Plaza Mediateca
Library and media center, San José, Costa Rica

Main authors
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Project data
Project title Library and Media Center, San José, Costa Rica
Project group Architecture, building and civil engineering
Client Universidad Latina
Project background Research project

Summary and appraisal by the jury
The media library for the people of the Rincón Grande neighborhood in San José, Costa Rica is designed as a modular raised platform resting on steel pillars covered by a ventilated roof. The orientation of the project takes advantage of natural light and movable facade panels integrate the internal breeze circulation, avoiding the installation of mechanical air conditioning. With a minimal environmental impact, this proposal offers a low cost, integrated and multifunctional solution, based on the commercial building system of the town, using local materials and workforce. Architecture is used as a tool to build social space, strengthen community identity and enhance the social life of the community across different ages, interests, classes and cultures.

Sustainability concept
Progress: The modular design of the infrastructure (roofing, cladding, structure) is based on the commercial building system of the town and promotes community participation in the construction. This generates affordability, facilitates construction, and offers the possibility of replicating the structure elsewhere.

People: The community of Rincón Grande de Pavas is threatened by the decline of public space, which limits their right to place in the city – and commensurate problems of marginalisation, fear, exclusion, dispersed community, segregation, residual spaces (non-place) and insecurity. The right to a city has not only the right to use it, but also the right to identify with it. The proposal seeks to a sense of belonging, inclusion, coexistence, participation, and social gathering through a hybrid scenario that will carry out community gatherings to promote culture and art.

Place: The plaza allows multiple leisure activities (artistic, recreational, academic, and cultural) with views of the surrounding cityscape. The design of the square reflects the legibility of the urban environment. The furniture accounts for spaces of social gathering, and the place is accessible for users with different needs. The media-library functions as a dynamic, multifunctional, and integrated platform. Rather than a complementary space of the square, it is an actor and generator of educational, recreational, and cultural areas. The open floor is a scenario for community encounters to learn and have workshops, cultural and recreational activities. The media library functions as a dynamic, multifunctional, and integrated platform.

Prosperity: The proposal is intended as a recovery of public space to enhance the social life of the community in which there is a convergence of different ages, interests, classes, and cultures. Therefore the project is necessary for the community, in which the population, local authorities, and businesses in the area are the main beneficiaries.

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Further authors

Image 1: The modular design of the infrastructure (roofing, cladding, structure) is based on the commercial building system of the town and promotes community participation in the construction. This generates affordability, facilitates construction, and offers the possibility of replicating the structure elsewhere.

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Image 11: Library and media center, San José, Costa Rica

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