MAISON ADMINISTRATIVE DE LA PROVINCE DE NAMUR 2018 - 2019

Competition: Urban planning and construction of The Ville de Namur's administrative headquarters, including offices, workshops, cafeteria and landscaping, rue Bodart in Namur



Site
Rue Bodart 5000 Namur

Client
Province de Namur

Structural engineer
Setesco

Services engineer
Alliance

Budget
18.496.511 EUR htva

In association with
Entreprises Louis De Waele

The 10.000sqm of MAP NAMUR are meant to consolidate on a single emblematic site an assorted constellation of public agencies previously dispersed in adjoining precincts. This conglomerate nature leads to a complexity of subjects of equal importance considered during the design process. Amongst these, openness to experience and eagerness to serve stand out as common denominators for all agencies, certainly because ingrained in the MAP's public interest mission. Logically therefore these themes guide decisions and define strategies adopted throughout conception stages, as does the desire to observe and interact, and not judge and react to this privileged stretch of bucolic terrain alongside the Sambre river.

The perception of service as an altruistic and engaging concept generates a transversal quest for qualified connections. Architecturally, these in turn trigger singular custom-fit dynamics of all sorts implemented throughout the project: between the magnificent site surrounding it and the skyline it is part of, between landscape and builtscape, water and shore, staff and visitors, between technical constraints and expressionist freedom, and perhaps above all else between those in need and those who assist, aka the MAP staff.

Such relationships are articulated into a meaningful whole thru the use of carefully calibrated spatial catalysts: an elongated tree-lined plaza federating its previously haphazard borders (la drÃ¨ve), a generous ramp leading up to the esplanade overlooking the plaza (le parvis), a large enclosed garden shared with neighbors (la chambre vÃ©gÃ©tale), and finally an intimate cloister for peaceful walks outdoors (le cloÃ®tre). The overflowing planted terraces and rooftops offering 360Â° views of valleys and hilltops fulfill a similar catalyzing role. Once inside and conforming to NWOW precepts, fit-out similarly generates productive interaction in the bustling agora, along the sunlit ground floor gallery, and in the string of informal double-height workspaces. While in more tranquil zones small meeting areas, acoustic bubbles, window-seats-for-two and serene office arrangements cater to concentrated tasks alone or in small groups.

Building depths vary allowing a myriad of spatial configurations, while the minimalistic ultra-modular prefab concrete structure (10,8m x 10,8m grid, mushroom columns, thermally activated slabs) offers maximum flexibility both short-term and long-term. Onto this load-bearing ensemble providing excellent thermal inertia a locally sourced timber faÃ§ade pre-assembled off-site in the form of large-scale panels is plugged in within record deadlines, wrapping itself around the built form. The latter floats above exterior parking space sunken only a half-floor in order to remain above groundwater levels. Low-tech service engineering, renewable energy sources and passive approaches guarantee 0-energy performance while concomitantly reversibility, flexibility, material choice and demountable building techniques integrate rigorous circular requirements.