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Sumit Singhal

Sumit Singhal loves modern architecture. He comes from a family of builders who have built more than 20 projects in the last ten years near Delhi in India. He has recently started writing about the architectural projects that catch his imagination.

Lille Museum of Modern, Contemporary and Outside Art in Villeneuve d'Ascq, France by Manuelle Gautrand Architecture

January 17th, 2012 by Sumit Singhal

1

Article source: [Manuelle Gautrand Architecture](#)

The project concerns the refurbishment and the extension of the Lille Modern Art Museum in a magnificent park at Villeneuve d'Ascq. The existing building, designed by Roland Simounet in 1983, is already on the Historic monuments list. The project aims at building up the museum as a continuous and fluid entity, this by adding new galleries dedicated to a collection of Art Brut works, from a travelling movement that extrapolates existing spaces. A complete refurbishment of the existing building was next required, some parts were very worn.



Exterior View (Images Courtesy Max Lerouge – LMCU)

- **Architect:** [Manuelle Gautrand Architecture](#)
- **Name of Project:** Lille Museum of Modern, Contemporary and Outside Art
- **Location:** Allée du Musée, Villeneuve d'Ascq, France
- **Type:** Refurbishment and extension of the existing modern Art Museum (Roland Simounet, architect)
- **Representative Architect:** Manuelle Gautrand
- **Photos Credit:** © Max Lerouge – LMCU, Philippe Ruault and © Vincent Fillon

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Exterior View (Images Courtesy Max Lerouge – LMCU)

- **Project manager Architect, joint Architect in Works phase:** Yves Tougard
- **Client:** Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine
- **Global cost:** Around 30 millions euros inclusive of tax
- **Dates:**
 - **Design contest:** 2002
 - **Studies:** 2003-2005
 - **Works:** 2006-2009
 - **Museum opening:** 09/2010



Exterior View (Images Courtesy Max Lerouge – LMCU)

In spite of the heritage monument status of Simounet's construction, rather than set up at a distance, we immediately opted to seek contact by which the extension would embrace the existing buildings in a supporting movement. I tried to take my cue from Roland Simounet's architecture, 'to learn to understand', so as to be able to develop a project that does not mark aloofness, an attitude that might have been seen as indifference.

The architecture of the extension wraps around the north and east sides of the existing arrangement in a fan-splay of long, fluid and organic volumes. On one side, the fan ribs stretch in close folds to shelter a café-restaurant that opens to the central patio; on the other, the ribs are more widely spaced to form the five galleries for the Art brut collection.

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Exterior View (Images Courtesy Max Lerouge – LMCU)

The Art brut galleries maintain a strong link with the surrounding scenery, but they are also purpose-designed to suit the works that they house: a typical pieces, powerful works that you can't just glance at in passing. The folds in these galleries make the space less rigid and more organic, so that visitors discover art works in a gradual movement. The architecture is partly introverted, to protect art works that are often fragile and that demand toned down half-light.

At the extremity of the folds – meaning the galleries – a large bay opens magnificent views onto the surrounding parkland, adding breathing space to the visit itinerary. These views make up for the half-light in the galleries: the openwork screens in front of the bays mediate with strong light and parkland scenery, a feature that recalls Simounet's generous arrangements in the galleries that he designed. Envelopes are sober: smooth untreated concrete, with mouldings and openwork screens to protect the bays from too much daylight. The surface concrete has a slight colour tint that varies according to intensity of light.



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- » Checkpoint (1)
- » Church (28)
- » City (15)
- » City Center (21)
- » Civic Center (7)
- » Clinic (9)
- » Club House (10)
- » Commercial Building (89)
- » Community Centre (33)
- » Competitions (14)
- » Concert hall (12)
- » Control Centre (4)
- » Convention Center (1)
- » Corporate Center (3)
- » Cottage (11)
- » Courthouse (2)
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- » Crematorium (2)
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- » Cruise Terminal & Port Service Center (6)
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- » Digital Project (3)
- » Disaster Prevention Station (2)
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- » Educational Institute (32)
- » Elementary School (1)
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- » Energy plant (14)
- » Entance (1)
- » Entertainment Centre (10)
- » Exhibition Center (28)
- » Extension (1)
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- » Featured Architects (98)
 - » Frank Gehry (4)
 - » Henning Larsen (31)
 - » Peter Zumthor (4)
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- » Fryrender (1)
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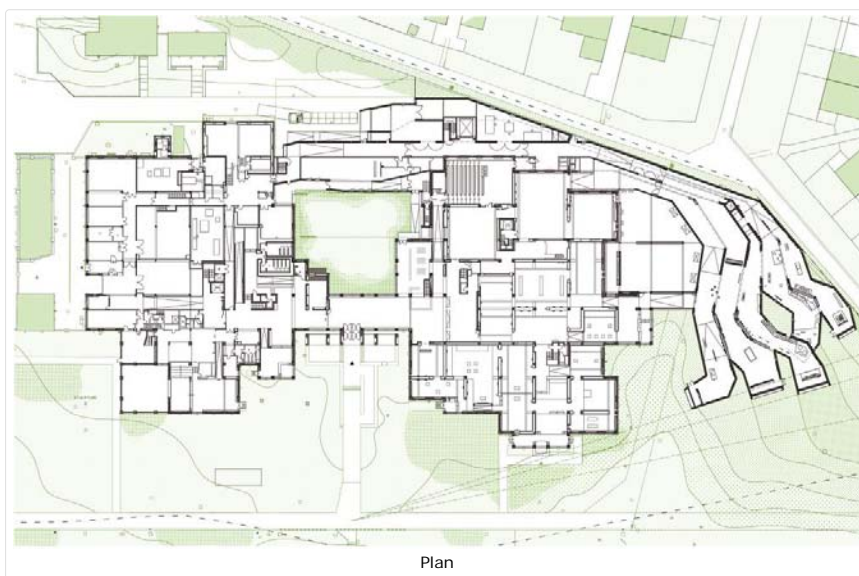


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- » [Medical production unit](#) (1)
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- » [Public Art](#) (12)
- » [Public Housing](#) (1)
- » [Public Landscapes](#) (62)
- » [Railway Station](#) (7)
- » [Recreational facility](#) (3)
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- » [Residential](#) (307)
- » [Resort](#) (18)
- » [Resource Center](#) (2)
- » [Rest Stop](#) (1)
- » [Restaurant](#) (58)
- » [Restoration](#) (7)
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- » [Room](#) (3)
- » [S/W](#) (901)
 - » [Adobe](#) (188)
 - » [Adobe CS](#) (19)
 - » [Illustrator](#) (49)
 - » [InDesign](#) (22)
 - » [Photoshop](#) (152)
 - » [AlphaCAM](#) (1)
 - » [Arc+](#) (1)
 - » [Artlantis](#) (18)
 - » [Autodesk](#) (601)
 - » [3ds Max](#) (172)
 - » [Architectural Desktop](#) (1)
 - » [Autocad](#) (469)
 - » [Autodesk Inventor](#) (2)
 - » [Ecotect](#) (7)
 - » [Maya](#) (39)
 - » [Navisworks](#) (7)
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 - » [FormZ](#) (19)
- » [Bentley](#) (29)
 - » [Generative Components](#) (4)
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 - » [SketchUp](#) (132)
- » [Graphisoft](#) (80)
 - » [ArchiCAD](#) (80)
- » [JWWCAD](#) (2)
- » [MAXON](#) (22)
 - » [Cinema 4D](#) (22)
- » [Maxwell](#) (15)
- » [McNeel](#) (181)
 - » [Rhino](#) (181)
- » [Mental Ray](#) (1)
- » [Nemetschek](#) (135)
 - » [AllPlan](#) (8)
 - » [Vectorworks](#) (127)
- » [Podium](#) (3)
- » [T-Splines](#) (3)
- » [TEKLA](#) (1)
- » [TopSolid](#) (1)
- » [ZWCAD](#) (1)
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- » [Salon](#) (4)
- » [Sanctuary](#) (1)
- » [School](#) (93)
- » [Science Club](#) (2)
- » [Science Park](#) (4)
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- » [Shelter](#) (10)
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- » [Shopping Mall](#) (6)
- » [Showroom](#) (47)
- » [Skate Park](#) (1)
- » [Ski Jump Tower](#) (1)
- » [Skyscrapers](#) (6)
- » [Society](#) (2)
- » [Social Centre](#) (8)
- » [Social welfare](#) (2)
- » [Solar Panel Factory](#) (2)
- » [Spa Centre](#) (7)
- » [Spaceport](#) (2)
- » [Sports Complex](#) (31)
- » [Sports Hall](#) (14)
- » [Stadium](#) (22)
- » [Staircase](#) (1)
- » [Station](#) (6)
- » [Stock Exchange](#) (2)
- » [Stores](#) (20)
- » [Student Center](#) (4)
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- » [Uncategorized](#) (121)
- » [University Building](#) (43)
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- » [Villa](#) (42)
- » [Village](#) (2)
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