23 Years Euregional Prize for Architecture

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A new school complex in Laeken

Participant info

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Project info

   This secondary school project is part of wider initiative for rehabilitating the Tivoli urban wasteland in Brussels. The school sits within this revisited piece of urban space emphasizing the mixed character of this new ensemble and carrying the hope for a sustainable social future and continuous urban landscape. By promising to welcome some 700 students and offering sports and other multidisciplinary facilities even out of regular academic hours, the school contributes in creating links between different parts of the city.

Being adjacent to a small square, the establishment benefits from a direct and positive urban environment and takes part by proposing a mind-opening spatial, visual and acoustic dialog with the neighbouring Greenbizz complex and the quiet street that separates them.

A visual and physical equilibrium between the surrounding public area and the obviously secure school grounds is obtained with the transparency of the common rooms on the ground floor as well as through the development of a moving base. Access to the school itself is by percolation into the playground which serves as an external nucleus that connects the communal living spaces.

Two wings make together the internal space of the school and create a positive and dynamic arrangement between empty and full. By mutually enhancing each other, they allow for a quick overview of the activities taking place. The traffic spaces are drawn for users to experience sequences of variation in brightness, spatial expansion, use and view. The microcosm of the class is the basis for a study of its materials, its use as well as the relationship it has to the outside (view, orientation,...).

This architecture is a living space set to the rhythm of its users and their specific schedules - academic or collective. Its visual interface with the neighbourhood – the facades – allows one to allows one to see the activities and on the inside.