

arcVision Prize
Women and architecture 2013
Honorable mention



IZASKUN CHINCHILLA
MADRID, SPAIN

The jury really admires the courage of Izaskun Chinchilla who tries to open unconventional paths through researches and architectural education while being deeply concerned by a particular combination between social engagement, aesthetics and techniques to reinvent a new vision for ecological environment in her projects.

The realization of every project is transgressing architecture and art installation for embracing the social in public spaces.

The jury wants to enhance her dynamism in breaking the limits and her strength to express it through drawings which have been influential on a new generation of young architects.

BIOGRAPHY

Graduated Architect from Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Spain) in 2001.

She has been running her own studio in Madrid since 2001.

With a long and comprehensive experience in education, she is Senior Teaching Fellow and Researcher in Barlett School of Architecture (UCL London, UK). She has also taught at the Ecole Special (Paris, France) and at the HEAD University (Geneva, Switzerland). She was Studio Professor in the University of Alicante (Escuela de Arquitectura Universidad de Alicante) from 2002 to 2007. At present, she is teaching at Madrid University (Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain) and Instituto de Empresa (Madrid, Spain).

Her designer activity is accompanied by a research project called "Social and Aesthetic Repercussions of technical topics and solutions which take ecology into account" and that has taken her as visiting scholar to Columbia University in New York (2002), Ecole de Mines de Paris (2003) and Princeton University in New Jersey (2004) and also to the Institut d'Arquitectura Avancada de Catalunya (Barcelona), in a Postgraduate Master (2003-2007).

She is at the moment supervising construction of her project for a Mediatheque in Garcimuñoz Medieval Castle in Cuenca, Spain (a public cultural building including the refurbishment of the existing infrastructures with social purposes); the refurbishment of a vernacular house in Toledo, Spain, and other smaller projects.

She is also involved in the design of digital interactive exhibitions with social purposes, e.g. encouraging reading among young children (Fairytale Park Museography in Málaga) or appreciating the efforts after some sports (Centro de Arte Canal).

"Chinchilla was still very young (she graduated in 2001) when she came to building construction, from an essentially theoretical education and from teaching work (Bartlett School, London; Ecole Speciale, Paris): her first completed project is the conversion of a medieval castle built on the remains of an Arab building into a public music and hybrid library.

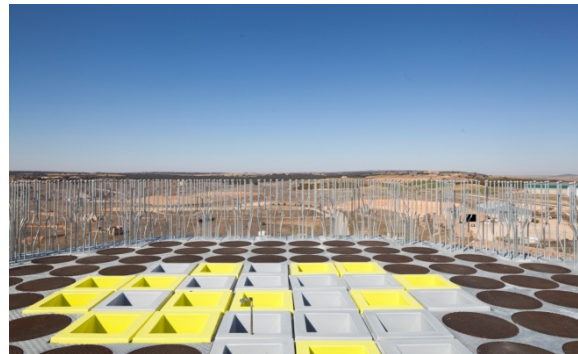
Given the nature of the isolated location, use of the castle will be diversified during the year, with a greater role for the outdoor areas in the summer: the structures created by this public project echo, in a highly modern register, the vertical impact of the surrounding medieval buildings, in an attempt to give a contemporary identity to a long-abandoned historic site.

In a project for a private site, the Casa Carmena, Chinchilla's expressive idiom is essentially developed through the surfaces and through decorative elements based on abstract patterns (inspired by the brushwork on an impressionist painting by Manet)". Stefano Casciani, scientific director

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GARCIMUÑOZ14 – Cuenca, Spain

Garcimuñoz Castle is a small site with very restricted resources. The central government has paid for the main refurbishment and the small city council will have to maintain the building. The location, just off the National III highway, ensures high volume of public in the sunny holiday periods. "Small resources" and "changing flux of public" have become critical aspects in the realization of the project. That is why the closed off area is minimized and this reduces energy consumption. Most of the project space is used with benign weather, when more people come to visit. In winter, only 200-250 square meters will be used. Most of the site will have "disappeared" in terms of economic and energetic expenses. Architecture will just be kind of ghost waiting for the sun to come up. In summer period, though all of the outside space will open adding up to 2000 square meters of visiting area. For this purpose all kind of bioclimatic techniques have been used.



ANCESTRAL HOUSE – Toledo, Spain

Historically, ancestral homes are the properties that has fostered the coexistence and represented the families that owned them. Regardless of their location, their grandeur, their time and their site all of them have borne the signs –names, heraldry or aesthetic tastes- of their tenants. The house was a reflection of the family character and, in certain way, it took a representative role. This house in Carmena, a small town 40 kilometers away from Toledo, is not an exception.

The refurbishment project takes as point of departure the challenge of transforming an existing architecture, but also essentially that of critically recovering the ‘good customs’ of the past blending them with the contemporary ways of life.

