

# PARIS' CBD LA DÉFENSE, JARDINS DE L'ARCHE

AWP





# JARDINS DE L'ARCHE

PARIS BUSINESS DISTRICT, LA DÉFENSE

PROJECT  
Jardins de l'Arche

PROJECT TYPE  
Public realm and follies

LOCATION  
La Défense, Paris, France

CLIENT  
EPADESA

ARCHITECTS  
AWP  
Marc Armengaud, Matthias Armengaud, Alessandra Cianchetta (Partners)  
with Juan-Manuel Garrido, Miguel La Parra Knapman, Noel Manzano,  
Gemma Guinovart, Irene Bargués (Project team)

ENGINEERS  
+ GINGER (Engineering, QS)  
+ 8'18" (Lightning)  
+ AEU (Environmental)

NET FLOOR AREA  
71 044 m<sup>2</sup>

COMPETITION  
2011 / PRO studies ongoing

DELIVERY  
2014

IMAGES  
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## ABOUT

AWP, Office for Territorial Reconfiguration (Marc Armengaud, Matthias Armengaud, Alessandra Cianchetta), was named general contractor for the landscaping of the public spaces and follies situated at the foot of the Grande Arche in July 2011. The site, located near the future Arena 92 in the Jardins de l'Arche neighborhood, serves as a space for genuine interchange between La Défense and Seine-Arche. The urban planners and designers at AWP are also responsible for a guide plan for Defacto that will enhance the urban space of La Défense's business district.

The project site is spatially very complex. The A14 route, metro line 1 and the RER A run underground, while above ground are the existing Jardins de l'Arche landscape project and Jetty. The aim is for the scheme to support the upcoming urban planning changes to the neighborhood: Terrasses de Nanterre, the Arena 92 stadium, residences and hotels.

Each element of the Jardins de l'Arche project, which covers approximately 70,000 m<sup>2</sup> and includes a ramp nearly 750 m long, contributes to an improved urban experience. The continuous and fluid ramp allows for a more fluid space, while the extensive garden encourages a re-thinking of the existing landscape as a "sanctuary", a place that should be protected. New follies, multi-purpose spaces and small-scale buildings increase and "activate" the possible uses of the site. The principal objective is to create an architectural, urban and landscaping continuity between the newly developed and existing urban spaces.

Central to the project are the following goals: recreate an exceptional urban offering/provision on a neglected site between the Terrasses of Seine-Arche and La Défense; create an attractive and lively space on the

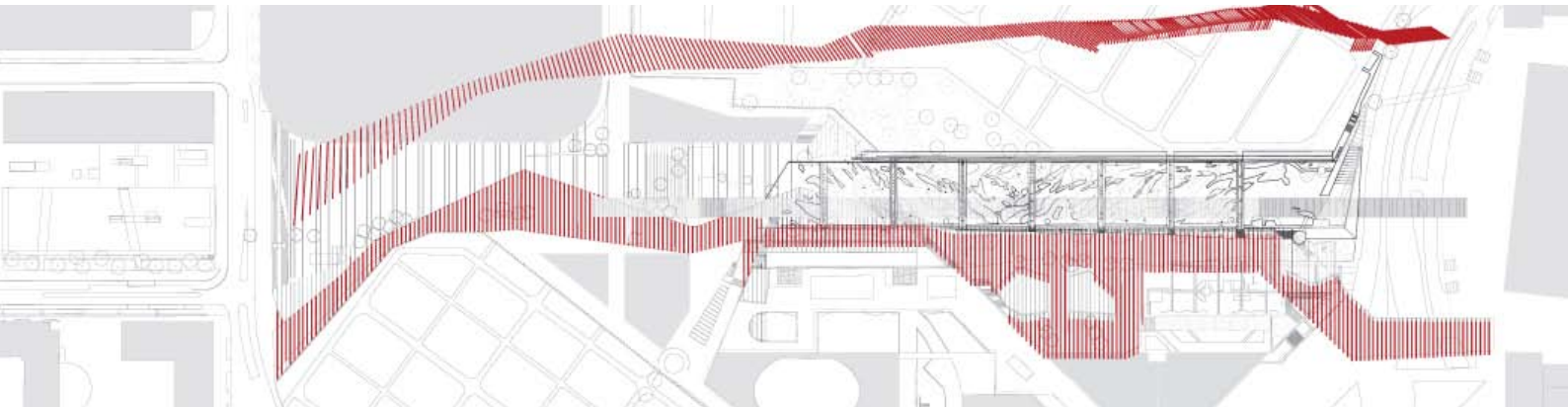
scale of the Parisian metropolis; generate an urban culture and communication between La Défense and the surrounding neighborhoods; reinforce the ties between this area and the heart of the city, by improving circulation and fluidity; reveal and give new value to the inherent architecture within a harmonious urban landscape.

This is one of Le Grand Paris's major public urban spaces. The major priority is that the site creates a link between two sections of the Seine, asserting its presence at their meeting point. This linking supercedes any private or local issues about the space and perhaps even influences the way these issues are addressed. We've approached the site by feeling it out in its nocturnal aspect, searching for a new intensity of landscape that can become a key image for Le Grand Paris.

We are approaching the project as one might approach a "place de l'Opéra": Arena 92 is a new type of concert hall. The site is, however, full of constraints, because of its exiguity, the presence almost on site of two signature, 'heritage' works (Gilles Clément, Paul Chemetoff & Marc Mimram), and because of the huge expected visitor numbers. A part of the design then may be "virtual," a luminous, sensitive, interactive, temporary presence...

Our vision at this stage is to develop spatial continuity with as few individual elements as possible, to bring the numerous small urban projects into an integrated, harmonious and stimulating whole (3): a large, contemporary plaza; flux zones that highlight the Jetty and the Jardin de l'Arche; and a common vocabulary across the project, such as spatial and temporal modularity in kiosks and follies, that makes the area accessible to all.

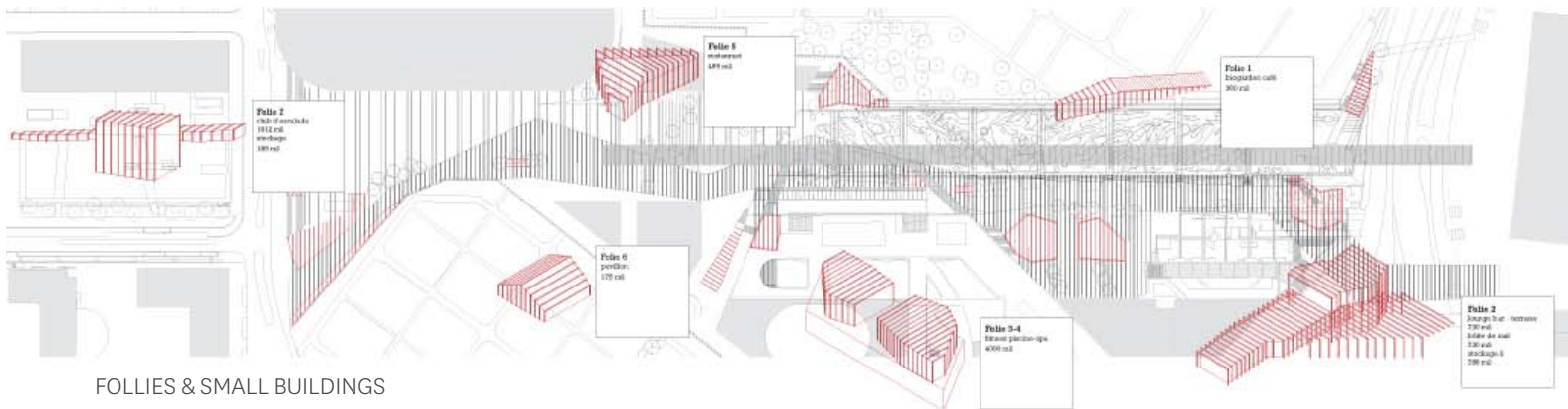




CONTINUOUS RAMP



THE GILLES CLEMENT'S GARDEN



FOLLIES & SMALL BUILDINGS



BACKGROUND INFORMATION /The Jardins de l'Arche Neighborhood

As a veritable link between La Défense and Seine-Arche, the Jardins de l'Arche are situated at the point where multiple neighborhoods meet: La Défense to the east, Les Groues and the Faubourg de l'Arche to the north, the park André Malraux to the south and, to the west, the Terrasses that extend Paris's historic axis to the Seine. On a site that covers eight hectares, this new neighborhood's development benefits from the construction of Arena 92, a multipurpose stadium, so as to become a center of urban life that combines the hospitality industry, residences and ground floor spaces intended for leisure activities and urban services.

The Établissement public d'aménagement de La Défense Seine Arche (EPADESA, Public Establishment in Charge of the Development of La Défense Seine Arche) heads the studies and implementation of one

of the major urban projects of the Parisian West. The 564 hectare perimeter of the operation d'intérêt national (OIN, national interest operation) includes the cities of Courbevoie, Garenne-Colombes, Nanterre and Puteaux. The presence of the premier European business district, also the object of a plan de renouveau and of the Seine Arche recomposition and development project, accounts for this national interest. The latter project, which is structured around 20 terraces that will extend the historic axis, is already under way. This area is intended to host future transportation infrastructures: Grand Paris Express, LGV train station for the Normandy lines and the continuation of Eole to the west.

Sections of the preceding text were translated and edited from EPADESA's June 30, 2011 press release « Lancement des opérations sur le secteur des Jardins de l'Arche à Nanterre. » ([http://www.ladefense-seine-arche.fr/fileadmin/site\\_intranet/user\\_upload/7.PRESSE/2011-06-27\\_jardins-arche\\_CP\\_AE.pdf](http://www.ladefense-seine-arche.fr/fileadmin/site_intranet/user_upload/7.PRESSE/2011-06-27_jardins-arche_CP_AE.pdf))





Photo credit : Gregori Civera

office for territorial reconfiguration

#### **PRACTICE PROFILE**

AWP (Marc Armengaud, Matthias Armengaud, Alessandra Cianchetta)

AWP is an award winning interdisciplinary office for territorial reconfiguration and design. It is based in Paris and Basel (AWP-HHF) and develops projects internationally working on a wide variety of programmes : architecture, landscape design, strategic planning, urbanism ranging from major large scale public projects to temporary installations both in France and internationally. The practice was awarded the French Ministry of Culture's Prize for Best Young Architects in 2006, and the French Ministry of Transport, Housing and Ecology's PJU urban planning award 2010.

AWP is currently working on the strategic masterplan plan for the development of urban space in the La Défense business district, and designing an iconic 800 m long public space just below the Grande Arche de la Défense, as well as a series of follies and buildings (culture & leisure). Relevant projects include: the Lantern pavilion in Sandnes, Norway, nominated for the Mies van der Rohe Award in 2009; the masterplanning of public spaces and mobility for the 230ha Praille-Acacias-Vernets area, Geneva; the construction of the Evry wastewater treatment plant, France; the sculpture park for the LAM - Museum of Modern, Contemporary and Outsider Art of Lille Metropole, France; the redesign of the public realm for Capodichino airport and the Ferro-Gomma Hub multimodal park in Naples, Italy (with RSH-P) and a number of international high profile competitions. Our portfolio of clients includes several European cities, metropolitan and regeneration authorities, cultural institutions and developers.

AWP also curates and designs exhibitions for major cultural institutions and regularly writes books and essays. The three partners have exhibited their work, taught and lectured at architectural venues in Paris, London, Milan, Rome, Barcelona, Beijing, Toronto, Belgrade, Tianjin, Winnipeg, Geneva, Copenhagen, Oslo, Trondheim, Tirana, Lausanne, Montréal, New York and many other places.

#### **FIELDS OF ACTIVITY**

Architecture / Master Planning / Design / Landscape Architecture / Public Space / Urban research & Forecasting

[www.awp.fr](http://www.awp.fr)

## PARTNERS PROFILE

**ALESSANDRA CIANCHETTA** Alessandra is a partner at AWP and the Director of AWP-UK. Her portfolio of award-winning designs ranges from major large scale public projects to temporary installations mostly focusing on public realm and cultural provision. Among her latest ongoing projects are the design of a 800 m long iconic public space and follies project for the Jardins de l'Arche, below the Grande Arche de la Défense and around the new Arena 92, the masterplan for the development of all urban spaces in the La Défense CBD, Paris and a series of small cultural & leisure buildings and follies in a Park in Poissy (Fr). Other relevant projects include The Lantern pavilion in Sandnes, No, nominated for the Mies van der Rohe Award in 2009, the sculpture park for the LAM, Museum of Modern, Contemporary and Outsider Art of Lille Métropole, Fr, the public realm redesign of Capodichino airport, the Ferro-Gomma Hub multimodal park, both in Naples, It (with Rogers Stirk Harbour & partners) and a public square for the high speed station in Florence (with Foster & partners). She has also curated and designed exhibitions for major cultural institutions (such as the GAMC, City of Architecture and Heritage and Pavillon de l'Arsenal, Paris, Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Rome, COAC, Barcelona, among others) written books and essays (Park Guell, Gustavo Gili, 2002, Alvaro Siza\_: Private Houses 1954\_–\_2004, Skira 2004 and Nightscapes, nocturnal landscapes, Gustavo Gili, 2009) and lectured and exhibited her work worldwide. Invited Professor at Columbia University GSAPP The Shape of Two Cities / New York-Paris Special Programme since 2012, Visiting Professor at the Master «Extraordinary Landscapes», Naba, Milan, It, at the Azrieli Visiting Critic at the School of Architecture and Urbanism, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ca, for which she currently directs a theory & design DSA. Alessandra has also been a member of the Newham Design review panel in London since 2007. Awarded the French Ministry of Culture Prize for Best Young Architects in 2006 and the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainability, Transport and Housing PJJ urban planning award 2010, she graduated from the "La Sapienza" Rome, Etsa Madrid and Etsa Barcelona, she later attended advanced studies on criticism and landscape theory at UPC, Barcelona and Ehes, Paris and worked with José Antonio Martínez Lapeña - Elias Torres in Barcelona and with Franco Zagari in Rome, before founding AWP in Paris in 2003.

**MARC ARMENGAUD** Founding member of AWP, Marc is responsible for the research and experimental projects at the office, being in charge of curatorial work for exhibitions, publications, lectures and strategic studies. He has directed various interdisciplinary studies focusing on new forms of public spaces, temporary communities and nighttime mobility for the French Ministry of Culture and Communication and for the City on the Move Institute, PSA foundation. He is currently directing a prospective strategic study about water networks and territorial policies, "le grand Paris de l'eau", for the group Suez Environnement aiming to establish a relation between public spaces and "inhabitable" infrastructures. He is also curator for an exhibition night in themetropolis for Paris' Urban Center, Pavillon de l'Arsenal. Marc regularly writes for the architecture magazine D'Architectures and is the author of several books and essays about architecture and perception issues in urbanism: among others, Nightscapes (GG Barcelona, 2009), L'Estuaire est une region bien intéressante (in Revue 3030, Estuaire Biennale catalogue, 2009), Corps à corps de la perception et du territoire (ENSAPM, 2009), Espaces invisibles (publiques) (Voies Publiques catalogue, Pavillon de l'Arsenal, 2006), Drawing movements in the dark (in : Nat Chard, drawing indeterminate architecture, Springer, 2005). Associate Professor at the Paris Malaquais School of Architecture since 2009, Marc directs project studios and regularly organizes workshops and international seminars. In addition he is often invited to lecture and teach at architecture universities worldwide. Awarded the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainability, Transport and Housing's PJJ Urban Planning award in 2010, Marc studied philosophy at Paris Sorbonne University (DEA) and is working on a PhD in Architecture (University of Paris – Est).

**MATTHIAS ARMENGAUD** Founding member and director of AWP, Matthias is in charge of the practice's architectural, landscape and urban projects both in France and internationally (Scandinavia, Italy, Switzerland, China, etc), focusing on public spaces, cultural facilities, infrastructures and large-scale masterplanning. He is currently working on a several-year mission for Defacto to develop the masterplan for the development of all urban spaces in the La Défense CBD, and another mission for the state of Geneva concerning the masterplanning of all public spaces and mobility for the 230ha Praille-Acacias-Vernets area, in the south of Geneva, as well as for the construction of the Evry wastewater treatment plant and that of cultural facilities in Bois le Roi, France. He collaborates regularly with Dominique Perrault (retail towers, harbours, museum projects) and with ADPI (the architecture department of the Paris Airport company), both in France and internationally. Founder of the "Troll" label and responsible for several strategic studies about nighttime mobility for the City on the Move Institute and the municipalities of Rome, Copenhagen, Malmö, Paris, Brussels, Barcelona, Helsinki, Rome, Toronto and Belgrade, he is also founding director of MTMA, and urban trends forecasting agency, and a consultant for future cities for several institutions. Currently associate professor at ENSA Versailles (Fr) and visiting professor (expert) at Fribourg (Switzerland) Engineering and Architecture school, Matthias has been invited to lecture and chair juries at several architecture universities (the EPFL in Lausanne, 2009, the ENSA Versailles, 2008, the "Extraordinary Landscapes" master's program at Politecnico de Milano, 2006-08, Elisava Barcelona, 2005, Marne-la-Vallée Architecture School, 2003-05, among others). He won first place at the Forum des jeunes architects in 2000; the Tony Garnier urban planning prize organized by the French Academy of Architecture in 2001; the French Ministry of Culture prize for Best Young Architects in 2006, and the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainability, Transport and Housing, PJJ urban planning award in 2010, Matthias is a graduate from the Versailles School of Architecture, and founded AWP in Paris in 2003.

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