

The Sound & Image Archive

Plaça de l'Hospital, 4 – 3a floor
07012, Palma

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Opening hours:

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays:

9 a.m. – 2 p.m.;

Thursdays: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The Arts & Crafts Library

Via Roma, 1

07012, Palma

971 219 536 / 971 219 531

bca@conselldemallorca.net

Opening hours:

Mondays to Fridays: 9 a.m. – 8.30 p.m.;

Saturdays: 9.30 a.m. – 1.45 p.m.

The Lluís Alemany Library

Via Roma, 1

07012, Palma

971 219 539

bla@conselldemallorca.net

Opening hours:

Mondays to Fridays: 8.30 a.m. – 2 p.m.;

Tuesday afternoons: 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.

(July and August: Mondays to Fridays: 8.30 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.)

Guided tours

Guided tours of the building for groups of schoolchildren and cultural associations are available on prior request.

INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS:

Tel.: 971 219 605

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Vicepresidència de
Cultura, Patrimoni i Esports

The Sculptures in the Garden

Pep Canyelles

*Dona asseguda damunt l'univers
(Woman sitting on the universe)*

Cast weathered steel/welding

300 x 140 x 440 cm

1990

A sculpture made of weathered steel, based on simple geometrical shapes, with a combination of hollow and solid arches that form an unfinished progression.



Joan Costa

L'origen (The origin)

Carved marble, metal and stone

175 x 140 x 67 cm

1988

Inspired by Minorcan "taules" (prehistoric table-like stone monuments), this sculpture was created as an installation for the mouth of the River Magra in La Spezia (Italy).



Joan Cunill

Llum circular and Ull vertical (Round light and Vertical eye)

Steel and stainless steel/Argon welding

202 x 102 x 50 and 230 x 94 x 45 cm,

respectively

2006

Joan Cunill, an expert in metal, donated this pair of sculptures. They stand out for the interplay of the geometrical shapes, on different planes, and the contrast between the different types of finishes.



Antoni Ferragut

Animals en acció II (Animals in action 2)

Cast iron

200 x 350 x 120 cm

1988

Designed expressly for the garden of the Casa de la Misericòrdia, it represents an animal about to leap in schematic form through sinuous iron bars that add a sensation of movement to the sculpture.



Ben Jakober

*Biblioteca misericordiana
(Misericordian library)*

Carved and engraved marble and limestone

225 x 150 x 280 cm

1988

This sculpture forms part of the «Libraries» series, made by the artist in the 1990s. It evokes reference points in Mallorcan culture through a material, stone, that reinforces the idea of permanence and durability.



Ben Jakober

La figura de l'esperit (The figure of the spirit)

Iron and limestone/Assemblage, carving

180 x 200 x 180 cm

1986

Originally part of the exhibition «Arqueologia del present» (The Archaeology of the Present), this work is made up of two big serrated iron wheels joined by a helical stone cylinder. It evokes mankind's evolution and the spirit as a substantial element, in consonance with Ben Jakober's sculptures inspired by dialogue between the past and present.



Pep Llambías

*Nido, hoja, amor, pájaro
(Nest, leaf, love, bird)*

(from the «Tallat de lluna» series)

Steel and luminous neon

20 x 20 x 180 cm x 4 unitats

2006

Referential words, in this case evoking love and nature protection, and steel girders are a common feature of this artist's work



Xavier Lllull

Dona (Woman)

Carved Deba marble (Sant Sebastià, Guipuzcoa)

220 x 20 x 20 cm

2006

This stylized schematic female marble figure, representative of Xavier Lllull's sculptural work, was acquired in 2006 as a result of an exhibition of the artist's work at La Misericòrdia Cultural Centre.



Josep Maria Sirvent

Cap blanc (White head)

Marble, iron and stainless steel

230 x 40 x 40 cm

1989

Verticality and interplay between different mobile elements are some of the features of this sculpture, which dates back to Sirvent's early period.



© Photographs of sculptures: Joan Ramon Bonet

To find out more:

-For information on the poorhouse, see:

DEYÀ, M.; SALAS, P.; CARO, F.; PASCUAL, A. (coord.) *De la beneficència a l'estat del benestar: història dels serveis socials a Mallorca: (s. XVI-XX)*. Palma: Consell de Mallorca. Departament de Benestar Social. Institut Mallorquí d'Afers Socials, 2011.

FULLANA, P. «Menors a Mallorca en perspectiva històrica (1796-1975)». *Alimara: revista de Treball Social* (December 2008), issue no. 51.

BALLE, A. *Report given by the prior of the Misericòrdia hospice in Palma to the Board of Governors at the July 12th meeting in 1847 on the state and needs of the said hospice*. Palma: 1847.

Royal letters patent by Her Majesty and the members of the Council by virtue of which the establishment of a Board of Governors is approved for the Casa de Misericòrdia in the city of Palma, in addition to the corresponding bylaws that she proposed as the institution's Patron. Palma: 1804

Regulation of the Provincial Hospice called the Casa de Misericòrdia. Palma: 1946.

- For information on the construction of the building, see:

CANTARELLAS, C. *La arquitectura mallorquina desde la ilustración a la restauración*. Palma: Institut d'Estudis Balearics, 1981, p. 250-253, 312-322.

- For information on Camp Roig Cemetery, see:

VALERO, G. *Palma, ciutat de llegenda: itineraris pels mites, les llegendes, les curiositats i els detalls de la ciutat de Mallorca*. Palma: Olañeta, 1995, p. 228-229.

- For information on the garden, see:

ROMAN QUETGLES, J. *El jardí botànic de la Misericòrdia de Palma: ciència i cultura de la botànica a Mallorca en els segles XVIII i XIX*. Palma: Consell de Mallorca. Departament de Cultura, 2005.

- For information on the sculptures and other contemporary works of art at the Misericòrdia Cultural Centre, see:

Fons d'art contemporani del Consell de Mallorca: (1980-2007) Different authors. Palma: Consell de Mallorca. Departament de Cultura, 2007.



The casa de La Misericòrdia



Vicepresidència de
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A snippet of history



© Consell de Mallorca General Archive, I-77/7. Procession in the men's courtyard in around 1950.

The Casa de la Misericòrdia was a charitable institution founded by the Jesuits in 1565. In 1677, it moved to a large house with a kitchen garden close to the General Hospital. The house must gradually have fallen into a state of disrepair and, as a result, in 1817, master architect Pere Joan Bauçà drew up plans for a new building. The first phase of the building, in the street known today as Carrer de la Misericòrdia, was completed between 1817 and 1845.

Although no documentary evidence has been found, the building project by Pere Joan Bauçà seems to have been continued by architect Joan Sureda, coinciding with the time when the institution was taken over by the Provincial Government. Sureda has been attributed with the plans for the chapel, built between 1831 and 1836.

In around 1870, a second block was built, destined for the male residents, while the existing part was reserved for the female ones. It is an austere, functional building that stands out for its stark architecture. The dormitories and different workshops could be found on the top floors, while the lower ones housed the administrative offices, storage areas, kitchens, dining rooms and oratory.



© Sound & Image Archive, Rul-lan collection. Orphaned children, accompanied by monks and teachers, on the terrace of the Casa de la Misericòrdia in 1934.

The part stretching toward the avenue known as Via de Roma was built in the late 19th century on land that belonged to Camp Roig Cemetery, where the destitute who died in the neighbouring General Hospital were buried. The cemetery had an oratory that was demolished in 1878. Architect Miguel Rigo was initially involved in this phase of the building work, although on his sudden death he was replaced by Joaquín Pavía.

The building continued to be used as a poorhouse until 1977. Since then it has been run by the Consell de Mallorca, which took it over from the former Provincial Government, and it has been used to house different cultural services and facilities.



© Consell de Mallorca General Archive, F-1. Classroom of the Casa de la Misericòrdia school.

Life in the Casa de la Misericòrdia

Thanks to a regulation published in 1946, we can gain an idea of what life was like in the Casa de la Misericòrdia for its residents during the post war period. The institution took in orphans and those in need who were unable to look after themselves due to their advanced age or as a result of physical problems. The men were separated from the women, and each of the two sections was subdivided into one for minors (aged 10 to 15), another



© Sound & Image Archive, Rul-lan collection. The kitchen of the Casa de la Misericòrdia in around the 1940s.

er for adults (aged 15 to 21) and a third for the elderly (all the rest). When a person was admitted to the poorhouse, they were forced to take a bath and, in the case of the men, to shave their heads. The residents had to wake up at seven o'clock (half past seven in winter), attend mass, and work in the workshops or go to class. The building had shoe, carpentry and printing workshops and a school for boys and girls.



© Consell de Mallorca General Archive, I-77/7. A football match in the men's courtyard.

The printing press was located in what is now Lluís Alemany Library and it was called the Escola Tipogràfica Provincial (Provincial Typographic School). It published publications by the Provincial Government and other books.

Except for special occasions, the food consisted of «home-style cooking with no need for frills, sauces or delicacies». At about six o'clock in the evening, the rosary was recited, seven o'clock was supertime, and at nine it was time for bed and silence was kept.



© Consell de Mallorca General Archive, F-2. The printing press.

Visiting the building

Today the Casa de la Misericòrdia is a cultural centre that houses different facilities and areas open to the public.

Exhibition areas

THE CHAPEL

Built between 1831 and 1836, its design has been attributed to Joan Sureda. A building with a layout in the form of a basilica, with an internal semi-circular apse, a barrel vaulted coffered ceiling and big Ionic columns built onto the walls, the chapel is based on neo classical models. The altarpieces and furniture, some of which were from the former Trinitarian monastery, ended up in different hands when the chapel began to be used for cultural purposes.



© Consell de Mallorca General Archive, V-691/13. The chapel in 1979.

THE MULTIPURPOSE BLOCK

The entrance in the hospital square leads into what used to be the men's courtyard. The wing on the left as you enter is currently a multipurpose block, with four rooms where temporary exhibitions of small works are held, together with other cultural activities. Through the big windows of the multipurpose block the former women's courtyard can be seen. This side of the building, which for years housed the care centre, the Hospital de Nit, is awaiting refurbishment work. Certain features stand out particularly, such as the cobblestones, central water storage cistern and sundial.

The Sound & Image Archive

Located on the third floor of the multipurpose block, the archive is designed to help revive, conserve and disseminate photographic, film and video-making, and phonographic heritage produced in or associated with Mallorca. It is open to all members of the public. The archive features a room for temporary exhibitions and a library specializing in photography, film-making, music, oral history and all subjects in general related to the world of audiovisuals.



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The Arts & Crafts Library

In 1928, the Balearic Provincial Government created an Arts & Crafts Library, specializing in the latter. The library was located in the Palau de la Diputació (the seat of the Provincial Government), now the headquarters of the Consell de Mallorca. In 1989 the library moved to the Misericòrdia Cultural Centre. In addition to an arts and crafts collection, the library has a general collection of printed and other materials, covering various different subjects.



© The Arts & Crafts Library

Since 2002, in its capacity as a public library, the Arts & Crafts Library has offered differing services, including a lending library, Internet and office IT services, and Wi-Fi.

The Lluís Alemany Library



© Sound & Image Archive. Photo: Gabriel Ramon. The Lluís Alemany Library

The Lluís Alemany book collection was created by chemist and bibliophile Lluís Alemany Vich (Mahon 1912-Palma 1983). The Consell de Mallorca acquired the collection in 1996 and the library was inaugurated in 1998 and opened to the public for university research, Balearic bibliographical studies and historical or artistic research. The Lluís Alemany Library collection specializes in subjects related to the Balearics, including the history of art, customs, cartography, religion and science. The library also features an area for small four-monthly exhibitions of its bibliographical and documentary collection.

The Botanical Garden

In 1827, influenced by the ideals of the Enlightenment, Captain General Josep M. Alòs proposed that a botanical garden should be created on a plot of land in front of the General Hospital. The project began between 1828 and 1833 with the construction of an entrance in the form of a huge gateway designed by Joan Sureda. The surrounding wall was also built, using sandstone from the demolished Inquisition headquarters, and plants were sown. In the end, however, rather than a botanical garden, a decision was taken to create a kitchen garden that would supply the hospital kitchen with vegetables and the apothecary's with medicinal plants.

In the second half of the 19th century, various attempts were made to revive the project for a botanical garden but the land continued to be used as a kitchen garden. In 1855, the Revenue Agency included the hospital kitchen garden in the list of goods that could be disentailed but the Provincial Government seems to have avoided its expropriation, largely by highlighting the importance of the project for a botanical garden. In 1896, architect Joan Guasp drew up a new project for a botanical garden, with a design influenced by Landscapism and an irregular, winding layout. This involved the garden being moved next to the walls of the Casa de la Misericòrdia, together with the demolition of Joan Sureda's gate.

Unfortunately, hardly anything remains of the botanical garden since the current gardens are the result of changes made in 1932. In accordance with a project by Josep Alomar, the current entranceway and iron railings on a limestone base were built, and the former botanical garden was linked to a new green area that forms the front garden of the Casa de la Misericòrdia.

THE FIGUS TREE

One of the few remains of the botanical garden is the ficus tree. Listed a singular example of a tree, it is between 150 and 200 years old, as well as being one of the biggest ficus trees in the Balearic Islands. Its spectacular trunk measures over 2 metres in diameter and it stands over 20 metres high, with roots so long that they have been found in holes dug in the Rambla.