



Archaeological Museum in Madrid: Historical exhibits displayed in a contemporary way

The contextual focus of the Archaeological Museum in Madrid is placed on Iberian art – such as the Lady of Elche. Precise accent lighting from ERCO lends the historical exhibits an expressive and contemporary appearance.

Project data

Project:	Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid / Spain
Client:	Spanish Government, Madrid / Spain
Architecture:	Juan Pablo Rodríguez Frade, Madrid / Spain
Lighting design:	Toni Rueda, Madrid / Spain
Photography:	Frieder Blickle, Hamburg / Germany

The fourth of August 1897 was to become a very special day for 14 year-old Manuel Campello Esclápez. Whilst working on a farm near to the Spanish town of Elche he discovered a large stone, that when looked at more closely was found to be a female bust of a very high artistic quality. Today this is known as the "Lady of Elche", is judged to be a masterpiece of Iberian art and is exhibited at the Museo Arqueológico Nacional.

Complete refurbishment of a historic museum for more visitors

The Museo Arqueológico Nacional, founded in 1867 by Queen Isabella II, specialises in historical artefacts from the Iberian peninsula and is supplemented by an Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Islamic collection. The permanent exhibition displays around 13,000 exhibits to the general public. In addition to the Lady of Elche, a copy of the Altamira cave with Stone Age rock paintings and the reconstructed mausoleum of Pozo Moro from the 6th century can also be seen.

An additional exhibition space with communicative transition areas

The neoclassical building was constructed in the 19th century according to a design by the architect Francisco Jareño. Renovation work and extensions were also frequently carried out over the years. Frade Arquitectos were commissioned to carry out the recently completed project. The main concept consisted of maintaining the emotional character of the historical building whilst bringing it into harmony with the requirements of a 21st century museum in terms of communication and visual appeal. As a consequence, the recently covered inner courtyards equipped with stairwell towers are used as exhibition spaces, and large-scale objects can now be observed from a variety of angles.

High-contrast lighting lends the exhibits a lively impression

The complete exhibition is illuminated with accents. Suitable dimming levels were defined for each exhibition room according to its size and the specific surface character of the

exhibits. Optec spotlights and lens wallwashers from ERCO are used as well as ERCO Logotec spotlights, all with 12W, 1260lm and warm white 3000K light colour. The flexibility of the lighting system is due to three factors – luminaires are mounted on track, the Spherolit lenses can be replaced without tools and luminaire housings are discreetly designed.

Precisely aligned light emphasises the finest details of artworks

The Lady of Elche is deemed to be one of the most important exhibits of the exhibition. The general space is characterised by bright col-

our tones but the figure is located centrally in front of a reddish brown background. It is displayed with three Optec spotlights from ERCO, two on the sides illuminating the object with spot light distribution and one from behind with wide flood distribution. The 3000K warm white light colour serves to emphasise the tone of the limestone. The contours of the bust are also highlighted by the interplay of light and shadow – the eyes cast downwards lie in shadow whilst the eyelids are especially bright to give a momentary, lively impression.

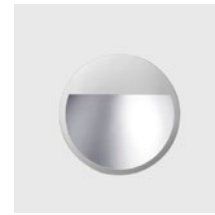
Luminaires used in the project



Logotec



Optec



Floor washlights

About ERCO

The ERCO Light Factory in the German town of Lüdenscheid is a leading international specialist in architectural lighting using LED technology. The family business, founded in 1934, now operates as a global player with independent sales organisations and partners in 55 countries worldwide. Since 2015 ERCO's portfolio has been 100% LED. With this in mind, ERCO in Lüdenscheid develops, designs and produces digital luminaires with focus on photometrics, electronics and design. Work-

ing closely with architects, lighting designers and engineers, ERCO develops lighting tools used primarily for applications in the following fields: Work, Shop, Culture, Community, Hospitality, Living, Public and Contemplation. ERCO understands digital light as the fourth dimension of architecture – providing highly precise and efficient lighting solutions to support creative designers in turning their visions into reality.

Copies and links requested.

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