Madrid Gym

The area around the Plaza Mayor (our project site) features cramped streets enclosed by 4 storey buildings, squeezed together taking up almost all of the surrounding area. As a consequence, there is inadequate space for recreation, sport or any type of physical exercise. That is why I chose to develop a gym.

People go into gyms to pump muscle and burn calories, it is a very physical and powerful experience. These aggressive and dominant qualities are expressed by the brutally modern exterior. With its exposed steel columns, bare concrete walls and huge glass sheets it is visually striking and contrasts greatly with the surrounding delicate fabric of Madrid. Parts of the building jut out, cantilevering onto the street to dominate the streetscape and to expose the exercising persons inside, to the public outside.

The inside floor plans feature walls set at 60 & 30 degree angles which compete with the straight regular bounding walls and the street to create a tension and thus accentuating the theme of power and physicality. It also deconstructs the geometric rigidity evident in Madrid buildings and creates rich spaces with sharp corners. The floors themselves are irregular with half of the building at half level. These create interesting spaces such as a sunken, semi-private weight room in the ground and a cardio room just a half level above the street and also enables a top floor with a 4.5 metre ceiling height to cater for the squash courts.

People can enter and work out in the available cardio or weight rooms, get a suntan in the sun room, attend outdoor aerobics, pilates, etc. classes on the top deck or lounge in the first floor café which opens onto the private courtyard

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