Bravo i Bordas, representing the CCCB, was the jury secretary.

THE PRESENT AWARD In this year’s award a total of 274 projects from 194 cities and 30 European countries have been presented. The Prize is an honorary award to both authors and promoters of the works chosen. The prize-winning works, the finalists and a selection made by the jury will be published in the European Archive of Urban Public Space, which has brought together and publicised the best works presented for the Prize since it was first offered in 2000.

THE “SHARED CITIES” EXHIBITION The exhibition of this year’s prize-winning works will be open to the
public at the CCCB from 25 April until 4 June. It will subsequently travel to several European and American cities, as was the case with the 2012 Prize exhibition, which was shown in Medellín, Toulouse, Bogotá, Paris, Lyon, Prague, Cartagena de Indias, Ljubljana, Quito, Caen, Luxembourg, Athens and New York.

JOINT WINNERS

MARSEILLE – RENOVATION OF THE OLD PORT

JOINT WINNER

The renovation of the Vieux-Port clears the docks of visual and architectural barriers, thus making the presence of leisure boats compatible with access and enjoyment of all citizens.

PREMI EXAEQUO, Marseille, before intervention, Michel Desvigne Paysagiste:

The **Vieux-Port of Marseille** is the largest urban harbour in Europe. The foundational site of the capital of Provence, it was also the region’s economic centre until midway through the nineteenth century, when transport of goods and passengers was moved to the Grand Port Maritime. The old harbour has a narrow entrance flanked by two old fortifications and it occupies a natural bay where the central districts of the city converge. However, despite its beauty and central location, the port fell into neglect and a state of disrepair by the end of the twentieth century. The premises of yacht clubs, which cluttered the port with architectural and visual barriers, blocked public access to 80% of the docks area where, moreover, the fact that priority was given to cars, discouraged pedestrian use.

PREMI EXAEQUO, Marseille, Michel Desvigne Paysagiste:
In 2009, the City Council and the Marseille Provence Métropole (MPM) called for entries in a competition aimed at rectifying the situation. The first phase of the renovation work has cleared obstacles and vehicular transport from the port’s three wharves, which are now uniformly paved in pale granite evoking the original limestone cobblestones. The Quai des Belges, the central wharf, devotes 60% of its surface to pedestrians and protects them from the sun beneath the Grande Ombrière, a rectangular canopy of 1,000 m², which can also be used for large crowd-pulling events. New floating docks have been installed in order to accommodate water activities without interfering with the pedestrian flow or views.
Thanks to a consultative process, which took into account the suggestions of residents, businesspeople and local associations before calling for entries in the competition, the port has recovered its vitality by means of taking the general interest into account. The presence of leisure craft, which fosters economic and associative activity, has been made compatible with access and enjoyment for all citizens. Hence, while other city ports combat economic decline by allowing privatised uses that undermine their role as public space, the Vieux-Port has been renovated by expanding its condition of a shared place that is open to everyone.

**ELX – “THE BRAIDED VALLEY”**

**JOINT WINNER**

The Braided Valley in Elche, Spain

A network of interlaced paths and footbridges has transformed the bed of the Vinalopó River into a linear park that stitches together the neighbourhoods through which it passes, connecting them with natural spaces to the north of the city.

H190, PREMI EX AEQUO, Elx, before 2006:
The Vinalopó River is considerably reduced when it crosses the city of Elche. Irrigation upstream and very irregular rainfall mean that water only flows in any abundance in autumn, when sudden flooding can occur. This has cut out a riverbed with steep sides, mainly as a result of landslides. In the 1970s, major channelling work put an end to flooding but also eliminated the network of paths by means of which residents on the right bank could reach the adjoining Palmeral, a vast palm grove which is inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Relegated to the condition of a marginal rubbish tip, the watercourse became a barrier that divided the city into two halves, both facing away from it.
In 2009, the City Council called for entries in a competition aimed at converting the riverbed into a three-kilometre-long linear park. The first phase of the work was completed on the upstream section where the social deterioration of the neighbourhoods and scarcity of bridges made improvement most urgent. A temporary in situ office collected data on the areas of movement that were most requested by future users. A network of paths was thus opened and led the place to be known as “The Braided Valley” because they criss-cross on both sides of the river, which were also replanted with autochthonous species of vegetation. Before reaching the walls of the channel and joining to cross the riverbed, the paths rise up in a Y-shape forming two footbridges resting on clusters of metal pillars which resemble tree trunks and give lightness to the structure.
Before completing the first phase, the new city council stopped work on the project it had inherited but did not embrace as its own. “The Braided Valley” has not been officially opened yet, although local residents have spontaneously made it theirs. With similar spontaneity, the riverside paths and bridges disregard the orthogonal nature of the urban layout and anticipate tracks which a pedestrian’s common sense would leave on a badly situated parterre or on the ground of a snowbound city. It is to be hoped that common sense will prevail and that work on this park, which already stitches together the neighbourhoods through which it passes and connects them with natural spaces to the north of the city of Elche, will soon proceed anew.


5 Apr 2014

**European Prize for Urban Public Space in 2014**

**European Architecture Competition Exhibition**

The President of the Consortium of the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, Salvador Esteve i Figueras, is to hold the European Prize for Urban Public Space 2014 Award Ceremony at the CCCB on Friday 25 April 2014 at 7 pm, followed by the inauguration of the exhibition of the winning works.

Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona / CCCB:
The event will feature the participation of Carme Ribas, president of the jury for the 2014 Prize. The event will be streamed live via the website www.publicspace.org.

On Saturday 26 April at 11 a.m., there will be a visit to the exhibition with comments by the authors of the winning works.

The exhibition will be open until 4 June. Free admission.
www.publicspace.org

European Prize for Urban Public Space

Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona

European Architecture Competition

The European Prize for Urban Public Space was set up by the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona and the Institut Français d'Architecture was first awarded in the year 2000.

Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona / CCCB:
The European Prize for Urban Public Space was set up to recognise the movement for the recovery and creation of urban public spaces which has taken place throughout Europe over the past twenty years, and has taken the shape of a series of outstanding, often little-known, interventions. These interventions reflect a new appraisal of public space, understood as a space replete with functional and symbolic values where citizens can meet and socialise and which recognises the fundamental role public spaces have always played in defining European cities. The Prize is not only awarded to architects but also, and most importantly, to the public institution which has promoted the project.

European Architecture

Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona – CCCB:

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European Prize for Urban Public Space information from CCCB

European Hotel Design Awards