

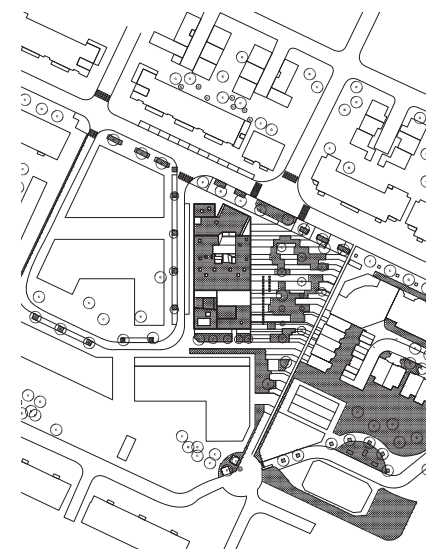
Site plan by Dominique Coulon & Associés
and photographs ©Eugeni Pons



Dominique Coulon & Associés, based in Strasbourg, France, is an internationally acclaimed architectural firm with over 25 years of experience. Led by Dominique Coulon and Steve Letho Duclos, the firm specializes in designing high-quality public facilities, including media libraries, schools, auditoriums, and sports complexes. Their intuitive approach creates contextual projects that blend contrast and complexity, emphasizing spatial quality and natural light. The firm has received numerous awards, including nominations for the Équerre d'Argent and the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture.

<https://coulon-architecte.fr>

Charles Aznavour Conservatory of Music, Drama, and Dance in Montigny-le-Bretonneux



The conservatory building in Montigny-le-Bretonneux sits on a triangular site, offering distant views of Ricardo Bofill's famous Les Arcades du Lac apartment complex. The compact structure turns southward, providing a better view of the street. It separates, showcasing its dance studio, which pivots parallel to the road.

Colliding forms reflect the site's geometry, offering vistas of the town and clear interior views. The exterior features reflective glazing and vertically striped surfaces that capture light. Various textures blur the building's scale, giving it an air of mystery. Its enigmatic outline suggests a cultural edifice.

Spread across four levels, the building houses drama rooms, a large black-box auditorium, music rooms, a recording studio, dance rooms with changing facilities, and underground parking. Spaces are arranged along an uneven axis, providing communal areas with views of the town or main sections. The entrance hall overlooks two tall basement spaces: the cavernous auditorium and a two-story percussion room. Hallways contrast exposed concrete walls with shiny floors and ceilings. Solid timber additions create welcoming communal areas throughout.

The lengthwise cross-section best illustrates the strong connection between spaces. Three large skylights punctuate the distorted ceiling, allowing natural light from all sides. A monumental staircase rises diagonally through the atrium, stretching toward the light and dance rooms. Dichroic films on large glass panes create a kaleidoscope effect, diffusing ever-changing colors that tie the spaces together.