

URBAN PLAN FOR POBLENOU, BARCELONA

Master Thesis at Chalmers Architecture

Urban and Architectural Design Laboratory

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POINT OF DEPARTURE:	CONFLICTS AND PUBLIC SPACE // LOCATION BARCELONA
RESEARCH:	A HISTORY OF PERIPHERY AND CENTER // MAPPING POBLENOU // ACTORS & AGENTS // CASESTUDIES // CONFLICT DRAWING
URBAN STRATEGY:	SCENARIO & VACANT SITES // TOOLBOX & PROGRAM CATALOGUE // PROGRAM NETWORK // NETWORK DRAWING
ARCHITECTURAL STRATEGY:	SITECONDITIONS // INTERVENTIONS // PROPOSAL
ATTACHMENTS:	REFERENCES // INTERVIEW

POINT OF DEPARTURE: CONFLICTS AND PUBLIC SPACE



“Conflict is not something that affects one originally, or potentially, harmonious urban space. Urban space is a product of conflicts”
Rosalyn Deutche

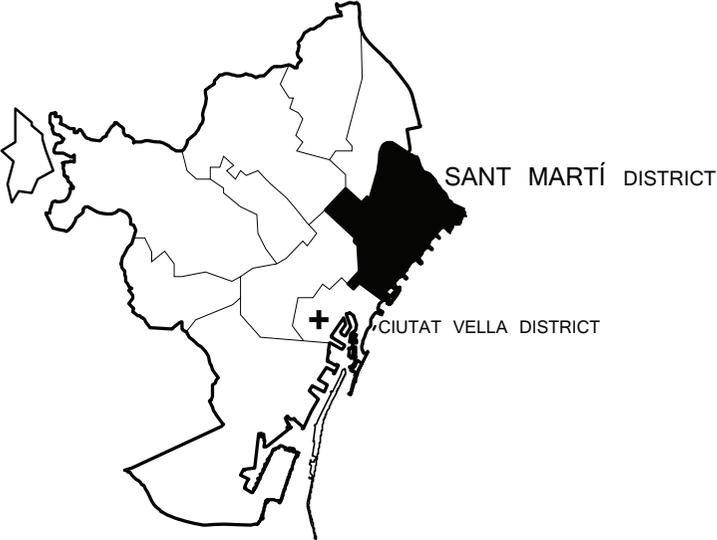
The framework of the thesis departs from public spaces, not as the space for consensus and homogeneity but highlighting the phenomenon of conflict as the condition for its existence. Departing from last year global protests and resistance of the Arab spring and the occupy movement where the public room’s potential as a stage for democracy has been highlighted.

The thesis focuses on Poblenou, a former industrial area in Barcelona where large protests arose as a result of a redevelopment plan. The thesis exposes conflicts and negations and brings up disadvantaged actors. The interventions aims to work as a catalyst in making room for and consolidate the actors as partaking citizens in the urban development.

POINT OF DEPARTURE: LOCATION BARCELONA



CATALONIA



BARCELONA



SANT MARTÍ DISTRICT

“Since politicians have changed recently, I am sorry to tell you that most of the insights produced are past, rather than present: the atmosphere here seems frozen, and the need to cry aloud is increasing”

Antonio Millan (ETSAV)

The recent redevelopment plan of Barcelona called @22 involves Poblenou, parts of San Martí district. Poblenou, a former industrial area that underwent a process of degradation that began with the deindustrialization in the 60's. With the preparation for the Olympic games in 92, new plans and interventions started the transformation of Poblenou into one of the new centres in Barcelona.

The plan of @22, a private/public initiative with the official aim to transforming Poblenou into a new central zone of technology and innovation, included massive investments in private and commercial programs. Critique and opposition of these plans came from citizens, various cultural networks and professionals. They advocated community service, spaces for cultural sector and the protection of cultural heritage. Point of departure is the current state of conflicts.

The research is a result of both theoretical processing of information through books, articles, maps and websites and an exploration of the site by physical observations and interviews. The research took place in Barcelona during August and September 2011 and aimed to understand Poblenou from different perspectives.

The *historical research* identifies important events and phenomena of Poblenou. It aims to highlight a local and unofficial history of Poblenou in contrast to the official image of Barcelona.

Mapping of physical and nonphysical structures and phenomena aimed to identify issues of interest and locations for interventions.

Actors and agents aims to identify the actors in the area and their involvement in the urban development and conflicts.

Casestudies aims to confirm the needs and desires as shown by initiatives and activities already taken by the actors involved in the opposition to the urban development.

The development of Barcelona has through its history been catalysed by *big events and the adopted strategy of an official image*. From the walled gothic city, the bourgeois monumental city to the “tourist city”. On the other side the city’s has also *grown from its periphery, the marginalised and the incorporation of it into the city*. With a history of decentralized networks and organisation, from the medieval guilds to a strong working class community and cultural networks. This duality of the city, is visible through the conflicts between local actors and developers and landowners in the area of Poblenou.

Poblenou has throughout history been a place for production, from the medieval agriculture and industrial activities to the cultural production since the 80’s, due to the de-industrialisation. The redevelopment plan of @22 is an attempt to transform and recreate productivity and generating a new economy in the district, but the plan lacks a local connection. *This lack of local connection, an industrial heritage in decay and run over citizens’ voices has been the basis for a conflict and resistance to the @22 plan and its global investors.*

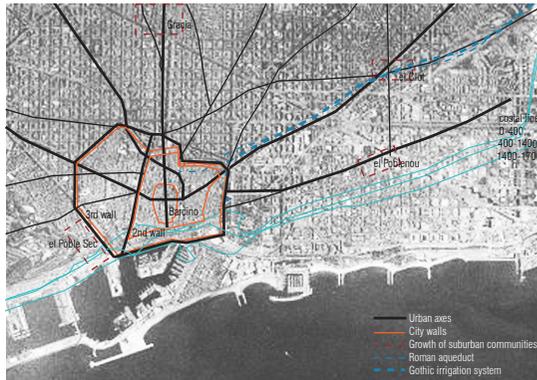
RESEARCH: A HISTORY OF PERIPHERY AND CENTER

A HISTORY OF CONFLICTS

Land owner conflicts

A HISTORY OF IMAGES

0-400
The Roman colony of consisted of a city core, it's wall and surroundings populated with isolated farming communities.
400-1400
The city was at the time associated with its wall and gates.
That image presented an escape from a feudal system, protection from invaders as well as access to public service.
1400-1700
Barcelona became one of the Mediterranean area the most powerful maritime city



0

A HISTORY OF PERIPHERY AND CENTER

0-1400
The Roman aqueduct was the early structure for settlement Sant Martí.
1400-1700
Poblenou mostly consisted until the early 18th century of marshes and pastures. The city established activities that was not suitable within the city walls, such as cemetery and quarantine station.

farming communities
Salt production, fishing, potting and tile making

A HISTORY OF PRODUCTION

1701-1714 War of Succession

political struggles for social changes and power over the country, colonies and city between nationalistic and socialistic movements. Conflicts between Industrial bourgeois, the Church, Spanish government, the military opposed to several workers organization, the largest being the anarchist workers union CNT.

1937-39 Spanish Civil War

1939-1978 Franco's fascist regime.

Camp de la Bota, the site of today's Forum, was used by the Franco regime as a prison and execution ground between 1939 and 1952 it is estimated that 1,700 were killed here

working class struggle

1700-1850

Barcelona surrendered to Castilian in the War of Succession 1705 to 1714 and the city lost its political autonomy.

The maritime economy paved way for colonization that provided means to support the industrialization



1700

1700-1850

programmatic difference and physical barriers

separated Poblenou from the city. As a result of the War of Succession the military zone and the Citadel that was built at the border to Sant Martí prevented the plain to be urbanized and the railways closed access to the city.

The community and early factories

of Poblenou expanded around the infrastructure and with the increasing industrial activity a small network of squares and streets developed.

textile, metalurgy and agriculture
steam-coal operated and water energy driven industry.

1850-1939

The 1888 world exhibition catalyzed the process of modernization of Barcelona. The urban transformations were a response to the ambition of the industrial bourgeois in creating and promoting the representative and monumental city.

representative and monumental city.

In that the modernization process culminated in 1929 exhibition, the city began to evolve through the exploration of marginalized issues of the working class, the peripheral and its incorporation into the city.



1940

1850-1939

The strong immigration flow and miserable work and hygiene conditions led to a rise in development of social mobilizations, associations and cooperatives.

The migration flow also led to a increase of shantytowns, concentrated along Carrer Badajoz and along the coastline. When Sant Martí was included into Barcelona municipality in 1897, the urban structure established by Cerda expanded more rapidly and resulted in that many of the factories and small roads cut through the grid.

Parallel with the territorial expansion in factories and population that continued in to the 50's, the Macià Plan from 1934, by Le Corbusier and the GATCPAC group proposed a rezoning of Poblenou into residential and recreational area.

expanding industrial activity

global economy and local production

La Mina and Diagonal Mar, the first being housing built to rehouse the shantytowns dwellers and the later a gated community are examples of conflicts of

social segregation and exclusion.

The Ideas of the city planning Olympic Games was criticized for

considering external voices and investments rather than local. The recovering of the city where

run down areas were upgraded, the increase of tourism led to higher rents.

lack of affordable housing and workspace

As an effect of the 90's planning, the shopping centers, privatized closed gardens, gated communities and surveillance that appeared met opposition because of the restriction of free public space.

neglected citizen's demands

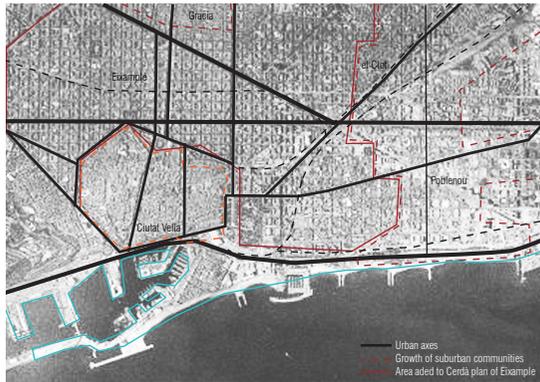
protests againsts large scale development lacking local, historical and cultural con-

cerns @22@Bcn, development plan of Poblenou led by the city council through the private-public company of @22Bcn, supported by the private sector; real estate sector and business community

1940-1975

The previous dual model of Barcelona's growth, the central and the suburban vil-lages changed by several

Regional plans and a speculative residen-tial development



1975

1940-75

With the 1953 Regional Plan limits for the industrial expansion was determined.

The relocation and reaccomodation strategies of the shantytowns was intensified between the 60's and 80's.

The de-industrialisation and the economic crisis in 74 was a significant blow to Poblenou, an area already in degradation and obselence.

de-industrialization
transport companies

1975-1992

The recovering of Barcelona after the years of oppression was a process that again culminated in a big event, the Olympic Games in 92. The urban planning aimed to deal with the fragmented city.

This new approach involved interventions in the city on difrent scales; rehabilitate and redesign the citys spaces as well as larger infrastructural developments. The overall vision of recovering the costal front linked the interventions.



1992

1980-1992

The interventions around the costal front began to formulate Poblenou as an area of centrality.

The construction of Vila Olímpica (92) transformed the industrial area of Içària and Diagonal Mar into low density residential areas. The new types of neighbourhoods that appeared along the caostal strip, combined hotel, retail, housing and offices

establishment of artist communities
tourism and service

1992-2004

The urban policy in the 90's, led to new forms of interpretations of culture, politics and economy in planning. It is expressed by the branding of the city through architecture and its symbolic capacity and of types of privatized "public spaces".

2004-2011

In an attempt to repeat the model of the development with Olympic city, another event was held in the city in 2004, Universal Forum of Cultures.

The new image of Barcelonaas the "city of Knowledge"

is represented through the plans for Poblenou.



2000

1992-2004

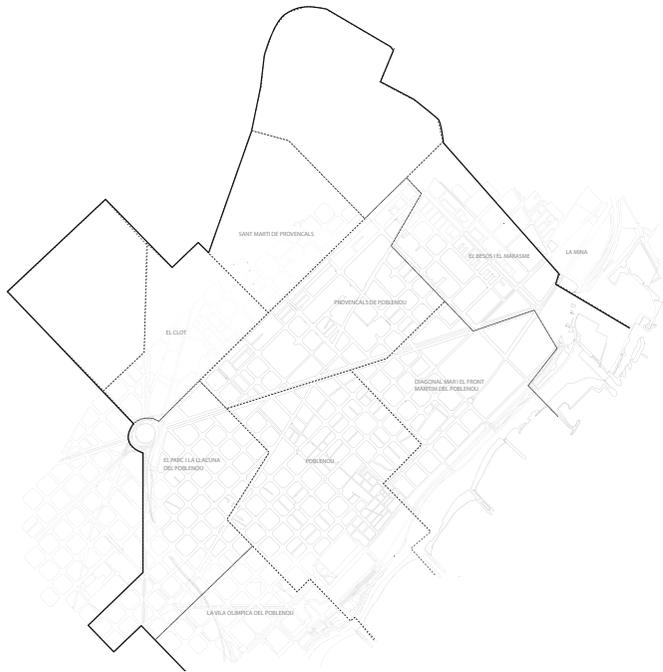
The continuation of Diagonal Avenue linked Poblenou to the business and comercial core of the city. The interventions articulated Gloriés as a central node included a concentration of offices, hotels and shopping centre.

The @22 plan was a response to the obsolete regulation for land use of Poblenou, led by the city council through the private-public company of @22Bcn promoting a district of technology and innovation.

The development of @22 and urban renovation of Poblenou since the Olympic city meant the introduction of star architects and landmark buildings.

technology and tourism sectors coexist
with small scale economy and cultural
production

RESEARCH: MAPPING POBLENOU



DISTRICT



GREENSTRUCTURE



PROGRAM



PROGRAM AREAS and @22



PRIVATE/PUBLIC



VACANT SITES

RESEARCH: ACTORS & AGENTS

*We want to regain our identity, practicing historical memory, the memory of truth.....
The story we have to write that we suffer and cope with speculation, insecurity, lack of housing and repression.*

Poblenou Neighbours Associacion

More than 200.000 people have left the city since 1986 because they couldn't find an affordable place to live here.

V de Vivenda

LOCAL INTEREST

YOUTH ASSOCIATION



NEIGHBOURS ASSOCIATION



IMMIGRANTS



CREATIVE COLLECTIVE



NEIGHBOURS

Concerning Industrial Heritage and Public Space etc.
Decreasing activity in Resistance.



HOUSING OCCUPANTS

Different kind of unregulated living. Immigrants, undocumented and poor families occupying old factories and buildings



ROMANIE FAMILIES



HOMELESS PEOPLE



WORK SPACE OCCUPANTS

Different creative collectives that need cheap and crude workspace. Occupying with or without permission. If with, under bad conditions.

"Since politicians have changed recently, I am sorry to tell you that most of the insights produced are past, rather than present: the atmosphere here seems frozen, and the need to cry aloud is increasing.

Antonio Millan (ETSAV)

A company engaged in purchasing investment...the company seems to serve as fuel to all political parties.. 3 years ago there was a series of hassles because Renta Corporación bought down the price and sold to the municipality rather expensive. And the profit seemed to have been split with the parties that made the proposition.

Placido Romero (La Escocesa)

GLOBAL INTEREST

REDEVELOPMENT/22@BCN

Redevelopment plan with the aim to transform the former industrial zone of Poblenou to a new technological area with non disturbing and non-polluting productive activities. The creation of urban space according to the needs of the current knowledge-based society. The real estate sector has decisively supported the Project: 74 of the 110 plans approved are promoted by the private sector. The plan is an extension of the largesacle urban projects of Diagonal Mar and Forum 2004.



CITY COUNCIL

El ayuntamiento with politicians and planners created the 22@ plan

PRIVATE CORPORACION

The most present one is Renta Corporacion; occupied with Real Estate Investments. Recently in a scandal concerning corruption within the political realm. Bought most of the land within the development area of 22@bcn.



TOURISTS

Not present in the conflicts but often part of one.



TOURISTS



NEIGHBOURS ASSOCIATION



YOUTH ASSOCIATION



ROMANIE FAMILIES



HOMELESS



IMMIGRANTS



CREATIVE COLLECTIVES



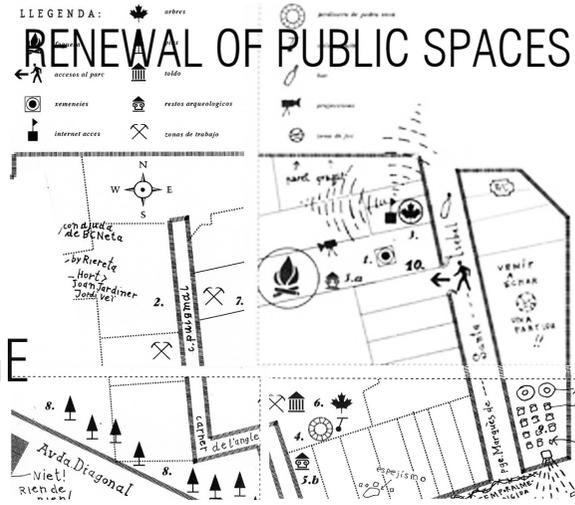
CITY COUNCIL



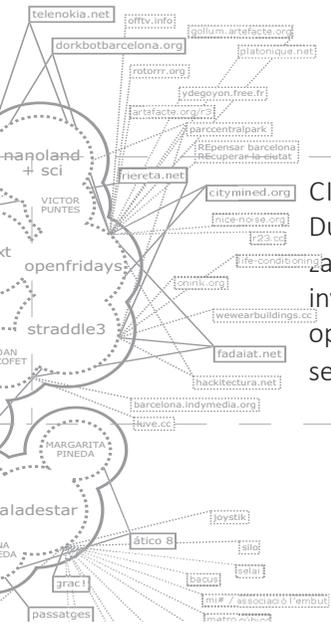
PRIVATE CORPORATION



ADAPTATION OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE



TEMPORARY STRUCTURES



CITIZEN & NETWORKS

During 2004-2006 cultural networks and neighbourhood organizations acted in protest against the city's plans. The major issues involved: -community services in the face of rampant urban development(22@plan). -the need for production space for the culture sector. -protection of industrial heritage.

SPACE

Adapting of the old industrial heritage into work and or living space. Reclaiming abandoned space for public use. Ex ParcCentralPark project invited people to participate in the design of the park. Temporary spaces and structures as platforms for actions and discussions.

RESEARCH: CONFLICT DRAWING

The drawing shows past and present conflictual issues and sites identified in the research. These conflicts are summarized in *neglected population, economic crisis, a industrial heritage in decay, housing and workspace, limited access to public spaces, resource crisis*. These conflict issues and sites overlap with the vacant sites that were found in the research. These sites are a result of the economic crisis in 2011 when global actors pulled out of their investments. The urban strategy departs from and deals with these issues and vacant sites.

NEGLECTED POPULATION

Due to recent development of Investments in private and comercial programs and corruption in the process. Plans has been made over citizens heads. Citizens demanding social services



ECONOMIC CRISIS

Unemployment and poor economy reduces possibility to consume and companies leave. Global investors pulling out, leaving the development of the area without a stable commitment.



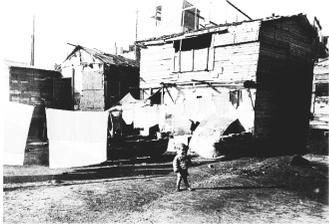
INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN DECAY

A development that neglects the local historical continuation of poble nou.



HOUSING AND WORKSPACE

Speculative housing market, lack of affordable housing opportunities, evictions and homelessness



LIMITED ACCESS TO PUBLIC SPACES

More privatized and limited usage possibilities of the public spaces creates less open and free spaces to dwell in

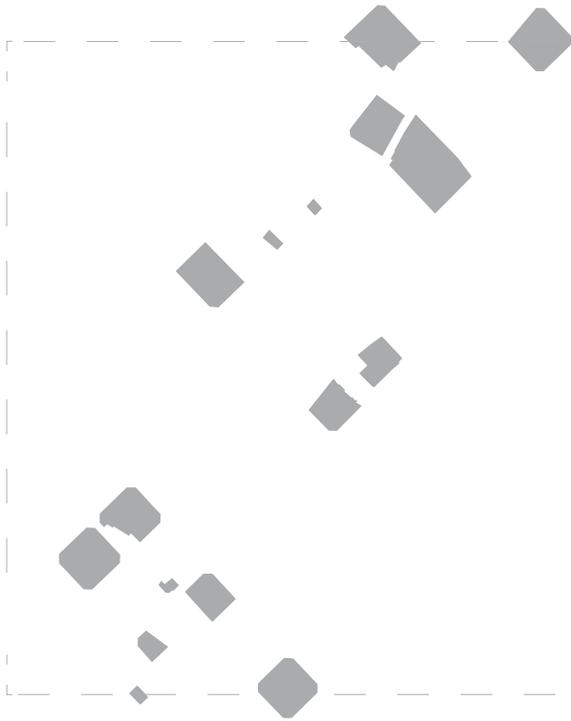


RESOURCE CRISIS

Due to a global lack of resources the need to reduce linear flows of matter and energy



RESEARCH: CONFLICT DRAWING



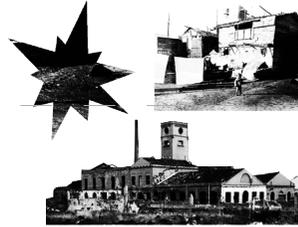
VACANT SITES



PRESENT CONFLICT



PAST CONFLICT



Can Ricart

present: the nineteenth-century industrial factory complex of Can Ricart became the subject for, and symbol of the conflict created by the @22 plan. between 2004-2006 numerous manifestations and protests was held by coalition of neighbourhood associations, artist groups, and architects advocating:
 -community services in the face of rampant urban development(22@plan)
 -the need for production space for the culture sector
 -protection of industrial heritage.

In 2005 Salvem Can Ricart claimed a partial victory when the city agreed to save the factory from demolition. Yet over thirty small industries and most of the artists and designers had already been evicted from their rented spaces, leaving only the collective of Hangar.



Parc del Centre del Poblenou

present: citizen created a proposal for a parc, the city invites Jean novel to design it, it's now open limited time during the day.



Unofficial living

past: the different strategies of, by force relocate or re-accommodate the inhabitants in shantytowns, that was intensified in the 60's to the 80's received protests and criticism from inhabitants and supporting organizations.
 present: homeless, undocumented and romanian families occupying storage buildings, streets and vacant sites in Poblenou.



Evictions

present: in 2011 the police intervene toward a building in Badajoz which has been occupied over five years by 50 immigrants. It was an eviction in wait for trial. Neighborhood associations and political organizations held a support manifestation in demand for better social service.



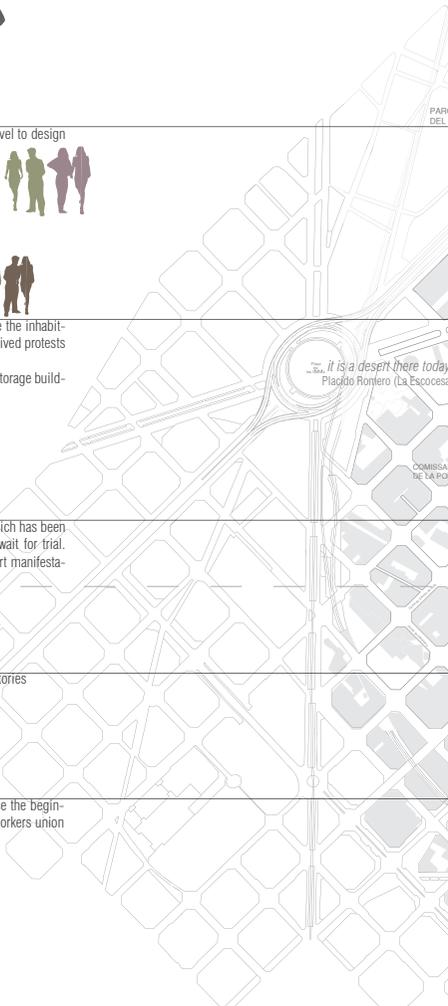
Unofficial workspaces

present: hidden creative collectives based in warehouses and old factories



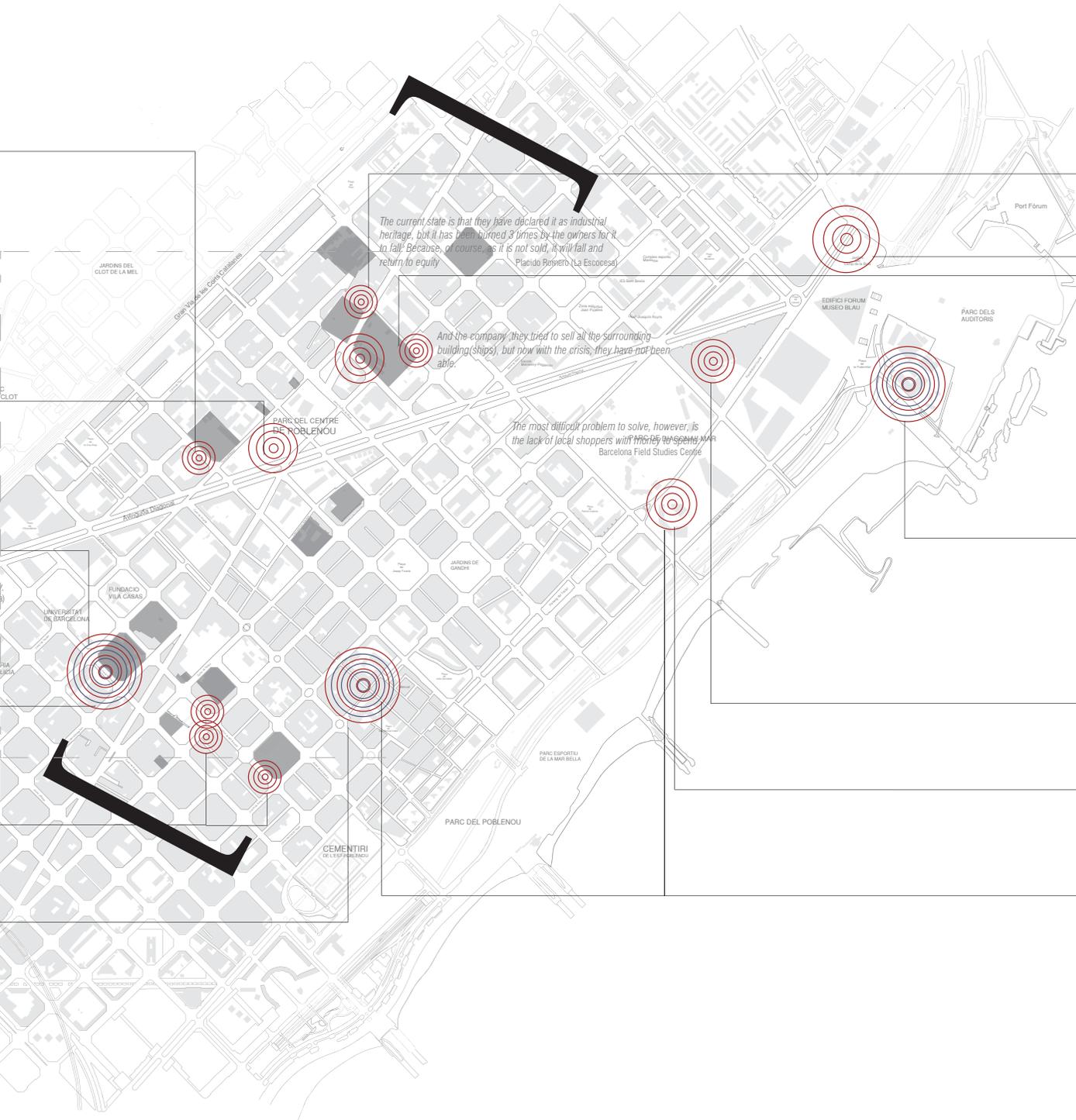
Workers strike

past: protests and strikes throughout Poblenou industrial history since the beginning of 19th century, the largest workers union being the anarchist workers union CNT.



... it is a desert there today
Plaça del Frontero (La Escocesa)

COMISSA
DE LA RICAR



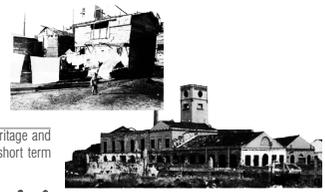
The current state is that they have declared it as industrial heritage, but it has been burned 3 times by the owners for it to fall. Because, of course, as it is not sold, it will fall and return to equity

And the company, they tried to sell all the surrounding building (ships), but now with the crisis, they have not been able.

The most difficult problem to solve, however, is the lack of local shoppers will hardly be spent here

la escocesa

present: an old factory in a decayed state, partly claimed industrial heritage and owned by private corporations. artist collectives rent the factory with short term rental contracts, and in risk of eviction



industrial heritage in decay

present: owners burn the factory three times to be able to sell the land to developers. unofficial occupation of the plot by a romanie family and a nearby warehouse of artist collectives



Social contrast; La Mina/ Diagonal Mar

present: conflict with residents of La Mina will be difficult to suppress in the short term. Diagonal Mar, surrounded by large fences and gates that are locked at night, is effectively a gated community that may encourage social segregation and increase La Mina's social exclusion.



Forum

past: Camp de la Bota, the site of today's Forum, was used by the Franco regime as a prison and execution ground between 1939 and 1952.



present: Universal Forum of Cultures, 2004 an event that was organized by Barcelona's and Spanish government and UNESCO and was possible by the investments of multinational corporal business. The event became criticized for, in favor of private business, creating an apolitical image, taking culture as an alibi for urban transformations. It's today an huge event area as a limited public space

Economic crisis

present: the commercial activity around Diagonal Mar and lower Diagonal suffer from lack of accessibility to consumers and in a risk of closure. Investors pull out and the development is put on hold.



Diagonal mar

present: housing area with limited public access



Expensive housing

present: The 10,000 new apartments being constructed in the vicinity of Diagonal Mar should bring in people with spending power, but the experience of the nearby Olympic Village, where apartments have been priced out of the range of many young urban professionals, suggests that the money may be in short supply or may not necessarily be spent locally.



URBAN STRATEGY: SCENARIO & VACANT SITES

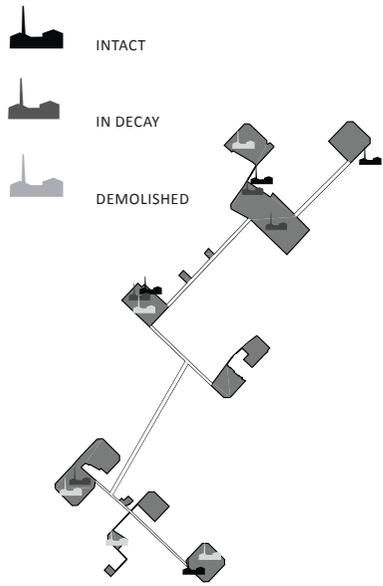
“One example, one of the things that we try to generate with La Escocesa is, well, that the site itself as a center of creation begins to infect the spaces around it.”

Placido Romero Martinez (resident artist of La Escocesa)

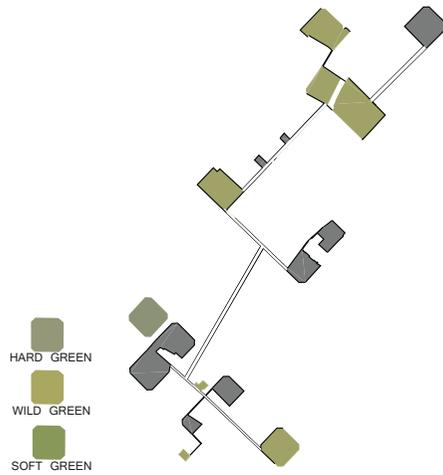


Poblenuu is today an area in development that due to the economic crisis is put partly on hold. This leaves traces in the city in the form of vacant and abandoned construction sites. The sites, officially closed for access is taken over by nature containing traces of Poblenuu's industrial heritage as well as hidden actors and activities.

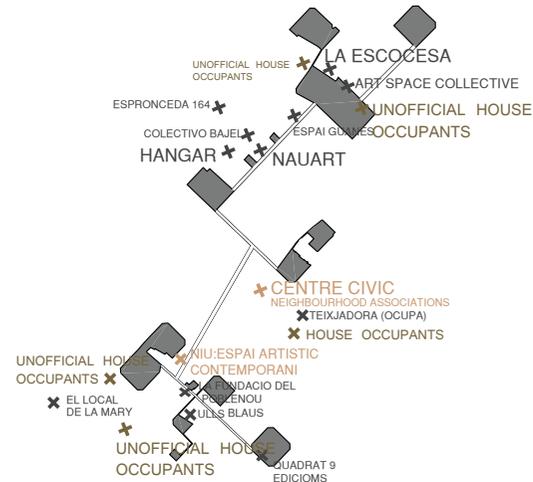
What if a strategy could seize this moment of crisis to strengthen the local actors, taking advantage of the vacant sites in provide room for the neglected actors and consolidate them as participating citizens in the continuous urban development.



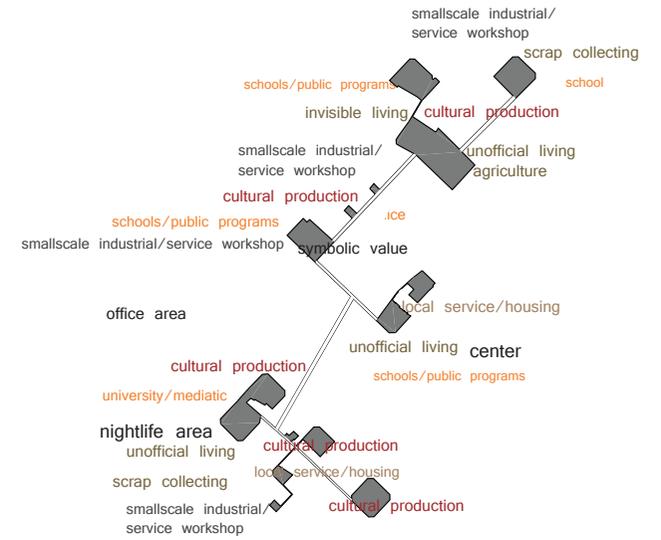
INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE



WILD GREEN



ESTABLISHED NETWORKS



LOCAL ACTIVITY

The interventions depart from the various conflicts and conditions on site, they respond to the needs and activities of local actors

INTEGRATING THE EXISTING
Aims to provide a historical continuity by reintegrate and adapt the industrial heritage.

LEARN/ EXCHANGE
Aims to put local knowledge and skills into actions by collaborations and shared spaces. As well as provide spaces for communication and meetings.

PRODUCE
Aims to taking care of the various types of production that exists. Support recycling and reuse as part of a local economy and material savings. To support a basic need of energy and water to the sites.

INHABIT
Aims to provide possibilities for everyday activities and provide shelter and services to the hidden actors



INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE
support structures and reuse of the existing empty factories.



OPEN WORKSHOPS for culture or fix and repair stations as part of an alternative economy and material savings

WALLS for exhibitions, announcements and to make an imprint on



A STAGE for performances and music. A place for meeting and debate

WORKSPACE
Artist studios



AGRICULTURE&COMPOST
spaces for cultivation as a possibility of self-sufficiency and alternative local economy

WATER COLLECTION

by pocket pools to support cultivation, food and hygiene programs.



SOLAR ENERGY for electricity and heating

RECYCLE UNITS to be located on every site for leaving and finding materials



MARKET space for alternative local economy



KITCHEN UNITS can be used as a community restaurant or open to prepare private food

TEMPORARY DWELLING

the possibility to dwell or hide a night, it also function as shadow during the days



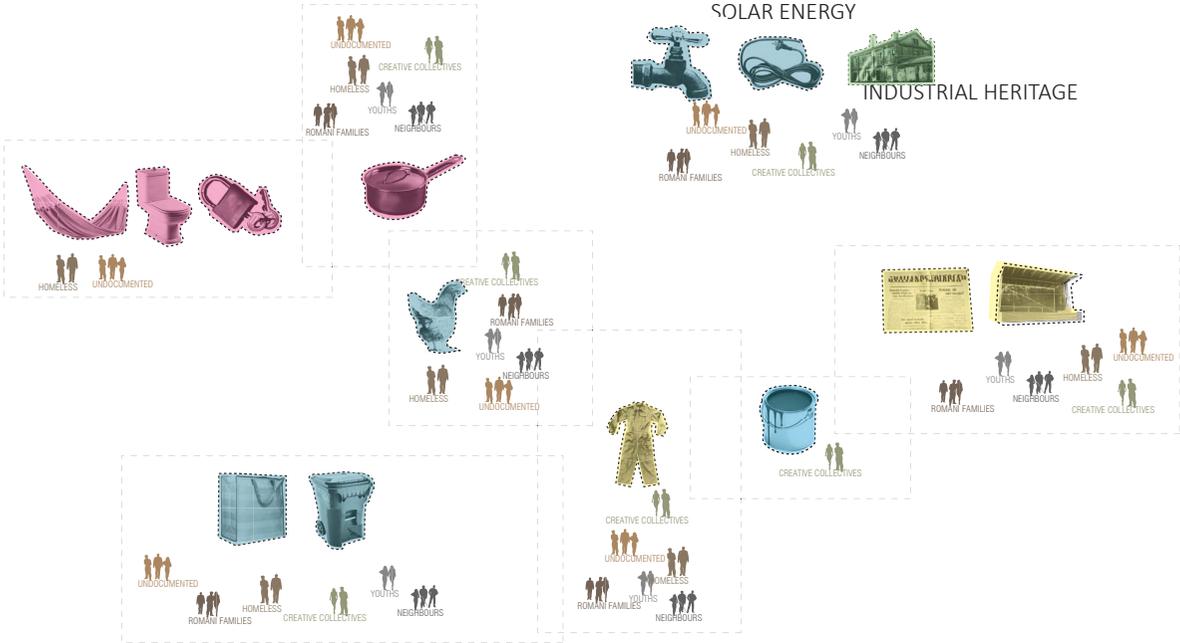
SHOWER & TOILETS

basic services to use of toilet and shower

LOCKERS to allow for storage of food and/or private goods

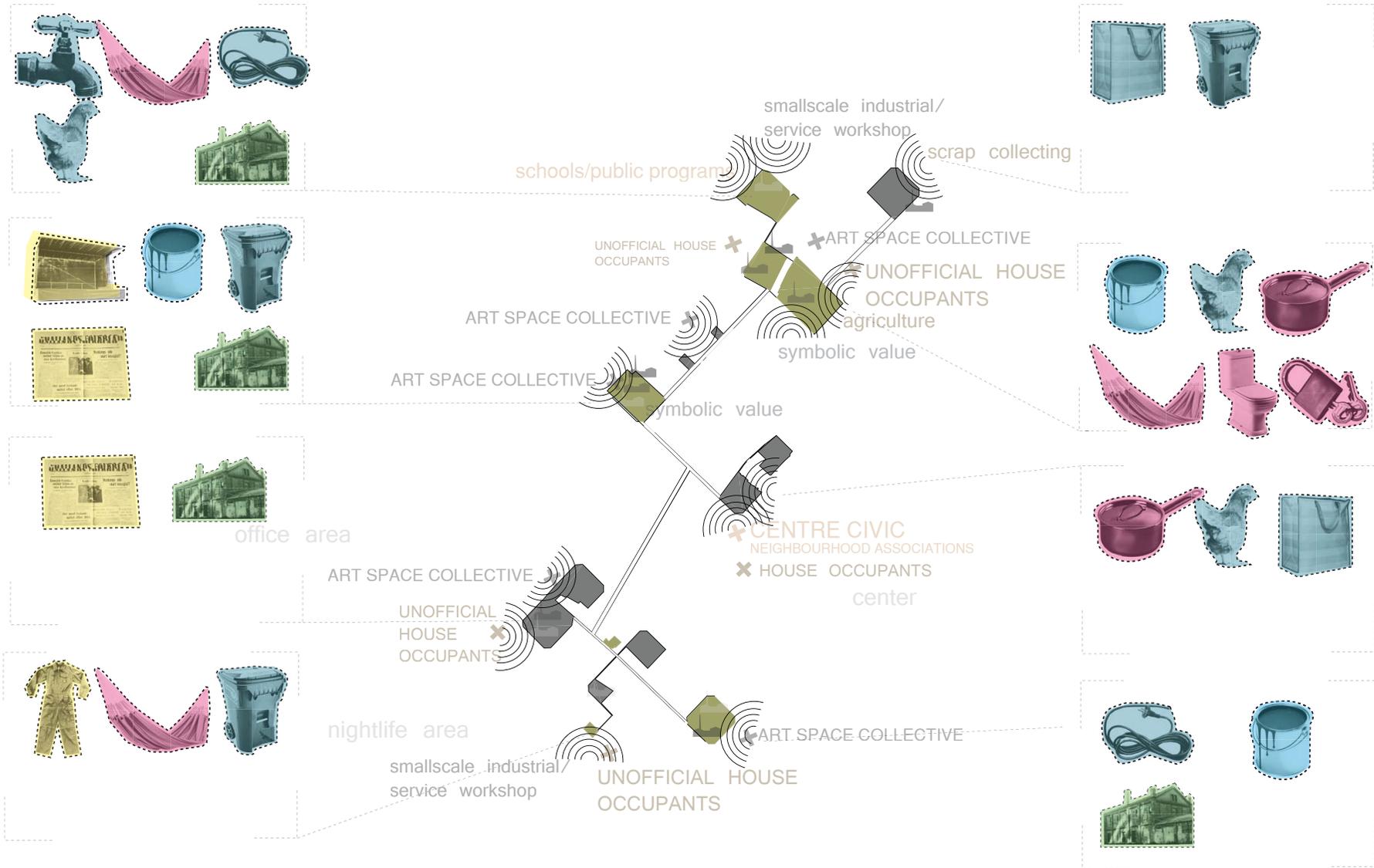


URBAN STRATEGY: PROGRAM NETWORK



The program network illustrates possible connections between programs and how it benefits the various actors. With departure from existing conditions, the network drawing illustrates how new interventions activate and connects the vacant sites.

URBAN STRATEGY: NETWORK DRAWING

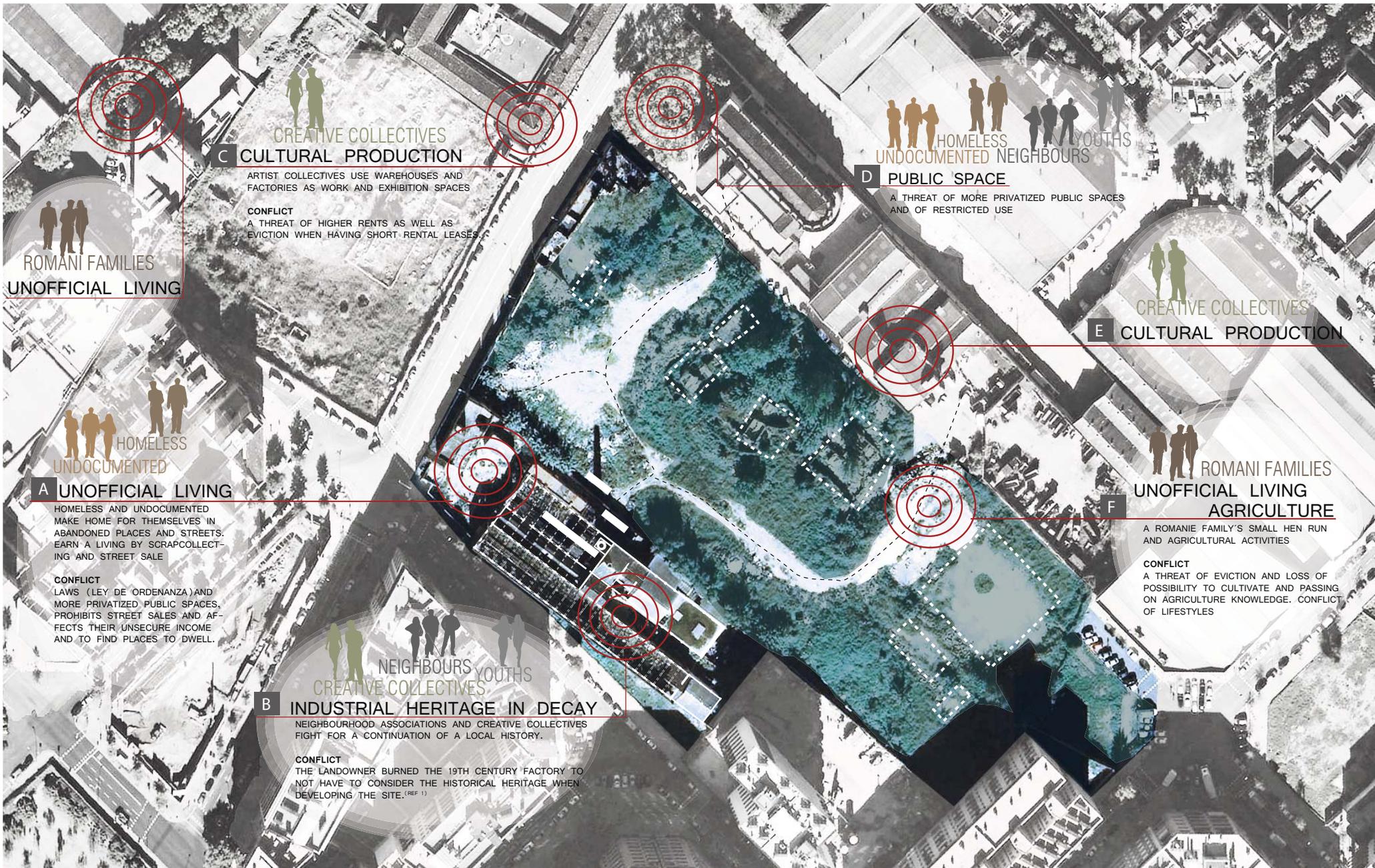


ARCHITECTURAL STRATEGY: SITE CONDITIONS



The selected site is within the 22 plan, a site that has become an issue of symbolic value in the conflict with the city. There is an industrial heritage on the site that has been burned three times when there is easier to sell and develop the site if there is no cultural value to take into account.

The existing activities on site are unofficially residents and cultivation. There are both legal and illegal artist collective in the houses around. The involved actors on site and around are; artists' collective, Romani families, homeless and undocumented and residents in adjacent buildings.



C CREATIVE COLLECTIVES CULTURAL PRODUCTION

ARTIST COLLECTIVES USE WAREHOUSES AND FACTORIES AS WORK AND EXHIBITION SPACES

CONFLICT
A THREAT OF HIGHER RENTS AS WELL AS EVICTION WHEN HAVING SHORT-RENTAL LEASES



ROMANI FAMILIES UNOFFICIAL LIVING



A HOMELESS UNDOCUMENTED UNOFFICIAL LIVING

HOMELESS AND UNDOCUMENTED MAKE HOME FOR THEMSELVES IN ABANDONED PLACES AND STREETS. EARN A LIVING BY SCRAPCOLLECTING AND STREET SALE

CONFLICT
LAWS (LEY DE ORDENANZA) AND MORE PRIVATIZED PUBLIC SPACES, PROHIBITS STREET SALES AND AFFECTS THEIR UNSECURE INCOME AND TO FIND PLACES TO DWELL.



B NEIGHBOURS YOUTHS CREATIVE COLLECTIVES INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN DECAY

NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATIONS AND CREATIVE COLLECTIVES FIGHT FOR A CONTINUATION OF A LOCAL HISTORY.

CONFLICT
THE LANDOWNER BURNED THE 19TH CENTURY FACTORY TO NOT HAVE TO CONSIDER THE HISTORICAL HERITAGE WHEN DEVELOPING THE SITE.^(REF 1)



HOMELESS UNDOCUMENTED NEIGHBOURS YOUTHS

D PUBLIC SPACE

A THREAT OF MORE PRIVATIZED PUBLIC SPACES AND OF RESTRICTED USE

E CREATIVE COLLECTIVES CULTURAL PRODUCTION

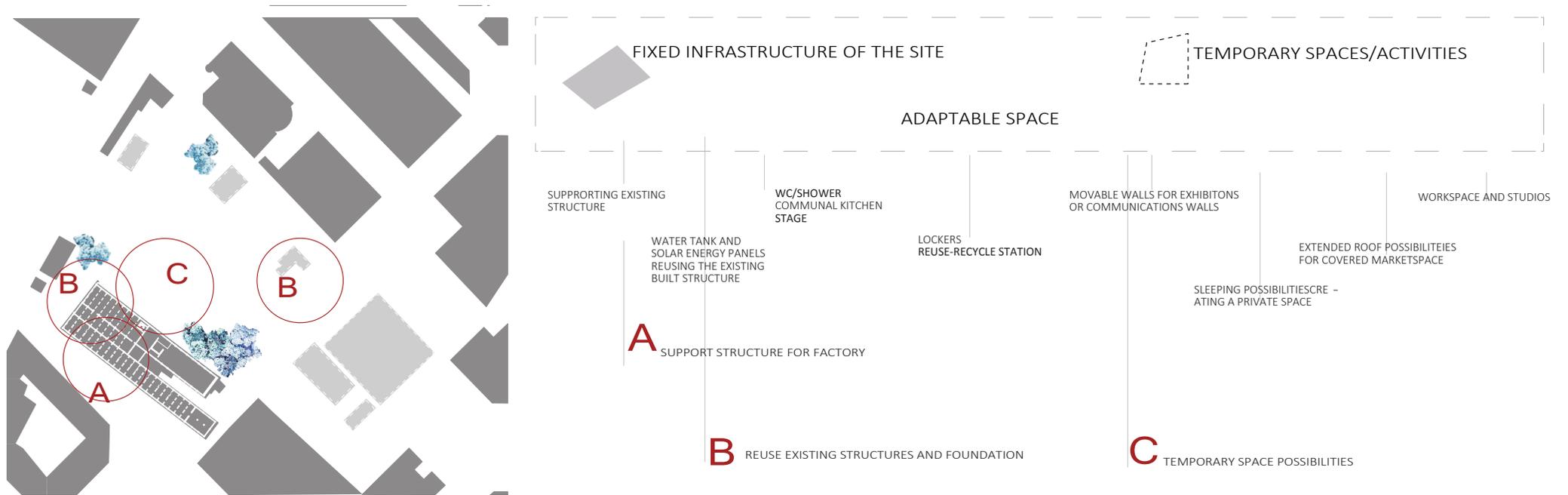


ROMANI FAMILIES UNOFFICIAL LIVING AGRICULTURE

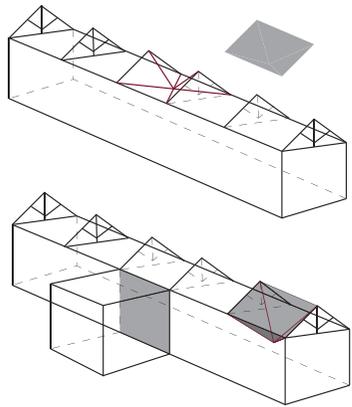
A ROMANIE FAMILY'S SMALL HEN RUN AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

CONFLICT
A THREAT OF EVICTION AND LOSS OF POSSIBILITY TO CULTIVATE AND PASSING ON AGRICULTURE KNOWLEDGE. CONFLICT OF LIFESTYLES

ARCHITECTURAL STRATEGY: INTERVENTIONS

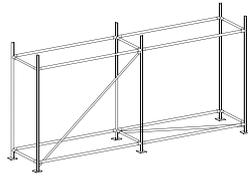


The *fixed structure* provides a basic infrastructure to the sites. And contains programs and interventions that make the site possible to inhabit, like water and energy supply. It also involves support structures for the industrial heritage. The *adaptable structures* provide spaces for multiple uses such as the shelf walls that can be used for cultivation, storage or shops. And the possibility of the *temporary structures*, protected canopies that provide spaces for sleeping, marketplaces and meetings.



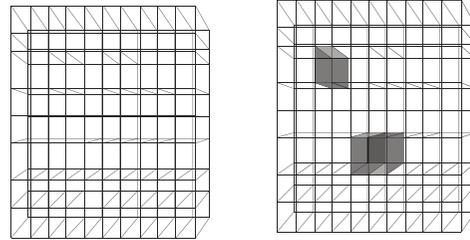
USE OF EXISTING STRUCTURE

Solar panels
Water tank



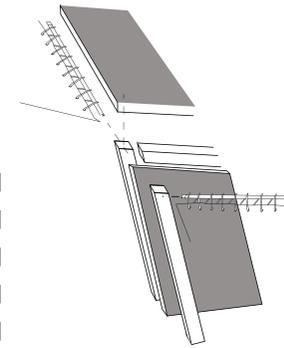
FIXED PROGRAMS

Support structure for factory
Stage
Kitchen
WC/showers



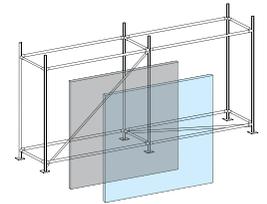
ADAPTABLE PROGRAMS

Use- reuse station
Lockers



TEMPORARY PROGRAMS

Sleeping possibilities
Extended stage
Studios
Communication walls



ARCHITECTURAL STRATEGY: PROPOSAL

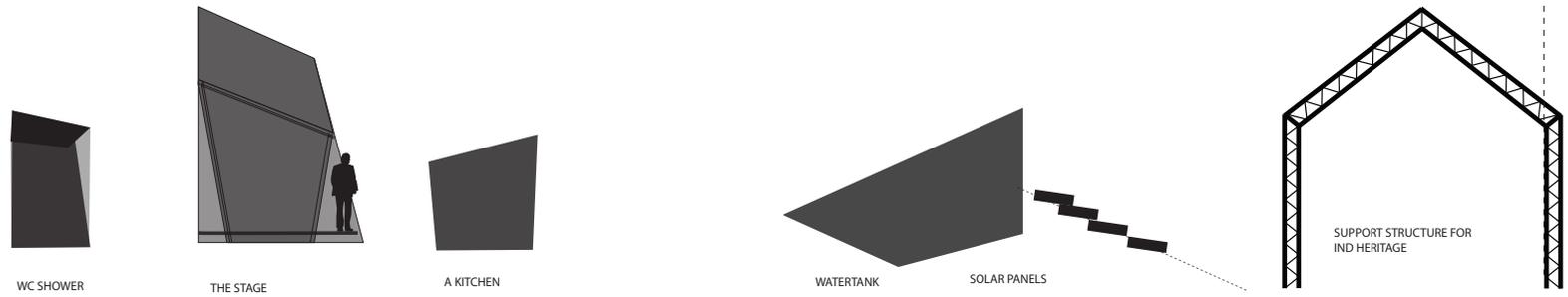
TEMPORARY PROGRAMS

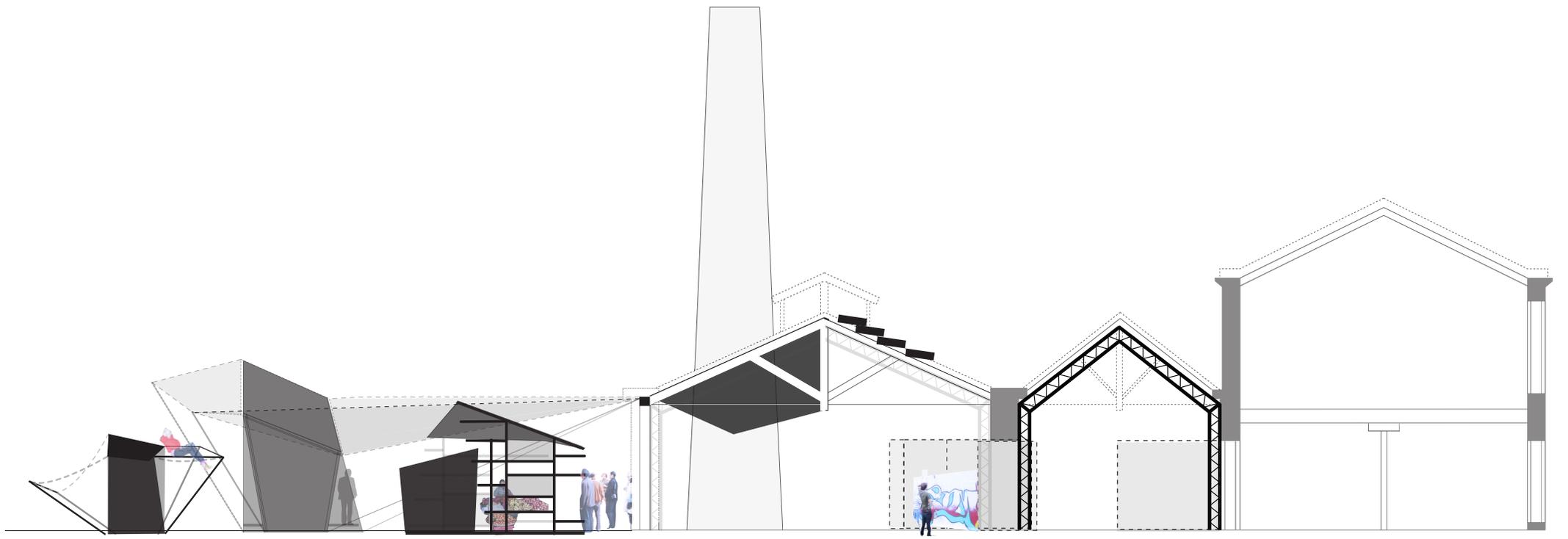


ADAPTABLE PROGRAMS



FIXED PROGRAMS





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Mapping/ drawings

<http://www.icc.cat/>

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<http://www.laescocesa.org/en>

22@Barcelona, <http://www.22barcelona.com>

<http://nau21.net>

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Architectural office

AAA Atelier d'architecture autogérée, <http://www.urbantactics.org/>, <http://www.spatialagency.net/database/aaa>

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Raumlabor, <http://raumlabor.net/>

ATTACHMENTS: INTERVIEW

Placido Romero: Resident Artist at the collectiveateliers of La Escocesa en Calle Pere IV.
2011-09-26 12:00/ Översättning

Would you like to explain the process of how La Escocesa came to be?

The factory was a private factory. It had always been the property of the same family. At a certain time there were no heirs left, they had died and he who then inherited was a man who was like the secretary of the previous owner.... Blurrrr... At this time you never rented out parts of a fabric, it was always the whole complex. Well, when this owner died there was no activity in La Escocesa until 9-10 years ago.

When did it shut down?

Exactly how long it had been closed when the artists arrived, I don't know. But the artists arrived 10 years ago. They came from other factories that had closed in the area of Poblenou. In specific there was one that was called Submarino, that had been the residence for quite many artists, that when it was shut down they went looking for empty buildings and found La Escocesa. So, at first arrived this group of artists and with time the factory started to be filled up with people, artists, craftsmen and so on...

So at this time all the buildings were occupied?

Yes, the whole complex. Then this Landlord (Francil) began to rent the space, where I don't know exactly ..but it seems as if this man was there every day, with the people and that he enjoyed the idea that it was full of artists. So, this lasted 7 or 8 years until, with the 22@ plan, there was a plan of reorganization of the district, and the whole complex was bought by Renta Corporación.

Renta Corporacion? A company engaged in purchasing investment. Really, if you look into it, the company seems to serve as fuel to all political parties. In fact, if you look online for 3 years ago or so, there was a series of hassles because Renta Corporación bought down the price and sold to the municipality rather expensive. So the gains, seemed to have been split with the parties that made the proposition.. It's a way to finance a "history". If someone would look into it because everybody knows, but nobody has investigated it closely on what really happened.

.....Anyway, what this company did was purchasing La Escocesa and I think that price was enough for the remaining heirs.. Once I asked if it was a good deal and he said they had made a lot of money but I can't tell what he had to spend it on?

So, they bought the entire factory and what they, Renta Corporacións, then dedicated themselves to do was, taking a crowded space and expell all of its inhabitants... To whom the contract ended it ended, and for those who stayed over time lo interdican?.. And this is what they did at the factory ... expelling all the people from their space and

only the few of us, we who did not have anywhere to go...We resisted until the City Council, because Renta Corporación gave a portion of the factory to the City (that part of the factory in which we now reside)and then we were able to move back in. So this part now belongs to the city.

Why do you think they did this? To justify their actions?

No, this is when you make a redevelopment plan of that size. Then a certain part of the property must be marked to the City Hall for services, schools, day care and so on.... They had some sort of an understanding ,I guess for this and to increase the buildable space ... because of course being a very large block, there is a large amount of floor area. You can make a lot with this space ... you get the height. Maybe the City saw something there..but high? Anyway ,exactly how it was made the decision I do not know, but something like that....

And then over the years, we have been there, creating ... And in the end getting the City Council to accept the plan of making La Escocesa to a Factory of Creation, and this is where we're at. And the company ,they tried to sell all the surrounding building(ships), but now with the crisis, they have not been able.

Nothing has happened?

Nothing has happened and nothing will happen in a long time....One thing we know is that the plot next to the fabric, where they were about to build fairly high buildings, Renta Corporación has sold it to the Municipality to build social housing.

The plots are in the rest of the neighborhood, are in a "paused" state too?

The history or the objectives of this is that the reformation of Poblenou has been very contentious. The idea of putting there a technological district (which is an idea coming from the policy of the Socialists (PSOE) here in Barcelona) is an idea ... which wasn't a totally failure of idea, because here you had an industrial neighborhood that did not work.

Poblenou had been formed in an era when Barcelona was an industrial city, but a really dirty industry...And the truth is that it had already been declining, that why there were so many artists here, because you could easily find a space and they were very cheap. So, then people began to come here to live. But then from the plan of reorganization, especially with the project of Forum... they made the plan of reorganization of this part of 22@ .. and this is where we are..

The part that was already built at this moment wasn't so bad ... but then there was this chief architect in the City, named Aranillo?.... I do not remember his name now, who has really been the creator of this whole idea of the city as it has developed at this spot.. The project that developed the city of Barcelona was much as the Eixample ..

The Cerda plan way?

The Cerda's plan. And as this had always been how one did all the extensions, suddenly with this Architect Aranillo?? The project should create buildings, skyscrapers and create a new city? But I must say that really, in an urbanistic view it seems to have resulted in a disaster... it is a desert there today. But you never know how time will shape the history.

Would you like to tell us some more about your relation towards 22@ and their plans and slogans marketing an innovative and technological district?

These are issues that I don't have very clear. I've been, relating to this issue, depending on the fact that we are giving grants... because the artist collectives don't have the means to live a life in a city to expensive, where you have to have lots of money to live. Clearly I must rely on the collective. But, this issue I don't have it so clearly nore the subject of the City development in this sense? It is unclear and now I don't have enough time to get a clear picture.

Can you tell us something about the neighborhood associations? They also produce some criticism?

Obviously, if you suddenly realize your town, because Poblenou really was a small-town, the only entrances to Poblenou was the street Pere IV because the other streets were tracks were cut, and it worked in a small town way...

Then suddenly the City Council decides that this will change, and the people who lived there were the heirs of workers ...so emotionally, there was a lot of strong symbolics involved? They tornd downall that which had been feeding their parents. What had created the environment. Because of this, at first the response was very strong. But on the other hand it couldn't be strong enough because this really was a neighborhood that was in a decadent state?

So, the neighbours of Poblenou remain critical. And that is no surprise if you look at what is happening there, but I think that a large part of these voices now have understood and maybe accepted that the city will grow. And that it certainly won't stop if there is nobody there. .the transformation ..

Was there any collaboration?

At first the struggle was superstrong, 22@ was the Monster, it was was the thief.

At this moment not so much?

They have started to do Campains to get publicity by the people, but to the people ... 22@ still sounds bad, it will always sound bad. Yet they try to promote ,for example, giving away computers to the neighbours ... So, they try to advertise to generate con-

sensus with people but still they don't get much reaction.

We ... an indicative network ... we really are in the position of ...I believe that the possibility of a neighborhood with creative spaces inside and such things could go well together with another...

Is La Escocesa safe today?

No. We have no security. During all these years we have made intensive campaines in order to remain our own activities inside.

How do you do this?

Well, look, in the association, there is a guy called Marco Norris?, an Italian. In the association, we who were there were 4 or 5, there was no more. Then, Marco with our website, made an Internet campain that came out pretty strong with lots of social repercussion . This was really the big secret. To make this campain of the network, making it into something important. It is about entering the willingness to do it, then advertise it... And begin to generate ..

And then there have been moments in this movement like the one we are in right now . And the truth is that we have managed to put forward a working system that up to this point has worked. Now what happens is that we have to decide how it should work in the future .. because this is something absolutely changing .. it always have to be reinvented.

And the theme of the Heritage of the factories?

This has happened because, of course, everything was erased. In Poblenou they just run over all of it without respect anything ... So then the ... industrial heritage...the Association of neighbors, everyone decided to defend it because these are important things, to tell the industrial history of Barcelona...But when it was accepted and decided to assure the industrial heritage there was not much left..What was left was Can Ricart and La Escocesa and almost nothing else..

So, what remains now is assured as Industrial Heritage?

Today it is, specifically La Escocesa is assured as Industrial Heritage, as is the remaining part of Can Ricart, the part that they decided to defend. Can Ricart was much larger before, but suddenly one decides that ... well this is the historical and the other we tear down. What was interesting with Can Ricart was that it was an entire industrial neighborhood, with the streets..It was the whole structure of a place where you could live, work, as if it was all generated. Can Ricart was like a system that behaved very unique ... And of course, now only two ships remain and with the rest they are going

to do other things that have nothing to do with till system.... And with La Escocesa it is the same story .. Or, with La Escocesa they have to protect finished building, but as it doesn't sell, they don't fix it and in the end it will fall down. Soon and when it is broken it will be to late...

Can you tell us something about other hidden activities or occupations in the neighborhood?

At this moment there is really not so many left... hm ... are you familiar with La Tejadora? It is an occupied building that, I'm not sure but I think it still remains occupied.. the people there do esceneria popular y and I think at this moment in Poblenou, this is the only place... because before there was the Macabra, the circus that was further down and I think the policy with this...well... It ended because it broke down before it could change.

Where do they go?

Who knows? Where do one go when they die? Nobody knows.....

What about this site (pointing at the site facing La Escocesa on the other side of Pere IV) Do you know anything about the current state?

This is a protected building as well. The current state is that they have declared it as industrial heritage, but it has been burned 3 times by the owners for it to fall. Because, of course, as it is not sold, it will fall and return to equity .. What is going to happen with this I do not know.

Here (pointing at the chicken street) they are gonna have to open this road, which is Provençals, which is not open yet .. and in principle it goes along up to Corts Catalans on the other side of La Escocesa. La Escocesa what happens is that , due to the preservation, the passage that is going through the block will be assured as a passage pietonal .. it is not going to be open as a street for cars traffic.. It is curious because in the original plan by Cerda the block was preserved like that as a whole..... And do not know what else I can tell you ...

We're happy..

Perfect, and what will happen with all this nobody knows .. moreover this project .. what will happen due to the current state of the economic crisis .. is something....Yesterday there was an urban planner with us who said that this will never be as it was. I mean that, well I guess the prices will go down and.. ..maybe the speculation will stop? Well, I suppose that would start to show a way out... We are temporarily year by year, every year we make an annual contract.

There is a project of reorganization of the fabric that is already proven but we don't

know when it will happen because, again, there is no money. So we maintain there in permanent agony..meanwhile we create...which is not so bad .

..... taking photo.....smalltalking about our project....and of making scenarios.....

One example, one of the things that we try to generate with La Escocesa is, well, that the site itself as a center of creation begins to infect the spaces around it. For example, the bar next door used to be a bar for those of the factory and such. Then, sales went down .. there were no factories, no more pads , all empty .. and they did not know to whom to give food ..

So we proposed to do the bar as the bar of La Escocesa , a place where people might come ... and they agreed , so now it is a part of La Escocesa with the remodulation of the factory hanging on the walls ... we have things there.

The property around us, the rest of the factory, is still empty and now the owners have been in touch with us asking if we wanted to buy artists spaces inside the factory. At first they were to do luxury apartments and is now generating They are looking into the possibility of renting or selling it to other artists or to do a creative center. But what happens is that the artists do not have the money. It is very difficult to sell at this time. But, well, I think that somehow these small space interventions in some way can generate to its surroundings something that has to do with it. And well, Barcelona has indeed begun to take coincidence of the importance of the art in this city.

Barcelona has always had an artistic tradition, but what happens is that ... before Barcelona was a city with a lot of.. atmosphere? With the tourism and with this selling of an image...really waht happens is a city being emptied..full of holes. And for the people who want to do things there is not enough room..

TACK

Sanna Johnels för alltid så inspirerande samtal och samarbete.
Placido Romero Martinez, Oriol Hernando,
Ana Betancour, Carl- Johan Vesterlund, Joaquim Tarraso & Agneta Andrén