ARCHITECTURE INTERIORS FOCUS: COLOURS

07 + 08

perspective

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INSPIRING ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

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MULTICOLOURED RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

By layering the three primary colours – red, yellow and blue – Beijing-based People's Architecture Office cooks up a vibrant office for gourmet sweets franchise 21 Cake

+ SPECIAL FOCUS:
40 Under 40 2016
— The Winners
— The Event
— The Forum

HK$48
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July/August 2016

Focus: Colours • Kevin McCloud, Grand Designs • Sou Fujimoto x COS • Peter McCaffery Fellowship 2016, Benoy

A singular envelope

The new Forum in Saint-Louis plays with a double scale: one of fractioning that links it with its urban context, and one of homogeneity that gives the building a strong and iconic design – specifically, a striking metal 'shell' in vivid orange

TEXT:
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PHOTOGRAPHY:
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The Forum of Saint-Louis, France, is set on a vast piece of land close to the city-centre in an area which mixes different scales and uses: it remains a residential area mainly made up of low-height houses, mingled with some characterless, large-sized collective buildings.

Designed by Paris-based Manuelle Gautrand Architecture to replace the old Palais des fêtes of the town, the Forum is a cultural facility designed to host associative, sporting and cultural events. "Our wish was to create a unified project, playing on both the multiplicity of the connected volumes, and on a global homogenous design," explains the architecture firm's founder and A&D Trophy Awards 2016 judge Manuelle Gautrand.

"Thus, all the claddings (façades and roofs) are treated with the same finishing material; an expanded metal – Métal Déployé – mounted on big frames, with a very specific colour inspired from natural copper. The inspiration has come from the context, which combines big orangey interlocking tile roofs with some industrial brick chimneys reminding the industrial past of the site."

The team used a translucent varnish designed and tested with Akzo Nobel, which includes pigments containing copper powder. The volatility of those pigments and their tricky

The façades and roofs are treated with an expanded metal (©Métal Déployé) mounted on big frames, with a very specific colour inspired by the building's context, which combines orange-hued interlocking tile roofs and industrial brick chimneys recalling the industrial past of the site

assembly required testing and several prototypes, and the result is a glistening envelope which, by turns and according to the light it gets, may vary from an almost white colour to a bright orange tint, and varying shades of rose, salmon and pale orange in between.

The expanded metal is perforated to reinforce this variety of perceptions, appearing strong or nearly transparent according to the angle from which it is viewed. The project actually comprises two envelopes with complementary functions: the first is a structural envelope forming the core and shell while guaranteeing thermal and acoustic insulation. Wrapped over this is a second skin made of large expanded metal panels, mounted on a very simple steel frame and relatively repetitive.

Their mounting over the core and shell volume creates a wide plenum, protected by the big uniting envelope that really embraces all the faces of the building, answers two technical issues: first, by masking the technical equipment; and providing thermal protection during summer, "plunging all the roofs forming the core and shell and the technical equipment, into a protective relative darkness, while providing a kind of natural ventilation intensified by the expanded metal perforations."