

The Aplix Factory

Le Cellier-sur-Loire, France

A building set out in the landscape according to the strict geometric and syntactic rules of a crossword puzzle. Each square of the 20-metre grid takes up an industrial function or a part of a function like a square of the crossword takes a letter. These functions are crossed and woven with each other according to the production process, like the intersected letters form words, in the vertical and horizontal sense. A first and metaphorical reading finds in this image of woven functions an evident evocation of the principal trade of the Aplix Company: the production of self-gripping systems in all kind of widths and surfaces. A second reading, more conceptual and more contemporary, identifies a layout of very basic elements, able to grow in all directions and ways in a very aleatory way, though without changing the founding principle. Naturally, it is this uncertain and unexpected development of the building's architecture which interests us. In fact, a very radical use of notion of flexibility, set up as an esthetic principle, produces finally an undetermined architectural form. Actually, an industrial building prescribes, much more than any other construction program, that architecture adapts itself very quickly to transformation or extension process. This wholly geometric conception of the factory governed only by important, albeit imperative, functional requirements would stay sterile if it were



not confronted with nature. Not gardens or parks, but the kind of nature that surrounds us every day, in the countryside as well as in the city.

In fact, nature is everywhere, even inside the factory where rectangular gardens have been placed at the heart of this orthogonal geometry like black squares of within the crossword puzzle which organize the words around them. The factory's life does the same around the large patios full of light.

Environment:	Rural
Material:	Stainless steel
Architect:	Dominique Perrault Architecte
Architectural engineering:	Perrault Projects
Technical engineering:	Boplan, Nantes
Photographs:	André Morin and Georges Fessy
More information:	perraultarchitecture.fr

