Urban Maestro

Lessons learned from the European Prize for Urban Public Space (2000-2020)

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INTRODUCTION

In 1999, the Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB) hosted an exhibition that featured the efforts of numerous European cities at reconquering many of the places that the automobile had taken over. Faced with this discovery, the Center decided to join forces with other institutions in London, Paris, Vienna, Frankfurt, Helsinki and Ljubljana to launch the European Prize for Urban Public Space. Delving into issues as thorny as the essence of Europe, the sense of the public sphere or the limits of what is urban, the contest wondered to what extent the physical transformation of shared places such as streets, squares or parks could contribute to the improvement of democracy. After ten biennial editions, the call for entries has harvested a wide repertoire of best practices that contribute to the redistribution of opportunities, the improvement of the legacy for the next generations, the empowerment of citizens or the revaluation of the inheritance received from ancestors. The dissemination of this body of knowledge constitutes a valuable tool for reflection and debate—a tool that is as rich in useful lessons as it is in open challenges.

1. BACKGROUND OF THE CONTEST:
   BARCELONA AND THE CCCB

The fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) triggered a process of globalization that led to the deindustrialization of many European cities; production moved to global remote locations where it was easier to exploit workers and the environment thus leaving many urban factories in Europe as unoccupied as their labour. Suddenly, the major European municipalities faced a new dilemma: how should cities make their living from now on? Barcelona, an eminently industrial city whose factories had attracted large waves of rural population for more than a century, became the spearhead of a possible response—the city was committed to a profound improvement of the public space as a recipient of democracy belonging to everybody. Following its example, countless European cities saw in this transformation the opportunity to bet on a tertiary economy based on knowledge, tourism and investment in real estate. In the midst of this refounding process, the Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB) was founded in 1993 in order to offer a critical and kaleidoscopic look at
urban facts. One of its most long-lived cultural products would be the European Prize for Urban Public Space.

2. AN EXHIBITION GIVES RISE TO THE PRIZE

In 1999, the CCCB hosted The Reconquest of Europe | Urban Public Space, 1980-1999, an exhibition that bore witness to the enormous efforts that have been made in Europe since the early 1980s to recover open urban public spaces. This exhibition confirmed the existence of a revolution on a continental scale that sought to reclaim the public space from the private vehicle to offer it to the public. The success of this discovery motivated the CCCB to organize in 2000 the first edition of the European Prize for Urban Public Space. Since then, the Award has certainly been unique, having offered an innovative approach to urban reality from both an empirical point of view—a repository of good practices—and from a political perspective—an agora open to reflection and debate on complex issues that condition coexistence and survival. This biennial and honorary contest recognizes both the authors and the developers of the best interventions carried out in public spaces in European cities. In the early stages of the Prize, the works presented were mostly Spanish and architectural, but over time their European dimension was consolidated and the type and scale of the interventions diversified.

3. THREE PROBLEMATIC BOUNDARIES

From its inception, the European Prize for Urban Public Space was comfortable with the complexity of the three concepts that appear in its own title. What is Europe? What does "public" mean? Where are the limits of the "urban phenomenon"? These were three problematic subjects that were in full review at the time the Prize was created and whose limits are still highly difficult to determine today. Very often, the difficulty of defining them leads to scepticism or perplexity regarding certain works submitted to the Prize, whose European, public or urban dimension is not at all evident. Far from being an obstacle, the problematic nature of these three dimensions is very useful when it comes to enriching reflection and debate, which are the ultimate aim of the contest.
3.1. The complex idea of Europe

To begin with, the Europe of the Prize represents both a heritage settled over centuries and millennia and a desire that has not yet materialized. Of course, its scope goes beyond the shrinking European Union, whose instability has been sadly confirmed by the uncertainty of Brexit. According to the contest’s rules, the urban transformations that can be submitted to the contest are those that have taken place in any of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe. However, the adoption of this political criterion collides with the geography of the continent, since it exceeds its limits without covering it completely.

On the one hand, it includes transcontinental states such as Russia, which occupies 40% of the European surface, although 75% of its territory is Asian. Something similar happens with Turkey, with 97% of its territory in Asia, and with Istanbul itself, the most populated city in Europe although it straddles two continents. For example, this is not a contradiction in the particular case of the reform of the Beşiktas fish market (Istanbul, Turkey, 2010)\(^1\), since it is located on the European shore of the Bosphorus. But the same does not happen in the case of the "Green Tenerife" plan (Buenavista del Norte, Spain, 2002)\(^2\), since, technically, the Canary Islands belong to
the African continent. On the other hand, the Council of Europe does not include among its member states countries such as Belarus or the Vatican City. Although their territories are de facto included within the European continent, their political regimes are incompatible with the governing principles of the institution, based on such European values as democracy, human rights, and the protection of national minorities or the fight against intolerance.

However, the ambiguity inherent to the idea of Europe far transcends its physical boundaries. On the north-south axis, for example, there are clear climatic and cultural contrasts. For example, the bustling promiscuity of Naples has little to do with the respectful order of Stockholm. This diversity of sociabilities is reflected in the shape and use of public spaces, thus enriching the European idea of the city, an idea that is more the result of the constant mixture of identities than of national, ethnic or religious purity. As an example of this, it is undeniable that Islam also belongs to the European DNA, although certain essentialists may find it difficult to accept. The Prize attests to this through interventions such as the restoration of the Torre del Homenaje (Huéscar, Spain, 2007)\(^3\), a watchtower built by the Arabs in 13th century Europe. However, this belonging has not only been extremely fertile throughout the centuries, but continues to be so today, nourished by migratory flows. This becomes evident in the Altach Islamic cemetery (Austria, 2012)\(^4\).

3.2. The ambivalent idea of public space

Another ambiguity inherent to the Prize is the concept of the public. On the east-west axis, European cities still reflect the traces of the division of the continent for almost half a century into two blocs, with political and economic paradigms that understood this concept in contrasting manners. The cities of the capitalist West, for example, anticipated those of the post-Soviet bloc in the communal reconquest of space taken over by the private vehicle. The delay that eastern cities still display on this front could be explained by a certain disdain for everything that is publicly owned, which has for decades been identified with authoritarianism. As such, it could certainly be said that there is a two-speed Europe. This justifies, for example, the recognition of

\(^3\) Torre del Homenaje | Huéscar (España, 2007) | Mención especial en la edición de 2008 | Nuevo mirador público sobre los restos de una antigua torre medieval de vigía. | [ENLACE]

\(^4\) Cementerio islámico | Altach (Austria, 2012) | Mención especial en la edición de 2014 | La construcción de un cementerio que obedece al rito musulmán satisface una demanda de una minoría muy considerable y da a muchos inmigrantes la posibilidad de inhumar a sus difuntos dentro de su tierra de acogida. | [ENLACE]
Tirana's effort to pacify Skanderbeg Square (Albania, 2017)\(^5\), a reform that, surely, would not be perceived as so unusual in French or British squares nowadays.

In fact, the example of authoritarianism highlights to what extent reducing public space to a mere question of ownership can be problematic. Identifying it with the publicly owned land carries the risk of neglecting its political burden and its democratic values. What is legal does not always coincide with what is legitimate, the public does not always coincide with the community. This is reflected in a special way in two of the most controversial recognitions in the Prize’s history. One of these is the "Heavenly Hundred" Garden (Kiev, Ukraine, 2016)\(^6\), which flourished in a central landfill whose metal fence was dismantled to erect barricades during the harshest days of the Revolution of Dignity—also known as EuroMaidan, literally, "Europe's Square". The brutality with which the authorities repressed these protests resulted in hundreds of dead and wounded. Within a week, the surrounding residents illegally occupied the publicly owned landfill, transforming it with their bare hands into a community garden where they could meet and discuss which democratic reforms Ukraine required.
The other controversial recognition is that of Occupy Puerta del Sol (Madrid, Spain, 2011). An illegal and crowded demonstration occupied with hundreds of tents, one of the most emblematic squares of the Spanish capital, for several weeks, night and day, until being violently evicted by the police. Aside from demanding democratic reforms, the demonstrators were protesting against the privatization of public services and cuts in state budgets. Indeed, the neoliberal hegemony that has characterized the era of globalized capitalism has led to a crisis surrounding the idea of the public, to the extent that it is not always easy to distinguish what is public from what is private.

On the other hand, although the public is usually defined in opposition to the private, there is no doubt that both domains maintain a relationship that is not only close, but also necessary. Proof of this are interventions such as the improvement of the center of Barkingside (London, United Kingdom, 2015), which crosses the sacrosanct property limits by renovating the signs and windows of private businesses. Usually, public space is also defined in opposition to domestic space, although it maintains an equally inseparable relationship with it. Dwellings require access, light or ventilation, but streets are also configured through facades, doors and windows. This is reflected in complex interventions that transcend the perimeter of public space in order to configure or activate it from the residential domain. This is the case of the new urban center of Can Mulà (Mollet del Vallès, Spain, 2000) or the comprehensive rehabilitation program of the Marinha de Silvalde neighborhood (Espinho, Portugal, 2002). In both cases, new affordable housing buildings serve to shape the public space.

Finally, it is also problematic to identify public space as being synonymous with free ground/open spaces, as opposed to what is built-up. From a purely typological point of view, the archetype of public space understood as being an open-air and universally accessible place often collides with the reality of the awarded works. Numerous works among the results of the different editions of the contest can be surprising at first glance because they escape traditional categorizations such as the street, the square, the park or the promenade. The truth is, it is not too difficult to

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7 Acampada en la Puerta del Sol | Madrid (España), 2011 | Categoría especial en la edición de 2012 | Demostración masiva de ciudadanos que reclaman la mejora del sistema democrático a través de una acampada temporal en una de las plazas más representativas de Madrid. [ENLACE]

8 Mejora del centro de Barkingside | Londres (Reino Unido), 2015 | Mención especial en la edición de 2016 | Las fachadas ciegas y los alrededores descuidados de una biblioteca pública y un polideportivo municipal de los años sesenta adquieren centralidad y representatividad cívica gracias a la inserción de un porche escenográfico, los jardines de Virginia y la mejora de los escaparates de la adyacente calle mayor. [ENLACE]

9 Centro multifuncional de Can Mulà | Mollet del Vallès (España), 2000 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2000 | Creación de un complejo urbano consistente en el mercado municipal, la sede del Ayuntamiento, equipamientos comerciales y viviendas en torno a un espacio público central. [ENLACE]

10 Programa de rehabilitación urbana de la Marinha de Silvalde | Espinho (Portugal), 2002 | Mención especial en la edición de 2002 | Plan integral de mejora urbana en el barrio de la marina de Espinho; ordenación integral del espacio público, rehabilitación de edificios y mejora medioambiental del frente litoral. [ENLACE]
include among these classic categories open canopies that function as civic roofs, roofs capable of sheltering from the sun or rain activities that are typical of public spaces such as the market, the theatre or the wait for transport. This is the case of interventions such as the theatre "La Lira" (Ripoll, Spain, 2012)\(^{11}\) or the multipurpose canopy of Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium, 2015)\(^{12}\).

It is becoming more difficult to understand the reform of a pavilion of the PC Caritas psychiatric hospital (Melle, Belgium, 2016) as a characteristic of public space\(^{13}\), not only because of its private ownership, but also because of its ambiguous architecture, halfway between a closed building and open space. The difficulty disappears when it is understood that the old pavilion was partially saved from demolition to offer a peaceful refuge to patients, its visitors and the walkers of the public park that surrounds it. The recognition of completely closed buildings without free access, such as the Norwegian Opera House (Oslo, Norway, 2008)\(^{14}\), the "Przełomy" dialogue center (Szczecin, Poland, 2015)\(^{15}\) or the Memorial of the Abolition of Slavery (Nantes, France, 2011)\(^{16}\) is also complex. The paradox vanishes when one takes into account that the roofs of these three facilities are walkable public spaces that openly offer themselves to the continuity of their urban environments. Even more difficult to assimilate into the realm of public space are situations such as the "Volkspalast" (Berlin, Germany, 2005)\(^{17}\), a totally enclosed parallelepiped-shaped building. Its opening is only perceived in the programming of its offer as an experimental and self-managed cultural center.
3.3. The confused notion of what is urban

The third ambivalent concept that appears in the title of the Prize is that of the urban notion—presumably, one of the largest contributions Europe has made to humanity has been its particular way of building cities, long-lived cities, where the vestiges of successive historical moments overlap. Compact, walkable and human-scale cities; mixed cities, especially prone to social interaction, political participation, commercial activity or cultural fertility. However, throughout the 20th century, the European conception of the city has suffered two great betrayals that many of the works presented to the contest try to compensate through the most diverse of strategies. One of these betrayals attacked the compactness of the urban fabric; the other, its mixture.

This attack against compactness took place following the Second World War, when the mass availability of private vehicles made the phenomenon of urban dispersion possible for the first time in history. Apart from lacking any civility, today we know that low-density urbanization is a completely unsustainable model in the face of global challenges such as global warming, the energy crisis or the outbreak of pandemics. Its expansionism depreciates the biodiversity of vast areas of territory, wastes large amounts of water and energy, and causes the emission of enormous amounts of greenhouse gases. Initially emerging in North America, the scattered city, comprised of gardened houses, highways, roundabouts and large shopping centers, has spread to countless European peripheries. The well-defined limits of the old walled cities have been diluted to the point that it is not always obvious where the urban area ends and the natural begins, if that still occurs anywhere on the old continent. The enclosure is no longer around the cities, but around the natural parks.
This ubiquity of the urban is reflected in the Award through peripheral interventions such as the landscape restoration of the controlled deposit of the Vall d’en Joan (Begues, Spain, 2003)\textsuperscript{18} or the opening of the Rainham wetlands (London, United Kingdom, 2014)\textsuperscript{19}. The first case consisted of the closure of a landfill located precisely within a natural park, so it is difficult to understand its inclusion in an award intended for urban spaces until it is understood that all solid waste from the metropolitan area of Barcelona accumulated in it for four decades. The second case is the creation of a metropolitan park in a vast natural territory miraculously preserved thanks to its condition, for decades, as a military compound closed to the public.

The attack against the urban mixture came from the hand of the urbanism of Modernity. Denying the promiscuous hodgepodge of cities inherited from the past, modern rationalism proposed the specialization of residential, administrative, commercial or productive uses in large sectors that function as monocultural landowners. Thus, the modern city is segregated into hyperactive and hyperpassive territories. Among the former are the large retail, service or office sectors, which concentrate all their activity during the day, but are desperately unpopulated at night. Historical centers that have expelled their former inhabitants to specialize as theme parks for mass tourism can also be included here. Among the latter, there are the dormitory cities where there are only dwellings and which are emptied during working hours because they lack economic activity. The "centrum.odorf" (Innsbruck, Austria, 2006)\textsuperscript{20} stands out among the innumerable works of the Prize that try to reverse the hyper passive condition of the residential estates. The intervention tries to create a new centrality between the blocks and towers of an inhospitable Olympic village built in the seventies. To this end, it creates a square surrounded by facilities, a place of social interaction activated by various community services.

Thanks to the large number of public housing units included in the project, this example from Innsbruck allows us to introduce another type of urban mixture, which Modernity has attacked: the social mixture, a quality of the European tradition that has been the victim of spatial segregation in numerous modern developments, which has occurred through action and by omission. In the first case, the proliferation of the elevator terminated the coexistence on the same building of different social strata, while automobile hypermobility fostered the polarization between rich and poor

\textsuperscript{18} Restauración paisajística del depósito controlado de la Vall d'en Joan | Begues (España), 2003 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2004 | Clausura y recuperación como parque público del vertedero de residuos del área metropolitana de Barcelona. | [ENLACE]

\textsuperscript{19} Apertura de los humedales de Rainham | Londres (Reino Unido), 2014 | Mención especial en la edición de 2014 | Un paraje periférico con una riqueza natural insólita y preservada se hace accesible a los londinenses para que lo conozcan, lo amen y lo defiendan de una probable depredación urbanística. | [ENLACE]

\textsuperscript{20} "centrum.odorf" | Innsbruck (Austria), 2006 | Mención especial en la edición de 2008 | Nueva plaza y nuevo edificio multifuncional a caballo entre los dos polígonos residenciales de las villas olimpícas de Innsbruck. | [ENLACE]
peripheries. As for the omission, modern planning was unable to channel the waves of rural migrants seeking opportunities in the city. In industrial cities like Barcelona, the newly arrived workforce had to crowd into informal settlements consisting of precarious and unsanitary huts; the restoration of the summit of Cerro de la Rovira (Barcelona, Spain, 2011) attests to this. This intervention treats as vestiges of maximum archaeological value the remains of an informal settlement demolished because of the Olympic transformation that the Catalan capital undertook in the 1980s.

After all, the compactness and urban mix defended by the Prize are closely linked to the European idea of the city. This was claimed in 2012 by the documentary "Europa Ciudad", produced by the contest's organizing team for Spanish public television (RTVE), based on interviews with award-winning authors and members of the jury. Time has confirmed that, far from being nostalgic, this European notion of the city fully coincides with the guidelines established by the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III (Quito, 2016). Against the segregation and dispersion promoted by an unjust, senseless and urbicidal urbanism, the mixed and compact city is the best geometric solution to inhabit in a fair and sensible way a finite and delicate planet, subjected to threats such as the demographic explosion, the scarcity of resources, the climate emergency or the increase in social inequalities.

4. FOUR SENSES OF DEMOCRATIZATION TO ANSWER A QUESTION OF A POLITICAL NATURE

The unavoidable complexity of the urban situation requires that the Prize approaches it from an eminently transdisciplinary perspective. Many of the interventions that are presented to their calls come from technical or humanistic disciplines as diverse as urbanism, engineering, architecture, geography, sociology or art. However, under the bases of the call there is an underlying question of a deeply political nature: what are the physical transformations of the urban environment that best contribute to democratizing the city? To answer this question, the Prize selects the most

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21 Restauración de la cumbre del Turó de la Rovira | Barcelona (España), 2011 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2012 | Restauración paisajística y mejora de la accesibilidad de un mirador en que se solapan los restos de unas baterías antiaéreas de la Guerra Civil con las del asentamiento informal que posteriormente las colonizó. | [ENLACE]

22 "Europa ciudad" | Soy Cámara | 2012 | Documental producido por el CCCB y RTVE. | [ENLACE]
outstanding works of each edition, giving four different meanings to the word "democratization."

4.1. Downwards, the sense of redistribution

Looking down, there is a sense of redistribution, which comes to the rescue of the base of the social pyramid to promote cohesion and equal access to opportunities. To this end, comprehensive neighborhood upgrading is an essential tool for transforming underserved neighborhoods into more prosperous and cohesive communities. This is exactly what is taking place, for example, in the aforementioned urban rehabilitation program in Marinha de Silvalde, a marginal and degraded neighborhood in Espinho (Portugal, 2002). There is also a deep sense of redistribution in the multiple transformations aimed at dissolving physical barriers that segregate or corner certain urban sectors with respect to the rest of the urban fabric. This is what is occurring in "El Valle Brazado" (Elche, Spain, 2014), a proposal that solves the shortage of bridges over the Vinalopó River and the consequent marginality of the neighborhoods on its right bank. It does so by converting the riverbed into a linear park that joins both banks through a network of paths and intersecting walkways. Something similar happened with the environmental recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river, one of the best examples of democratization in the recent history of metropolitan Barcelona (Spain, 2000). What had been a sort of sewer that separated the poorer neighborhoods from the central city became a green corridor that summons the two shores and connects them with the sea.

In fact, one of the recurrent forms of opportunity redistribution occurs on the maritime fronts. Coveted by the real estate market and the tourism industry, these prime locations are constantly subjected to privatization pressures that seek to make them more exclusive and exclusive. For this reason, it is important that cities democratize them, guaranteeing universal access to the greatest diversity of users. A good example of this is the renovation of the Poniente beach promenade (Benidorm, 2002)
Spain, 2009). Thanks to its high population density, the municipality was able to support an exuberant civil work that invites all citizens to enjoy the sea, regardless of their condition. Another emblematic example is in the "marine organ" that was installed on the west coast of Zadar (Croatia, 2005), a mere landing dock for massive floods of cruise passengers completed with a wide staircase that plunges into the sea. It is provided with long tubes that emit musical sounds with the impact of the waves. Now, it is a beautiful promenade whose magnificent sunset draws residents and tourists alike. Equally, representative is the remodeling of the Old Port of Marseille (France, 2013). This historic site, which had succumbed to the unjust mismanagement of yacht clubs and their pleasure boats, was spruced up so that any stroller could enjoy the view of the water.

When they have not ended up as backyards for cities, riverbanks can also constitute primordial fronts whose attractions run the risk of exclusionary privatization. Among the results of the contest, there are numerous interventions that have defended them as public spaces with universal access. Noteworthy among them is the case of the recovery of the banks of the Ljubljanica River as it passes through the historic center...
of Ljublana (Slovenia, 2011)\textsuperscript{29}. The profuse collection of bridges, canals, dikes, squares and riverside parks that historically accompanied the riverbed was rehabilitated and completed for pedestrians to revisit following decades of neglect. Another situation that occurs frequently in the water courses that cross urban centers occurs when they lose their industrial character in order to be opened up to citizen uses. Also in these cases it is necessary to claim the shore as a primarily accessible and publicly owned place, which is precisely what happened with the new "Havnebadet" public baths, located in the port of the Grand Canal in Copenhagen (Denmark, 2003)\textsuperscript{30}, next to the Islands Brygge neighborhood. Here had been the historic Rysensteen Baths, closed in 1954 due to increased water pollution. The site was consolidated as an industrial sector that went into decline between the 70s and 80s of the last century, becoming a marginal neighborhood with a high crime rate. However years later, by opening up to new commercial and residential real estate developments, it became one of the most expensive sectors of the city to the point of being known as "the Manhattan of Copenhagen". That is why the installation on the dock of a floating platform that is accessible and equipped with different pools of clean water that allows the most varied citizens to enjoy the bath safely and free of charge was so pertinent. In less central positions, the riverbanks also have the possibility of becoming public parks that preserve the delicate meeting between city and nature. In this way, green lungs that democratize access to chlorophyll are saved from urban predation, which is especially suitable for those who do not have a terrace, garden or second home. Excellent examples of this are the recovery of the banks of the Gállego River (Zuera, Spain, 2001)\textsuperscript{31} or the new Ter River Park, on the outskirts of Girona (Spain, 1999)\textsuperscript{32}.

Another family of interventions impregnated with an authentic sense of redistribution is made up of those that are dedicated to reconquering the immense proportion of public space still privatized by the car, as soon as it is parked just as if it were moving. There is no doubt that private mobility is class-biased, as not everyone has the purchasing power to buy and maintain a car, yet it also involves other biases. For example, gender, since women drive less than men do, although they are more harassed when they walk on streets without pedestrians. In addition, age, since children and the elderly are more dependent when they do not have alternatives to

\textsuperscript{29} Restructuring the banks of the Ljubljanica river | Ljubljana (Slovenia), 2011 | Ex aequo award in the 2012 edition |
Renovation of the banks of the Ljubljanica river as it passes through the historic center of the city, the result of a collective effort that concentrates resources on specific operations. | [\textit{LINK}]

\textsuperscript{30} "Havnebadet" | Copenhagen (Denmark), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | New public toilets in the Graní C

\textsuperscript{31} Recovery of the channel and banks of the Gállego river | Zuera (Spain), 2001 | Ex aequo award in the 2002 edition |
Environmental improvement and urban planning through the creation of a new park with river walks. | [\textit{LINK}]

\textsuperscript{32} Ter river park | Girona (Spain), 1999 | Special mention in the 2000 edition | The Metropolitan Park of the River Ter entails the environmental recovery and improvement of the accessibility of the fluvial surroundings, which are no longer city's backyard. | [\textit{LINK}]

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Restructuring of the Place de la République | Paris (France), 2013 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | While the main squares of the French capital continue to be under the hegemony of the private vehicle, that of the République chooses to dedicate most of its surface area to pedestrians.

"Black Square / White Square" | Robbiano (Italy), 2005 | Special mention in the 2006 edition | Remodeling of the public space located in front of two churches in the historic center.

"Stortorget" | Kalmar (Sweden), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | Renovation of the pavement of the cathedral square.

Reform of Skanderbeg Square | Tirana (Albania, 2017) | First prize in the 2018 edition | The main square of the Albanian capital has been renovated through the planting of a green belt that unifies the buildings on its perimeter and the laying of a multicolored pavement of stones from various parts of the country.

"Shared area" on Exhibition Road | London (UK), 2011 | Special mention in the 2012 edition | A main street in the cultural district is subject to the renovation of pavements, the removal of architectural barriers and the pacification of road traffic according to a "shared surface" system that achieves a consensual balance between pedestrians and vehicles.

"Supermanzana" of Poblenou | Barcelona (Spain), 2017 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Several tactical urban planning operations pacify a cell of nine blocks in the Ensanche de Cerdà and constitute a pilot test for a future large-scale strategy that seeks to regain public space from the private vehicle and offer it to public transport, bicycles and pedestrians.

Theater "La Lira" | Ripoll (Spain), 2012 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | A canopy and a walkway fill the void left by the demolition of an old theater, becoming a window that frames the views towards the mountains and an access door to the old town.

As regards pedestrian conquests, they are as abundant as they are diverse among the results of the Prize. Those that pacify squares are especially symbolic, such as La République (Paris, France, 2013), Robbiano (Italy, 2005), Kalmar Cathedral (Sweden, 2003) or Skanderbeg (Tirana, Albania, 2017), cited above, as well as those that pacify main streets, such as the Exhibition Road (London, United Kingdom, 2011). This emblematic case adopted the concept of "shared surface" by greatly reducing the speed of road traffic and applying a striking diagonal grid to the pavement that made drivers aware of the fragility of pedestrians. But perhaps one of the most notorious cases of pacification is that of the "superblock" of Poblenou (Barcelona, Spain, 2017), a pioneer in a much more ambitious strategy that aims to reconquer the wide streets for walks, games or social interaction of the orthogonal plot of the famous Ensanche planned in the 19th century by Ildefons Cerdà.

Lastly, the sense of redistribution is also present in some interventions that go beyond the bourgeois conception of public space as a merely recreational place—the setting for the Sunday walk—by acknowledging its productive role. These are the actions that are conscious of the fact that many people with low purchasing power have always made their living on the street. As a paradigmatic example, the market square, which welcomes small merchants' stalls weekly so that the population has access to local and quality products at reasonable prices. This same evanescent productivity is found in the aforementioned Ripoll canopy (Spain, 2012), which on certain days shelters temporary markets. Also on the Sint-Jans-Molenbeek...
multipurpose canopy (Belgium, 2015)\textsuperscript{40}, the "Stadshal" market canopy (Ghent, Belgium, 2012)\textsuperscript{41}, the photovoltaic canopy of Figueres (Spain, 2011)\textsuperscript{42} or the Theater square (Antwerp, Belgium, 2009)\textsuperscript{43}. Of more stable but no less productive uses are the open canopies of the aforementioned Beşiktaş fish market (Istanbul, Turkey, 2010)\textsuperscript{44} or the market of the port of Vodice (Croatia, 2015)\textsuperscript{45}.

Since productivity goes beyond merely commercial activities, examples of actions dedicated to the primary and secondary sectors of the economy could not be missing from the award results. On the manufacturing side, the case of the network of urban commons "R-Urban" (Colombes, France, 2014) is of great interest\textsuperscript{46}, which combats the structural unemployment of the Parisian banlieue through the creation of a set of productive facilities. Aside from community gardens, an experimental micro farm and a proximity market, the complex includes coworking premises and spaces to store, process and reuse construction materials recovered from demolition. Another example of a public space dedicated to manufacturing is the Fabrique Urbaine, a cooperative workshop located in the Schieblock building, which is part of the complex urban renewal action "Test Site" (Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2016)\textsuperscript{47}. The workshop offers its cooperative members and small self-employed professionals a fully equipped space to manufacture models, furniture and interior finishes that are sold in local stores.

Within the agricultural sector, there are abundant examples of urban gardens among the award results. The orchard located on the roof of the Schieblock building stands out for its professionalism and size. Known as the Dakakker, it is the largest roof garden in the Netherlands and one of the largest in Europe. In it, they experiment with different techniques of beekeeping and urban agriculture. Among its healthy, seasonal and zero kilometre products, there are fruits, vegetables, herbs and honey.

\textsuperscript{40} New multipurpose canopy | Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium), 2015 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | The construction of a monumental canopy in a block patio allows for concerts, fairs and a wide range of neighborhood activities to be hosted in a neighborhood with a complex and fragmented social composition. \[LINK\]

\textsuperscript{41} "Stadshal": a new market canopy with its main squares | Ghent (Belgium), 2012 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | A civic canopy with a highly representative cover that allows for host the weekly market and large events to be hosted, while returning to the historic center the dense and complex structure that it had lost during the 20th century. \[LINK\]

\textsuperscript{42} Photovoltaic roof | Figueras (Spain), 2011 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | A large civic roof covered with photovoltaic panels provides shelter for activities as varied as the weekly market, meetings and concerts. \[LINK\]

\textsuperscript{43} Plaza del Teatro | Antwerp (Belgium), 2009 | Work presented in the 2010 edition | A large canopy in front of the Stadsschowburg façade houses the regular markets of the Theaterplein, as well as eventual theatrical performances and open-air concerts. \[LINK\]

\textsuperscript{44} Beşiktaş Fish Market | Istanbul (Turkey), 2010 | Work submitted to the award for the 2010 edition | A triangular roof shelters a new fish market which, without facades, is closely integrated with the street. \[LINK\]

\textsuperscript{45} Port market | Vodice (Croatia), 2015 | Finalist in the 2010 edition | The old market of this coastal town is restructured under a new open canopy that facilitates its direct relationship with the daily life of the port. \[LINK\]

\textsuperscript{46} "R-Urban": network of urban commons | Colombes (France), 2014 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | A peripheral residential polygon combats structural unemployment through an ecological and productive complex that includes community food gardens, an experimental micro-farm, a market, coworking workshops, and spaces to store and reuse recovered materials. \[LINK\]

\textsuperscript{47} "Test Site" | Rotterdam (The Netherlands), 2018 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | A series of temporary interventions of tactical urbanism activate a marginal strip between the train tracks and Weena Avenue. \[LINK\]
They are sold in local bars and restaurants, especially *Op het dak* ("On the rooftop"), a cooperative bistro located on the same deck. Other professional examples include the orchards on the outskirts of the town of Caldes de Montbui (Spain, 2015)⁴⁸, which underwent a comprehensive restoration following the recovery of the old community irrigation system based on thermal waters. In this case, the reactivation of agricultural production in a mosaic of private plots of the urban perimeter was combined with the opening of a network of footpaths and walkways for pedestrians that allow all citizens to contemplate the passage of the stations through the orchards. A similar visual relationship between the contemplative stroller and the producer of the primary sector was established in the booths installed in the port of Cangas de Morrazo (Spain, 2008)⁴⁹. This intervention energized a breakwater in the fishing port with an economic activity deeply rooted in the place, as well as being attractive to pedestrians.

### 4.2. Forward, the sense of sustainability

Looking forward, another sense of democratization is that of sustainability. Plain and simple, it is about enhancing the legacy we leave for generations to come. Although typically judged from an ecological perspective, sustainable inheritances must also be valued from an economic point of view. If in the first case there are the actions that prevent the deterioration of the environment, in the second there are those that avoid the waste of resources. Perhaps one of the most extreme examples of economic sustainability that can be found among the results of the Prize is in the temporary pacification of Verona Street (Bucharest, Romania, 2012)⁵⁰, which had a total cost of €450. During the hot Romanian summer, once stripped of the cars that normally park on it, this road was completely cleared so that the residents could enjoy a communal pool built out of rented pallets, a reusable tarpaulin and the water provided by themselves. An intervention as austere as it is transformative, it contrasts with so many pharaonic works whose wastefulness puts future generations in debt with little social return.

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⁴⁸ Recovery of the irrigation ditches of the thermal gardens | Caldes de Montbui (Spain), 2015 | Ex aequo award in the 2016 edition | The orchards surrounding the village are the object of a comprehensive restoration that recovers the old thermal irrigation water, reactivates agricultural production and opens a network of footpaths for pedestrians. [LINK]

⁴⁹ Fishermen's huts in the port | Cangas de Morrazo (Spain), 2008 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | A row of fishermen's huts invigorates a harbor breakwater with an activity rooted in the place and attractive to the eyes of passers-by. [LINK]

⁵⁰ Temporary Pool at Verona Street | Bucharest (Romania), 2012 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | In the three days during a summer festival, a street normally occupied by cars becomes home to a swimming pool constructed out of rented pallets and a waterproof canvas so that residents can enjoy having contact with water. [LINK]
Regarding the ecological aspect of sustainability, one of the most pressing needs of cities is to reduce discharges and polluting emissions. Regarding the dumping of solid and liquid waste, there is no doubt that a great pedagogical deployment is required to modify the habits of mass and irresponsible consumption that are deeply rooted in the population. From the senseless waste of water underlying touristic farms to the exponential waste of single-use packaging that involves e-commerce or department stores, cities must stop and reconsider this way of life that seems completely normal, as it is completely unviable. As an agora where shared challenges are highlighted and discussed, the public space plays a fundamental role in reducing consumption and improving waste management. The Prize offers multiple examples of how to raise public awareness in this regard. For example, when it comes to reducing consumption, the case of “Elsewhere” is fascinating, as it is an artistic installation that occupies the Central Station of the Citytunneln, the underground railway that crosses Malmö (Sweden, 2010)\(^51\). This piece, which will be discussed later, is the result of a radical decision—the public transport authorities chose to eliminate all consumerist propaganda from their platforms, corridors and lobbies and replace it with works of art that encourage travellers to think, thus contributing to reducing consumption. This is like facilities such as the aforementioned network of urban commons in Colombes (France, 2014)\(^52\), where residents learn to reserve, classify and reuse waste from demolition. Even the many proximity markets that have been discussed above invite the responsible consumption of local food and are free of non-returnable packaging.

Regarding waste management, it is again inevitable to refer to the case of the Vall d'en Joan landfill (Begues, Spain, 2003)\(^53\). The public park that this former site of exploitation became has not only sealed the immense mass of accumulated garbage so that the rain stops pushing its leachate to the adjacent aquifers, but it has also covered it with legume plantations that eliminate the toxicity of the soil. It has even been turned into an educational space visited by masses of schoolchildren who thus become aware that what is thrown away at home does not magically disappear. As if that were not enough, a network of pipes collects all the biogas that emanates from the mass of waste. What would represent 20% of the total greenhouse gases emitted by the city of Barcelona is used to generate electricity instead. The resulting energy periphery of the city combats unemployment through an ecological and productive complex consisting of community food gardens, an experimental micro-farm, a market, cooperative workshops and spaces for storing and reusing recovered materials. \([\text{LINK}]\)

\(^{51}\) “Elsewhere” | Malmö (Sweden), 2010 | Special mention in the 2012 edition | A permanent installation projects moving images onto the platforms of an underground railway station, thus making the waiting period more enjoyable for passengers. \([\text{LINK}]\)

\(^{52}\) “R-Urban”: network of urban commons | Colombes (France), 2014 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | A housing estate on the...

\(^{53}\) Vall d’en Joan Landfill Restoration | Begues (Spain), 2003 | Joint winner in the 2004 edition | Landfill and recovery as a public park of the Barcelona metropolitan area rubbish tip. \([\text{LINK}]\)
is enough to satisfy the electricity demand of 12,000 inhabitants, which would mean the emission of 100,000 tons of carbon dioxide if it were generated using fossil fuels.

Arriving here, it is unavoidable to point out that approximately one third of the gaseous emissions of cities comes from transport, within which the private vehicle has an overwhelming weight. All this, without accounting for the fact that a good part of the microplastics that end up in the oceans correspond to fine particles detached from car tires which are washed away by rainwater. If it was already clear that cities must get rid of the car in order to redistribute opportunities, it is no less so that they must also do so for sustainability. As well, there is no doubt that the best way to get rid of the car is to conduct our movement and transportation in a more fair and sensible manner again, that is, to regain active or shared mobility. As has already been stated, both the one and the other require that the city be compact; that is, that distances are shortened to the human scale and that the population density allows for route- and expense-sharing. When it comes to active mobility, there are countless reasons why cities should prioritize walkers and cyclists. Apart from the fact that they do not pollute the air, they bring life and safety to the streets, while avoiding such harmful effects on one's own health and that of others such as accidents, noise or sedentary lifestyle. In addition, compared to the car, they take up much less space and consume far less energy, dwindling goods on a finite and increasingly populated planet. Previously, works of the Prize that stood out for promoting pedestrian mobility have already been mentioned, such as the "shared surface" of London's Exhibition
“Shared area” on Exhibition Road | London (UK), 2011
Special mention in the 2012 edition
A main street in the cultural district is subject to the renovation of pavements, the removal of architectural barriers and the pacification of road traffic according to a “shared surface” system that achieves a consensual balance between pedestrians and vehicles.

“Supermanzana” of Poblenou | Barcelona (Spain), 2017
Special mention in the 2018 edition
Several tactical urban planning operations pacify a cell of nine blocks in the Ensanche de Cerdà and constitute a pilot test for a future large-scale strategy that seeks to regain public space from the private vehicle and offer it to public transport, bicycles and pedestrians.

Regarding shared mobility, a large number of interventions are presented at each edition of the Award that strive to improve public transport. There are abundant examples that bet on intermodality; that is, to facilitate the connection between different modes of transport—for example, those that connect metro lines with trams, buses or bicycle infrastructure. An exemplary case of this is the reform of the Nørreport metro station (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2015) through which some 165,000 people pass every day. Its exit to the street was rearranged to house a bus terminal, more than two thousand bicycle parking spots, and a pedestrian zone connected to the old town. Those interventions that opt for surface public transport, such as bus or tramlines, are especially noteworthy. On the one hand, these surface systems compete with the car and, therefore, their extension contributes to taking away urban space. On the other, its execution is much more sustainable compared to metro lines. Although these other metropolitan forms of infrastructure are sometimes unavoidable due to their high capacity to transport large numbers of people, over long distances in very short times, the truth is that they require the investment of huge economic and ecological efforts in burying or raising infrastructure in order to avoid disturbing the car. Finally, its appearance can also be used to renovate the public space, thereby maximizing the benefits of the

Pasaje Cuypers | Amsterdam (Países Bajos), 2016
Special mention in the 2018 edition
Un nuevo paso subterráneo de más de cien metros de largo y decorado con azulejos que representan fragmentos de la historia naval neerlandesa atraviesa la Estación Central de Ámsterdam facilitando a los ciclistas y los peatones la conexión entre el centro histórico y los embarcaderos del río IJ.

“Cykelslangen” | Copenhague (Dinamarca), 2014
Finalist in the 2016 edition
Una nueva pasarela exclusiva para bicicletas serpentea entre edificios comerciales, residenciales y de oficinas para culminar la primera conexión transversal del puerto de la capital danesa abierta en los últimos cincuenta años.

Estación de Nørreport | Copenhague (Dinamarca), 2015
Finalist in the 2016 edition
La caótica explanada que cubría la estación subterránea más antigua de Dinamarca, por donde pasan cada día unas 165.000 personas, se reordena para acoger una terminal de autobuses, más de dos mil bicicletas aparcadas y una zona peatonal conectada con las calles medievales del casco histórico.
investment. This can be perfectly appreciated in the Place de Pey Berland (Bordeaux, France, 2005)\(^5\), which was substantially improved thanks to the arrival of a new tram network. Also relevant are the numerous interventions that do not understand public transport infrastructure from a merely functional aspect, but rather try to imbue them with the dignity proper to large civic spaces in order to improve the experience of travellers and thus favour their use. An excellent example of this attitude is the already mentioned artistic intervention "Elsewhere", which projects footage on the walls of the Citytunneln Central Station (Malmö, Sweden, 2010)\(^6\), turning it into a dreamlike hall. Another example is in the artistic installation "At sea level" (Lisbon, Portugal, 2011)\(^61\), a mosaic placed on the ceiling of the lobby that connects the metro with a ferry terminal and that metaphorically announces to passengers the presence of the Tagus River.

Apart from reducing greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate global warming, another of the most urgent needs of cities in terms of sustainability is to offset the tons of CO\(_2\) that will inevitably continue to be released into the atmosphere. Without a doubt, the best recipe to achieve this is to increase the plant mass, capable of fixing the released carbon. There are countless incidents of this highlighted by the Award that obey this strategy, both outside and within the urban fabric. In the first case, it is obvious that urban sprawl and consequent forest predation should be avoided as much as possible. On the peri-urban front, the plant masses provided by the aforementioned Rainham wetlands (London, United Kingdom, 2014), stand out, due to their colossal extension\(^62\) with 640 hectares of surface, the Lea River Park (London, United Kingdom, 2018)\(^63\), with 235 hectares, or the Zollverein park (Essen, Germany, 2019)\(^64\), with 80 hectares.

Regarding the insertion of arboreal mass into urban tissues, in addition to serving to fix carbon on a planetary scale, it is also very useful on a local scale, since it helps to detoxify polluted air or to mitigate the heat island effect, two phenomena very harmful...

\(^5\) Plaza de Pey Berland | Burdeos (Francia), 2005 | Obra presentada al Premio en la edición de 2006 | Reforma de la plaza de la catedral con motivo del paso de una nueva red de tranvía. [ENLACE]

\(^6\) "En otra parte" | Malmö (Suecia), 2010 | Special mention in the 2012 edition | Instalación artística que proyecta en los andenes de una estación subterránea de ferrocarril imágenes de paisajes en movimiento, amenizando así la espera de los viajeros. [ENLACE]

\(^61\) "A nivel del mar" | Lisboa (Portugal), 2011 | Finalista en la edición de 2006 | Un mosaico colocado en el techo del vestíbulo que conecta el metro con una terminal de transbordadores establece una relación metafórica entre los pasajeros y el río Tajo. [ENLACE]

\(^62\) Apertura de los humedales de Rainham | Londres (Reino Unido), 2014 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | Un paraje periférico con una riqueza natural insolitamente preservada se hace accesible a los londinenses para que lo conozcan, lo amen y lo defiendan de una probable depredación urbanística. [ENLACE]

\(^63\) Lea River Park | London (United Kingdom), 2018 | Finalist in the 2018 edition | The creation of a park following the course of the Lea River from the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to the Thames at Blackwell has overcome physical and social fragmentation caused by large-scale infrastructure while also recognising the industrial landscape which has been essential for London’s economic development. [LINK]

\(^64\) Zollverein Park | Essen (Germany), 2019 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | After two decades of work, an old mining operation which was closed at the end of the twentieth century and subsequently declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site is now a large park combining industrial archaeology, green landscape, leisure installations, and cultural facilities. [LINK]
to public health. A beautiful example of this strategy is the arboretum planted in Barking’s main square (London, UK, 2008)\(^65\), which consists of 40 mature trees of 16 different species. On the other hand, extending the proportion of green area in cities also serves to reduce the runoff coefficient from urban land. This helps the natural terrain to absorb a portion of the water accumulated during episodes of torrential rains—which, with climate change, will become more and more frequent—so that it feeds the aquifers and does not collapse the sanitation facilities. The city of Copenhagen has set an example of this by implementing the ‘blue and green’ strategy, which consists of integrating rainwater management with increasing and maintaining urban green. This is to replace asphalt and waterproof surfaces with landscaped areas that have a greater absorption capacity. A small sample of this strategy is the new green area in Tåsinge Square (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2014)\(^66\), which replaces an old open-air car park. The frequent flooding in surrounding basements was resolved with the creation of this rainwater retention garden that expresses how rain can be used as a resource to improve urban space.

In any case, inside the city, not only the amount of surface covered with vegetation counts; equally important is maximizing the perimeter of the green areas since that is where friction with the buildings that enjoy them takes place. In other words, the longer its borders, the more people that can enjoy its proximity. In this sense, the central park archetype is the least convenient, since it concentrates the vegetation within a compact enclosure. This means that its perimeter is reduced, so that the fronts of interaction with the city are scarcer and, therefore, more desired, expensive and exclusive. With the same vegetation surface, the constellations of pocket parks or green corridors are much more democratic, since, for purely geometric reasons, both have longer perimeters. The last two cases mentioned—the Barking Square Arboretum (London, UK, 2008) and the Tåsinge Garden (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2014)—are good examples of pocket parks. In contrast to large central parks, this solution can be replicated by coating the entire urban fabric with green spaces so that everyone can live within walking distance of a garden.

Regarding green corridors, apart from the fact that they also maximize their contact perimeter with the city, they have two other added advantages. On the one hand, in addition to offering green environments for rest and recreation, they can also constitute pleasant mobility infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. These modes of active, silent and clean mobility will not disturb the idle users of the green zone and, surely, they will prefer to move through this placid environment than to do so on

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\(^{65}\) Barking Town Square | London (United Kingdom), 2008 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | New town square in the suburb of Barking. | [LINK]

\(^{66}\) Refurbishment of Tåsinge Square | Copenhagen (Denmark), 2014 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | The problem of frequent flooding in basements around a small square overrun with cars has been solved by creating a garden that can collect and store rainwater and thereby demonstrate how water can be used as a resource to enhancing urban space. | [LINK]
roads invaded by the smoke and noise of the car. This is the case of "Baana" (Helsinki, Finland, 2012), a former railway cutting that tore through the urban fabric and was recycled as a green corridor for cyclists and pedestrians. On the other hand, green corridors are useful when it comes to increasing the biodiversity of ecosystems, whose loss contributes, among other calamities, to zoonosis and the spread of epidemics such as COVID-19. Given the inherent fertility of aquatic ecosystems, this increase in biodiversity is achieved especially in green river corridors such as those already mentioned in Girona (Spain, 1999), Barcelona (Spain, 2000), Zuera (Spain, 2001), or Elche (Spain, 2013).

Despite all that said, it is necessary to note that vegetation does not always contribute to the sustainability of the city. The attachment to chlorophyll, widespread among neighbours and activists, often leads to a kind of "green populism" that shares some vices with the NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) phenomenon. From an individual point of view, anyone prefers having a park in front of his or her house rather than a hospital or an affordable housing building. However, not everything that is green is ecological, like golf courses in dry climates, and not everything that is ecological is green, like a railway line. Therefore, the claimed increase in green should never be detrimental to a reasonable urban compactness. In fact, scattered low-density tissues can be highly generous in vegetation, but they are so at the cost of predating natural territory and multiplying distances that generate dependence on the car, that is, they multiply the emissions of polluting gases and, therefore, aggravate global warming. If green is to gain more urban space, it does not have to do so at the expense of buildings, but of polluting uses such as automobile infrastructure. Avoiding urban sprawl is essential because reversing its effects will not be increasingly difficult in the future. As the energy crisis renders low-density, car-dependent developments completely unviable, it is very likely that these will have to be abandoned. Everything indicates that we will not have the necessary energy to turn them into walkable cities that are well equipped and served by public transport.

When dealing with natural areas that have been damaged by anthropic action, some works of the Prize intentionally renounce returning them to their original state. This is

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67 "Baana": pedestrian and bicycle corridor | Helsinki (Finland), 2012 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | A deep railway cutting which slices through the urban fabric has been converted into a pedestrian and bicycle corridor in a resource-saving collaborative process that also respects the memory of an industrial past. [LINK]

68 River Ter Park | Girona (Spain), 1999 | Special mention in the 2000 edition | The metropolitan park in the River Ter brings environmental recovery and new access to the riverside surroundings, which have ceased to be the city’s backyard. [LINK]

69 Environmental recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river | Barcelona (Spain), 2000 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | New park and river walk in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. [LINK]

70 Recovery of the channel and banks of the Gállego river | Zuera (Spain), 2001 | Joint winner in the 2002 edition | Environmental improvement and urban planning through the creation of a new park with river walks. [LINK]

71 “The Braided Valley” | Elche (Spain), 2013 | Joint winner in the 2014 edition | A braided network of paths and footbridges have transformed the bed of the Vinalopó River into a linear park that stitches back together the neighbourhoods through which it passes, connecting them with natural spaces to the north of the city. [LINK]
the controversial decision that was made in the case of the former Maurice Rose airfield (Frankfurt, Germany, 2004). After the Second World War, the installation of this military infrastructure by the US military irreparably damaged a natural area on the outskirts of Frankfurt. Once abandoned, the City Council considered what to do with it. There is no doubt that tearing it down and getting rid of the debris would have meant nothing more than consuming a lot of energy to carry the problem elsewhere. Knowing this, a partial dismantling was opted for. The surface of the runway was broken into jagged pieces that were left on the ground. While before they formed an impermeable and continuous layer, now they generate an abrupt relief, full of folds and cavities that plants and animals have gradually colonized. Since then, the Senckenberg research institute has rigorously documented this reconquest by nature by recording the plant and animal species that have appeared and how they had done so. With the same attitude, the terraces, slopes and ramps that were preserved that made up the aforementioned Vall d’en Joan landfill (Begues, Spain, 2003). The immense economic and energy cost that would have involved making this artificial topography completely disappear explains why the new park recognized it as its own.

4.3. Upwards, the sense of participation

Looking up, a third sense of democratization is that of participation, which serves to fight the abuse of power. Top-down decision enforcement is nothing new in the history of cities, nor the popular movements that have faced them from below. Although it is true that enlightened despotism has had certain successes over the centuries, it is no less true that it has also given rise to countless injustices. In their paternalistic arrogance, two great vices can be identified, one of which is the result of the excessive accumulation of power, which occurs when the rulers do not recognize the rights of citizens to participate in decision-making, and it occurs even in regimes that call themselves democratic. This manifests itself in multiple ways, from the corruption that steals from the public coffers to the speculation that gambles with privileged information, passing through the most undemocratic authoritarianism. The other vice of enlightened despotism is the result of hoarding knowledge. This occurs when those who have been recognized as experts in some field impose their technocratic determinism on the people, without the people and, sometimes, against the people. Armed with their supposed excellence, they assume that people are
Citizen participation has valuable instruments to counteract these two trends. On the one hand, it gives citizens the right to control power through tools such as transparency, voting, and accountability based on fact checking. On the other hand, it empowers citizens with weapons such as pedagogy in complex issues or training in new skills. Sometimes, citizens receive these powers from rulers who honestly place themselves at their service; others the citizens are forced to conquer by themselves. In any case, participation does not only face threats from above—beyond the abuse of power, there are risks that arise within the citizenry themselves. These include phenomena as widespread as indifference, individualism or populism, which are fought from their own participation, through practices that invite them to get involved in the defense of the common good from the respect of the other. In other words, participation is medicine against idiocy. In fact, in Ancient Greece the idiot (from *idios*, "oneself") distinguished himself from the citizen by being one who only took care of his own affairs, without participating in the assembly.

After all, the city is a social co-production that is enriched by the participation of the most diverse agents. The countless forms of co-production that the Prize has garnered throughout its ten editions can be grouped into three main families. One of which is that of transdisciplinary solutions, which recognize the polyhedral nature of the urban event and address its transformation by integrating different fields of knowledge in a transversal manner. For example, the creation of the cultural and ecological space "Passage 56" (Paris, France, 2009)\(^7^4\) included the participation of architects who are experts in the reuse of construction elements, engineers specialized in renewable energy and agronomists trained in permaculture. Another interesting example of interdisciplinary collaboration was the Westblaak skate park (Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2001)\(^7^5\), where engineers and architects from the Department of Urban Planning had the expert advice of future users who were involved in the design, construction and the maintenance of eleven pieces of equipment for skateboards, inline skates or BMX bicycles. Perhaps the most interesting case of participatory knowledge transmission was in the already mentioned recovery of the irrigation channels in the thermal gardens of Caldes de Montbui (Spain, 2015)\(^7^6\). With an attitude diametrically opposed to technocratic

\(^{74}\) "Passage 56": cultural and ecological space | Paris (France), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | This popular initiative has transformed an abandoned passage on Saint Blaise Street into a collective organic garden. | [LINK]

\(^{75}\) Westblaak Skatepark | Rotterdam (Netherlands), 2001 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | New public park in the central space of Westblaak Avenue. | [LINK]

\(^{76}\) Recovery of the Irrigation System at the Thermal Orchards | Caldes de Montbui (Spain), 2015 | Joint winner in the 2016 edition | The orchards around the town are the focus of an integral project of restoration which restores the old irrigation system of thermal waters, reactivates agricultural activity and opens up a network of pedestrian pathways. | [LINK]
arrogance, a team of young landscapers rescued from oblivion the ancient irrigation techniques treasured by seventy elderly gardeners in order to restore their productive capacity to the gardens.

Another family of interventions based on co-production is given by those that are the result of collaboration between different agents. Sometimes they are public administrations of different levels, as was the case of the aforementioned example of the recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river (Barcelona, Spain, 2000)

wherein four different city councils and a ministry of the Spanish government were involved. In such kinds of interventions with a metropolitan scale and different municipalities involved, it is necessary that municipal solidarity allow the struggles between neighbouring municipalities and the short-term logic of the mandates to overcome. In addition, when supra-municipal administrations intervene, it is important that the principle of subsidiarity be respected, which recognizes the smallest ones’ greater proximity and empathy towards the real needs of citizens.

Other forms of co-production between different agents include public-private collaboration, in which it is essential that public leadership be never lost to ensure that the general interest is respected. Because of this type of collaboration, the Grotekerk Square Theater was realized (Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2009), promoted by a private, non-profit organization under the supervision of the City Council.

However, there is no doubt that the most authentic formula for participation is the co-production of solutions with citizens. To this third family belong the public spaces that do not culminate in the physical construction of an object commissioned by the authorities and designed by experts, but are developed through an open and

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77 Environmental recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river | Barcelona (Spain), 2000 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | New park and river walk in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. | [LINK]

78 Theater in Grotekerk Square | Rotterdam (Netherlands), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | The insertion of a theatrical pavilion programmatically invigorates the Laurenskerk cathedral square and articulates its relationship with the Delftsevaart canal. | [LINK]
In this sense, there is the delightful approach that inspired the pathways of "The Braided Valley" (Elche, Spain, 2013)\textsuperscript{79}, an intervention that has already been discussed above. During the project phase, a temporary office was installed next to the Vinalopó River that collected data on the routes of the residents and their preferred places of passage. Based on this information, the network of crosswalks and footpaths that connects both banks of the riverbed and gives its name to the intervention was drawn.

Interventions that bet on the versatility of public space also avoid functional determinism, understanding it as a place open to interpretation by people and capable of hosting different uses at different times. A good example of a versatile space is the Smithfield Esplanade (Dublin, Ireland, 2000)\textsuperscript{80}. Covered with a continuous blanket of cobblestones, the imposing 43-meter-wide by 335-meter-long urban hall is open to uses as diverse as everyday games, temporary markets or mass concerts. The aforementioned multipurpose canopy in Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium, 2015)\textsuperscript{81}, whose monumental indeterminacy is capable of housing a wide range of community uses. Citizen assemblies, concerts, children's workshops, barbecues, theatrical performances or film screenings allow us to achieve the ultimate goal of the intervention, which is none other than to bring together the inhabitants of a fractured neighbourhood under the same-shared roof.

Another way to avoid deterministic impositions is the so-called "tactical urbanism" (although perhaps "tactical urbanization" would be more appropriate), which provisionally tests spaces so that people can examine the suitability of their transformation through use. This is what happened in the first phase of the aforementioned Poblenou "superblock" (Barcelona, Spain, 2017)\textsuperscript{82}, undertaken by students from various architecture schools through the reversible application of painted signs on the ground, the temporary installation of elements of urban furniture or the placement of trees planted in mobile containers. The provisional nature of

\textsuperscript{79} "The braided valley" | Elche (Spain), 2013 | Ex aequo award in the 2014 edition | A network of paths and intersecting walkways converts the Vinalopó riverbed into a linear park that gathers together the neighborhoods through which it passes and connects them with the natural landscapes in the north of the city. | [\textcolor{blue}{LINK}]

\textsuperscript{80} Smithfield Esplanade Reform | Dublin (Ireland), 2000 | Ex aequo award in the 2000 edition | Restored with simple but forceful means, an old and dilapidated esplanade acquires the identity and unitary character that it required to become one of the main public spaces in Dublin. | [\textcolor{blue}{LINK}]

\textsuperscript{81} New multipurpose canopy | Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium), 2015 | Special mention in the 2016 edition | The construction of a monumental canopy in a block patio allows concerts, fairs and a wide range of neighborhood activities to be hosted in a neighborhood with a complex and fragmented social composition. | [\textcolor{blue}{LINK}]

\textsuperscript{82} Poblenou "Superblock" | Barcelona (Spain), 2017 | Special category in the 2018 edition | A series of tactical urbanism operations has pedestrianised a "superblock" - nine blocks in the grid-designed Eixample district - in a pilot test of a future large-scale strategy for reclaiming public space from private vehicles and making it available for public transport, bicycles and pedestrians. | [\textcolor{blue}{LINK}]
these solutions allowed the introduction of modifications based on the results of a participatory process with the neighbours, which gave rise to children's play areas, sports courts, picnic or ping-pong tables, assembly spaces, literary routes or ephemeral markets. Once the spaces had already been subjected, empirically and pedagogically, to different tests of use, the second phase consolidated the intervention permanently through conventional civil engineering works. Beyond the conventional urban transformation, Poblenou's "Superblock" functioned as a cultural product capable of bringing to the public debate the need to bet on a more equitable and sustainable mobility, a still highly controversial issue in Barcelona.

At the end of the day, the countless examples of participation that can be found amongst the winners of the Prize present varying degrees of co-production of solutions with the public. The most classic—and moderate—forms of participation are provided by interventions wherein future users act as consultants in the preparation of the needs-based program, prior to the drafting of the project. A beautiful example of this is the participatory process that led to the design of "A8ernA" (Zaanstadt, The Netherlands, 2005). In order to inject life into the underside of the elevated highway that divided the Koog aan de Zaan square in two, the most unlikely requests of the neighbours were collected in an ambitious program of needs. Instead of acting on the continent, the resulting intervention inhabited it with edifices and installations as eclectic as a jetty on the Zaan River, a park, an urban art gallery, a shooting range, a supermarket and a flower and pet shop. A further degree of participation is in the interventions that involve citizens in co-design processes to conceive of the most appropriate responses to their needs. Accompanied by professionals who have the technical knowledge necessary to act rigorously, future users become aware of the complexities and limitations of the intervention. An excellent example of this occurred in the collaborative design of the Magdeburg open-air library (Germany, 2009). In that project, the residents of the Salbke district were fed up with waiting for the City Council to build the new public library on the same site where the old one had been demolished. The abandoned premises of an adjacent store served as their base of operations to organize a book drive and launch a homeless library project. With the advice of a team of professionals, a program of needs was agreed upon and several designs were developed. With more than a thousand cases of beer, they raised a 1:1 scale model on the site that allowed them to determine the main successes and errors of the best-valued proposal before it was finally built.

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83 “A8ernA” | Zaanstadt (Netherlands), 2005 | Ex aequo award in the 2006 edition | A participatory process configures a program of needs to inhabit the space covered by the A8 motorway, in the historic center of Koog aan de Zaan with citizen uses. [Link]

84 Open-air Library | Magdeburg (Germany), 2009 | Ex aequo award in the 2010 edition | The residents of a socially depressed neighborhood have organized to collect and share books in an open library that they have built, following a participatory process, with the prefabricated pieces of a demolished building. [Link]
The next step in the ascending ladder of citizen empowerment is constituted by interventions that are open to self-construction or self-management by users. This occurred in incipient form in the aforementioned case of the "Passage 56" (Paris, 2009)\(^{85}\), where its neighbors were involved actively in the collection and sorting of recycled materials for the construction of the cultural and ecological equipment. Even greater was the involvement of various groups of musicians, poets and visual artists in the temporary renovation of an old Stalinist amphitheatre located in the central park of Dnipro (Ukraine, 2017)\(^{86}\), the result of self-financing, collaborative design and assisted self-construction. There are also abundant public spaces that, once transformed, are opened up to formulas of community self-management that, while respecting sufficient democratic guarantees, strengthen the sense of responsibility of the users and unite the interrelated fabric of the neighbourhoods. This is what took place with the group of residents, professionals and entities that took charge of "Passage 56" itself (Paris, France, 2009)\(^{87}\) and its community garden. In fact, there are more and more situations in which the merely decorative gardening carried out by municipal officials gives way to a "bottom-up" pedagogical and productive agriculture. A pioneering experience on this path was that of the Reudnitz municipal park (Leipzig, Germany, 2002)\(^{88}\), where a good number of plots were reserved and rented at affordable prices to individuals. Used as recreational gardens or as productive orchards, private plots even have containers where users can store furniture or tools. Not exempt from the risks of privatization, this innovative experience stimulates the identification of citizens with "their" park and encourages joint responsibility in the care and maintenance of public space. Something similar occurred in the renovation of the Schorfheide residential estate (Berlin, Germany, 2010)\(^{89}\). In the public gardens that separate their housing blocks there, twenty-four prefabricated containers were installed that neighbours can rent to use as simple storage, as a DIY workshop or even as a second living room in contact with the green. Thus, they give members of small and often overcrowded households the possibility of withdrawing to spaces where they can be alone or meet others.

Finally, the most extreme degree of citizen participation occurs in situations that incur civil disobedience. It is marked by activists who put what they consider as

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\(^{85}\) "Passage 56": cultural and ecological space | Paris (France), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | This popular initiative has transformed an abandoned passage on rue Saint Blaise into a collectively-managed ecological garden. | [LINK]

\(^{86}\) Stage | Dnipro (Ukraine), 2017 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Several cultural groups of musicians, poets, and visual artists organised to carry out a temporary renovation of a Stalinist-era amphitheatre in the city’s central park by means of crowdfunding, collaborative design, and a “self-constructed” team effort. | [LINK]

\(^{87}\) "Passage 56": cultural and ecological space | Paris (France), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | This popular initiative has transformed an abandoned passageway on rue Saint Blaise into a collectively-managed ecological garden. | [LINK]

\(^{88}\) Reudnitz Municipal Park | Leipzig (Germany), 2002 | Joint winner in the 2002 edition | New city park on the land of the former Eilenburg railway station and aa reorganization of traffic in the surrounding areas. | [LINK]

\(^{89}\) Renovation of the Schorfheide housing estate | Berlin (Germany), 2010 | Work submitted to the Prize in the 2012 edition | Local residents take part in a transformative process that gives sense and attributes to dreary interstitial spaces in a residential estate. | [LINK]
legitimate above what is legal only. Without waiting for the permission of the authorities, they take possession of emblematic places to occupy and transform them. Sometimes, the absence of official authorizations does not prevent the occupation of the space from being extended in time and entailing substantial modifications to its use and physical configuration. This is exactly what occurred in the aforementioned interventions of the "Heavenly Hundred" Garden (Kiev, Ukraine, 2016)90 and “Occupy Puerta del Sol” (Madrid, Spain, 2011)91. In the first case, the occupied site reconciled the commemorative function—in honor of the victims of police repression during the EuroMaidan revolution—with playful and creative activities that invited us to share daily life. The slogan "no tears, no candles, only action" inspired a place that was transformed through community co-production and self-management, with the help of NGOs, but without any interference from the authorities. After clearing the site and removing tons of waste, the activists planted trees brought in from other parts of the country in order to honour the victims with a symbol of life. Among the new landscaped flowerbeds, trails and a playground equipped with a slide and swings were installed. In the centre of the garden there is a communal garden where children and neighbours learn to grow organic food. When time permitted, free events such as concerts, readings, exhibitions, educational games or film screenings were held. The occupation received hundreds of expressions of solidarity from around the world.

The camp that occupied the most emblematic square in Madrid in May 2011 also received international attention. In this protest, the demonstrators were involved in a protest march organized by the group Real Democracy Now! under the slogan "We are not merchandise in the hands of politicians and bankers." It was comprised of ephemeral and lightweight constructions, whether they were commercial tents destined to spend the night or artisanal structures, built on-site and on the fly with waste materials that acquired unsuspected functions. Ropes, cables, tarpaulins, plastics and adhesive tapes were applied to ingenious constructions in which logistical requirements such as having sanitary or quartermaster services were sheltered. The constructions effectively and decisively reserved spaces of collective interest such as circulation corridors, libraries or nurseries. Denounced by some as an illicit appropriation of urban space and silenced by media that only cited it under pressure from social networks or the foreign press, the Sol campsite disappeared a few weeks after its spontaneous emergence. Cleaning brigades organized by the campers themselves left the pre-existing space as they had found it.

90 “Heavenly Hundred” Garden | Kiev (Ukraine), 2016 | Special mention in the 2016 edition | An empty lot is transformed into a memorial for the victims of the EuroMaidan protests and, on an everyday basis, has a productive role as a self-managed community vegetable garden. [LINK]

91 “Occupy Puerta del Sol” | Madrid (Spain), 2011 | Special category in the 2012 edition | A large-scale demonstration by citizens demanding improvements in the democratic system by means of a temporary occupation of one of Madrid's most representative squares. [LINK]
4.4. Backwards, the sense of memory

Looking back, the last of the four senses of democratization is that of memory, which makes the best use of inherited pre-existence from the past. Unique in the animal kingdom, the human capacity for cultural transmission between successive generations is what makes progress possible. "By contrast, beyond animals" genetic evolution, they do not experience any cultural advancement. Knowledge is not passed from parents to children. Instead, each human being accumulates a large amount of learning produced millennia before being born. This has occurred largely since the Neolithic Revolution, when hunter-gatherers stopped being nomads and began remain in stable settlements. Adopting a sedentary lifestyle caused that, in addition to intangible knowledge, and material assets began to be transferred. Both the location of the historic centre and the layout of its streets are the result of old decisions, taken by missing ancestors, but which continue to determine the present. As a tapestry on which the traces of successive generations are superimposed, the city is a space of memory par excellence.

Therefore, the principle of memory is directly aligned with that of sustainability. Subsequent generations access from memory the legacy that previous generations have left them through sustainability. The better the values inherited from the past are preserved, the richer the legacy that can be passed on to the future. As such, there is a deep sense of intergenerational co-responsibility here. Yet, on the other hand, recycling the thermodynamic heritage of pre-existence is more ecological than opting for a clean slate or to prey on more territory by spreading out new plant developments. The utopias of modern urbanism that started from a blank page are those that have neglected many lessons from the past. They also seem to be ignored by the techno euphoric neophilia of the Smart City. However, the truth is that the city of the future is already built—it treasures great wealth and is only waiting for renovations that give it new uses and meanings to adapt to the needs of the present.

Due to the extraordinary longevity of European cities, interventions dealing with memory are perhaps the most abundant among the Prize's nominees. Everywhere, at every moment, archaeological remains, industrial heritage or war wounds return from the past to interfere in the present. However, their effects can be completely the opposite, so therefore highly different approaches are required. If sometimes it is about making up for unforgivable forgetfulness, other times you have to deal with traumatic memories. On the first front, European cities are very prolific in memorials. Some save very recent events from oblivion, as is the case of the Garden of the "Celestial Hundreds", which has already been widely spoken about. Others date back
to time immemorial, such as the medieval Homage Tower (Huéscar, Spain, 2007)\textsuperscript{92}, which has also been mentioned. Halfway through, a large number of memorials still appear that fight against collective amnesia regarding the countless calamities that the 20th century brought. At the "Przelomy" Center for Dialogue (Szczecin, Poland, 2015)\textsuperscript{93}, for example, homage is paid to the victims of Soviet totalitarianism. The same square in which more than sixty protesters from the Solidarność union were killed has thus become the cover for this underground museum on the recent history of the city. But perhaps one of the most exquisite memorials in the way of remembering the past century is the Ghetto Heroes' Square (Krakow, Poland, 2005)\textsuperscript{94}, dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust. Located next to the Krakow ghetto, it was designated during the Nazi occupation as Umschlagplatz, the place where Jews were to congregate for deportation. In 1943, once the ghetto was vacated, the suitcases or chairs that the Jews had been able to carry during forced transfers and which, before undertaking their last trip to Plaszow or Auschwitz, were forced to abandon were accumulated there. The square kept these monstrosities silent until 2005, when dozens of bronze chairs were arranged, somewhat larger than usual and oriented in the same direction. These household objects evidently refer to the furniture abandoned by the Jews. Thus, avoiding the dramatic spectacle and the sublimation of the tragedy, they humbly summon the presence of the absent.

\textsuperscript{92} Torre del Homenaje | Huéscar (Spain), 2007 | Special mention in the 2008 edition | New public viewpoint over the remains of an old medieval watchtower. [\textsuperscript{LINK}]

\textsuperscript{93} Dialogue Centre “Przelomy” at Solidarność Square | Szczecin (Poland), 2015 | Joint winner in the 2016 edition | A place where sixteen demonstrating workers were killed in the 1970s has become the new Solidarity Square while also forming the roof of an underground museum on the recent history of a city which was seriously damaged during the Second World War. [\textsuperscript{LINK}]

\textsuperscript{94} Ghetto Heroes Square | Krakow (Poland), 2005 | Special mention in the 2006 edition | Refurbishment of a square in memory of the victims of the Krakow Ghetto. [\textsuperscript{LINK}]
With regard to interventions that deal with traumatic preexistence, there are two clear examples from Berlin among the Prize results. One of them is offered by the Tilla-Durieux Park (Berlin, Germany, 2003)95, which sutured one of the gashes inflicted on the urban fabric by the Berlin Wall. After its fall, a 500-meter-long esplanade between the Brandenburg Gate and Checkpoint Charlie was abandoned during the construction euphoria of the 1990s, when most of the urban voids adjacent to the Potsdamer Platz were consolidated. The creation of an immense swath of grass has filled that void with life, testifying to the existence of the wall without being overshadowed by the memory of dire times. In a city divided for 40 years between two opposing worlds, the presence of physical testimonies of separation can be a painful burden. Perhaps that is why, since the fall of the Wall, Berlin has undergone an intense process of renewal, which, in an attempt to bring about reunification, seems to have chosen to forget that chapter of its history.

This is precisely the starting point for the second Berlin example. In 2003, the Bundestag approved the complete demolition of the Palast der Republik, the headquarters of the Socialist Party of the former GDR. The same mistake had been made by the authorities of the socialist regime in 1950, when they demolished the Stadtschloss, a baroque palace that had been despised as a symbol of Prussian imperialism, in order to replace it with the modern Palast der Republik. In fact, the Bundestag's decision also involved the construction of the Humboldt Forum, a new complex that would faithfully reproduce the baroque façade of the old imperial palace. Thus, controversy was served. While some believed that the Palast der Republik represented the oppressive architecture of the fallen regime, others argued that the literal reproduction of the baroque façade was more typical of a Disney theme park than of central Berlin. At this point, advocates for the building's preservation organized around the aforementioned "Volkspalast" initiative (Berlin, Germany, 2005)96, which for several years turned it into a dynamic center of cultural experimentation. Thus, giving it new uses and meanings, they managed to deactivate its negative connotations, until it was sadly demolished.

At the opposite extreme from the supporters of the clean slate, there are the aggressive defenders of the petrified heritage who advocate for not touching anything and leaving everything exactly as it is. If it were up to them, the city would look like a stuffed, taxidermied animal with glass eyes. To contradict them, a large number of interventions on public space have been committed to reactivating obsolete pre-existence in order to adapt them to the present without fear of modifying

95 Tilla-Durieux Park | Berlin (Germany), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | Creation of a new park near Potsdamer Platz. | [LINK]

96 "Volkspalast": Experimental Cultural Centre | Berlin (Germany), 2005 | Special prize of the Jury in the 2006 edition | A citizen platform took the Palace of the Republic, former parliament of the GDR, in order to turn it into an experimental cultural center until it was demolished to be replaced by a former baroque castle. | [LINK]
them. This is the case of the remodelling of the Paseo del Óvalo (Teruel, Spain, 2003)⁹⁷, which seamlessly inserted a monumental elevator into the Mudejar wall to complement its old staircase with infrastructure more in line with current accessibility demands. Equally uninhibited was the paving of the Stortorget, Kalmar’s cathedral square (Sweden, 2004)⁹⁸. The history of the city was written on its cobblestones. The dry stone boundaries that delimited the original crops were dismantled to build the walls of the houses and to pave streets and squares. Large, uncut pebbles formed the floor of Stortorget for three hundred years, but, in the middle of the 20th century, the continuity of the pavement was damaged when slabs and curbs were added that differentiated the passage of pedestrians and vehicles. When it came to undoing the damage, literally restoring the original cobblestones would have been a technical challenge in the service of conceptual impertinence. Thus, the gaps in the pavement were filled with contemporary dressings. They are large slabs of pre-cast concrete, lined with a layer of small granite pebbles that look like miniatures of the originals. Thus, the new differs from the old openly, in a game of textures reminiscent of a marquetry board.

Far from damaging memory, this frank dialogue between the ancient and the contemporary expresses the passage of time in a pedagogical manner and adds layers of richness to the city’s complex tapestry, yet the physical contrast between solutions from different times is one thing, while the change in the uses and customs that inhabited them and gave them meaning is quite another. In the recent examples of Kalmar and Teruel, they acted on material bodies that preserve their original functions as a plaza and stairway intact. However, often the vestiges of bygone eras have fallen into utter obsolescence and the functions for which they were conceived have lost all validity. This is what has happened to many factories during the era of deindustrialization, and is what will probably also happen, sooner rather than later, to the heavy infrastructure of the car. Even so, the obsolescence of a pre-existence does not necessarily imply that the city should get rid of it, especially given that something that was conceived for a certain purpose can be used in a completely different manner. Among the results of the Prize, countless interventions are dedicated to attributing new uses to the industrial heritage that has been left empty and inactive.

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⁹⁷ Remodeling of the Paseo del Óvalo, its staircase and surroundings | Teruel (Spain), 2003 | Joint winner in the 2004 edition | Construction of a new system of lifts by a flight of steps in Teruel. | [LINK]

⁹⁸ Stortorget | Kalmar (Sweden), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | Renovation of the pavement in the cathedral square. | [LINK]
Due to its lavish scale, it is inevitable to again mention the reconversion of the Zollverein mine (Essen, Germany, 2019)\textsuperscript{99}, one of the most important industrial remnants in Germany. In operation since 1847, the complex encompassed an area of more than 80 hectares that included multiple coal extraction pits and several coke distillation plants. However, the decrease in world demand for coal, the gradual extinction of the most accessible deposits, the conversion of the Ruhr basin into one of the most populated metropolitan regions in Europe and the progressive diversification of its economy towards the technological industry and the tertiary services sector led to the sequential closure of the complex, which closed its doors definitively in 1993. Surrounded by new urban developments, its immense extension remained isolated for years, becoming a reserve of flora and fauna protected from any human presence. Since 2019, following the principle of "development through maintenance," restricted areas have receded to give way to a huge park that is deliberately unfinished. In the end, it is becoming accessible with the gradual and continuous contribution of improvements and new elements. For example, in addition to its new recreational function, it has already become one of the most important points on the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

Another notable update of an obsolete industrial infrastructure occurred in the "Baana" intervention (Helsinki, Finland, 2012)\textsuperscript{100} already mentioned previously. In 2008, the transfer of the old port to the Vuosaari neighbourhood rendered unnecessary the railway line that, for years, had made possible the traffic of goods to the Central Station. Suddenly, the tear in the useless gorge, dug under the open sky, became more annoying. The option of covering it and turning it into an underground tunnel would restore the continuity of the urban fabric, yet it is expensive and will take time to complete. Meanwhile, it has become a green corridor for cyclists and pedestrians that preserves industrial memory and saves resources for the future. This is similar to the strategy the hermit crab employs when it takes advantage of the empty shell of a dead mollusc as a dwelling place. Similar forms of thanatocresis—biological interaction in which a living being benefits from another dead—are found in the aforementioned interventions of "A8ernA" (Zaanstadt, Netherlands, 2005)\textsuperscript{101} and PC Caritas (Melle, Belgium, 2016)\textsuperscript{102}. The dead husks that are filled with life converted into a pedestrian and bicycle corridor in a resource-saving collaborative process that also respects the memory of an industrial past.\textsuperscript{[LINK]}

\textsuperscript{99} Zollverein Park | Essen (Germany), 2019 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | After two decades of work, an old mining operation which was closed at the end of the twentieth century and subsequently declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site is now a large park combining industrial archaeology, green landscape, leisure installations, and cultural facilities.\textsuperscript{[LINK]}

\textsuperscript{100} "Baana": pedestrian and bicycle corridor | Helsinki (Finland), 2012 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | A deep railway cutting which slices through the urban fabric has been converted into a pedestrian and bicycle corridor in a resource-saving collaborative process that also respects the memory of an industrial past.\textsuperscript{[LINK]}

\textsuperscript{101} "A8ernA" | Zaanstadt (Netherlands), 2005 | Joint winner in the 2006 edition | Layout for the space covered by motorway A8, in the historic centre of Koog aan de Zaan.\textsuperscript{[LINK]}

\textsuperscript{102} PC Caritas | Melle (Belgium), 2016 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Somewhere between a closed building and open space, an old psychiatric hospital pavilion has been partially saved from demolition to offer a peaceful refuge for patients, their families, and people walking in the public park surrounding it.\textsuperscript{[LINK]}
come from the slab of an elevated highway in the first case and an abandoned clinical ward in the second. However, perhaps the most beautiful case of thanatocresis that can be found among the Prize’s winners is that of the memorial of the abolition of slavery (Nantes, France, 2011). During the 18th century, the river port of Nantes was the main starting point for French expeditions dedicated to the slave trade. This is where a good portion of the city’s wealth comes from, although, until very recently, only the sumptuousness of the palaces erected by the slave owners attested to this. Suddenly, under one of the docks of the port, a reinforced concrete structure appeared that was periodically submerged by the floods of the Loire River. Coincidentally, its triangular shape was reminiscent of the hold of a slave ship. This significant coincidence led to it being rehabilitated to become a center for the recovery of the memory of slavery. With the same attitude with which Marcel Duchamp would have recycled an objet trouvé—ready-made—to turn it into art, Nantes thus endows itself with a public space impregnated with an ethical sense that sheds light on some of the darkest episodes of its past.

On other occasions, the opposite occurs. Instead of injecting new uses and meanings into old pre-existence, some interventions invent objects ex novo in order
to recall historical events. This is the case of the "Ring of Memory" (Ablain-Saint-Nazaire, France, 2014)\textsuperscript{104}, a colossal elliptical structure that crowns the Notre-Dame-de-Lorette hill to commemorate the first centenary of the start of the Great War. Located in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, where more than half a million soldiers from different sides lost their lives during that war, the promontory houses the largest necropolis in France, giving the small town to which it belongs the dark peculiarity of having many more graves than inhabitants. This justifies the irruption of the "Ring of memory," erected in the present to carry wise warnings from the past to the future. This is by no means the only case among the Prize’s results in which memory travels through invented objects. In the aforementioned "Havnebadet" baths (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2003)\textsuperscript{105}, for example, there are several elements that, although new, refer to the industrial past of the Grand Canal: a pergola formed by steel beams recovered from a demolished factory or the roof of a drinks kiosk built out of the inverted hull of an old ferry. In the aforementioned reconstruction of the Homage Tower (Huéscar, Spain, 2007)\textsuperscript{106}, there has also been a great deal of invention. Fortunately or unfortunately, restoration could not be equivalent this time to consolidating or reproducing a pre-existence, since the original watchtower had been lost to the oblivion of time. For this reason, six hundred years after its destruction, the intervention has reinvented the shape of the tower from a respectful yet frankly contemporary attitude, restoring only its meaning and function. But perhaps the most blatant case of invention of pre-existence is in the reform of the main square of Barking (London, United Kingdom, 2008)\textsuperscript{107}. On the one hand, there is the Folly Wall, a new manual brick wall that hides the dividing line of a supermarket and that, with its ruined appearance, evokes the exposed brick facades of the old Barking buildings. On the other, there are the arcades leading up to Ripple Road, lit by chandeliers and paved with a checkerboard of large black and white flagstones like the sumptuous villas of Edwardian London. In the end, the eclectic coincidence of these picturesque and extravagant elements dilutes the banality of an urban landscape that had lost its attributes and colours the space of senses, turning it into a recognizable and significant place.

However, landscapes that have lost their attributes are not only reconquered through physical transformations, they can also be filled with senses if the intangible memory
of their intangible heritage is restored. This is what the artistic intervention "Other People's Photographs" (Folkestone, United Kingdom, 2008)\textsuperscript{108} achieved. The construction of a new shopping center was the most aggressive transformation that Folkestone had undergone in generations, with streets and buildings were systematically wiped off the map, leading to inhospitable wastelands and temporary parking lots. The place was so alienated from its social fabric, that it lost the symbolic references that had guided it until then. To mitigate this disorientation, the artistic initiative collected more than 1,500 photographs of people from citizens, taken over 125 years in any of the public spaces of Folkestone. They depicted children on bicycles, street parties and other everyday scenes. Each of them was hung in the corresponding public space, accompanied by the voice of its protagonists, who narrated the underlying story. In this manner, individual memories strengthened the collective imagination to re-establish some connections between places and inhabitants.

5. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CONTEST

Since 2000, the CCCB has launched ten biennial calls for the European Prize for Urban Public Space. This has been conducted together with other European organizations such as the Netherlands Architectur Center (NAI), The Architecture Foundation (London), Architekturzentrum (Vienna), La Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine (Paris), Deutches Architekturmuseum (Frankfurt) and the Museum of Architecture and Design (Ljubljana). The directors of these institutions are part of the contest's jury, chaired each edition by a renowned architect who is appointed by the CCCB. In addition to its partner organizations, the Prize is also supported by an expert council consisting of urban specialists from across Europe. This board guarantees a wide geographical scope in addition to ensuring that the most relevant works that have taken place do not stop being submitted to the call. Registrations are free and open to any work that has created, recovered or improved a certain public space in the two years since the last edition. The Prize jointly recognizes the authors of the work (for example, architects, engineers, artists) and its promoter (mostly

\textsuperscript{108} "Other People's Photographs" | Folkestone (United Kingdom), 2008 | Special mention in the 2008 edition | An artistic intervention that brings together collective memory by means of an exhibition of personal photographs taken in public space. | [LINK]
6. COMPLEMENTARY TOOLS FOR DISSEMINATION, REFLECTION AND DEBATE

Far beyond the call for entries and the announcement of the Jury’s verdict, the award has made a great effort to document the accumulated knowledge and make it accessible to the public in order to promote reflection and debate surrounding the complexities that underlie the urban fact. To begin with, the Online Archive of the Prize brings together the most relevant works that have been presented in each edition and that already constitute a corpus of more than 300 examples of good practices explained through images, descriptive texts, technical figures and typological classifications. In addition, this digital content is also part of traveling exhibitions that have been installed in a large number of cities around the world and that have been accompanied by talks and debates on topics such as mobility, parks, peripheries, waterfronts or heritage. In addition to specific works, the Award’s website also includes sections dedicated to reflection, either through interviews with personalities from a wide range of backgrounds who have visited the CCCB, or through specialized articles commissioned from experts from around the world. All of this content offer an open and kaleidoscopic view of the city, always seeking to know which decisions best favour the achievement of high-quality built environments from the perspective of the general interest.

7. LESSONS LEARNED AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

After twenty years defending and celebrating Europe's efforts to improve its public spaces, the Prize has collected countless evidence that these shared places are closely linked to the democratic quality of cities. In addition, from the abundant harvest of case studies accumulated over ten editions, important lessons can be drawn on the main challenges that European cities share, no matter how varied their...
sizes, geographies, climates or cultures. Among all, perhaps the most outstanding lesson learned is that, far from being nostalgic, defending the European idea of the city is more imperative today than ever—a compact city, of human scale and walkable distances, and a blended city, where diverse people and different functions coexist. Although urban planning, public policies or even citizen claims have too often betrayed this notion of a blended and compact city, the truth is that it constitutes one of the best solutions to fairly and sensibly inhabiting a finite planet facing challenges as severe as demographic explosion, a scarcity of resources, growing inequalities or the climate crisis. However, what if the goal of raising awareness about the importance of public space has already been achieved? What if we now need to be aware of other domains? Perhaps the most painful observation that has emerged throughout the ten editions of the award is that, even if necessary, public space is not sufficient to achieve a compact and blended city. This finding has been revealed especially through the paradox of gentrification: the improvement of streets, squares and parks can lead to an increase in the cost of the homes or shops that surround them and, therefore, in an expulsion of the citizens who most deserved to benefit from it. Thus, a holistic and attentive approach to the interdependencies between public and domestic spaces is more necessary than ever. At the end of the day, houses and streets have always needed each other.
URBAN MAESTRO

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