

PROJECT MEMO

The panel of judges valued in particular the solution provided for a large-scale problem through the creation of small ceramic pieces forming patterns that are repeated and laid out in such a way as to create urban elements like latticework or walls. These provide effective and individual solutions for a range of circumstances. An affordable element that manages to offer creative solutions adding quality and value, as well as enhancing a space within the city.

See the video

DESCRIPTION

This intervention is located in one of the most built-up areas of Sant Feliu de Llobregat. A working class district that sprang up around the town's former industrial fabric, encircling the textile factories that provided employment for the local residents who lived in modest housing huddled next to the factories. Following the demolition of one of the last remaining factories, an underground car park was built to serve the district known as 'La Salut', leaving a large void with a concrete cover on the site where the factory once stood.

The existing divisions have been extended, tracing the outlines of each of the park's parterres. Just like slices of bread, they divide up the public space into smaller, individual corners, creating an almost domestic atmosphere in an attempt to make the visitor feel comfortable and 'at home' in a more manageable setting. In this sense, the elevation and section of each area features an individual design, creating topographic layouts that provide shelter and shield the passer-by from the adjacent road.

The void left by the former factory reveals the once concealed walls of the rear courtyards of the h

ousing blocks and which now form a façade for the new urban space. The decision to use ceramic tiles to clad the existing divisions was practically automatic. Ceramic tiles fired at high temperatures provided us with an affordable material that offered excellent guarantees in terms of ageing and resistance to frost, rain and variations in temperature.

The project clearly reflects the intention to return to the use of ceramic tiles as a means of preserving the memory of the district's industrial heritage, whilst at the same time echoing the walls of the existing courtyards. Our aim was to incorporate this wealth of nuances into the latticework in the form of textures and gaps already featured in the divisions, which in turn mirrored the various transformations and interventions the city has been subject to over the years. The only way of filtering the view of these rear courtyards whilst at the same time reflecting their irregularities, twists and unique features was to include an enclosure made with ceramic tiles.

We took the time to research thoroughly the best way of processing and firing the clay used in the pieces that made up the latticework. We opted for a simple geometry using the fewest possible number of pieces that would enable us to cover a 150 m façade and meet the demands of the existing enclosures. First and foremost, the latticework had to enable us to maintain the parapet of the existing walls, made from a range of materials and standing at varying heights, retracing as far possible a continuous 'horizon' that would absorb them all. Likewise, the latticework needed to allow us to maintain the various degrees of opacity of the divisions, which ranged from solid block walls to totally transparent railings, and including wattle partitions. Finally, the latticework also had to permit us to include the staggered grading using a continuous texture that ran the entire length of the park.

It took several attempts before we finally came up with the definitive geometry for a self-bearing latticework made up exclusively of three glazed ceramic pieces fired at a high temperature: a 20 x 20 x 20 cm cube and a (solid or perforated) diamond measuring 20 x 13.5 cm. The cube guarantees the optimisation of the production process, as a single piece, positioned either facing the front or back enabled us to make the latticework opaque or transparent. The herringbone layout allowed us to create a natural, almost organic parapet that traced the changing heights of the enclosure in an unbroken line.

The colour scheme selected for the glazing reflected the tones featured in the existing divisions. The image of the background façades was limited to seven colours which, together with that of the ceramic tiles, created 8 principal tones. These eight tones, featuring a gloss or matt glaze, were applied to the opaque or perforated pieces, thereby enabling us to achieve the nuances we sought in the latticework.