

Dominique Perrault: a presentation

Emblematic figure of French architecture, Dominique Perrault gained international recognition after having won the competition for the National French library in 1989 at the age of 36. This project marked the starting point of many other public and private commissions abroad, such as The Velodrome and Olympic swimming pool of Berlin in 1992, the extension of the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg in 1996, the Olympic tennis centre in Madrid in 2002, the campus of Ewha's University in Seoul. Upcoming projects include works as Piazza Garibaldi in Italy, the congress and exhibition hall of Leon in Spain or, the Fukuku Tower in Japan. Dominique Perrault is currently working in the development of the Thermal Baths in San Pellegrino, the business Centre in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia in 2009 and the Yeosu performance Center (expo 2012).

So far, his projects have been remarkable for their conception anchored in an urban vision detached from historicist speech and their dynamic vision aiming to unify architecture and its environment. Dominique Perrault introduces an "abstract lecture of architecture" where constructive elements have their own autonomy. The relationship between them is only a matter of position and materiality. It is a process without contact. Thus, it assumes the principle of vanishing architecture, a state of representation of shape and object.

Several projects, built or under construction, are distinguished by their architectural and urban importance. The problematic of scale and logical change according to dimension does not exist for Dominique Perrault. However, these "grands projets" can be considered manifestos of his architecture.

These projects stand out, in first place, because they create a landscape, not only buildings. They are linked to a specific site, history and geography- it is precisely this context that generates the concept of the project. Moreover, they illustrate the notion of disappearance of architecture. The site's scale does not necessarily require a proportional range of resources, in the contrary, for Dominique Perrault void, stillness or silence are essential components of architecture. These operations transfigure landscape where they are inscribed by the means of minimal intervention in relationship with emptiness and urban context.

The expression of this architecture reveals new and unexpected employment of materials. Dominique Perrault especially employs textiles and metallic meshes, in particular, that allow him to constantly play with opacity and transparency, revealing and concealing his architectural works. In fact, for over 15 years, in coalition with Gaëlle Lauriot-Prévost, architectural designer and artistic director of his studio in Paris, he has been investigating the application of industrial materials in architecture, being the pioneer of the architectural use of metallic meshes.

Dominique Perrault's work on furniture and lighting does not represent a parallel decoration activity but a true extension of his architecture. Firstly because it employs the same vocabulary of simple forms reduced to the minimum. In the other hand, because they pay the same attention to materials engineering. The result are simple, robust and functional objects, designed for the greatest manufacturers, like Sawaya and Moroni, Poltrona Frau, Fontana Arte, Alessi, Baccarat...

Dominique Perrault received many prestigious prizes and awards, including the Mies van der Rohe prize (1997), the French national Grand Prize for Architecture. Numerous international publications refer to his architectural approach. The body of his works has recently been showed at the Centre Georges Pompidou in 2008 through the monographic exhibition "Dominique Perrault Architecture".

Information concerning Dominique Perrault Architecture:

DPA DOMINIQUE PERRAULT ARCHITECTURE consists of:

- DPA France, 1981
- DPA Luxemburg, 1997
- DPA Spain, 2006

These structures sum up over sixty architects, engineers and international designers.