



Historical Review

Parque Cultural de Valparaíso – PCdV, is an architectural complex with three buildings of 10.000 m², built in a area of 2,5 hectares where the Public Prison of the city was formerly situated. This Place is hurl from a harmonic joint to install cultural resources around a park open to the community. The old cell block was kept and fitted out to be used for artistic displays. Nowadays, the PCdV is a cultural, artistic and a social center that develops actions that include these three areas which to work as a local development agent.

The *Powdermagazine or Warehouse of Gunpowder*, was built between 1807 and 1810 by Spaniards with defensive purposes. Its main purpose was to store the gunpowder supposed to be distributed to the coast through tunnels in order to be used by Spanish cannons to repel the British fleet in the context of the Napoleonic Wars.

The Powdermagazine represents a valuable relic that is kept inside the place along with its overlapping brick vault stucked together with mortar (lime – sand – water) and one meter thick walls.



Nonetheless, no evidences were found to prove that this vault was ever used for that purpose. Until the 40's, "Polvorín" was used as garrison to store the arms of the city. In the middle of 1840, this place began to be used as Valparaíso's prison, thus replacing the old one located in San José fort in Cerro Cordillera.



Along with other neighboring buildings and a couple of small fortified towers, they already constituted a prison by 1863.

The earthquake of 1906 that destroyed the port city, also destroyed a wide part of these locations. Due to this reason, the construction of a new cell block was started and was made of iron filled with cement: inmate wing.

This place was used as a public prison of the city until 1999, moment in which, as a consequence of renovating and constructing new correctional facilities, a new prison was built.

The Place had an original capacity to shelter around 400 prisoners, wich later reached up to 1000 of them. Nowadays it is known as the Transmission Building where artistic and cultural contents are transmitted.



From 2000 until 2010, this place was reused by artists and neighbors for cultural and social purposes.

In 2010, within the stage of a “Plan Bicentenario ” of the Chilean state, a big national architecture contest was held in order to define the current building. 118 plans participated and the winner was the architect office HLPS composed of Jonathan Holmes, Martín Labbé, Carolina Portugueis and Osvaldo Spichiger.

One of the principal challenges for these architects was to look for the transformation of this prison, formerly conceived as a cloister, to an open space of public use and connection to the surroundings.



Now, this new and large building was meant to be used for cultural purposes, it's known as the Broadcasting Building.

Undoubtedly, the current structure and preponderant white color, make this place a unique space in Valparaíso, lowering the visual pollution levels and extending the view of the fields of grass and young trees.

Today, Parque Cultural de Valparaíso is a place assigned to exhibit the local artistic practices, with training rooms for theater, dance, music and circus. The park has a building of modern architecture style that contains a big theater with 307 armchairs and a modern acoustic system. Also, it has a vast visual arts room of 460 m² and a lab room for multiple activities.

The long-term purpose of PCdV is to consolidate a cultural and architectural landmark of international standard in order to boost the artistic, social and communitarian activities of the city and the region of Valparaíso, thus aiming to become not only nationally, but internationally known.

PCdV

Broadcasting Building / Powdermagazine / Park/ Administration Building / Transmission Building

