Coating Façade

Aztec Serpent

La Cité des Affaires

Location: Paris, France
Designer: Marie-Aurelie Vareil
Client: Jardine-Fugro
Photographer: Philippe Dufrêne
Material: Aluminum Alloy, Thermal Insulating Material, Steel Lacquered Shear
Project Brief

This office building (1,500 employees) groups various public services, including the head office of ‘Saint-Etienne Métropole’, a business canteen and 400 parking places. The project is like a large ‘Aztec serpent’ rising on the lot. Its body has three identical cubic faces, and an underside that is different, a skin of silvery transparent scales and a bright yellow ‘throat’, shiny and opaque.
Skin Analysis

The facade’s design is the answer to the architectural, climatic, geographic and economic context, with the purpose to lead to high thermal performances. The facade’s principle is based on the complementarity of a glass skin and a mineral skin. Each skin performs from an energetic and thermal viewpoints. This dual (material) of surfaces obeys a simple logic shared throughout, which aims at expressing clarity in bolds. Depending on those movements, the yellow unclad is either a floating canopy or an interior vertical wall, accompanying internal pedestrian movements with its rich luminous presence.