



# 04

## PRECEDENT STUDIES

- 4.1 The Watershed
- 4.2 27 Boxes
- 4.3 Meydan Shopping Square
- 4.4 Mercat Encants

## PRECEDENT STUDIES

This chapter will investigate four relevant case studies, The Watershed Noero Wollf Architects, 27 Boxes by VH+S Architects, Meydan Shopping square by Foreign Office Architects and the Mercat Encants by b720 Fermon Vazquez Architects. These four precedent studies were investigated as they serve as clear examples in redefining retail space. They are successful in producing spaces that change the way we think about “the mall” as building. The four projects are contextual in their architecture and space, inclusive in programme and produce retail architecture as effective social space.

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# 4.1 THE WATERSHED

Location: Cape Town South Africa.

Architects: Wolff Architects.

Through pedestrian and public transport connections, this project is a perfect example of where the need for an anchor store became obsolete. It is also a good example of how the local identity is translated in programme and space; where retail and production can run hand in hand. The project was conceptualised as a collection of individual buildings under the cover of the existing shed. The project redefines the stereotypical retail space with strong conceptual responses and new approach towards the programme of retail spaces.

The Watershed is a contribution to better city-making. The design concept stemmed from the intention to create a sustainable urban condition that supports a market economy (Mackenzie Hoy 2014: 58). The pedestrian street created through the Watershed creates a vital urban connection between the main active area around the V&A shopping centre precinct and the Clock Tower Precinct on the one side and the aquarium, the bus stop, the GSB campus and new BRT stops on the other. For this project Wolff Architects designed what has been dubbed the “floating floor” – a suspended structure that makes a 50m x 50m gridded steel slab over the market. The floating floor meant that the activity of the street below could be complemented by another type of space, running perpendicularly overhead. This substantially increases the diversity and intensity of human interaction in the street (Mackenzie Hoy 2014: 58).

The ground floor of the building is now home to some 150 small business owners selling a multitude of arts and crafts, representing over 365 local brands. Aside from this, there is also the Workshop 17 space on the first and second floors. Workshop 17, operated by Open Workspaces, will be a social innovation and co-working space, offering a desk rental model with communal working facilities which will tap into a new model for small and start-up businesses, bringing diversity to the V&A Waterfront.

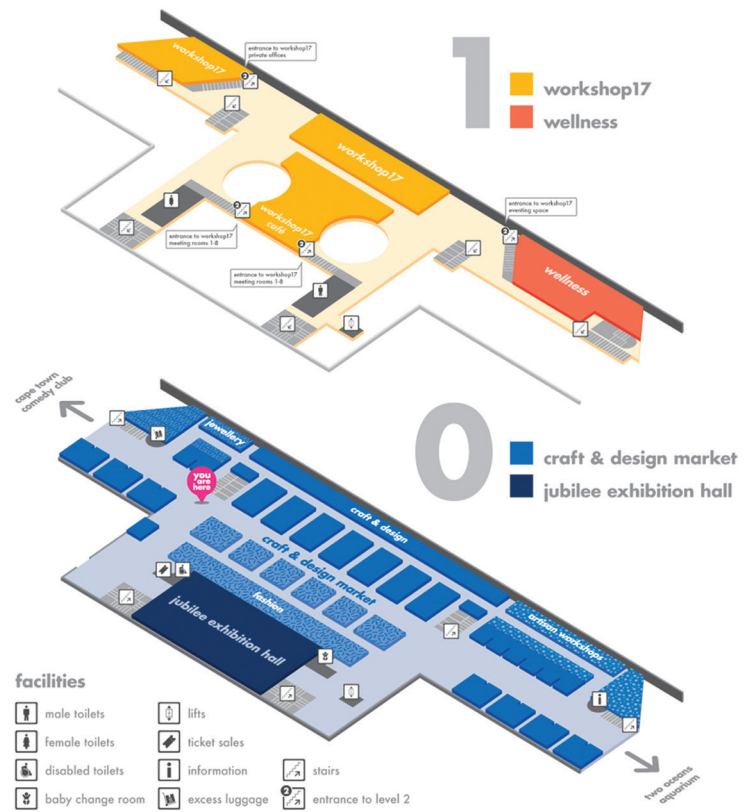


Figure 4.2. Floor plan diagrams of the Watershed (Kandi 2014)





Figure 4.3. Interior view of the Watershed. (Mackenzie Hoy 2014: 59)



Figure 4.4. Entrance to the Watershed. (Mackenzie Hoy 2014: 58)



Figure 4.5. Circulation in the Watershed (Mackenzie Hoy 2014:60)



Figure 4.6. Space for semi-informal trade (Mackenzie Hoy 2014: 58)



Figure 4.7. The Co-work space at the Watershed (Mackenzie Hoy 2014: 61)



## 4.2 27 BOXES

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa.

Architects: VH+S Architects

The 27 Boxes retail space in Johannesburg is an experimental design constructed from shipping containers, where the containers have been configured to represent retail units. The aim of the project is to enhance the lives of the surrounding community and to support entrepreneurs. The design should serve as a platform to expose, test and build. A platform for creative expression, innovation and experimentation. The brief from the developers was to create a place for the community to come together, to entertain, to relax and to work (27 Boxes 2015).

Building this retail centre with recycled materials meant that construction costs were significantly lower, so the rent is much more affordable. This makes it possible for local designer, makers, artists and artisans to have their own permanent retail spaces, with a few of the containers being used as rotating pop-up shops. One shipping container represents one retail space, this was noted as a very successful and optimum size for small scale retail spaces and will be used as future reference. There is an airy amphitheatre, a garden area and a play park where events and an informal market is hosted. Though constructed from shipping containers, 27 Boxes successfully explore an alternative retail typology that is responsive to its context through appropriate scale of structure and the façade that communicates with the surrounding built fabric. It is a retail space that functions as public space to the surrounding community.



Figure 4.8. Floor Plan diagram of 27 Boxes (27 Boxes 2015)



Figure 4.9. Food outlets at 27 Boxes showing retail spaces as separate boxes (Author 2015)



Figure 4.10. Atrium space at 27 Boxes (Author 2015)



Figure 4.11 Amphitheatre (27 Boxes 2015)



Figure 4.12 Spatiality and Construction (27 Boxes 2015)

## 4.3 MEYDAN SHOPPING SQUARE

Location: Istanbul, Turkey

Architects: Foreign Office Architects

Completed in 2007, this project intended to redefine the shopping centre as typology. The concept was to develop a public square in a new suburban district, with a green oasis as a meeting place. The project seeks to find possible answers to the problems facing the surrounding area, which has few public squares and green areas.

The centre of the building is formed by an open plaza, connected to all levels of the building by means of ramps and stairs. The programme of shopping in a sense becomes secondary to the aim by creating a successful civic space. The green roof surface is partially accessible on foot and their seating invites visitors to sit and relax. The central square allows for a variety of activities other than shopping, such as music festivals to take place (Messedta 2015 : 178).

In its form spatiality and architecture, the build successfully relates to its context. Though, primarily designed around vehicular access, the project nonetheless creates successful human scale and orientated spaces.





Figure 4.13. The public square of Meydan shopping square (Messadat 2015: 178)

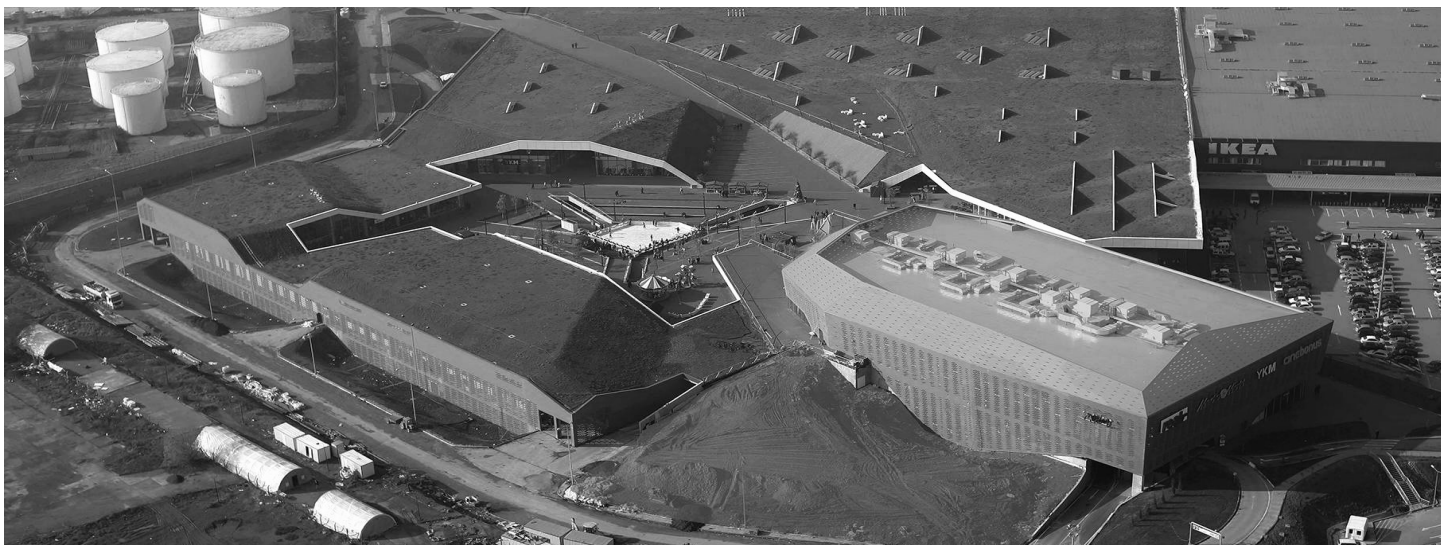


Figure 4.14. Aerial view of Meydan shopping square (Messadat 2015)



Figure 4.15. Civic use of Meydan Shopping Square (Messadrat 2015: 179)



Figure 4.16. Meydan Shopping Square (Messadat 2015: 179).



## 4.4 MERCAT ENCANTS

Location: Barcelona, Spain.

Architects: b720 Fermin Vazquez Arquitectos

The project was studied as precedent study as it serve as a respectable example of a new approach to retail design. Though a market space in essence, the building includes different typologies of retail that is a reflection of the existing context. It produces retail architecture as a civic insurgent that strongly responded to its context through architecture, scale and programme. The building functions as two entities: The retail infill and the roof. The retail infill is small retail pods that serve as lock-up space rather than conventional shops. Their size brings the scale of the large structure done to human level. The Roof functions as a separate entities that serve as shelter while the sheer scale of the roof allows for a continuation of the urban fabric into the market space.

Mercat Encants is a public market designed for Mercats de Barcelona, Barcelona's public markets. The primary intention of the design was to deal with the requirements of the City's plan to redesign the area, transforming a dull traffic junction with undefined edges into a large representative public square. It also had to respond to the operational requirements for a new market in Barcelona, which meant high standards of logistics, safety, accessibility, signage, etc. (Aecaffe 2016).

The design needed to take into account the merchants who had in many cases worked there for generations. The design was developed through a continuous follow up with client and merchant representatives in a two way process that included many meetings, workshops and assemblies. The intent of the design is to create a high quality central public space. The main design aims where:

- Preserve the market's soul
- Dignify its role in Barcelona's civic life.
- Make it a large public space as opposed to a "commercial building"
- Provide it with a strong visual identity.



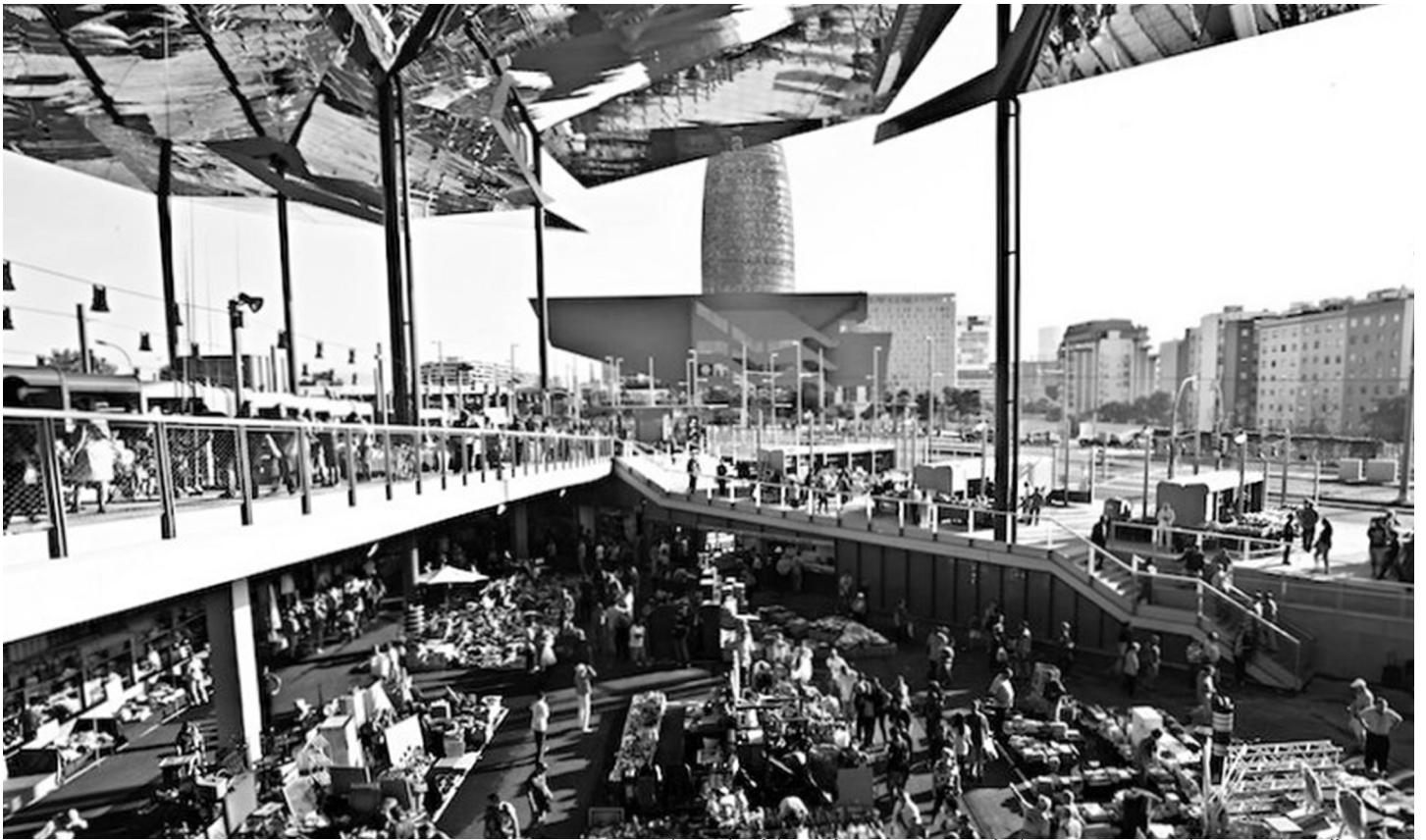


Figure 4.17. The scale of the roof. A continuation of urban space into market space (Aecaffe 2016)

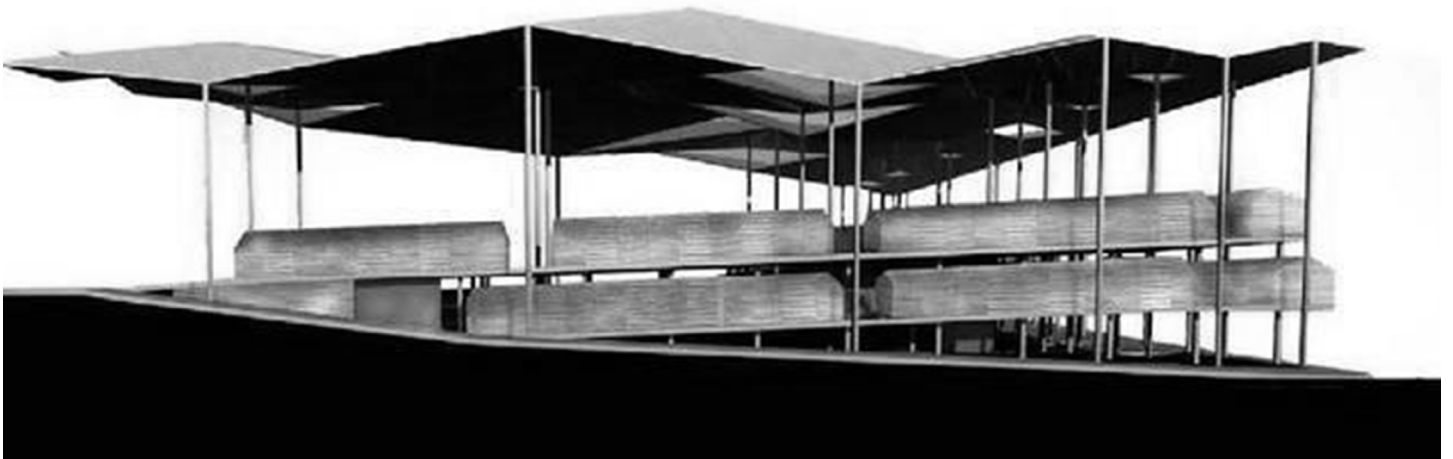


Figure 4.18. Scale model of Mercat Encants explaining the differentiation between market stalls and roof (Aecaffe 2016)

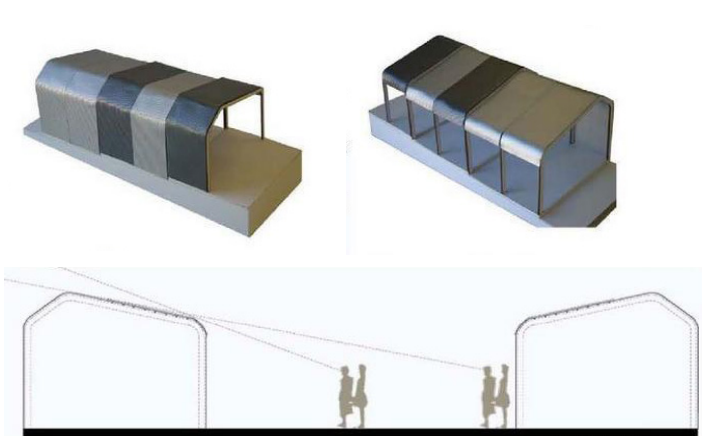


Figure 4.19. Shop design and layout of Mercat Encants (Aecaffe 2016)



Figure 4.20. Shop design and layout of Mercat Encants B (Aecaffe 2016)