

The Fundació Enric Miralles recognises the conservation of the biodiversity and heritage of our territory through the first edition of the IED Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue Award for Best Interior Design Thesis at IED Barcelona



“Palette Playground”, a project by the student Adda Bjarnodóttir, won the award with a proposal for a centre for the study of new plant-based foods at Masía Can Reon in Tiana, Barcelona.

Benedetta Tagliabue, President of the Fundació Enric Miralles and Director of the studio EMBT Architects, was in charge of presenting the award, with which the Fundació Enric Miralles, centre for experimentation in architecture, recognises the work of a design school for the first time.

The winning thesis, as well as the shortlisted projects, will be exhibited in the Fundació Enric Miralles until 21 June.

Barcelona, 16 June - “Palette Playground” by Adda Bjarnodóttir, a proposal to create a research centre for alternative plant-based proteins located at Masía Can Reon in Tiana (Barcelona), was the winning project of the first edition of the IED Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue Award for Best Interior Design Thesis at IED Barcelona, presented by the Fundació Enric Miralles.

The proposal responds to the values of experimentation, innovation and creativity, and approaches nature through research into materials. It also connects the spaces to the historical and scenic characteristics of the territory.

In a ceremony held at the foundation on **15 June**, the President of the Fundació Enric Miralles and Director of EMBT Architects, **Benedetta Tagliabue**, presented the award, with which the centre for experimentation in architecture recognises the work of a design school for the first time.

As key elements of the project, the jury, formed by Tagliabue and the members of the Board of Trustees of the Fundació Enric Miralles, highlighted creativity in providing solutions that contribute to the preservation of biodiversity, positive impact on the territory, a focus on the value of heritage in the Mediterranean region, a commitment to sustainability (with the reuse and reintegration of materials), as well as innovative design.

In addition to the prize for the winning thesis, the Fundació Enric Miralles decided to award two honourable mentions to two works by IED Barcelona Interior Design students, which propose areas for the observation and conservation of wildlife in the form of sanctuaries. These are **“Be butterfly”** by **Pia Martí**, a butterfly farm to educate about the importance and value of this pollinating insect, which is fundamental to various agricultural cultivation processes, and **“Nest”** by **Patricia Belma Tudela**, a house sparrow research and conservation centre.

The two projects demonstrate a wealth of thematic research, as all as a focus on improving human well-being.

All the proposals will be exhibited at the Fundació Enric Miralles until 21 June.

With the creation of the first IED Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue Award, IED Barcelona and the Fundació Enric Miralles have begun a long-standing collaboration that demonstrates their common vision of design as a discipline with a social purpose based on interdisciplinarity and multiculturalism that aims to improve our surroundings.

Human- and life-centered design

The origin of the projects

As a society, we have reached a point where most of the economic and industrial conventions and practices inherited from the 20th century are being seriously challenged on the grounds that they have proven to be unsustainable. In that sense, and as part of this change, biodiversity has an important role to play in preserving our future, and the design community, as thinkers, problem-solvers and entrepreneurs, has a duty to understand this and collaborate to find meaningful responses to the diverse problems we face.

Thus, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity, IED Barcelona's Design School challenged final-year Interior Design students to think about solutions to preserve biodiversity and heritage in the Mediterranean territory, taking Catalonia as a case study. Specifically, students based their final projects within three iconic masias, or farmhouses, that form part of the architectural heritage of Catalonia: Can Reon (Tiana), Can Parici (Sant Pere de Ribes), and Masía Can Valldaura (Collserola); all located in very characteristic areas of the Catalan countryside.

The students' starting point was how space can express this need and urgency to recognise nature and biodiversity as a source for our survival, not only as human beings but as a living species as a whole.

“Beyond the approaches that can be provided at the level of biomimetics, biophilia, biomaterials, biodesign, and the strong connections with the environment that surrounds us and their impact, students have explored current and future scenarios in order to think about new realities”, explains **Raffaella Perrone, Director of IED Barcelona's Design School.**

The winning works

IED Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue Award for Best Interior Design Thesis at IED Barcelona: **“Palette playground”**

Taking inspiration from Catalonia's rich gastronomic culture, this project aims to explore the possibilities of alternative proteins (microproteins, algae, fungi and vegetable proteins) as substitutes for meat consumption, as well as their incorporation into our daily lives.

To this end, it conceives the creation of a centre for research, creativity and innovation for professionals in the form of a gastro-technological laboratory at the Masía of Can Reon, in Tiana, holding conferences and experimental cooking workshops. The exterior houses several vegetable gardens where alternative proteins can be grown, as well as offering tasting sessions for visitors.

In order to emphasise the contrast between heritage and innovation, the spaces are designed with a colour palette that makes use of neutral tones and materials such as steel to represent technology, and warm colours, vertical gardens and other biophilic design elements reflecting nature.

Honourable mention: **“Be butterfly”**

“Be Butterfly” addresses the threat climate change poses to the survival of pollinating species, specifically butterflies, proposing an intervention aimed at preserving them and raising awareness of this problem among the general public.

The project involves transforming a traditional Catalan farmhouse, Can Valldaura, located in the Collserola Natural Park, into a centre for education and research. By rescuing original elements of the building and with nature as the protagonist, the experience is designed to put the visitor in the butterfly’s “skin”.

With this in mind, the space hosts interactive and sensory activities, such as digital installations, a wind tunnel that simulates the flight of these insects, and a “butterfly oasis”, where visitors can interact directly with them.

Honourable mention: **“NEST: Natural Experience with sparrows”**

House sparrows have traditionally been a common species in cities, but today we are witnessing their gradual disappearance. Given their role as a bioindicator of the quality of urban life, this project focuses on the preservation of these birds within the new environment they inhabit: the wooded areas close to cities.

To achieve this, it envisages a centre located at the Masia Valldaura, in the Collserola Natural Park, considered to be Barcelona’s green lung, where they can be protected, provided with a nest and adequate food. It also conceives various activities for the space, aimed at raising citizen awareness and promoting action on this issue, such as observatories, listening areas, and areas for outreach and relaxation, among others.

The interior design of the building, which includes large windows and a majestic central tree, perfectly integrates with the natural surroundings. It uses native cork as its main material, which acts as an acoustic insulator in the listening area and as an element of camouflage in the observation area.



First page: IED Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue Award for Best Interior Design Thesis at IED Barcelona: **“Palette playground”** by **Adda Bjarnodóttir**.

Top left: Honourable mention: **“Be butterfly”** by **Pia Martí**.

Top right: Honourable mention: **“NEST”** by **Patricia Belma Tudela**.

Left: **Adda Bjarnodóttir**, winner of the first **IED Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue Award for Best Interior Design Thesis at IED Barcelona**, with **Raffaella Perrone**, IED Barcelona Design School director; **Caterina Miralles** and **Benedetta Tagliabue**, from the Fundació Enric Miralles, and **Andrea Marchesi**, IED Barcelona Director.

About IED

The Istituto Europeo di Design (IED) is the largest education network in the creative field — design, fashion, the visual arts and communication — with 11 schools in Milan, Barcelona, Cagliari, Florence, Madrid, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, São Paulo, Turin, Bilbao and Como.

More than 130,000 students have graduated since its opening, and every year it welcomes 10,000 students from all over the world. IED is committed to educational initiatives and practices related to a corporate reality, and has established over 1,000 business agreements during its 50-year history.

In its more than 20 years of experience, the IED Barcelona headquarters, located in the Gràcia neighbourhood, has consolidated its position as one of the reference training centres in design, and is officially recognised by the Government of Catalonia as a Higher Education Centre for Design.

Its educational offer, taught in English and/or Spanish, includes a Bachelor's Degree in Design, with specialisations in Product Design, Interiors, Transportation, Fashion, and Graphics, as well as a range of different pathways. The School also offers Bachelors of Arts (Honours) degrees awarded by the University of Westminster, IED Diplomas, and Master's, Postgraduate, Specialisation and Summer courses, as well as tailor-made training for companies and professionals.

IED Barcelona stands out for its innovative approach, addressing strategic design hand in hand with companies, as well as for its multicultural and interdisciplinary nature. It attracts 1,000 students of more than 100 different nationalities each year.

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