

# SQUARE STREET

Barcelona  
2012-2016

Turó de la Rovira is included in the last foothills of the Coastal Range before the change of slope that forms Barcelona's plain. This geological formation includes a series of hills that emerge from the urban fabric with heights between 180 and 260 meters above the sea level and constitute one of the most extraordinary and wide balconies over the city.

## TPOLOGY

Public Space - Refurbishment

## AREA

5227m<sup>2</sup>

## PROMOTER

Barcelona City Hall

## BUILDER

Obres i Serveis Roig, s.a.

## COLLABORATORS

Blázquez Guanter s.l.p., structural consultants

## PHOTOGRAPHY

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XI Iberian-american Architecture and Urbanism Biennial Award 2018.

XIV Spanish Biennial of Architecture and Urbanism Award 2018.

FAD Opinion Architecture Award 2018.

European Prize for Urban Public Space Finalist 2018.







*The progressive expansions of Barcelona's urban fabric during the XXth century reached Turó de la Rovira's summit, a former collective open air leisure spot.*

**F1**  
Street Square site plan. Institut Cartogràfic i Geològic de Catalunya (ICGC), 2016.

**F2**  
Penyal street in Carmel district, a characteristic dirt road of Barcelona's urban spread, 1972. Photography from Branguli fond (photographers) from the National Archive of Catalonia (ANC).

**F3**  
Popular gathering and open air activities used to colonize Turó de la Rovira's foothill. Photography from Custòdia Moreno's Archive, published in the book "El Carmelo ignorado. Historia de un barrio imposible" edited by Agència de Promoció del Carmel i entorns, s.a. and Barcelona City Hall.



The hilltop where the project is located has undergone several stages of urbanization starting at the beginning of the twentieth century with the construction of several summer homes for wealthy families from Barcelona. During the civil war and due to its strategic location an anti-aircraft battery and some related military installations were built. After the war the city had to cope with a strong wave of immigration that favored the emergence of a settlement based on self construction that later became a populated shantytown. It was not until 2010 that the crown is regained for collective use with an intervention that brings back to the light the dense history of the site including all its layers.

Today Barcelona is working to reintegrate Turó de la Rovira's area into the urban grid imagining new routes that will connect it with some of the most signified landmarks of the city such as Park Guell, Sant Pau Hospital and Sagrada Familia. This operation requires an intervention to improve the access that leads to the veranda of the old batteries through the small inhabited village of Marià Lavèrnia.

The project aims to mainly operate by modifying the topography. It simultaneously provides the necessary conditions for a road access through a ramp and the will to have new small resting areas able to generate new outdoor activities: successive horizontal planes that will allow an open appropriation of the public space. These terraced squares along the existing street seek to preserve and emphasize the domestic character that is and has been an intrinsic part of the history of the place.

The planted vegetation should play an essential role in the forthcoming years in order to provide the necessary hygrothermal and luminic comfort for the flourishing open air life.

**F1**  
View of Marià Lavèrnia street before the intervention.

**F2**  
Pedestrian areas around the Acropolis of Athens, by Dimitris Pikionis. Photography by Hélène Binet.

**F3**  
View of Marià Lavèrnia street from Turó de la Rovira's summit. On the right side, the Eixample district. The Mediterranean sea in the background.





F2

Axonometric view of the project.





**F1-F2**  
Successive horizontal planes allow for an open colonization of the street.







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- F1**  
The dimensions of the horizontal planes respond to the existing plots and houses.
- F2**  
The squares promote the extension of domesticity in the open air.
- F3**  
The sequence of horizontal planes ensures access to every door and building along the street.

*The configuration of a sequence of horizontal planes guarantees the accessibility to each house and suggests a domestic appropriation of the public space.*







**F1**  
Planted vegetation is expected to provide a pleasant shade and the essential thermal comfort to promote a gradual occupation of the place.

**F2**  
The series of horizontal surfaces smoothly adapts to the complex topography of the site.

**F3**  
The project furnishes the street with gathering spaces.







**F1**

The project offers a wide and tranquil route for pedestrians to the veranda in Turó de la Rovira's summit while guaranteeing access to all kind of municipal vehicles. Recently planted trees extend the green character of the hill into the street.

**F2**

The squares cascade into a final larger space next to the existing pine tree forest.