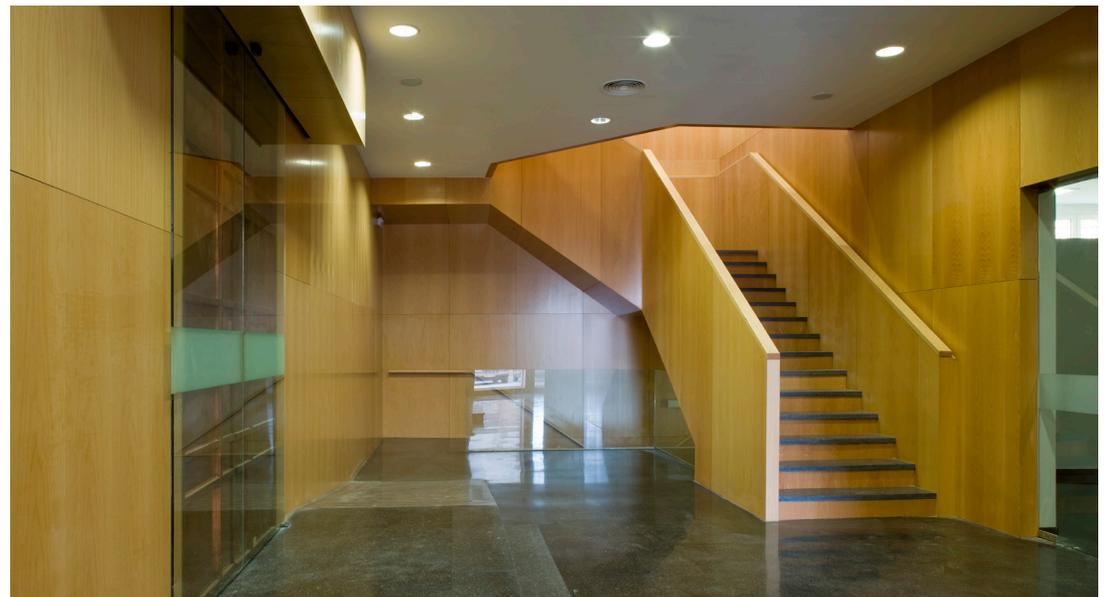
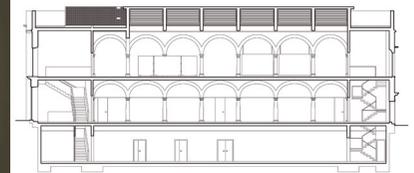
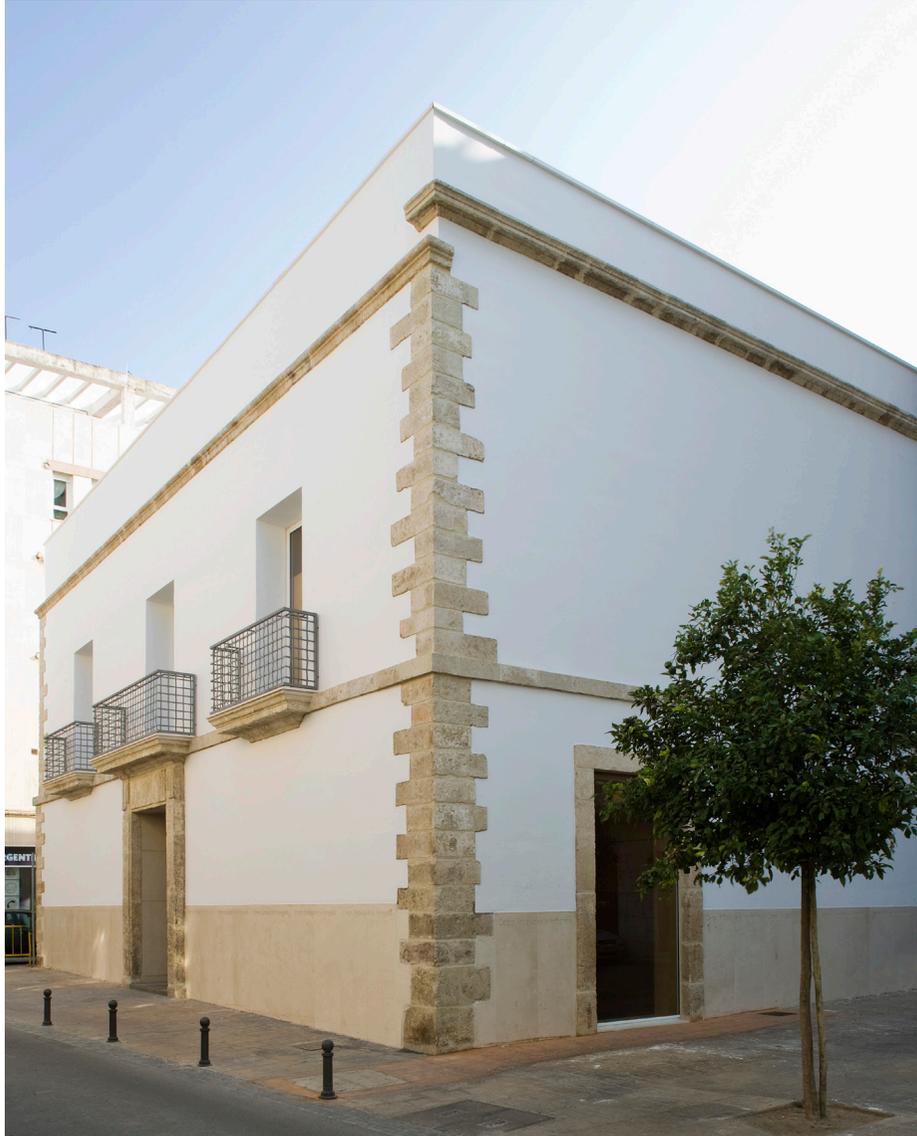


Project **Centro Andaluz de Fotografia CAF**
Location site Spain , Almería, Calle pintor Diaz Molina
Client Conserjería de Cultura de la Junta de Andalucía
Completion date Junio 2.007
Budget 1.937.210,05 €







The Andalusian Photography Centre (CAF) is an institution located in the city of Almeria involved in the exhibition, conservation, teaching and investigation of photography.

The building to house the CAF is named "Liceo", or Lyceum. The origins of this building are uncertain, but can be traced to the XVII or XVIII century. It was almost certainly a commercial building, a warehouse with a big central courtyard to store salt, fish or any other good traded in the adjacent maritime port. Some legend tells that were traders from Genova the ones who built this building, nevertheless there is no way to corroborate this.

What is known though documents and papers of the time is that in the XIX century the building was in a bad condition and probably used as a brothel. It was then bought by a local association of theater lovers who converted the building into a cultural center. Theater, opera and musical performances took place in the main courtyard. The building became tremendously popular among the local residents and achieved great splendor.

Unfortunately, the tragic events which took place in Europe during the XX century and the general decadence of the city of Almeria meant that building was left with no use for a long period of time, subsequently falling in a state of dilapidation.

In the early nineties, mayor works for conversion took place. Nevertheless this first attempt failed due to structural problems in the building. A few years later structural reinforcement works were carried out.

Therefore, when facing the design for the conversion of this building, we had to deal with a heavily altered building. It was a requirement from the client to undertake the elements from the first adaptation project which were already built.

The design attempts to be faithful to the nature of the building. It is a container of fluxes of people, performances, workshops and exhibitions in permanent flow.

The ground floor, with a direct access from the street, houses the main offices and public facilities. The big central space which used to be the courtyard becomes an exhibition space. The perimeter around this central space accommodates the library, video library and administrative facilities.

The first floor concentrates the rest of the public facilities, where travelling photography exhibitions take place, as well as lectures and performances. The design takes special care in dealing with the main exhibition space, trying to reclaim the open nature of this former courtyard. Light wells are designed to this end, bringing light into the interior, creating a dramatic effect.

The underground houses the more private functions of the building, mainly the restoration facilities, sets for photography, classrooms and a storeroom. All this variety of functions are organized along a wide and generous corridor.

Taking history as our main inspiration, the design is both respectful with the past and creative. There is a clear intention to state the new and create a divide with the existing. We just hope to start a new and very successful period in the long and varied history of this building.

