

Civic Centre "Cristalleries Planell" - 1/4

H ARQUITECTES

Category A

SUMMARY

This public facility houses an adult education centre, a language standardization consortium and space for entities on a triangular plot in the Parliament district. Two of the three sides of the site are defined by the heritage-listed frontage of the former Planell glass factory, built on Calle Anglesola in 1913.

The building makes use of the entire plot, acting as an intrinsic part of the urban landscape, although the triangular shape and the classified façades prevent it from occupying the entire site. The programme is distributed across four levels which are set back from the south-facing heritage facade. The resulting atrium reconciles construction and heritage, improves the natural lighting for the classrooms and provides a heat and sound barrier. This long, narrow courtyard is reproduced at the northern vertex, which exhausts the geometry but acts as a relational system between the administrative uses of the building and the exterior. The building section shows how it controls and manages the air under natural conditions.

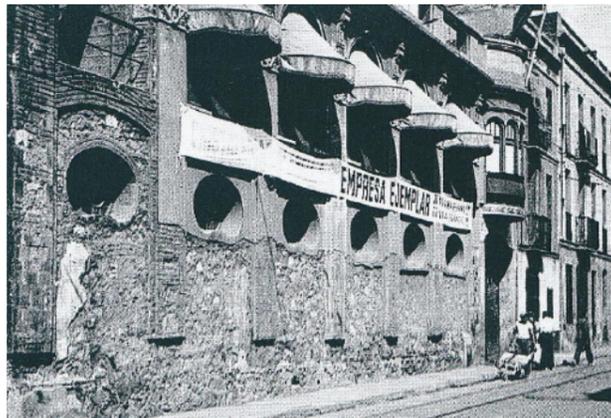
In winter, it is necessary to control heat loss due to air renewal, redeem the heavy internal load built up due to the inertia of the wall structure, and draw fresh air in from the atrium, which thus acts as a natural air recycle.

In summer, the heat has to be dissipated by moving the largest possible volume of air and fresh air must be strictly natural, based on solar chimneys and caps that apply the Venturi effect. Cross-ventilation between the courtyards is ruled out by the programme and the need to avoid conflicting noises. The building therefore gives each strip of usage space a long structural break where the air circulates vertically, 'pulled upwards' in the chimneys by the power of the sun, which also give the building a silhouette and a distinctive, transparent materiality. The resulting volume is an answer to the strict triangular geometry of the plot, for its power and urban behaviour.

The ceramic materiality aims to exalt the heritage façade by integrating and not singularizing it, to use and not sacralise it. The new and the old are set with similar materials and techniques. This puts them practically on the same level, but in both cases the building demands are attended: the closing, the reception, the ventilation of the chambers and patios. The materiality is composed by structural meanings.

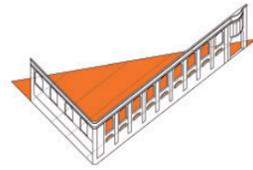
The block of solid glass has been introduced as part of the wall enclosure that allows light to enter the north patio and capture the south patio. This improves the light conditions of the courtyards and provides the façade with a material linked to the memory of Cristalleries Planell.

Original façade after the civil war. 1940-42

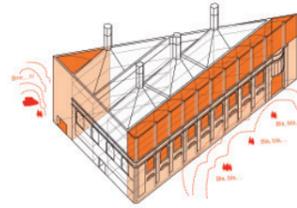


PROJECT STRATEGY

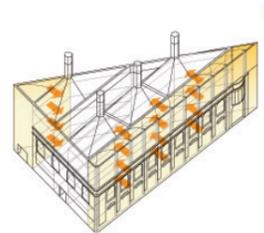
Catalogued heritage façade



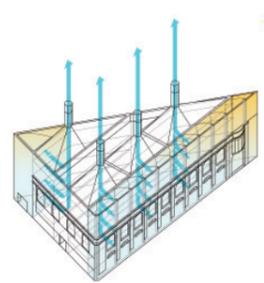
Patios: geometric adaptation and acoustic protection



Winter: the patio acts as a thermal cushion and natural light collector



Summer: the solar chimney acts as a natural engine of ventilation



Previous state of Cristalleries Planell. 1997

