

Emilio Perez Piñero and the Contemporary Lightweight Collective

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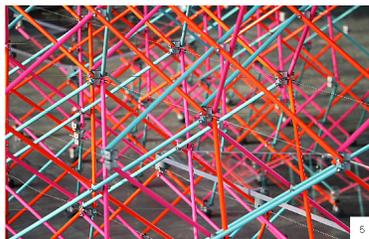
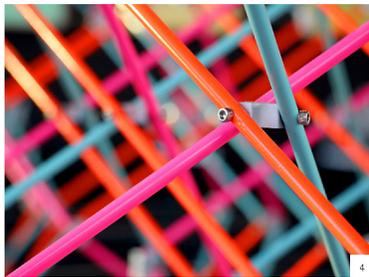
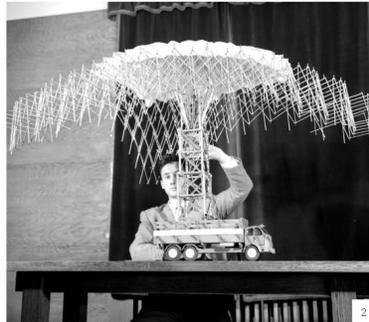
Today, the necessary versatility of the limited common space in our cities and our transient lifestyle establish a contemporary framework to reevaluate the work of collapsible and transformable built environments and their potential to produce lightweight and affordable solutions. In a call to rethink the impermanence of space, the project 'Deploy' interrogates the context of the last fifty years of Spanish architecture with the intention of developing a framework to question the possibilities of deployable structures within the public realm. The project looks from the mechanics in the structural prototypes of Spanish architect Emilio Perez Piñero in the 60's, that attempted to provide an illusory flexible space in a post-war era, to the contemporary post-economic-crisis proposals such as the 'Escaravox' by Andres Jaque, 'Eco-Boulevard' by Ecosistemas Urbanos and 'El Circo' by Santiago Cirugeda, which hold a critical position with their current urban context.

The positive assets of these projects contribution to the public realm provide a further exploration and testing of future spatial possibilities that promote a stronger and more socially diverse collective. Piñero's work on designing a collapsible space frame structure, based on the logics of the equilateral triangle found in Fuller's geodesic dome, was able to articulate two important factors. First, its use of lightweight easily transportable materials, and secondly the ability for the structure to be erected with ease. More specifically the design showed innovation in resolving problems of mobility, since the structures could be transported in one piece, making in place assembly unnecessary and reducing the need for multiple parts. In addition to his technical advances, Piñero was able to participate in new trajectories found in disciplinary discourse that were concerned with future thinking and utopian visions of non-permanence in the collective realm. His structural prototype for an ephemeral mobile theatre was a response to the desire of a new kind of improvisational architecture. A crucial statement which led the first attempts to the shifting cultural and social conditions of the rigid political dictatorship in Spain at the time.

Past and present projects illustrate the use of lightweight architectures as non-permanent and flexible catalysts for the collective experience that have provided spaces in support of social, sustainable, political and cultural development of our cities. Contemporary proposals mark a return or continuation of an invested interest in the collective space alternatives in a more politically-involved, sustainable and participatory society. A society whose demands require closer attention by designers who leverage lighter, quicker and cheaper mechanisms to support change. By revisiting Piñero's work, Deploy led to the design and construction of a prototypical structure that intends to further demonstrate the ability for these deployable architectural proposals to 'stage' new relationship between the citizens and the city. As the Spanish urbanist Jordi Borja states, these 'projects and the management of public spaces and collective facilities are both an opportunity to produce citizenship and a test of its development.'

DEPLOY

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1. Piñero + prototype 2. Piñero + UJA design 1966 3. Piñero + Dalí - Vidriera Hipercúbica 1972 4.-5. 'Deploy' details 6. 'Deploy' Taulman College ATM Exhibition 2017 7.-8. 'Deploy' Free City Flint Public Art Festival 2017