

# **Cagliari. Continuità**

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## **Atelier E2A**

**Cagliari. Seafront**  
Area ferroviaria  
Porto

## **Sara Biffa**

**Reuse of an industrial railway structure:  
a new space for culture**

**Sarah Biffa**

Reuse of an industrial railway structure: a new space for culture

The proposal is to bring a new pole for the cultural life of Cagliari in the industrial plot just behind the main station, nowadays not accessible to the public.

The strategic position in the city is the evidence itself that this area can be easily reactivated by a programmatic reconversion of what is already there: the idea is to bring a new learning center in the existing hangar, keeping the small buildings all around as spaces of support for the new activities.

The program provides spaces for students such as library, workshops, working spaces, ateliers, dancing and painting rooms. At the same time the building is also addressed to the city, supplying auditoriums and a place where public events can take place, thanks to the big extension of the structure.

Used for train maintenance, the hangar is characterized by a surface of 12000 m<sup>2</sup> with no vertical or horizontal partition: the big scale is the protagonist of the space.

Exploring the potential of the existing structure, the reconversion aspires to bring a more favorable scale for the new activities, providing wide variety and flexibility in spaces.

In fact, with the complement of few structural elements the project hybridizes the existing grid with new spatial conditions. For example, the addition of a layer of beams allows to introduce a slab that has more intimate spaces.

Again, the addition of a truss structure allows to break the regularity of the grid freeing the space from the pillars, and so to create three specific moments through the building: the main entrance on the south-east corner (the more connected to the city), the auditoriums at the back facade and a big multipurpose hall on the west side, becoming a new landmark in the city thanks to the prominence of their roof.

And still, in the heart of the building, a part of the original structure is kept alive, becoming the central covered plaza and main connector of the whole building.

For the expression of the project, the architectural making stands as a political statement of a low budget university that, with a minimum intervention, is able to activate this area of the city bringing cultural quality; the materials, such as iron glass and corrugated aluminum, speak about a contemporary project that at the same time wants to evoke the industrial past of the building. ]