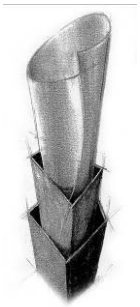

TROPHÉE ARCHIZINC by VMZINC

VMZINC

PRESS FILE JUNE 2010

4TH EDITION OF THE ARCHIZINC TROPHY: SYMBIOSIS BETWEEN ZINC AND ARCHITECTURE

Last September, **VMZINC®**, the international brand for rolled zinc products manufactured and marketed by the Building Products unit of the UMICORE GROUP, launched the 4th edition of the ARCHIZINC TROPHY. This competition is held every two years and awards prizes to architects from all over the world in four categories: **Public Buildings**, **Individual Housing**, **Commercial Buildings** and **Collective Housing**.

The awards ceremony took place in the Gustave Eiffel room in the Eiffel Tower on **14 June 2010**. Jury members, winners and UMICORE group officials attended the event.

The ARCHIZINC Trophy is one of the key events for the company and is awarded to innovative and original zinc envelope creations. These creations can be distinguished by innovation in the use of the zinc material, elegance, functionality and respect for the environment. With the ARCHIZINC TROPHY, VMZINC® confirms the strong ties between architects and the brand, between players in the building industry and zinc as a building material.

■ THE ARCHIZINC TROPHY: AN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

For this 4th edition, **241 entries** from 25 countries were submitted. Whether from France, the United States, Lebanon, Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Taiwan, Turkey or La Réunion, all the candidates were able through their work to demonstrate their attachment to the zinc material. Their projects were brilliant in terms of both quality and originality.

During its deliberations last March, the jury - comprising 13 international architects and building professionals* - selected **twelve creations** classified in the four distinct categories. It also awarded four exceptional Special Prizes for “Environment”, “Innovation”, “Tradition” and “Technical Performance”, as well as a Special Prize for an Individual House in Los Angeles (USA).

The national submarine archaeology Museum in Cartagena, the Institute of Ocular Microsurgery in Barcelona, an office building in Belgium or a social and emergency housing complex in Paris, all these buildings reflect the complexity and diversity of the projects presented.

As their prize, the winners received the Trophy itself, a valued artistic object in zinc. They will also receive 200 copies of the FOCUS ON ZINC magazine that will be published for the occasion by VMZINC®. 65,000 copies of this Special Issue will be published in October 2010 and distributed in over 10 countries in 4 languages. Through its pages, the architecture and the material find expression via the twelve selected projects. This is a unique opportunity for the twelve prize-winning architects to present the philosophy of their work worldwide.

** See list of jury members on page 2.*

ARCHIZINC TROPHY 2010: THE JURY

The cosmopolitan Jury was made up of 13 professionals from outside the company, all working in the architecture and building industry sectors.

■ FRANCE	DOMINIQUE BOUDET	Journalist with architecture magazine AMC *Le Moniteur Architecture* **President of the Archizinc Trophy Jury**
	FRÉDÉRIC BOREL	Architect Frédéric Borel Architecte Agency
	LIONEL DUNET	Architect DESA, President of the National Council of the Order of Architects
	DOMINIQUE QUEFFELEC	President of ARCORA, Specialised Engineering for Envelope Structures, France
	GILLES DE MONTMARIN	Architect DPLG Delegate Director of SEMAPA (SEM *Aménagement de Paris*)
■ BELGIUM	SERGE FRAAS	Architect STEKKE + FRAAS STUDIO
■ SPAIN	LLUIS DILME	Architect, Architects Studio Estudi DILMÉ & FABRÉ
■ NETHERLANDS	DIRK JAN POSTEL	Architect, Director of KRAAIJVANGER URBIS ARCHITECTS STUDIO
■ LEBANON	SIMONE KOSREMELLI	Architect ARCHITECT & URBAN PLANNER
■ GREECE	NICOS KALOGERAS	Architect engineer, NTUA (National Technical University of Athens)
■ CANADA	ANICK SHOONER	Architect OAQ OAA FIRAC, MENKÈS SHOONER DAGENAIS, LE TOURNEUX Architects
■ POLAND	TOMASZ MARKOWSKI	Architect ECT - The Architect Company
■ UK	CHRISTOPHE EGRET	Architect Studio EGRET WEST

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Winner

Individual house “CASA B3”, Pamplona (Spain)

Architects:	Vaíllo & Irigaray + Galar Arquitectos Antonio Vaíllo i Daniel - Juan L. Irigaray Huarte
VMZINC Products:	VMZ Standing seam - QUARTZ-ZINC®

Interior adventure

In the midst of a mediocre suburban environment, CASA B3 chooses to remain silent. Its openings and gardens are concealed in the crevices of a zinc structure.

Monumental and opaque, house B3 seems to be sculpted from a freshly quarried block. Its strong presence borders on hostility, which the architects explain by referring to the uncertain nature of the site, a “no-man’s land”, like so many others in the residential outskirts of cities. The house is in fact located in an estate built around a mini roundabout. As it cannot draw support from its environment, it is closed in on itself like a fortress, and becomes a base from which to re-conquer its location. An inner world takes over from the outer world: discreet micro-gardens settle into excavations in the ground and spaces scooped out of the house’s massive volume. Large windows, invisible because they are set back from the main facade, make it possible to take full advantage of these outside spaces from the living areas situated on the ground floor, or from the rooms on the first floor.

The zinc cladding that surrounds all the outer facades gives this monolithic house a rough, solid aspect. The layout is arranged in a cross-wise geometry, and repeated in an almost obsessive, radical manner. Only on closer observation of the house does the single block soften, to become a precious object that has been as carefully crafted as a piece of furniture. The crevices formed by the recess of the cross are occupied by windows and their walls are covered in wood. This softer material was the perfect means for the architects to express the duality between inside and outside that is the leitmotiv of this entire piece of architecture.

Special award

Individual house “Vivienda”, Vilariño (Spain)

Architect: Alfonso Penela Fernández
VMZINC Products: VMZ Standing seam – Natural zinc

Zinc boats

Is this a house or a village? The three roof ridges are above all a metaphor for the fishing boats used by the fishermen in this village in Galicia.

Alfonso Penela Fernández chose the small fishing boat, a fundamental object of local life, as the point of departure for his project.
This small vessel was the source of inspiration behind a housing project that can be made up of one, two or three houses. It’s difficult to be more specific because the owners decided to keep the possibility of dividing this residential housing complex into two, three or five rental units! In any case, there are three upturned hull-shaped roofs towering above the Atlantic, on steeply sloping land.

Installed on the brickwork constructions inherited from the buildings that previously occupied the plot, the extremities of the three boat-shaped roofs open on to the sea. Using the slope to his advantage, the architect positioned part of the programme on the lower part of the plot, digging rooms out of the earth, sharing a large patio with the sea. The climate of Spain’s Atlantic coast is harsh, with frequent rainfall: the roofing on the three vessel-houses is like a shield to resist the corrosive attack of the salty winds. The architect opposes the roofs - the hull that cannot be modified, or in shipping terms the “deadwork”– to the “quickwork” of the living spaces that can be altered and transformed as desired.

The multiplication of roofs creates the impression of a small village, with steps and narrow streets. Zinc covers both the walls and the roofs. The two slopes of roofing become more complex as this metal skin extends closer to the ground. Volumes with folds that prolong the roofing joints thicken on the vertical walls, opening windows onto the sea in an architectural language that is more contemporary than vernacular. But are these really man-made constructions or are they scallop shells or some other ocean treasure, inhabited by nomadic tribes in the spirit of hermit-crabs?

Winner

Apartment building, Madrid (Spain)

Architects: Estudio Entresitios
VMZINC products: VMZ Standing seam, VMZ Flat lock panel - ANTHRA-ZINC®

A suburban signal

Dimension, colour, shape: the architects at the ENTRESITIOS agency pulled out all the stops to make a social housing building a strong signal that contrasts with the banality of one of Madrid's suburbs.

This is a radical apartment building: dark, vertical and streamlined. The ENTRESITIOS architects opted for the spectacular rather than the discreet, with the aim of providing some architectural diversity to the cityscape. In doing so, they have they have installed a strong signal in a constantly evolving district, a suburb of Madrid located between the 4th and 5th ring roads. The client, a social housing organisation, set up a competition to select an architect to build a complex of 50 apartments. The organisation had not envisaged exceeding the maximum 8-storey height of the neighbouring buildings. The teams consulted were however permitted to override this specification and instead of a building aligned with those around it, they suggested building a complex whose main feature would be a 22-storey tower block. Urban regulations authorised exceeding the maximum height of the neighbouring buildings, on condition that the number of m^2 built be identical to that of a building of standard height on the same plot, and that it be set back from the street.
The other striking element of the building is its black facades. The architects' choice of zinc was given three explanations:

- compatibility with ventilated facade procedures commonly used in Spain to contribute to thermal comfort,
- compliance with fire safety regulations applying to social housing, stipulating a distance of at least 1.50 metres between windows,
- the design of the façade, punctuated by the zinc modules.

The relief effect created by these modules makes it possible to interpret the building differently depending on the distance at which it is observed. The massive dark structure that can be seen from afar becomes porous up close, and at the foot of the building its graphic texture becomes apparent. Although the architects wanted to use a dark material, they also wanted shadows to be visible on the building. The Madrid sun is strong enough to make this possible. Varying in colour from black to brown depending on the light, this apartment complex has become an unmissable signal on the road that leads from Madrid to Valencia.

The windows seem to be arranged randomly over the facades. They vary in size, and sometimes protrude from the surface of the wall, forming boxes that overhang the street. But this impression of disorder is just an illusion, the building's openings were meticulously designed.

Special award

Social and emergency housing complex, Paris (France)

Architects: BRENAC and GONZALES ARCHITECTS STUDIO
VMZINC products: Cassettes - QUARTZ-ZINC®

Many-to-one

This apartment building is like an urban collage in a heterogeneous environment, varying materials and programmes.

Versatility and social inclusion are buzz words in the housing sector, in the quest for an antidote to the ghettoised, mono-functional universe of large housing projects. When an apartment building has a mixed programme catering for a varied population, it must favour "co-habitation" and combat the risks of spatial segregation. These two concepts may be more often talked about than put into practice, but in this project designed by the Parisian agency BRENAC ET GONZALES, they are taken to the extreme.

Built on the grounds of an old hospital, the building shares a programme combining social and emergency housing, shops and a day hospital with the building erected on the other side of the plot. Its occupiers and users have serious social problems: domestic violence, homelessness…

The basic volumetric design of the project is a cube from which the architects subtracted different parallelepipeds to obtain the final shape: a pedestal made up of a "mantilla" of prefabricated concrete elements, surmounted by two small towers in zinc and brick. Hanging gardens and footbridges are located on the upper floors, making the building look like a miniature town, an impression that is heightened by the variety of materials used. This heterogeneity was introduced by the client, who wanted the new building to blend in with the renovated hospital. A fine example of 19th century rationalist architecture combining brick, stone and metal on the façade, and zinc on the roof, which is extended into the new building. The variety of materials on the facade does not reflect the different functions of the buildings. The idea was to design an urban collage, without revealing the different categories of residents, using a variety of textures to replace overt signage.

Winner 1

Institute of Ocular Microsurgery, Barcelona (Spain)

Architect: Josep Llinás Carmona
VMZINC products: VMZ Standing seam – QUARTZ-ZINC®

A roof between two worlds

A large part of the Institute of Ocular Microsurgery is located underground on the hill of Collserola. In this building, the roof - the fifth façade in modern architecture – becomes the main facade.

The Ronda de Dalt can be seen simply as Barcelona's version of the circular boulevards that surround all cities. But for architect Josep Llinás, who built the new Institute of Ocular Microsurgery on the edge of this thoroughfare, this upgraded ring road has an entirely different meaning. It marks the border between the city and the countryside.

Interpreting the site in a way that likens the infrastructure to a border was crucial to the design of the building. As the plot allocated to the clinic is situated facing the countryside, Llinás wanted to make it disappear into the surrounding landscape and embedded it into the hillside.
Seen from the Ronda, the Institute is more reminiscent of some Andalucian cave architecture than the buildings with repetitive layouts that have too often been the lot of hospital architecture. The institute has no facade, or rather has a porous facade, an intermediary space occupied by the access ramps that connect the different levels of land. The external roofs protect the glazed facade from the assaults of the sun. All spaces accessible to the public have a view of the city. The centre of Barcelona appears in the distance, through a series of huge sculptural white pillars that resemble the columns of gypsum quarries. Located in this space, at the lower end of the hill, a dark pond reflects the roofs of the building, introducing a vertical dimension into this horizontal space.

Eye medicine must be practised in low luminosity, and the majority of the clinic is located underground. It vanishes below the immense roof, made of folds and a mixture of gentle, abrupt, long and short slopes, like an origami of zinc transformed by the double requirement of the slope and the organisation of medical circuits. Seen from the heights of Collserola, this "5th façade" of modern architecture is both a sculpture and a geological event. Seen from the inside of the building, it appears and disappears, lets the light in through numerous apertures, creating a feast – appropriately - for the eyes!

Winner 2

National Museum of Submarine Archaeology, Cartagena (Spain)

Architects: Estudio Vázquez Consuegra
VMZINC products: VMZ Flat lock panel – Natural Zinc

Bordering on…

Both a museum and a public building, the submarine archaeology centre in Cartagena exhibits its collections in a large excavation lit by two skylight-buildings.

Situated in the south of Spain, Cartagena is an ancient European city that has perhaps yet to attain the level of recognition it truly deserves. Facing the Mediterranean, Qart Hadasht, the new city, was founded circa 227 B.C. Today it is a Spanish Navy harbour, and is home to the national museum of submarine archaeology.

Construction of the building – approved in 1996 but not completed until 2008 – is an example of the highly contemporary logic underlying the renovation of urban waterfronts - be they fluvial or maritime. Designed by Seville agency VASQUEZ-CONSUEGRA, the museum was built on former wasteland by the harbour. As both a museum and a public area, this hybrid building can be recognised from the street by two protrusions. One is rectilinear and opaque, the other is broken and opened with large windows – forming a space that passers-by can walk through without stopping. These two separate elements are reunited underfoot, in an immense underground floor situated at the same level as the sea, sheltering the 700 pieces of the museum's collection. Although there is an opening facing the Mediterranean, the main light is provided by the two protuberances seen from the street. These act as two large skylights to a basement that is the main floor. Like the tips of an iceberg, they reflect the topography of the site: the parallelepiped is resonant of urban order, whereas the block broken at multiple points recalls the strongholds that used to defend towns against dangers arriving from the sea, be they human or natural (ocean swell).
This stronghold is abundantly glazed on its protected side and closed on the sea-facing side. One window in the lower part of the building provides a view of the street, and the southern light reflected by the water is softened by a sun-screen that is reminiscent of the grill panels in a belfry. As with the louver panels of a belfry, these sloped strips are covered in metal, but in this case not with lead but with zinc, which was used to deflect the light. Combined with the stone, it resembles the mask of a watchman protecting the collections of the museum.

Winner

Office and kitchen adjoining the university, Cartagena (Spain)

Architects: José Manuel Chacón Bulnes
VMZINC products: Folded and perforated sheet – QUARTZ-ZINC®

The old and the new

To preserve the views from a historic building, architect José Manuel CHACÓN BULNES covered the glass walls of an office building with a skin of perforated zinc.

The new offices of the Polytechnic University of Cartagena are located in a building whose history is inseparable from that of the *ANTIGUO PENAL DE PRESIDARIOS Y ESCLAVOS*. The building is over two hundred years old. It is austere and powerful and its stone walls tower over an impressive courtyard that resembles an enclosed, highly mineral square. Built in 1776 between the harbour and the arsenal, the old prison played several roles and for a long time was home to the CIM (*Cuartel de Instrucción de Marineria*), the training centre for Spanish navy officers.

The start of the school year in September 2009 was the first time that university students replaced navy officers in the large rectangular courtyard, which José Manuel CHACÓN BULNES covered with a net of textile to provide some welcome shade in this severe space. The conversion of the military training school into a university building involved two radically opposed types of project:

- the renovation of a historic building
- the creation of a new building to house the offices and other work spaces for which the existing building lacked space.

The old building was restored: CHACÓN BULNES gave it back its double-sloped roofs, which had been removed by the army in the 1930s. A zinc roof, which is visible from the hills around the harbour, now forms a frame for the rectangular courtyard. Zinc is also used in the extension to the university.

The new building did not appeal to everyone: the extension was accused of blocking the view of the seafront, and of disfiguring a major element of Cartagena's architectural heritage. All these debates were refuted by the architect: the extension was built on the shorter side of the historic building, and has the same dimensions as the latter. Replacing the old dining halls that adjoined the existing facade, the new building is a little detached from the monument. Its glass façade, which is covered with a layer of perforated zinc, allows passers-by to see through to the stone walls inside. Made out of a series of folds, this second skin of zinc also acts as a sun-screen, keeping heat levels to a minimum in the offices hidden behind this metal lattice.

Environment

Cicé-Blossac Domain Resort and Spa, Bruz (France)

Architects: Atelier LOYER & BROSSET Architects
VMZINC products: VMZ Standing seam – QUARTZ-ZINC®

On stilts

The main reason these holiday apartments are perched on a forest of poles is to protect them from potential flooding. This system sums up the spirit of architects LOYER AND BROSSET'S work in Cicé: turning environmental constraints into an architectural advantage.

The Cicé park looks as though it has always been a natural site. But appearances can be deceptive. Prior to becoming the location for a golf course and apartment hotel, it was a gravel pit that provided the city of Rennes with building materials. The former excavations were filled with water to form the park's ponds. In this place that is mid-way between industry and nature, architect LOYER sought to subject his architecture to the environment. This can be seen in the attention given to the eco-design of all aspects of the project.

This preoccupation with eco-design is immediately visible in the layout of the buildings, which nestle amidst forty year-old trees that had gradually taken possession of the land. It is also reflected in the shape of the buildings and their intentionally traditional aspect: modern architecture is becoming outdated, says LOYER, whereas more classical designs seem timeless.

The materials used (concrete, wood cladding and zinc) were chosen because they require little or no maintenance. Rather than choosing slate, a regional material, the architects chose zinc, because it can be used in shallow pitch roofs and can be recycled, in the event of the complex being destroyed. In contrast, the piles upon which the apartments are perched are less traditional. This lakeside architecture was no arbitrary choice: the park is located on a flood plain, and although the 2004 development plan still authorised building there, the architect set himself a certain number of rules enabling the buildings to be adapted to this constraint. The buildings must not obstruct water drainage, must ensure the safety of people and goods, respect fauna and flora, and must create a link between the architecture and the landscape. This last objective, although difficult to assess, seems to have been reached: the vertical lines of the piles become blurred when the water level rises by a metre: visitors glide above the site, keeping dry feet on slender footbridges that disappear into the trees.

Daring

Apartment building, Bradford (UK)

Architects: KRAUS - SCHÖNBERG,
VMZINC product: VMZ Standing seam – ANTHRA-ZINC®

Between past and present

An old warehouse converted into apartments in a district full of protected 19th century buildings is crowned with a contemporary roof extension. An anthracite zinc roof replaces the slates traditionally used in the area and blends with the complex lines of the new roofing.

Roof extensions usually create two problems for architects: the first is technical in nature as the extension must be compatible with the existing structure; the second is a question of aesthetics.

Whether one chooses contrast or integration, the "graft" must be accepted by the pre-existing building to produce the final result: a single building. These problems sometimes arise in the specific context of a protected district, as in Bradford, in Yorkshire.

Hanover House is located in the "Little Germany" area of Bradford, a warehouse district built in the 19th by merchants, most of whom were German. Considered a major element of the local urban heritage, the city authorities intend to protect and restore the area. A neighbourhood full of Victorian buildings, which owes its remarkable homogeneity not to its architecture but to the sandstone material used for all the facades in the district. It is only fitting then that the Hamburg-based KRAUS SCHÖNBERG agency, which has an office in London, should have been entrusted with the conversion of Hanover House into a complex of eleven apartments. The most beautiful apartments of the operation are positioned at the summit of the building, beneath a new roof that now crowns the attics of this classified old warehouse. The roof extension rests mainly on extended supports positioned at the centre of the building. To keep the load weighing on the facade to a minimum, the architects designed the roof like a large self-supporting, monolithic structure in laminated wood. The folds accentuate the rigidity of the material and produce an effect that is both picturesque and modern, in perfect harmony with the diversity of roofs in "Little Germany". Slate, which is the main roofing material in the area, was not suitable for this complex roof comprising multiple valleys and numerous faces. The architects substituted preweathered black zinc, which had a greater capacity to merge with the curves of the roof and to blend in with the range of blue-black colours in the surrounding environment.

Tradition

Individual house, Tilburg (Netherlands)

Architects: Lode Havermans Architecten
VMZINC product: VMZ Standing seam – QUARTZ-ZINC®

Deceptive simplicity

Two icon-houses complete a housing complex for disabled people built around a restored farmhouse.

In appearance, nothing could be more ordinary than the housing complex designed in Tilburg by the architects at the LHA agency. Made up of houses with two slopes, it seems far removed from the innovative, ultra-contemporary shapes of Dutch housing architecture.

The architects' foremost priority here was to be attuned to the context. The site was occupied by a farm that the owner wanted to convert into housing for people with handicaps. It was possible to accommodate part of the eleven apartments in the existing building. The rest were spread out in two independent extensions that have the common, ordinary appearance of suburban houses. In actual fact, this style of house with two slopes is far from being outdated. Abandoning cubes, numerous contemporary architects in Holland and elsewhere are seeking to rediscover what they have called the "iconic house".
The sophistication of details compensates for the formal naivety. The walls and roofs form a single envelope, volumetric complexities are banished, rigorous openings leave room for the surfaces to express themselves. Such is the design strategy for this housing icon, followed to the letter by the LHA architects. The horizontal line of the gutters disappears into the roof. This streamlined system eliminates gutters and box gutters and lets cladding take the limelight: wood for the facades and zinc for the roofs. Other details such as the quirky juxtaposition of side windows with the gables and the elegant woodwork on the dormer windows belie the sophistication of the design, demonstrating that simple design is not incompatible with refined finishing details...

Technical performance

Office building, Hoboken (Belgium)

Architects: CONIX ARCHITECTS
VMZINC product: VMZ Standing seam – ANTHRA-ZINC®

Offices in a metal strip

In Hoboken, expressionism takes over from the typical functionalist style of industrial architecture. Slotted into the curves of a strip of zinc, an office building embodies the renewal of an industrial site.

There can be no doubt about the function of the extension designed by the CONIX ARCHITECTS agency for the UMICORE offices in Antwerp. Built on a site that uses metal as its material and trades in metal transformation, the new building looks like a giant metal strip surging out of a rolling mill. Its expressionist shape is far more than just an image juxtaposed onto a facade.

The shape of the strip designs a profile inhabited by the administrative departments of the company. The light travels across the open spaces to reveal the gable walls, curving around and straightening up again to the rhythm of the curves in the immense strip of anthracite zinc.

The new building is part of the broader re-structuring plan of an industrial site in the suburbs of Antwerp, in Belgium. CONIX ARCHITECTS says the place is like a miniature town, a building estate dedicated to production and which needed to regain cohesion. Apart from the buildings, the agency redesigned traffic and access to the plant, renovated certain facades, designed the signage and created green spaces, etc.

A symbol of the rebirth of the site, the strip also expresses the flexibility of zinc and the fact that it is recyclable. A strong signal displaying the identity of the group with a full size illustration of “closing the loop”.

SPECIAL TROPHY FOR THE JURY'S AWARD

Individual house, Los Angeles (USA)

Architect: Andrew LIANG
VMZINC product: VMZ Interlocking panel – ANTHRA-ZINC®

Dark light

Built for the owner of an art gallery, this elegant house can be distinguished by its dark walls, made up of small modules of anthracite zinc, with mouldings providing relief to the facade.

One would certainly need to have more than one's fair share of daring to build a black cube right in the middle of a suburban residential area dominated by houses with orange tile roofs and brightly painted walls.

The area in which Mush House erupts is a suburb of Los Angeles that was built up at the end of the Second World War. One of those typical suburbs that can be seen on the outskirts of all big cities. But it was perhaps an attraction to avant-garde aesthetics rather than a taste for anti-conformism that made the clients ask the architect Andrew LIANG to design such an atypical house, which Pierre SOULAGES himself, the painter who invented dark light, would not renounce.

Two parallelepipeds jut up from the parcel: the first is devoted to the house itself and the second houses a garage and a studio apartment occupied by the mother of one of the owners. It could be converted into an office in years to come. The two cubes both have a sophisticated envelope that is reminiscent of furniture rather than real estate. Geometric wooden plans and glazed volumes framed in wood perforate this block that seems to be cut out of a dark, dense mass of material.

This impression of monolithic is created by the anthracite black zinc cladding on the facade. The material was transformed into small elements that were folded and hollowed out and were installed in strips of varying sizes on the entire facade. These mouldings, which provide subtle relief, can only be seen clearly close up to the building, where they reveal themselves under the generous light of the Californian sun.