

12. Plaça d'Islandia

District Sant Andreu
Andreu Arriola, Carme Fiol
1995
6000m²

The square is located in Sant Andreu, in Navas neighborhood, just off the Meridiana highway. Through it passes the old Rec Comtal, the canal built to bring wáter from the Besòs River into the old center. It has a triangular shape traced by Palencia, Espronceda and Bofarull streets where the latter is a historical trace that follows the older street pattern aligned to the Rec Comtal. In the square a large fountain or pool (2m x 15m x 33m) is incorporated evoking the water of the Rec Comtal and establishing a new symbolic center for the neighborhood.⁵³ The idea of the fountain is a metaphor of an Icelandic geyser with structures that try to reproduce an aesthetic perception of a phenomenon of nature and the feelings associated with it.⁵⁴

Five huge metal sheets are set into the fountain and opens up five waterfalls, vapor spary clouds, and a 17m high geyser. The vertical dimensions of the metal sheets vary from 4.5 to 8 meters with a width of 5m, allowing the geyser's "tectonic accident" to respond to the scale of the city junction. The pavement behind the metallic sheets is varied between the 20x20cm panots of the sidewalk and 40x40 concrete slabs and water drains.

The square is of two levels, a 7m wide low lane for pedestrians passing along the shops, and an approximately 13m wide higher area where the fountain is located along with benches and trees. Both levels were separated by lighting bollards that were recently removed. They are paved with lines of 60x40cm concrete slabs drawn parallel to the waterway and then manipulated and stretched apart into a wavelike effect, separated by 20x10cm brick paving laid perpendicular to these lines. The concrete slab lines also determine the layout for benches, street-lights, a potable fountain and tree protectors planted with acacia. On Palencia street side, lies a triangular parterre covered with green

53. FIOI, Carme. *Plaça d'Islandia* [online]. Arriola & Fiol Arquitectes [Accessed: 23 November 2011]. Available at: <<http://arquitectes.coac.net/arriolafiol/>>

54. REMESAR, Antoni. Font de la Plaça d'Islandia. *Web Art Públic* [online]. Departament Urbanisme. Ajuntament de Barcelona- Universitat de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: <www.bcn.cat/artpublic>

grass, shrubs and a Magnolia tree, and its middle is paved with stepping stones sheltered by a willow tree.⁵⁵

According to Antoni Remesar, the fountain is quite large in relation to its location and the metaphor is more interesting than the realization of the work itself. *“Suena demasiado a foto fija, a momento congelado en el tiempo de procesos naturales en constante cambio y evanescencia. Hace demasiados años que las placas de acero corten están quietas en el mismo lugar. Hace demasiado tiempo que se puede calcular el tiempo controlado de la explosión del surtidor. Hace demasiado tiempo que el dinamismo que la foto de 1995 quería expresar, ha quedado congelado en el espacio y en el tiempo de una plaza que de Islandia sólo tiene el nombre.”*⁵⁶



Fig.71 The fountain with the metallic “geysers”



Fig.69 All street furniture are aligned with the pavement



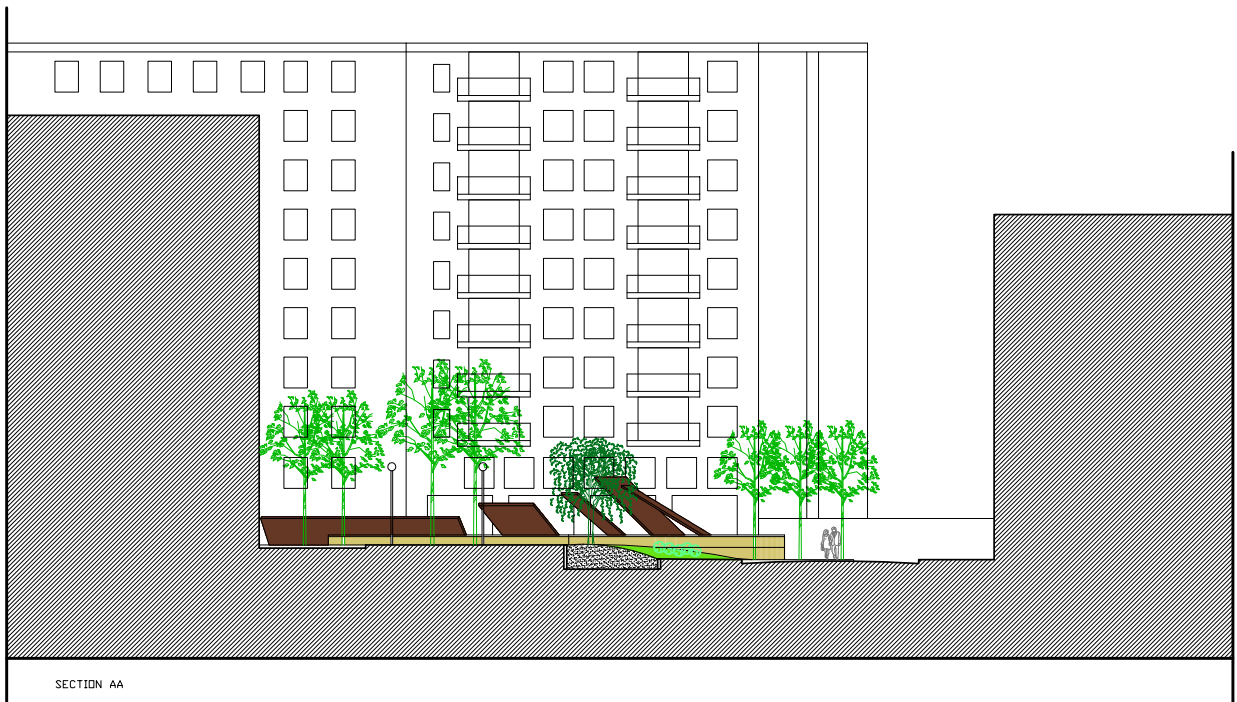
Fig.72 The metallic “geysers” view from the corner of Espronceda and Bofarull Streets



Fig.70 View of the square from the fountain

55. FIOL, Carme. *Plaça d’Islandia* [online]. Arriola & Fiol Arquitectes [Accessed: 23 November 2011]. Available at: <<http://arquitectes.coac.net/arrio>>

56. REMESAR, Antoni. *Font de la Plaça d’Islandia*. *Web Art Pública* [online]. Departament Urbanisme. Ajuntament de Barcelona- Universitat de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: <www.bcn.cat/artpublic>



13. Plaça de Sóller

District Nou Barris

Josep M. Julià, Josep Lluís Delgado, Carme Ribas, Andreu Arriola

1983 - 1984

19,000m²

Plaça Sóller is a square in Can Porta neighborhood in Nou Barris. It occupies almost two hectares and is surrounded by Valldemossa, l'Estudiant, l'Escultor Ordóñez, and Dejà streets. It was integrated in the "Partial Plans" of urban development—that included the construction of this neighborhood in 1963—but its owner had it removed from those plans. In 1966, the Urban Planning Commission gave its approval to the urban development project on condition that the square would be included in the plans. Nevertheless, by the end of Franco's era, the square was still a vacant plot while the construction of dwellings went ahead as planned. During the 'transition to democracy' period, it was among the lands that Mayor Josep Maria Socias purchased for City Council redevelopment.⁵⁷

The square is defined by architecture of brick porticos and terraces, constructed in its perimeters, which fill in the six meter difference in level between the upper and lower limits. The porticos form a U-shape surrounding the square, and, from l'Escultor Ordóñez street, they start by a brick wall and gradually become a series of columns where the Porta Sóller Civic Center is located. In the perimeters, surrounding the porticos is a series of benches, street lights, and trees of plane, acacia and celtis located on 60x40cm red and grey concrete slabs and on rectangular areas filled with sand.

Due to the unevenness of the terrain, the square is divided into two sectors. The superior part, which is accessed by l'Escultor Ordóñez Street, is designed as an urban park with a naturally uneven topography and organized around a hill with slopes and gravel platforms filled with benches, playgrounds, fountains, and trees of cypress, celtis, poplars and holm oaks. From the hill emerges a fresh water spring which cascades, due to the slope, and falls



Fig.7.3 The square currently (top), the square before construction (bottom left). Xavier Corberó's sculpture (bottom right)

into an organic-shaped pond separating this level from the lower one (Bohigas, 1983).

The lower part, which is accessed by l'Estudiant Street, is reached from the superior part by a series of transitional steps. This part is a "hard square" or "plaza dura" that consists of a large rectangular area more than 4.000m². It is paved in a checkerboard style with 500x500cm polished concrete outlined with a double row of 50x5cm bricks. On one side of this area there are 4 palm trees providing shade to 4 benches beneath them. It is delimited on its three lower sides by the perimetrical porticos and porch that filters the area from the surrounding buildings, and on its upper side by a strict lined brick bench separating it from the pond and the urban park where no filters nor barriers exist between the constructed city and the natural landscape (Bohigas, 1983).

In 1981, Oriol Bohigas, commissioned Xavier Corberó to make a sculpture that would be placed in the pond. It was one of the first sculptures to be located in the peripheral districts of the city, in other words, it was the first practical step in the policy

57. FABRE, Jaume. Huertas, Josep M. Homenatge a la Mediterrània. *Web Art Públic* [online]. Departament Urbanisme. Ajuntament de Barcelona- Universitat de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: < www.bcn.cat/artpublic >

Bohigas called “monumentalizing the periphery.”⁵⁸ The sculpture was unveiled on 17 April 1983, with the title ‘Homenatge a la Mediterrània’. Corberó drew inspiration from the warmth of the Mediterranean climate to produce a work of great visual beauty. It is composed of 41 pieces of pink marble from Portugal, white marble from Almeria, and onyx from Iran. It is claimed that the white marble represents the moon and the sailing vessel, the pink marble represents the clouds, and the onyx represents the sun. The shiny grain of the marble is reflected on the water with the light of the sun, producing a very special effect.⁵⁹ Currently the sculptor is undergoing maintenance work.



Fig.76 The palm trees with view of the pond and porticos



Fig.74 View of the pond from the urban park



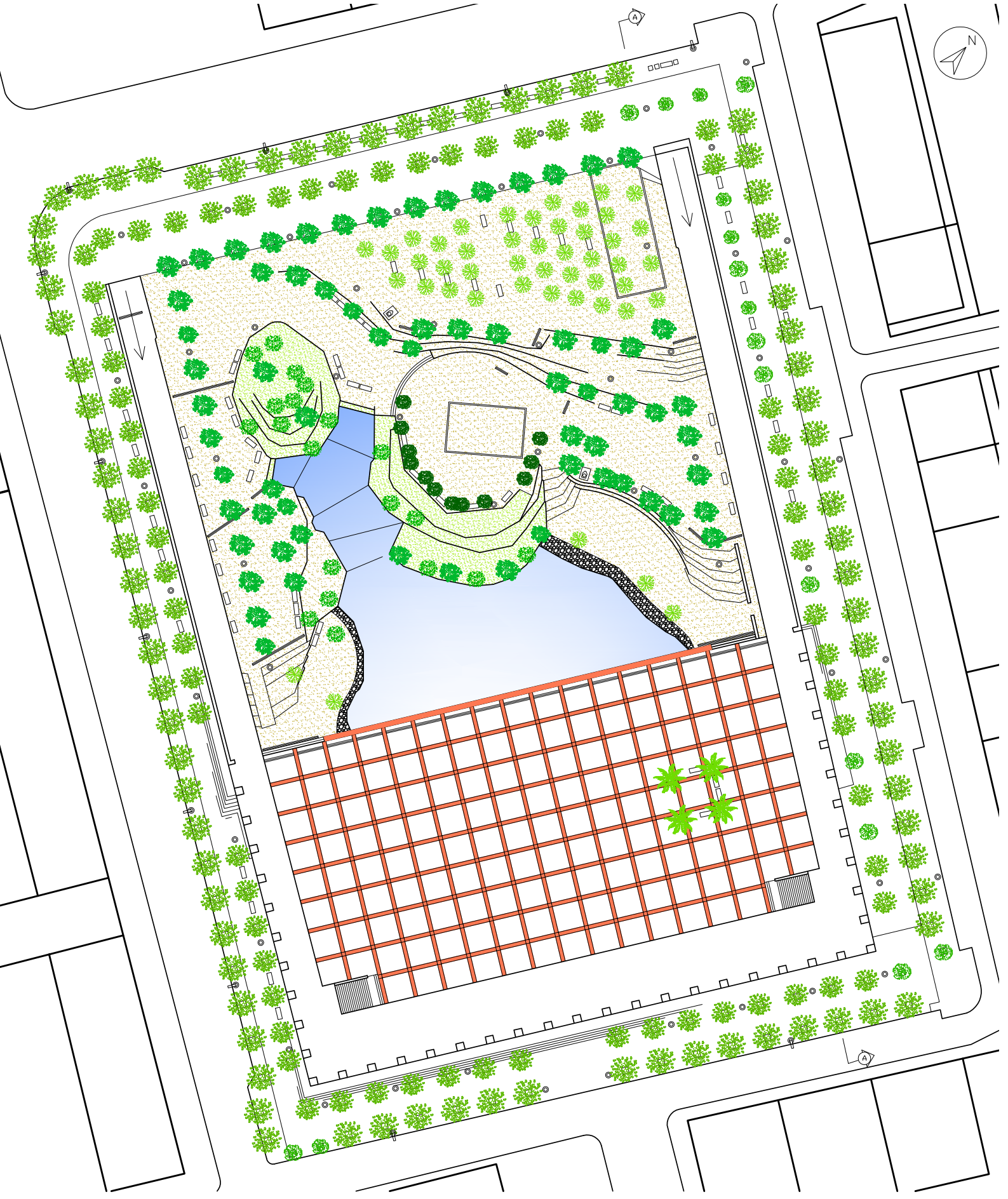
Fig.77 View of the porticos, sidewalk and rectangular sand area from Valldemossa Street side

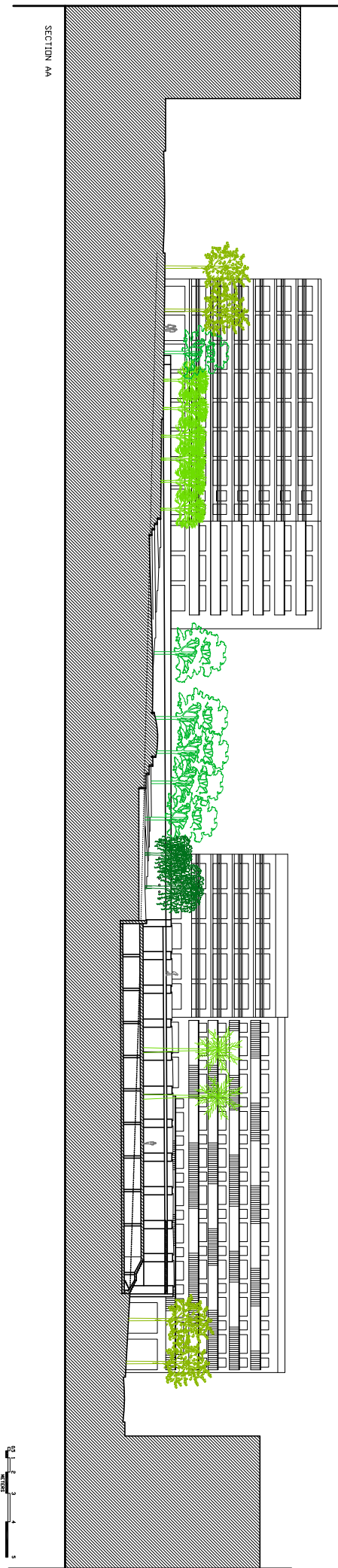


Fig.75 Panorama with the view of the playground, slopes and pond.

58. Ibid.

59. FABRE, Jaume. HUERTAS, Josep M. Homenatge a la Mediterrània. *Web Art Pública* [online]. Departament Urbanisme. Ajuntament de Barcelona- Universitat de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: < www.bcn.cat/artpublic >





14. Plaça Salvador Allende

District Horta - Guinardó
 Jordi Ferrando
 1985, remodeled in 2008
 3.516 m²

The square, inaugurated in April 1985, is dedicated to Salvador Allende the founder of the Chilean Socialist Party and the former president of the Republic of Chile before he was overthrown and died heroically during the assault on the 'Palacio de la Moneda'. It is built on a 22 meters steeply sloping site bounded by the exposed party walls of neighboring buildings and located between Hortal street (on the lower part) and Santuaris street (on the upper part). It is what we can call; reconverting a residual space into a public square.

The difference in level is solved by the creation of three terraced areas joined by steps running along either side. The upper level consists of a small square in front of the Civic Center with a potable fountain, a series of benches, three pergola structures to cast shade, a group of acacia trees, and a surrounding balustrade. It is paved with 8x20x-8cm granite paving stone placed between rows of 60x30cm granite slabs. Two sets of concrete stairs leads to the intermediate level paved with concrete and granite slabs and planted with cypress and acacia trees. Dedicated to Allende is a memorial fountain built against a wall and takes the form of a long, narrow, and almost flat channel with a pebbled bottom and a bronze plaque bearing the name of the deceased politician attached to the wall.⁶⁰

The lowest level, covered with gravel and sand, is converted into a small, quiet garden area with poplar, plane and celtis trees, a playground, a terrace for the neighboring restaurants, benches and a sculpture, "Onze poliedres," designed by the sculptor Marcel Martí. This level is connected to Hortal street by a few concrete steps that gradually convert into stands.

Between the low and intermediate level is a pebble-paved slope landscaped with trees of planes, cypress, acacia and ivy.

The construction of the square also provided a solution to the immense buildings' party wall that was one of the first walls to be worked on as a normal façade. In the past the party wall consisted of two walls with different heights, position, material and color. Usually such walls are disguised with graffiti, niches or ivy, but the architect Federico Correa dealt with the problem by constructing a superimposed metallic structure unifying the different heights and creating a series of false lines that provide a continuous single plane impression and an orderly well-arranged surface that integrate perfectly into the square.⁶¹

On 11 September 1997 a bronze head of Allende was unveiled, the work of the Chilean artist Lautaro Díaz Silva. It is sculpted in strong, bold strokes appropriate for the person it depicts. In 2007 the square was refurbished and the bronze head was relocated from the middle part to the upper part of the square and placed above a bronze plaque with an inscription, the flag of Chile and the outline of the South America continent.⁶²

However, since 2010, the lower and middle parts of the square are undergoing radical changes due to the construction of a subterranean parking as part of the 'Pla Fent Barcelona' program.

This program identifies with urban acupuncture in the fact that it is improving these public areas and solving parking problems by taking advantage of the subterranean levels below them. Two hundred parking spaces will be distributed among three floors beneath the square. The projects will be finished in April 2012 and will provide the square with a new design and image.⁶³ This issue left the square inaccessible except for its upper level, and the only public art that remained (for the time being) is Salvador Allende's bronze head and plaque.

60. GRANDAS, Carme. A Salvador Allende. *Web Art Pública* [online]. Departament Urbanisme. Ajuntament de Barcelona- Universitat de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: <www.bcn.cat/artpublic>

61. MASSONS, Elena. Mitgera de la Plaça Salvador Allende. *Web Art Pública* [online]. Departament Urbanisme. Ajuntament de Barcelona- Universitat de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: <www.bcn.cat/artpublic>

62. GRANDAS, Carme. A Salvador Allende. *Web Art Pública* [online]. Departament Urbanisme. Ajuntament de Barcelona- Universitat de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: <www.bcn.cat/artpublic>

63. Movilidad y transportes. *La plaza de salvador allende tendra un aparcamiento soterrado.* [online]. Ajuntament de Barcelona [Accessed: 03 January 2012]. Available at: <http://w110.bcn.cat/portal/site/Mobilitat/menuitem.cbe15a34b5efad778a738a73a2ef8a0c/?vgnextoid=abd3e0a3dd3cb210VgnVCM10000074fea8c0RCRD&vgnextchannel=55840641b867b210VgnVCM10000074fea8c0RCRD&vgnextfmt=formatDetall&lang=es_ES>



Fig.78 Different views of the upper level



Fig.79 Construction of the subterranean parking in the lower level



Fig.80 Party wall before and after (left). Martí 's sculpture (currently in storage (top right). Silva's Allende bust (bottom left)

