

projeto

# Mouraria Square

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Arquitectos

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It is alongside a requalified urban section that, years later and aside from the Mouraria's Action Plan, it was born the project of a square connecting Palma Street to Benfornoso Street, integrating a set of public squares that mark the pathway. The program for the new square found its guidelines on the site characteristics. The area is a frontier between two urban realities, that can also serve as an opportunity to bring together and put in contact two different social and cultural worlds. The architectural design process takes a personal approach, believing that this is a result of a broad and ambitious reading of reality, while facing its complexity, multifaceted, and consistent vision to then transform the real world. The exercise of critical thinking, which is the cornerstone of our design process, feeds a systematic assessment of expected solutions and their efficiency, and the necessity of an eventual revision.

KEYWORDS: Mouraria square; public square; urban site.

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#### PRAÇA DA MOURARIA

É ao lado de um trecho urbano requalificado que, anos depois e à parte do Plano de Ação da Mouraria, nasceu o projeto de uma praça que liga a Rua Palma com a Rua Benfornoso, integrando um conjunto de praças públicas que pontuam o caminho. O programa para a nova praça encontrou suas diretrizes nas características do sítio. O local, fronteira entre duas realidades urbanas, é também uma oportunidade de reunir e colocar em contato essas realidades sociais e culturais. Começamos o processo de projeto arquitetônico com uma abordagem pessoal, acreditando que isso resulta de uma leitura ampla e ambiciosa da realidade, encarando sua complexidade, e de uma visão multifacetada e consistente para transformá-la. O exercício da dura crítica é a pedra angular do nosso processo projetual, que alimenta uma avaliação sistemática das soluções previstas, sua eficiência e uma eventual necessidade de revisão.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Praça da Mouraria; praça pública; espaço urbano.

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#### PLAZA MOURARIA

Junto a un tramo urbano recalificado que, años después y aparte del Plan de Acción de Mouraria, nació el proyecto para abrir una plaza que conecta la calle Palma y la calle Benfornoso, integrando un conjunto de plazas públicas que marcan el camino. El programa para la nueva plaza naturalmente encontró sus pautas en las características del sitio. El lugar, frontera entre dos realidades urbanas, es también una oportunidad para reunir y poner en contacto dos realidades sociales y culturales. Comenzamos el proceso del proyecto con un enfoque personal de diseño arquitectónico, creyendo que eso es el resultado de una lectura amplia y ambiciosa de la realidad, frente a su complejidad, y de una visión multifacética y consistente para transformarla. El ejercicio de la resistencia crítica es la piedra angular de nuestro proceso de proyecto, alimentando una evaluación sistemática de las soluciones previstas, su eficiencia y una eventual necesidad de revisión.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Plaza Mouraria, plaza pública; espacio urbano.



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PÁGINA ANTERIOR  
Urban insertion  
of the project in  
the neighborhood  
highlighting the  
opposite public void.

Photographic records  
of the neighborhood.

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### 1. Mouraria Square

It is alongside a requalified urban section that, years later and aside from the Mouraria's Action Plan, it was born the project of a square connecting Palma Street to Benfornoso Street, integrating a set of public squares that mark the pathway. However, according to some municipal archival documents, there were already initiatives to open a square connecting the two streets. At the end of the nineteenth century, shortly after the opening of Palma Street, a group of Benfornoso Street residents requested for an additional passage to link both streets. Years later, in the 1950s, a demolition plan for the construction of the Martin Moniz square included the elimination of a set of buildings where now the Mouraria square is planned to be created.

Heading north, the extension of Palma Street becomes Almirante Reis Ave., an ease connection to the expanding city. However, it creates a frontier and isolates the Mouraria area from the West side of the city. Therefore, opening a connection between these two streets is not only a way to address an action problem of local urban design, but it is also an opportunity to respond to a pressing matter regarding social cohesion in a multicultural context.

### 2. A New Mosque

The program for the new square found its guidelines on the site characteristics. The area is a frontier between two urban realities, that can also serve as an opportunity to bring together and put in contact two different social and cultural worlds. For example, given the dimension of the local Muslim community, coming especially from Bangladesh, and the precariousness state of the existing mosque, it is a reasonable decision to build a new mosque. Furthermore, the close presence of the Municipal Photographic Archive, next to the square, become an opportunity to expand the Archive facilities. For instance, a new multi-purpose room can be built to host exhibitions.

The future square program aims to reflect the natural condition and composition of the site as a frontier. The mixed program will allow spaces of multiple uses. In addition to that, the design principles seek to reinforce the flexibility of the use of the buildings, ensuring that they can serve a diversity of purposes, now and in the future. This vague and plural program also allows the project to not succumb to the temptation of contributing inadvertently to the process of stigmatization by giving visibility to multi-cultures.

Public Spaces:

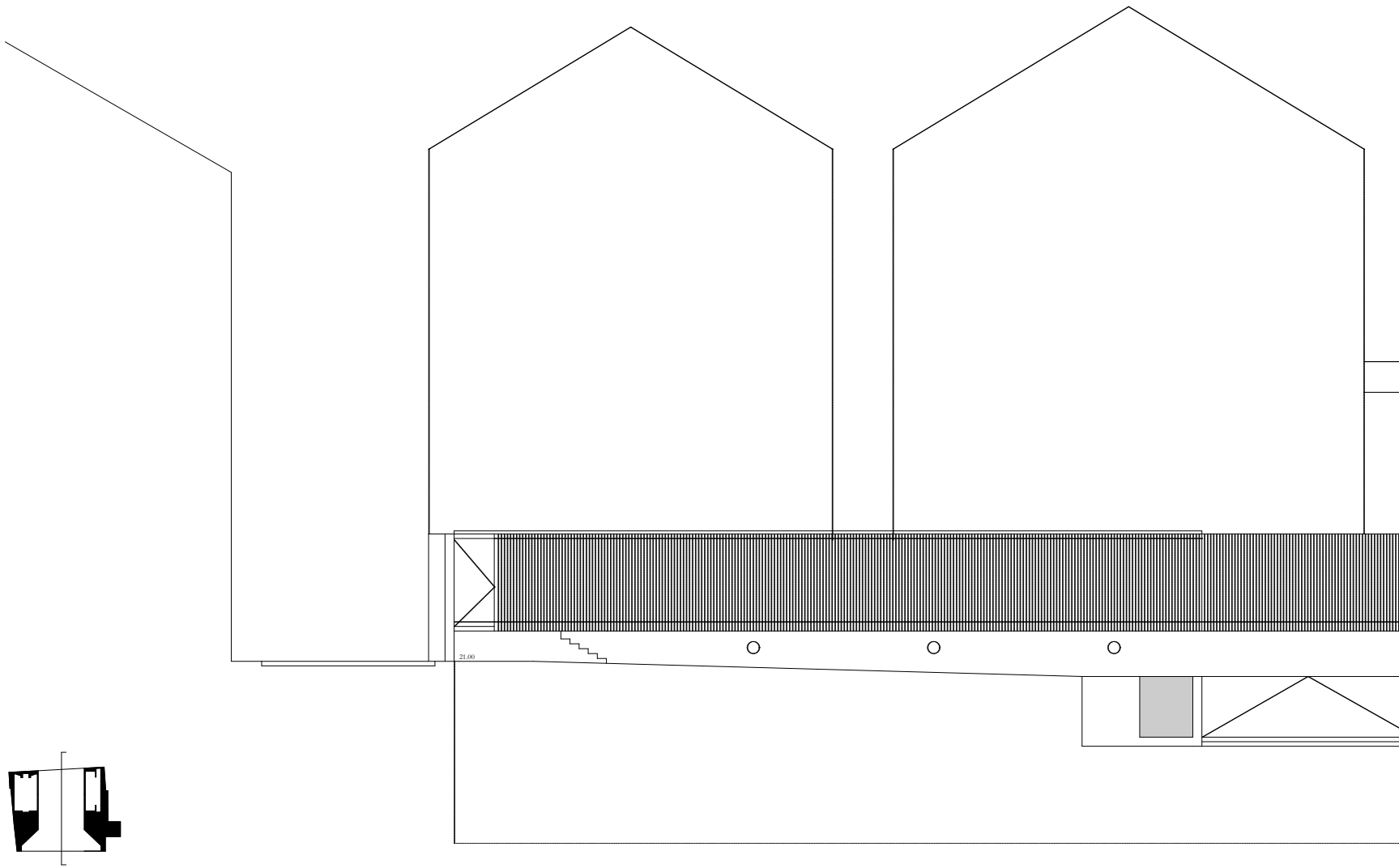
- 01. Comércio Square
- 02. Rossio Square
- 03. Figueira Square
- 04. Martim Moniz Square
- 05. Mouraria Square
- 06. Intendente Plaza
- 07. Anjos Church
- 08. Chile Square
- 09. Arroios Marketplace
- 10. D. Afonso Henriques Mall Garden
- 11. João do Rio Square
- 12. Areeiro Square

Neighborhoods:

- A. Mouraria Neighborhood
- B. Graça Neighborhood
- C. Intendente Neighborhood
- D. Andrade Neighborhood
- E. Inglaterra Neighborhood
- F. Colónias Neighborhood
- G. Penha de França Neighborhood
- H. Alto do Pina Neighborhood
- I. Actores Neighborhood



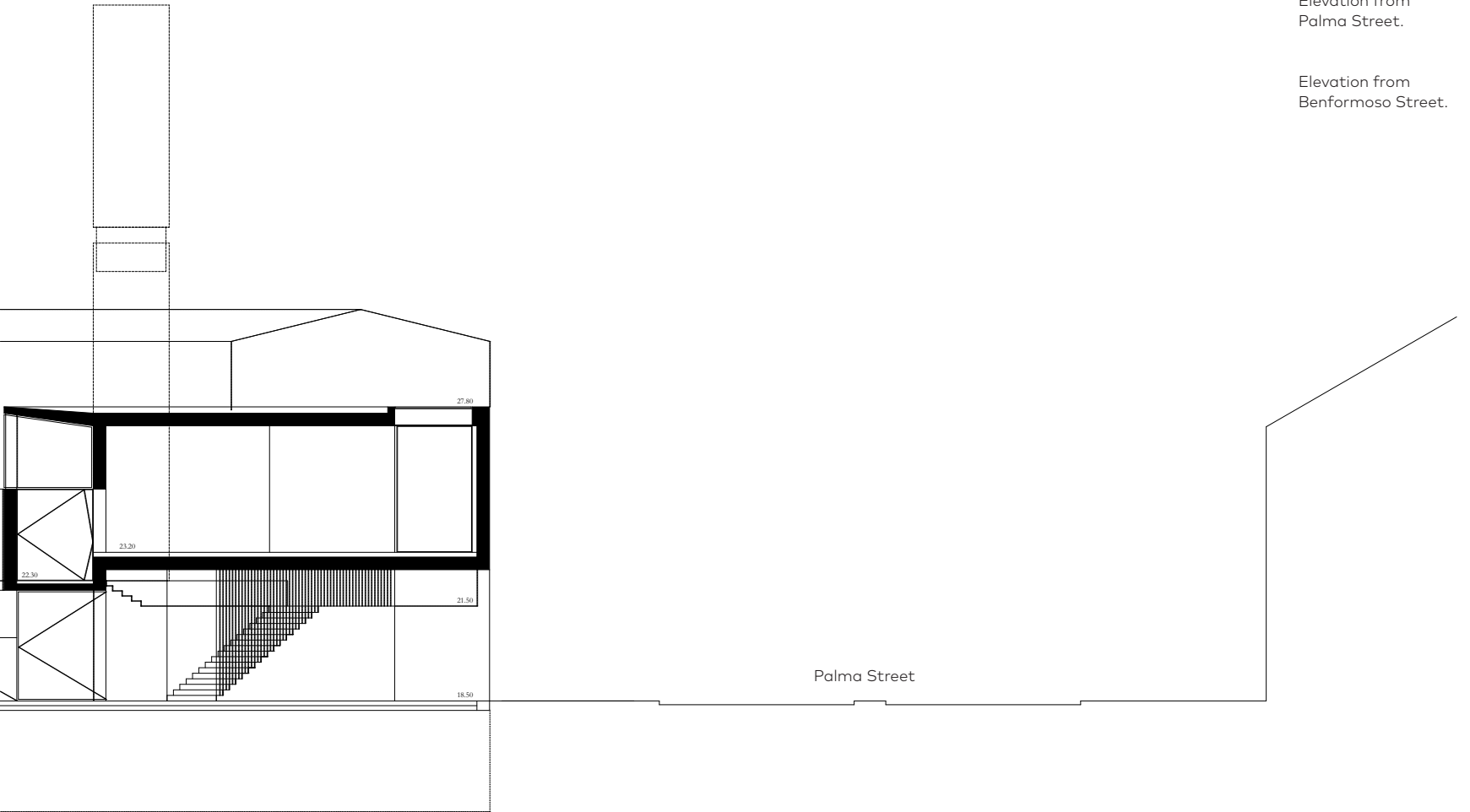
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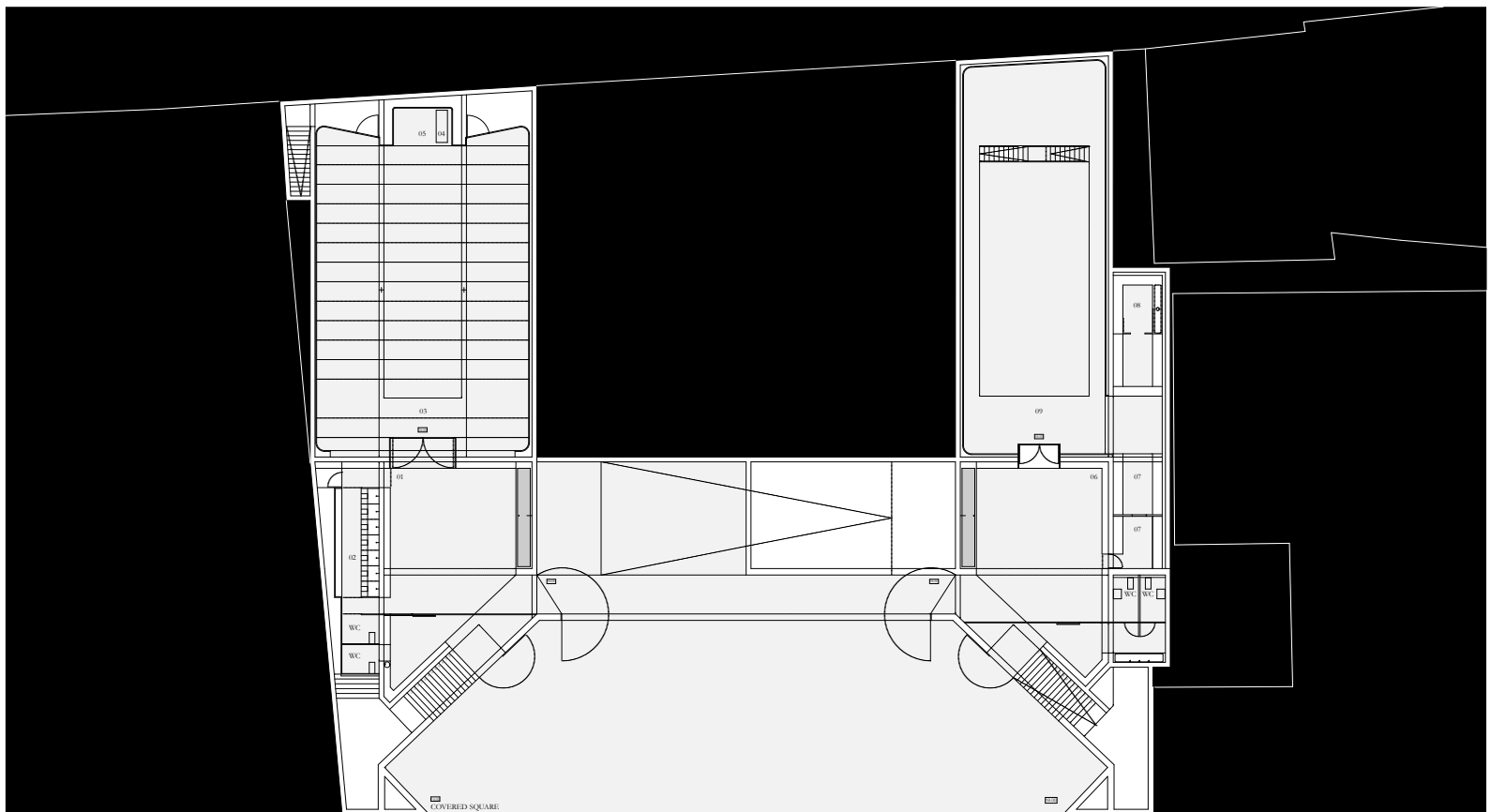
Cross section.

Elevation from  
Palma Street.

Elevation from  
Benformoso Street.

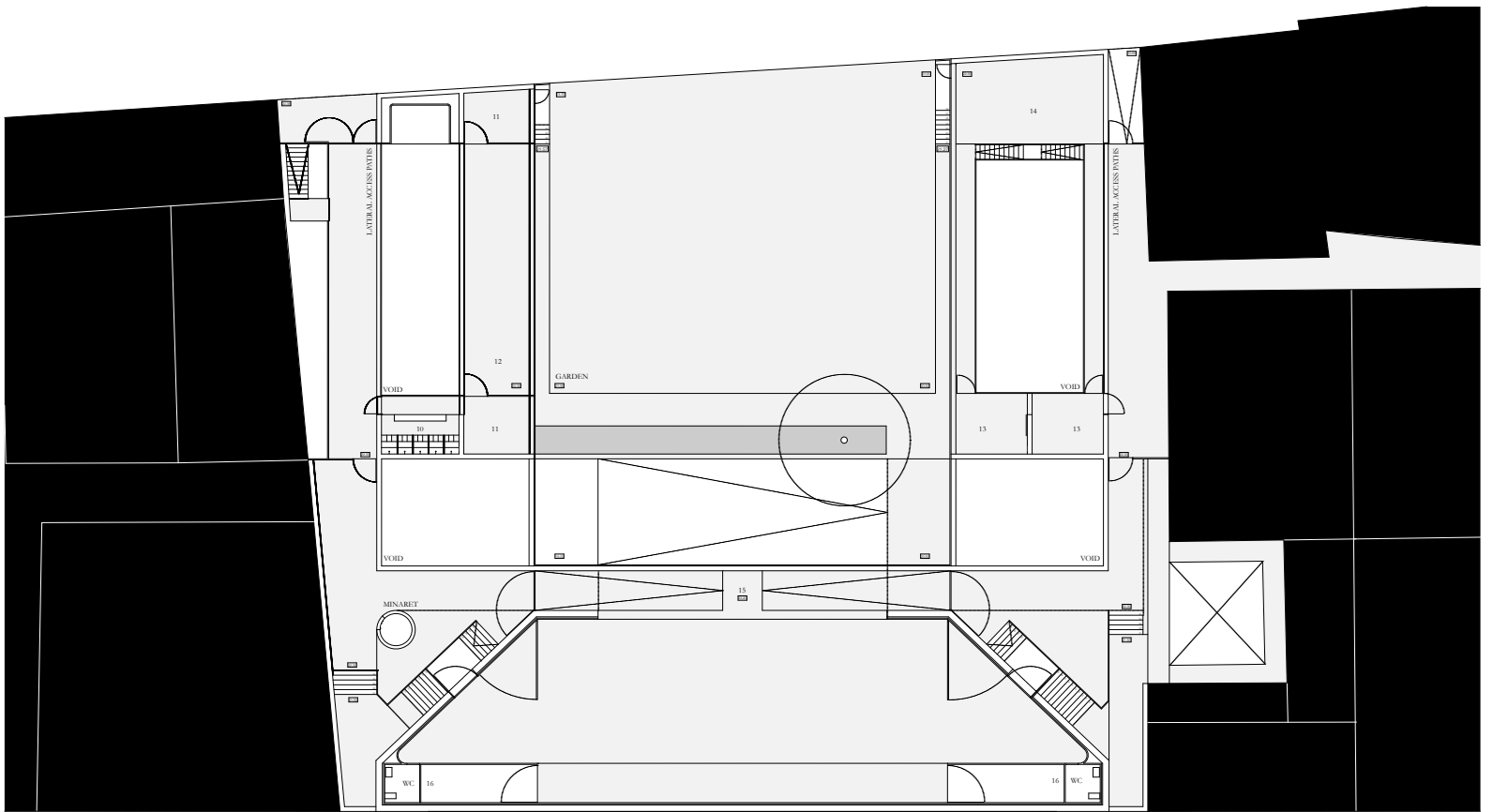


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Plans

- 01. Courtyard of praying spaces
- 02. Men's ablution space
- 03. Men's praying room
- 04. Minbar
- 05. Mihrab
- 06. Courtyard of refectory
- 07. Cloakroom
- 08. Kitchen
- 09. Refectory/ Multipurpose room
- 10. Women's ablution space
- 11. Hall
- 12. Women's praying room
- 13. Cabinet
- 14. Multipurpose room I
- 15. Multipurpose room II
- 16. Storeroom
- 17. Minaret
- WC. Toilets





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Mouraria has a unique reality, it is a territory where different cultures coexist; so, when people share a common place like a square, a neighborhood, or a public space in general, a great opportunity to effectively integrate the OTHER is created.

Even though one might consider that urban interventions search to act on the obscure side underlying the ambiguity of interstitial spaces it's, here, appropriate to note that being ambiguity of interstitially conditions inherent to our contemporaneity, maybe it would be important to also take in to account the potential of those conditions. This is, I believe that the possible invention of a neighborhood as a segregated and stigmatized space, implies admitting that Mouraria is one of the reflections of contemporary urban space, a patch was coexist distinct parts or a multiplicity of Mourarias. (MENEZES, 2004, p.282).

### 3. Design Process

The intention was, from the beginning, to take a personal approach, believing that this is a result of a broad and ambitious reading of reality, while facing its complexity, multifaceted, and consistent vision to then transform the real world. The aim was to serve to each particular context — cultural, social, and economic — with an adequate and sustainable response. In order to do so, it was necessary an in-depth analysis of the challenges that must be accomplished through design. Second, in every stage of the project, a continuous joint reflection of the design teams needs to assure a wide, plural, and coordinated vision. Even though sustainability is as multifaceted challenge, the project must focus on the necessity of attaining an optimal response: broad in sense and strict in the affection of means. The purpose is to achieve maximum efficiency, both during and after the construction.

The exercise of critical thinking, which is the cornerstone of our design process, feeds a systematic assessment of expected solutions and their efficiency, and the necessity of an eventual revision. Therefore, the project relies on multidisciplinary design teams, believing that interdisciplinary dialogue stimulates creativity and the overall quality of the design. Every project starts with a careful diagnosis, which allows both the design team and the client to create a critical vision of the project and be part of the involved challenges.

#### AUTHOR

Inês Lobo graduated at the School of Fine Arts of Lisbon in 1989, and since then she teaches design studio. Currently, she is a Guest Professor at the Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa and at the Universidade de Lisboa. Her professional career began in 1989, and in 2002 she founded her own company: Inês Lobo, Arquitectos. In 1999, she was honored with the title of *Oficial da Ordem do Mérito* by the President of the Republic of Portugal and in 2013 she received the *Mulheres criadoras da cultura* prize, granted by the Portuguese Government. She is also a curator and commissioned of Architecture exhibitions. Lobo was responsible for the Portuguese representation in the Venice Biennale (2012) and the Eighth Ibero-American Architecture and Urbanism Biennale.

#### TEAM

João Rosário, João Vaz, Júlia Varela, Vasco Lopes and Sónia Ribeiro.

#### COLLABORATORS

ADF Engenheiros Consultores and Pedro Morujão (structures); Fernanda Valente (hydraulic installations); GPIC Projectos Consultoria e Instalações, Fernando Aires and Alexandre Martins (electrical installations, telecommunication and security); Natural Works and Guilherme Carrilho da Graça (heating, ventilation, building physics, thermic and acoustics); Rui Prata Ribeiro Lda and Paula Balseiro (project revision); 3Dhelp (renderings); Paulo Catrica (photography).

#### REFERENCES

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Lisbon, Portugal, 2013-16.