

## Workshop III

### UVA Garden. A strategy based on personalization

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The neighbourhood of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in Camas was newly created by the Neighbourhood Absorption Unit (UVA) in 1964 . An implementation of single-family houses based on the repetition of one type of unit, with groupings of four associated to each other in a linear distribution for the generation of communal pedestrian access spaces. This type of neighbourhood planning was not unique to this locality, but was a planning process that was implemented simultaneously at new sites in other towns.

The proposed action starts from the discovery of the rules used by the community and the need to generate new ties, in addition to social activation and the public space of the neighbourhood.

In this way, public space is colonized by green spaces to differing degrees depending on the proximity to the accesses to the houses, from the closest to the intermediate to the most extensive, which match the larger scale communal spaces. In the latter is found the large community garden, attached to the premises of the community association where the workshops were taught, given by the members of the community themselves. What could be encompassed within this large magma that is now called 'shared knowledge' is something which in this community had already developed since its origin.

The uniqueness or difference between these interventions are both the proximity or distance to the city centre, the latter being the case in the UVA neighbourhood, and the adaptation to the topography of the site of implementation. Circumstances which led to a linear distribution of the building and pedestrian streets in staggered platforms for maximum adaptation to the natural ground profile. This terraced solution has

height differences of approximately one meter, which, together with the distribution of the 4 unit groupings at 45°, give rise to a common lineal space with central garden beds that absorb the unevenness and mark the connotations and unique peculiarities of this community. That is to say, the division of this linear access space into two levels, causes the unitary ambience apparent on the ground plan to be divided into two, in section, favouring the appropriation of public space by the users of the houses.

From the first day that the UVA scheme was occupied by the inhabitants, a process of personalization or customization began which has been a constant feature of the neighbourhood. We highlight the lack of a design or intentional plan as an aspect of vital importance. The decisions on appropriations are the result of mutual agreement. Born from the 'no plan', from the interested spontaneity of the people within the community. We order and chronologically arrange the evolutionary stages of this 'no plan' up to the present day.

At first, users visually announced the entrances to their homes, differentiating the area of access to their property from the public transit space, using material drapes, ironwork or plants.

Over time, the patios and terraces that gave a certain identity to this type of grouping disappear with the clogging of these outdoor spaces and the movement to the indoor spaces of the houses.

It is followed by the appropriation of free space at height, with the distortion of the original building volume. The constructed profile is modified above the level of the cornice, which is generally kept as a vestige of memory.

Simultaneously, the perimeters of the different properties are emphasized by a border consisting of planted ceramic or plastic plant pots, cans or jars, with the objective of drawing the line between public and private sectors.

In summary, an approach is proposed of the collective space for the community, viewed from the object of the garden as an architectural element that adds to the current situation as a new activating ingredient, a product of the rules or standards of the community, as well as the arbitration of the 'no plan' that they have generated themselves.



