

HUMANIZING HIGH SECURITY SPACES: REFORMATORIES FOR MINOR OFFENDERS - THE TEACHING AND PRACTICE OF DESIGN FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION TOWARDS VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES.

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ABSTRACT | Community-engaged design project between the students of design of Escuela Superior de Diseño de Aragón (ESDA) and the minor offenders interned in the Education and Internment Center by Court Order (CEIMJ Juslibol) Zaragoza, Spain. The focus of the project is on teaching our students and practicing design skills with people living in poverty or at risk of exclusion, working with vulnerable communities to accelerate the transition to a fair and ecological society. The practice of design involves intervention in a social group, and therefore, we should incorporate the anthropological dimension in methodological terms. Man being spatial, all experience depends on the place where it happens (Herrera & De Oña, 2016) A collaborative effort between students and vulnerable communities contributes to various aspects of design. A different approach and change of mindset applicable to teaching social design and design for social innovation (Mazini, 2015) A reformatory for minor offenders is neither a prison nor should it look like one (Pol, Esteve, García-Bores & Llueca, 1992)

Educational-formative and welfare institutions, and more explicitly correctional institutions, are organizations that have served, by satisfying the urgent basic needs of the vulnerable population, as an effective method of social control, and architecture plays a very important role in this. The main objectives are:

- The better use of space and its environmental conditions as spatial resources of intervention to facilitate treatment.
- More dynamic environmental conditions facilitate the appropriation of the space by the inmates.

The first project, “My personal space,” developed in 2023 by the students in the 3rd year of Interior Design, focuses on the individual rooms of the inmates, developing 14 proposals for more friendly and personalized rooms through the design of interior details and complying with the necessary safety conditions. Surveys were conducted to measure the mood of the design students before, during, and at the end of the project. The students who were initially against working directly with minor offenders were, in the end, satisfied that they were actively involved. During the ESDA DESIS Social Design Days, experiences and projects of social innovation are shared publicly. Our students explained the project to the educational community.

The second project, “Humanizing high-security spaces,” developed in 2024 by the 3rd year Interior Design students with the collaboration of 3rd and 4th year Graphic Design students, focuses on the reception module, a liminal space where the minor is admitted for the first time and spends his first week of adaptation to the center until he is transferred to the module that corresponds to him with other inmates.

Design students learn and discover in an immersive way the social dimension of design by developing new interpersonal skills.

The proposals were born from the dialogue between the designers and the inmates as a process of deep knowledge of their needs and expectations, bringing together new points of view through participatory design. The result confirms how small gestures in interior design make possible great improvements, creating an environment conducive to positive therapeutic development work.



The focus of the project is on teaching our students and practicing design skills with people living in poverty or at the risk of exclusion

Minor offenders

Education and Internment
Center by Court Order
Zaragoza, Spain



A collaborative effort
between students and
vulnerable communities
contributing to various facets
of design

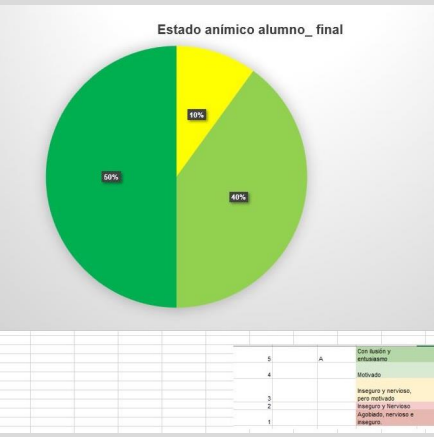
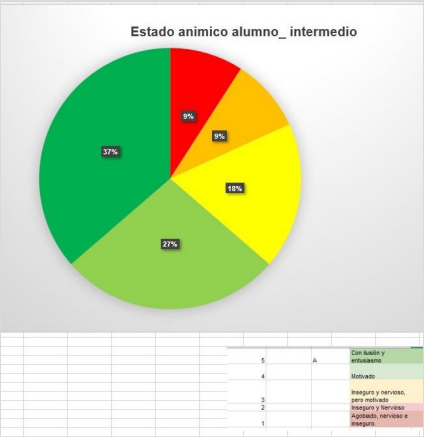
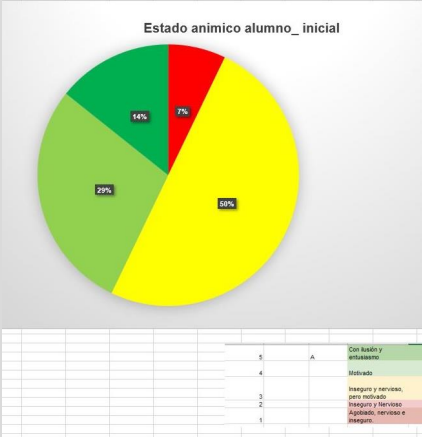
A different approach and
change of mindset applicable
to teaching social design and
design for social innovation
(Manzini, 2015)



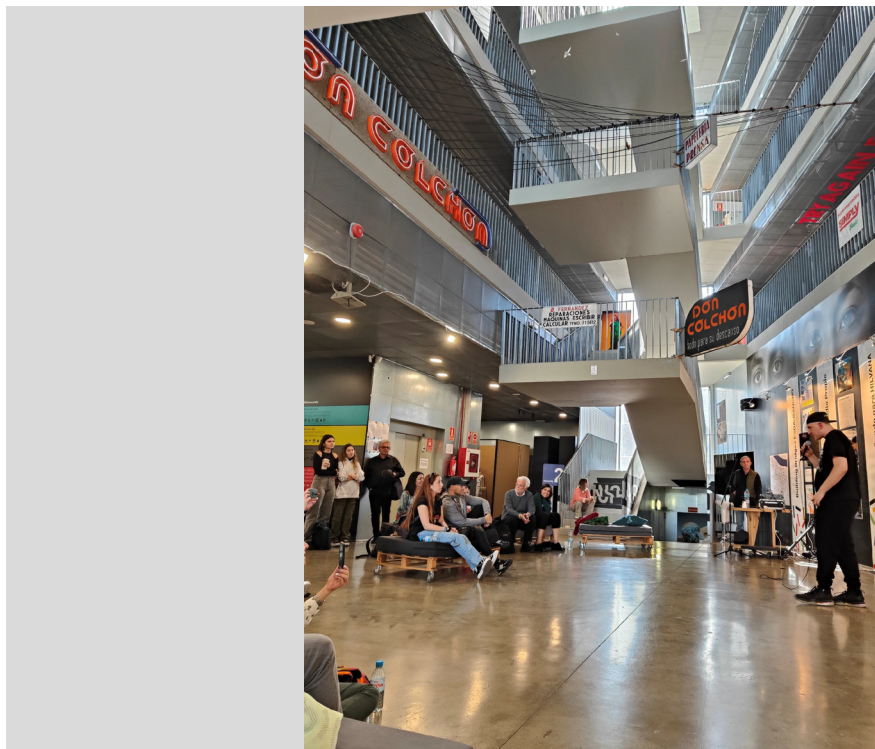
A reformatory for minor offenders is neither a prison, nor should it look like one (Pol, Esteve, García-Bores & Lluca, 1992)

- The better use of space and its environmental conditions as spatial resources of intervention to facilitate therapeutic treatment
- More dynamic environmental conditions that facilitate appropriation by the inmates





The few students were initially against working directly with minor offenders, at the end they were motivated and actively involved.



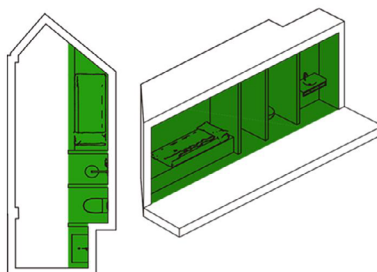
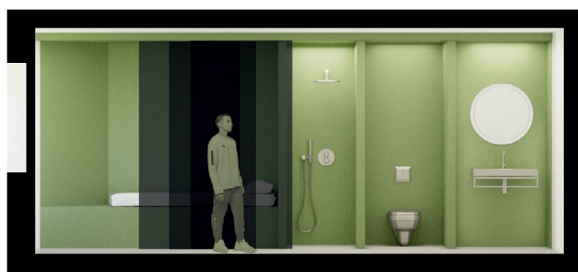
Concert in ESDA
by MURALLA

II ESDA DESIS Social
Design Days

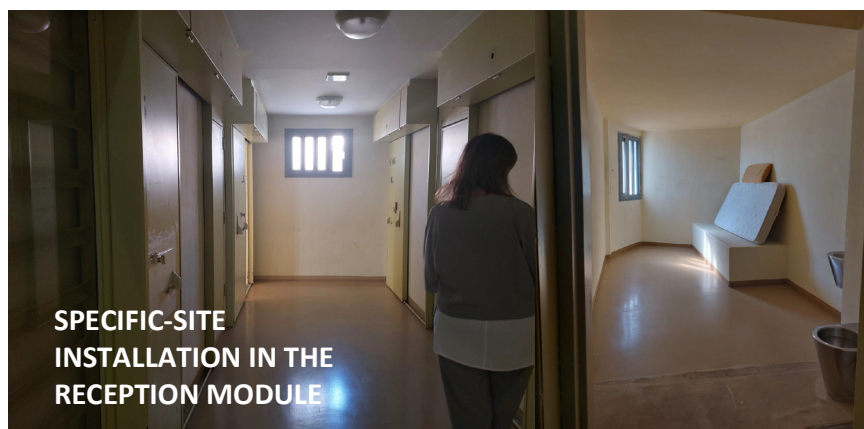


THE RECEPTION MODULE

A liminal space where the
minor is admitted for the
first time and spends his
first week of adaptation to
the center

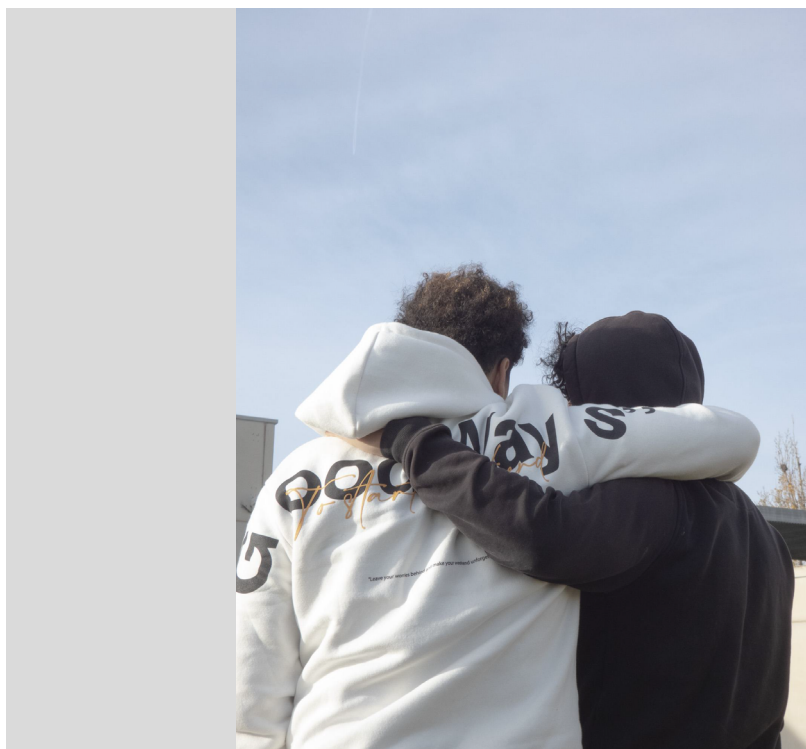


Presentations in
digital 3D and
feedback with the
management team on
the utopian
theoretical proposals.





The result confirms how small gestures in interior design make possible great improvements, creating an environment conducive to positive therapeutic development work.



Design students learn and discover in an immersive way the social dimension of design.

“There cannot be aesthetic values if there is no ethical value.”

Felix Beltrán_BID 2021

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IMAGES AND FIGURES

Álvaro Albajez, Jorge Cebrián, Nicolás De Pablo, Marcos Fernández, Vanesa Gil, Julia Moliner, Lara Navarro, Eugenia Pérez de Mezquia, África Prados, Marian Red, Pilar Sopena, M. Antonia Valverde



THANK YOU

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P/REFERENCES OF DESIGN

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