

## TEXTILES AND THE SUN: A SUMMER STORY

Textiles have a long history as protectors against the inclemency of weather, after all that is the primary function of cloths to begin with. In the hot regions of the world tents, canopies, parasols, sunshades and similar textile devices were soon developed. In the Mediterranean countries covering the streets with lengths of fabric to provide some shadow to pedestrians is still quite common today providing an interesting -and rather playful- area of work to architects, designers and artists. But textiles seem to be a handy material when thinking about sun protection not only in the Mediterranean...

It was in 2007 when New York's Governor's Island hosted for the first time a summer design event that in time has become a much expected international competition. Organized by the not-for-profit organization FIGMENT, a forum for the creation and display of participatory and interactive art by emerging artists across disciplines, the competition (run in conjunction with engineers and emerging architects NYC associations) challenges designers to envision installations that provide at least 50 visitors a shaded retreat with a net-zero ecological footprint. Submissions must also consider the entire life cycle of the materials to be used in their proposals. The installation will be dismantled and reused in other places of the city when summer ends.



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For the first time, in 2015 there was no one winner but two. The first selected entry, the Newyorker BanG Studio's *Billion Oyster Pavilion* used materials typically employed to encourage the proliferation of oyster colonies in the city harbor, a rather controversial local issue. Custom-cast cement "reef balls," artificial catalysts for building reef ecosystems, provided the foundation for a canopy of nylon rope, steel rebar, and hose clamps.

*Organic Growth* by Madrid's Izaskun Chinchilla Architects aims to evoke a field of hydrangeas by recycling disused umbrellas, table stools, bicycle wheels, and tire parts. These wise flowers only grow what their environment allows them so maintaining a balance with nature.

Maintaining two pavilions rather than one, however, does increase the amount of support required. FIGMENT is accepting tax-deductible donations to support the maintenance of these two pavilions on Governors Island for the 2015 summer season.

[http://newyork.figmentproject.org/city\\_of\\_dreams\\_pavilion](http://newyork.figmentproject.org/city_of_dreams_pavilion)



Tejiendo la Calle (Weaving the Street) is located in a completely different human and geographical environment but like the Figment NYC project -or even more- is strongly defined by community work. It is the third year that Marina Fernández Ramos -another young Spanish woman architect as Chinchilla- covers the narrow streets of the old village centre with big crocheted parasols working in close collaboration with associations and neighbours of her native village of Valverde de la Vera, Cáceres. Made en masse working along the year with “threads” recycled from used plastic bags, their brilliant colours make a beautiful contrast with the more restrained ones of the very genuine vernacular architecture. This year embroidery has been used in some of these works that will be on view during August to brighten up the village *fiestas*.



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