



**Petare**  
Caracas  
Venezuela



**Capitán Chico**  
Maracaibo  
Venezuela



**Pinto Salinas**  
Caracas  
Venezuela



**El Chama**  
Mérida  
Venezuela



**Los Mangos**  
Valencia  
Venezuela



**Context**

Espacios de Paz (Spaces for Peace) is an exercise of Participatory Design that attempt to activate processes of physical and social transformation through the self-construction of public spaces in conflicting areas.

Promoting a culture of peace that encourages peaceful coexistence, comes from redefining the territories. Ensuring that the "zones of danger", areas with high presence of all kind of violence, are transformed into "zones of peace", areas with the possibility of creating social dynamics that invite new ways of living in communities, transforming the basic categories that rule the daily life: the use of time and space.

An opportunity to work on the processes of learning and cooperation, based on the exchange and transfer of knowledge and experience, turning human and territorial potential into power, "the ability to do." Ensure that individuals are involved all together and recognized as a whole in the site, being conscious that their own contribution is part of the general result.

**SPACES FOR PEACE (Espacios de Paz)**  
PICO Estudio & Movimiento Por la Paz y la Vida



Espacios de Paz (Spaces for Peace) is an exercise that attempt to use architecture as a way of social transformation in five of the most conflicting urban contexts in Venezuela, through the formula of Participatory Design and collaborative construction. Architects from Venezuela and from other countries lead a process in which the community designs and builds a public space, in a span of four weeks.

Understanding that beyond the constructed object, the key is to share knowledge between all the actors involved in the process, the community learns the methodologies that provide them the necessary tools to continue building in a self-managed way.

In this way, we have a searching to be increasingly dispensable as architects, and to reach a project not for the community but from community, from planning, design, construction, and finally the management; thus achieving, generate a sense of collective belonging that ensures its maintenance.

We have called this line of research Architecture as a Process, associated with the formulas of Urban Acupuncture or Tactical Urbanism.

#### Methodology

The project framework is a 6 week long workshop, developed by groups of architects from Venezuela and from other countries simultaneously in five different communities. The first week is the preproduction and planning of the workshops, the following four weeks are for designing and carry out the projects, and one final week to check results.

Teams for each project were formed by a national group and / or a union of two national groups, plus another foreign group, in addition there were communities members, students, volunteers and state institutions that were involved.

The general strategy is based on acts of acupuncture in the urban structure, focal interventions on specific territories that are actually underused such as junk spaces, empty plots or spontaneous landfill sites; areas that are nevertheless key points on urban dynamics and have the potential to transform and consolidate their surroundings.

## SPACES FOR PEACE (Espacios de Paz)

### PICO Estudio & Movimiento Por la Paz y la Vida



**Pinto Salinas**  
Caracas  
Venezuela



**Los Mangos**  
Valencia  
Venezuela



**Petare**  
Caracas  
Venezuela



**Capitán Chico**  
Maracaibo  
Venezuela



**El Chama**  
Mérida  
Venezuela

The main propose of design is to work with anything we have in hands. Materiality shall respond to the ease of access of the local material, either, waste material or materials that normally are used for constructions. In this way are used: rubbers (Captain Chico), unused barrels of oil (Los Mangos), cylinder compression testing concrete (Pinto Salinas), and others, waste materials that usually are found in any community. As for the materials of local architecture, are recognized depending on locations; whether Enea (Catnail) leaves, typical of the Añú indigenous architecture (Captain Chico) or river stones if it is a mountainous region of Los Andes (El Chama).

It is not only essential to consider local materials for the constructions, it is also important that builders are from the community, so, based on a study of place potentials, popular knowledge are identified and this is what defines the way how to build.

The quest is based on work that achieves low- Technology, minimizing construction difficulties, in this way; this will give opportunities for the community to contribute; thinking on replicable modules for the design, that ensures the continuity of the projects in the future.

**SPACES FOR PEACE (Espacios de Paz)**  
PICO Estudio & Movimiento Por la Paz y la Vida



**Capitán Chico**  
Maracaibo  
Venezuela



**Los Mangos**  
Valencia  
Venezuela



**El Chama**  
Mérida  
Venezuela



**Pinto Salinas**  
Caracas  
Venezuela



**Petare**  
Caracas  
Venezuela

In the Venezuelan context there is a search to transform the state into a participatory and protagonist model in which organized communities have the ability to reach high levels of self-government. Espacios de Paz (Spaces for Peace) is created in this context as a formula to provide methodological and technical knowledge's to the neediest communities, and to empower them to build their public spaces with higher quality.

As the only guarantee of success, Participatory Design is understood as the fundamental basis to create projects that truly meet the most pressing needs of the population that in a future will be living in that spaces built.

The project has a multidisciplinary character by the need of create cultural activation, integrating groups of documentalist and muralists in the process. All working together under the same logic of teaching the community to do; in this way each member of the community is formed as future workshop organizers, documentalist and muralists. All this knowledge will remain in the community, like most of the profits of the project.

#### Results

A project of collaborative architecture that is seen in its complexity as a whole, it has been a great production effort in which they were able to articulate many agents to work together with a product of 5 projects of public spaces, in consolidation and expansion. The project is an instrument to teach the community of a methodological tool that allows them to work independently to transform their reality.

It is a social form of practice that is focused on a local issue, to meet and transform the needs, expectations and dynamics of everyday life instead of the model of the great urban renewal projects, which demands big national budgets, complex bureaucratic processes and takes many years to complete.

Participation at all levels, applied as a mechanism of self-management of the project, involving citizens in the construction of their public space through a learning process that strengthens the neighborhood cohesion, collective empowerment using government institutions.

A space built not only "for" the community but "by" the community, as well to reclaim a role of architects as workers, architects are not only seen as agents in the project, but someone that is integrated, someone that doesn't excel but is incorporated into the process.

## SPACES FOR PEACE (Espacios de Paz)

### PICO Estudio & Movimiento Por la Paz y la Vida