

BUS TOUR OF INDUSTRIAL SEVILLE

INDUSTRIAL SEVILLE

In their day they were symbols of modernity and development but today many of the former factories that gave Seville wealth and jobs have become a headache for the administrations. They have to decide how to use these buildings, some of which have centuries of history and form a fundamental part of the city architecture.

For a long time, the vestiges of Seville's industrial heritage have been scorned by experts and the public in general. Today, they are beginning to be acknowledged and valued as an essential part of our cultural heritage. Added to this situation is the popular conception of Andalusia, and Seville, as areas in which the industrial revolution failed and which therefore have no significant examples of industrial culture. However, we need to look deeper and recognise that, in global history, the culture of work made a significant contribution to universality which manifested itself in masterpieces of architecture, technology and civil engineering, such as factories, railways, and bridges. Even before this, other periods, such as proto-industrialisation, characterised by windmills, estates and the royal factories, contributed to the creation of a completely new form of society and landscape.

These industrial records are also places of memory; a memory of the working classes, labour and suffering; it is also memory of a time when society had a close relationship with raw materials, processed products and methods of use. We can see how, in this new framework, the strength of Spanish culture is one of the basic resources that can help stimulate the transformation of this country into a land where cultural heritage means both identity and progress.

Today industrial heritage, like other cultural heritage sectors, is threatened globally. The economic and industrial changes that have shaped the last two centuries have had a major impact on many sites, which often occupying large areas, and which have been abandoned as a result of technological changes or the depletion of natural resources.

The value of these spaces with industrial history is however poorly understood and there is all too often a lack of awareness of the importance of this heritage, and particularly the need for the public to claim it for themselves. Factories, foundries, mines, railways and other forms of industrial heritage are representative of some work and production methods that are at risk of disappearing because of destruction or abandonment.

Seville has many examples of this type of heritage. Its preservation is facing difficult challenges due to the constantly shifting urban structure. Seville's industrial heritage is an exceptional source of resources for modern society because of the rich and complex factors of which it is made up. The reasons they are worthwhile are varied. They relate to the historical structure of the memory of a community — *record* — with the artistic merits associated with the material forms of industrialisation — *aesthetics* — with their properties of efficiency — *training* — with their potential usefulness for new applications — *recycling* — or with feelings of self-respect and cultural tradition, conceived as a sincere expression of the identifying traits of a people - *symbols*.

ARTISANS' YARD ON CALLE CASTELLAR, 52. The concentration of different production activities in one or more grouped buildings is considered to be an enclave. Seville is probably one of the few cities that are still home to exceptional places, such as artisans' yards within the historical urban fabric. These spaces are typically located within apartment blocks, and are somewhat isolated and hidden. They are places that

foment relationships and unique habitats. This is because for hundreds of years, craftsmen and craftswomen have been an integral part of life within the city walls. At this yard on Castellar, some fifteen artists bring life to an old building in need of renovation, but hiding the magical charm of interculturalism and different disciplines which are developed here, even if they focus more on performing arts than other yards do. But they have the same mission: to bring to light the treasures held between their old walls.

The Feria district of San Julián is characterised by the activity of its artisans' courtyards. The richness and variety of crafts in Seville still have healthy prospects despite facing many difficulties. The clear mark of its magnificent historical legacy in aesthetics, technique and design not only survives, it has evolved with the times, customs and trends, but it has always preserved its own mark and its image of authenticity. Nevertheless, gentrification, which started in the district of San Luis Alameda in Seville's old centre, is currently threatening to oust the district's crafts activities.

SINGER WORKSHOPS. A project carried out by architect José Espiau y Muñoz in 1913. Espiau, commissioned by M. Balbontín, executed the project at the factory, now the Singer sewing machine warehouses. The rear part of the building occupies an irregularly shaped plot with a party wall on Torre de Don Fabrique and its surrounding gardens. Meanwhile, the front occupies an elongated rectangle ending in an industrial building with a metal gabled roof supported by the wall facing onto Calle Lumbreras and on brickwork supports. Despite renovation to the building, the gabled roof has been kept. Today, ceramic panels for the Plaza de España are produced inside the building and work will soon begin on the square's balustrades.

Two features makes this small industrial building noteworthy: firstly, its location, on a section of the former gardens of the Convent of Santa Clara, which highlights the clear need to expand Seville in the early 20th century; and secondly, its façade which is adorned with ingenious modernist posters.

The most interesting characteristic of the building is the façade which sports modernist features. It has two fine modernist signs, which were lost in the 1980s but have now been restored although the commercial slogan reads "*Almacenes, Maquinas...*", that is stores, machines, relating to the building's original use. They have been replaced by new ones that refer to the building's new function as a training and employment centre

LA TRINIDAD GLASS FACTORY. In 1998 the spatial organisation of the factory still bore some resemblance to the original project, namely: "A site of 10,800 m² containing the following buildings: the industrial building occupies 3,440 m² of land and has a built area of 6,880 m² over two floors to house the melting and tempering furnaces, the mould storeroom, decorating room and boilers. A building with a 660 m² ground plan housing offices, the storeroom and exhibition and shop area. An industrial building of 460 m² housing the support workshops. The remainder of the plot, which is not built up, totals 6,240 m² and is intended for parking, services and open-air storage.

The "La Trinidad" Glass Factory (1900-1902) on the Avenida de Miraflores owes the first plan and elevation designs to José Luis Rodríguez Caso. Renovation was subsequently carried out in 1924 and 1926, by architects Vicente Traver and Ramón Balbuena respectively.

The history of "La Trinidad" is for many reasons the history of Seville itself during the 20th century. The factory started life with this same person, Luis Rodríguez Caso, who is also considered to have been the driving force for 20th-century Seville for conceiving and promoting the famous Ibero-American Exhibition of 1929.

HYTASA TEXTILE FACTORY. The industrial textiles business, HYTASA (Hilaturas y Tejidos Andaluces S.A.) at the Cerro del Águila, is one of the most worthwhile contributions from the Modern Movement in architecture in Seville. The site was a project by Talavera y Heredia and José Galnares Sagastizábal. The first of these was involved in the preliminary phase and two industrial buildings (1938-1941), while the latter worked on the remainder and overall planning (1941-1963). Until recently, it has continued industrial textile production in an isolated area, although market difficulties have produced a notable separation, replacement and change in use of the facilities. The series of logically ordered buildings feature various construction styles, particularly their uniqueness, the appearance of the exposed brickwork of its perimeter walls and the lightweight sawtooth roof.

The Seville company, Hilaturas y Tejidos Andaluces, Sociedad Anónima, was created in 1937, as part of the industrialisation plans for Seville promoted by Queipo de Llano and also to make use of cotton production from the Guadalquivir valley in Andalusia. People supporting construction included Prudencio Pumar, Luis Cobián and Jorge García Dornaletche. For a quarter of a century the company was one of the main textile companies in Spain at some points in time. It had up to 3,300 workers who had a strong presence in the union and activist movements at the end of the Francoist era and the transition to democracy. It did not distribute profits from 1967 and in 1975 it made losses, which slowly escalated until it was wound up in 1997.