



Critical Prison Design: Mas d'Enric Penitentiary by AiB arquitectes + Estudi PSP Arquitectura

By Roger Paez

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The newly built Mas d'Enric penitentiary sparks a series of reflections on architecture's role in the problematic subject of prison design. The prison is an uncomfortable institution and its architecture is often subjugated to technocratic criteria. This servility forces the prison out of the socio-cultural realm where it belongs, thus erasing it from public discourse. "Mas d'Enric" is a new penitentiary that overturns preconceptions and posits architecture as a medium to critically rethink contemporary prison buildings.

The discussion is enriched by contributions from a number of influential architects and architectural theorists, and is complemented by original work in film, photography, literature, sculpture and visual arts.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Paez profiles a new prison in Catalonia designed to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration into society once inmates have served their sentences, without neglecting aspects of security related to their confinement and custody.

Architects have made all efforts to integrate the large-scale infrastructures

into their surroundings by minimizing their environmental and social impact, he

says, situating them close to communication hubs and improving their

accessibility in terms of distance and traveling time to major population

centers. This is an example of prison innovation since the Catalan government

took over responsibility for penitentiary matters in 1984 and began replacing

Franco-era prisons." --Eithne O'Leyne, Editor, ProtoView

About the Author

Roger Paez is principal of [AiB], a ten-year-old firm based in Barcelona with parallel operations in Los Angeles and Miami. Over the years they have succeeded both professionally and academically in the practice of Advanced Architectural Design. In ten years they have developed over 250 projects and proposals, mostly for public clients. Their extensive professional experience ranges from public facilities, to housing, town planning and landscape. [AiB] is a platform devoted to contemporary architectural practice with a critical edge. It provides professional services in Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape Design.

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Mary James:

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