



Recetas Urbanas
Santiago Cirugeda

HOUSE OF WORDS (HoW)

Flexible add-on Structure

Promoter: GIBCA & PAAS
Building Company: Self-Building
Location: Gothenburg, Sweden
Area: 65 m² + 15 m²

Cost: 28.500 €
Start Design Date: April 2015
Construction Start: August 2015
Inauguration: September 2015

The House of Words'project (HoW) is inspired by the traditional meeting places – sheds or shaded spaces – found in many African societies, used by communities for dialogue and exchange. It consists of two parts: an architectural structure, designed by Recetas Urbanas and built through a collective process, and an experience activated by Loulou Cherinet, aiming for individuals and communities to appropriate this platform and engage in storytelling. The architectural proposal resulting consists of a “prosthesis pavilion” that is attached to Röda Sten Konsthall, as part of the Gothenburg International Biennial of Contemporary Arts, built with second hand materials from previous projects of Recetas Urbanas, shipped from Spain in a maritime container and bought in a municipal reusing station. This very gesture started with the methodology in which HoW has been conceived and then constructed: bottom-up by professionals, volunteers, and instructors from local communities working together a month before the biennial's official opening. A key starting point is the previous experience, based on developing subversive projects that address the urban realities and negotiations between legal and illegal zoning in order to realize ambitious outcomes, from new housing models for the socially disadvantaged to temporary sites for community discussion and cultural intervention.



The philosophy of the process is a self-building method based on learning by sharing, teamwork and community. More than 70 people from all walks of life took part in this process during four weeks, exchanging skills, discussing the design, and helping each other along the way. Good music, good food, and a sense of celebration have been prioritized as much as proper footwear, safety. The demand from the users and other interested collectives made that the Art Center asked to prolong the temporality for five more years.