

Theatre spaces in a little center: Almagro in Castilla-La-Mancha

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The title of this dissertation introduces a context which places it in the region of *Castilla-La-Mancha* in the heart of Spain: *Almagro*, known because of an interesting theatrical festival that takes place there every year in the month of July. The analysis of this location was done in such a way that allowed us to gradually focus in on the essence of the place seen as a whole: the project to insert a theatrical space into a historical and monumental building; *Oviedo Palace*, at the moment in a state of disuse and decline despite its undoubted architectural valency. It was built in the 16th century and was the noble home to one of the oldest and most powerful *almagro* families, the Oviedos.



Oviedo Palace relief and actual state

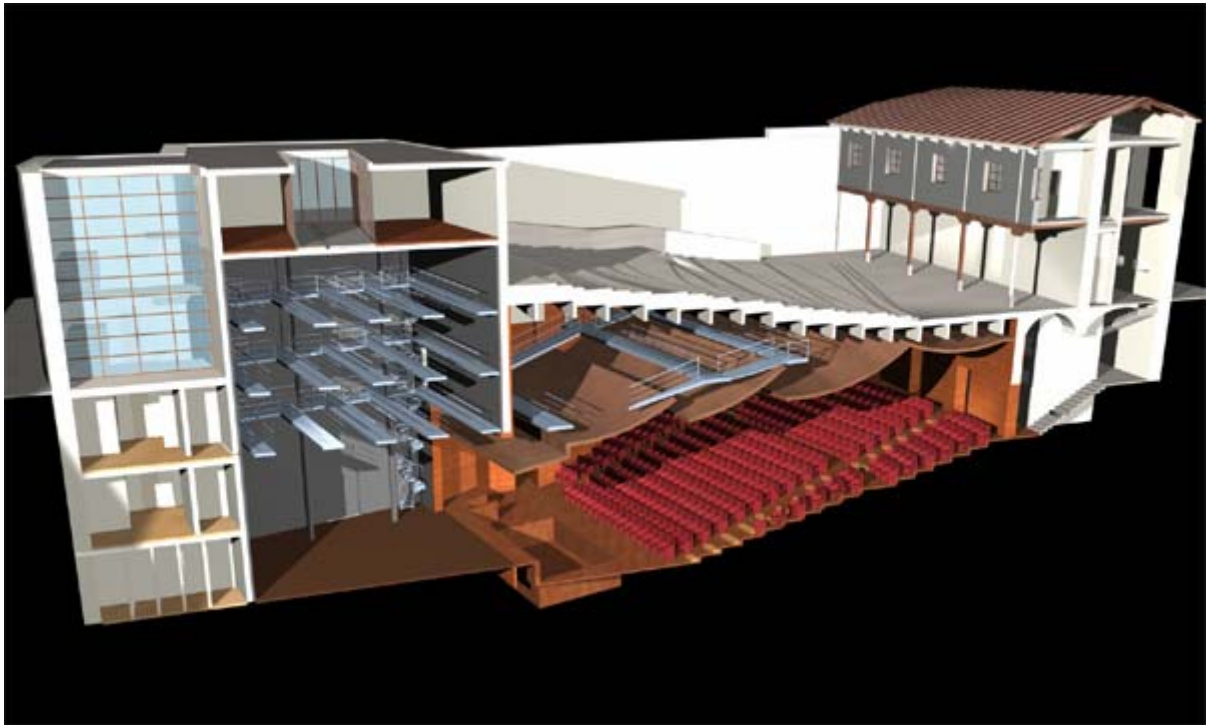
The first step was to understand the stages of the urban plotting; a morphology as homogenous as this would not be able to cope with the oversized volume that would be needed to create space for a new theatre, with specific reference to the imposing size of the scenic tower. Particularly, regarding the plot in question, its small dimension needs to be considered. The solution was to create a hypogeum theatre with the stalls completely underground which could be accessed from the vaulted cellars of Oviedo Palace.



Longitudinal section - Prospect interior - View of interior patio as pit

The new theatre is visible thanks to the volume of the tower, which contains an opaque covering and a trellis above the stage. The façade will be redone in reflective glass with multiple functions: to balance out Oviedo Palace, as it will all be at the same height, and to increase the internal size of the palace itself.

This system will allow the fabric of the city to be brought into the patio, which will take on a symmetry that will correspond to other patios destined for the theatre and evoke the symmetrical effect presented by the two façades of Plaza Mayor.



Vertical section in 3D

The distance between the existing building and the scenic tower follows the trend of the theatre roof below; an upward slope. The inclination was resolved by means of a flight of steps that can be used as an extension of the foyer, for social events but also as an open-air stalls during summer theatrical events.

Oviedo Palace will be restored and cleared of the equipment that was added during the cinema event in the summer. The roofing over-looking the patio will be removed completely which will clear up the ground floor façade and at the same time regaining the columned gallery. The upper floor will be adapted for shows by creating an open space: a theatrical laboratory and a diction course. The façade on the first floor will be reorganized with a view to regularizing the opening in line with the other noble residences in the city. Taking the shallowness of the building, it was necessary to incorporate the entrance hall in the gallery, which will be closed off from the outside by sliding electric glass partitions set up at the front of the building and made of electro-chromic glass which, when activated electronically, can change from transparent to opaque. According to the electro-chromic chosen, it is possible to obtain different colors.

The ability to change the color of the upper façade will eventually allow it to be used as a screen for projecting images and films. When the glass doors are being used as room dividers between the lounge and the patio they can be transparent, opaque or colored, thus creating a variety of atmospheres for the foyer-lounge.

During the summer seson- as in all the spaces that are adapted for theatre during the festival – a stage will be set up between the columns in the gallery (free of the glass doors)and, on the staircase, the spectators will take their places and at the same time support the show: the backdrop for the performance will be the view of the inside of Oviedo Palace.

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