



The Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award

COLLECTIVE RETROFIT WINS FIRST PRIZE IN THE ALCOA PRIZE 2009

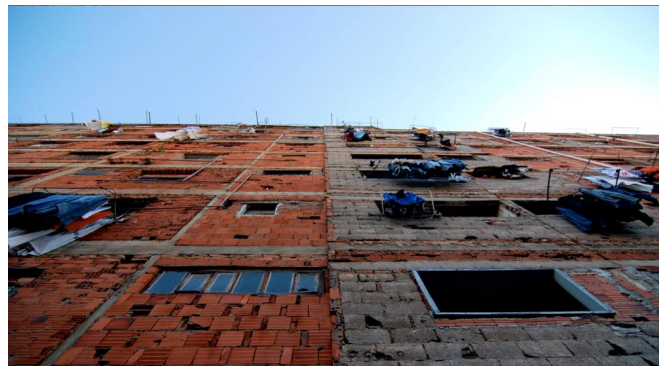
The Alcoa Prize is a scientific and cultural competition that aims to offer support to the development of Brazilian projects that innovate using aluminium, from developing new products and applications of aluminium to the expansion of the use of recycled materials in the construction industry.

This year's competition offered awards in two different categories: environmental management and product design.

The Project "Collective Retrofit", by **Marcos Leite Rosa** and **Kristine Stiphany** won the first prize in the category product design.

The site of the Collective Retrofit is the União building, a tall residential building in the Centre of the city of São Paulo. Since the 1970s it has been illegally occupied and has recently gained legal status through the hard work of the Resident's Association.

Today, it is a registered residential building that houses 42 families.



Uniao building before the restoration

The project is a positive example of community empowerment for people who want to keep living close to their centrally located jobs and access infrastructural, cultural, and leisure facilities available in the centre of the city.

Collective retrofit proposes the addition of a new skin to the building, a new façade. This second skin, superimposed over the original structure, provides new conditions of thermal comfort through protecting the building's original façade with a buffer zone, critical to mediate climatic conditions in the city of São Paulo.

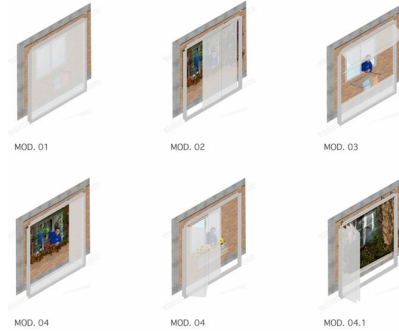


Design of flexible aluminium facades

This superimposing skin is composed of individual panels that are selected by residents according to varying aesthetic and functional desires.. Residents choose their own façade according to its environmental performance and also to accommodate the functions already performed by the existing windows. Today, some residents have window planters, others use the space to dry clothes, others hang personal objects.

The role of the architects in this project is that of an articulator. The modules were designed as pieces which, in a game like fashion, are united in the façade through the choices made by the building's residents. Therefore, the façade is defined first as a result of a collective project rather than as an outcome of previously established individual choices. The new skin acts as a screen,, revealing the original façade which has also been constructed piece by piece by each resident, over time since the building became occupied.

The innovation lies not exactly in the design of the new aluminium façade panels but in the application of the material to organize a new way of making a façade that respects individual choices and interprets existing use patterns. The material and the process together are innovative and made visible through the collectively articulated façade.



Different shapes and types of facades

The União building was awarded the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award in 2008 for its successful established partnerships and shared vision toward a better environment for its inhabitants. An important partnership with Metodo (a construction and engineering company in Sao Paulo) resulted in a big step in the realization of necessary building repairs. Following the partnership with the engineering company, the União's partnership with two architects – Marcos L. Rosa and Kristine Stiphany – continued the work with engineers and residents on two collective design actions. The first is the design and construction of the exterior entry 'foyer' to provide the space with the necessary infrastructure to better accommodate existing activities – of encounter and coexistence. The solution is a linear, folding bench that is organized as micro-topography attached to a vertical garden. The second action is the montage of a second skin to the existing structure, maintaining the plurality of creatively using an 'as found' situation while responding to environmental and social issues. In the way, the façade simultaneously serves as a one meter wide structure in which neighbourhood patterns can vertically unfold and as a solar filter.

Jury: ***"This project highlights the recreation of a new facade for existing buildings within a revitalization process in big urban centres, providing some reinforcement to its inhabitant's self esteem. The creativity of the proposal would also allow its use in new constructions with a variety of applications."*** The award had, on this occasion (2009) 767 inscriptions, from 18 states and 116 university and educational institutions from across the country.

More information:

http://www.alcoa.com/brazil/pt/custom_page/pa2009/premioalcoa_2009_index.asp

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