

Press kit

# Place de la République

(2013)



TVK





## The largest pedestrian square in Paris

TVK – Pierre Alain Trévelo and Antoine Viger-Kohler – hand over the redevelopment of the Place de la République, inaugurated by the mayor of Paris on June 16th 2013.

Due to its exceptional size (120 m by nearly 300 m), its symbolic dimension as a representative public statement and its location in the city, the Place de la République occupies a special place in the international hub that is Paris.

The redevelopment of the Place de la République is based on the concept of an open space with multiple urban uses. The elimination of the traffic circle frees the site from the dominating constraint of motor vehicle traffic. The creation of the concourse marks the return of calm in an airy, uncluttered two hectare space. The new square, now skirted by motor traffic, creates a large-scale landscape and becomes an urban resource, available and adaptable for different uses. Clear connections with the large boulevards promote a new balance centred on soft transport for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. The statue of Marianne, the reflective pool, the pavilion and the rows of the trees form a strong axis. This harmony is amplified by the serene balance of the mineral element and a very gentle slope of 1%. All these elements contribute to both the interpretation of unitary materials in a perennial and contemporary manner and multiple explorations (colours, water, lights) creating different urban ambiances.

The Place de la République is now a new centre of attraction, a place for exchanges and meetings. Two terraces incorporated into the continuity of the square encourage people to sit down and relax.

The south-west part of the square houses a 162 m<sup>2</sup> pavilion also designed by TVK, a unique building, glazed throughout to retain a continuous impression of this singular space.

The Place de la République is now the largest pedestrian square in Paris.



LOCATION  
Place de la République,  
Paris

CALENDRIER  
January 2010  
Competition winners  
April 2010 - June 2011  
Studies  
July 2011 - December 2011  
Preliminary works  
January 2012 - Spring 2013  
Works (in phases)  
16 June 2013  
Handover of square  
Mid-July 2013  
Handover of “Fluctuat Nec  
Mergitur” Pavilion (previously  
“Monde & Médias” pavilion)

KEY FIGURES  
*Dimensions of square*  
280×120 m  
*Pedestrian area*  
2 ha  
*Bus, taxi and cycle lane*  
7 m wide, reduced-speed traffic  
*Ratio of pedestrians: traffic*  
*before:* 2/3 traffic,  
1/3 pedestrians  
*after:* 2/3 pedestrian,  
1/3 traffic

SEATING  
• Ground (wide steps  
and base of statue)  
• 24 wooden benches  
and 1 platform  
• “Movable” chairs available

WATER  
• Statue basin (3m wide around  
the base of the statue)  
• 276 m² reflecting pool  
(23×12 m) and sprays

LIGHTING  
• 34 lighting masts, 10 of them  
equipped with “bark signal”  
• 19 historic candelabra, restored

MATERIALS  
3 sizes of concrete slabs on the  
concourse (14 cm thick)  
and on the north and south  
pavements (12 cm thick):  
*Concrete slabs 1*  
Large (192×68 cm) in the centre  
of the concourse  
*Concrete slabs 2*  
Average (95×34 cm) over the rest  
of the concourse  
*Concrete slabs 3*  
Small (48×17 cm) on the  
pavements  
*Parisian asphalt*  
On the west and east pavements  
(continuity)

TREES  
*Plane trees*  
134  
*Honey locust trees*  
18  
*Wild cherry (tree of secularism)*  
1  
*Trees before transformation*  
• 83 on the esplanade  
• 142 around the perimeter  
*Trees in the new square*  
• 97 on the esplanade  
• 154 around the perimeter





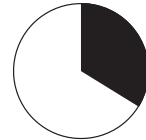
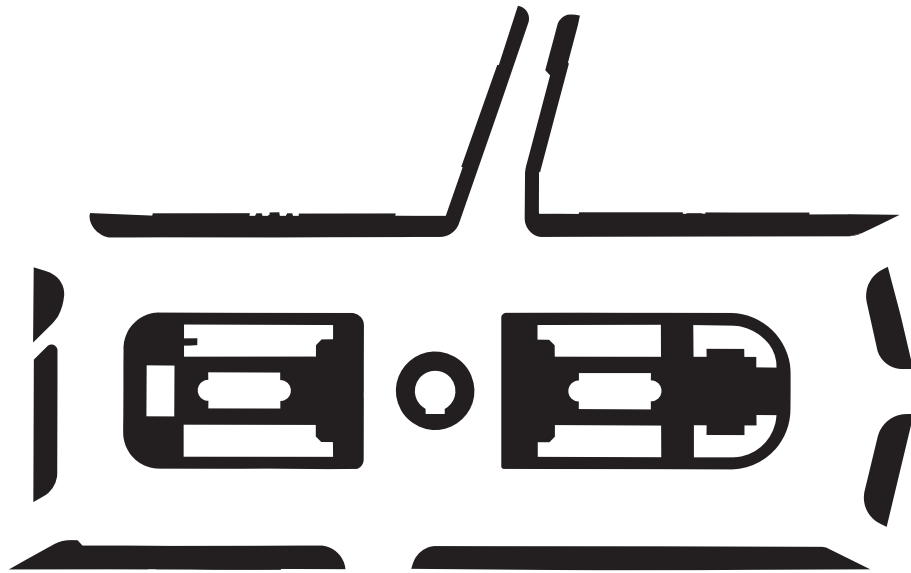




## BEFORE TRANSFORMATION

2/3 traffic

1/3 pedestrian area



PEDESTRIAN AREA  
35% of the total square  
area (12,000 m<sup>2</sup>)

## TODAY

2/3 pedestrian area

1/3 traffic



PEDESTRIAN AREA  
70% of the total square  
area (24,000 m<sup>2</sup>)

## THE ARTICULATION OF PUBLIC AND PEDESTRIAN AREAS

The redevelopment of the Place de la République is based on a decision to create the largest possible public pedestrian area. Paris was in need of an exceptionally large and versatile public place, like an open field in the heart of the city, a feature found in many other large cities. Also, it was essential to move away from the traffic circle model.

### *Functional and environmental dissymetry*

Two-fold dissymetry, both functional and environmental, is used along the long axis of the square to blend it into the general urban setting. Motor traffic has been reorganised. It now runs along the southern edge and two smaller sides of the square only. Now that the traffic runs in both directions and the pavements have been widened, the road is much more similar to the large Parisian boulevards.

### *Unity and balance*

The Place de la République is also open to varied groups participating in a very wide range of activities.

The aim of the project was to cater for these users by changing the balance between the roadway and the concourse. The most important challenge was to reunify and harmonise the attributes of a city with those of a local neighbourhood.

## TRAFFIC FLOWS: GENUINE INTERMODALITY

The atmosphere of the square is highly dependent on the flow of traffic, and particularly public transport. A lane reserved for buses, taxis and cycles runs along the north eastern side of the square, under the trees, connecting with the Rue du Faubourg du Temple. This creates a smooth flow of traffic and at the same time fosters intermodality. Almost all the bus stops are located very close to the main Metro exits and/or cycle/taxi stations. The vast pedestrian area makes it easy to change from one mode of transport to another.

## THE ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH

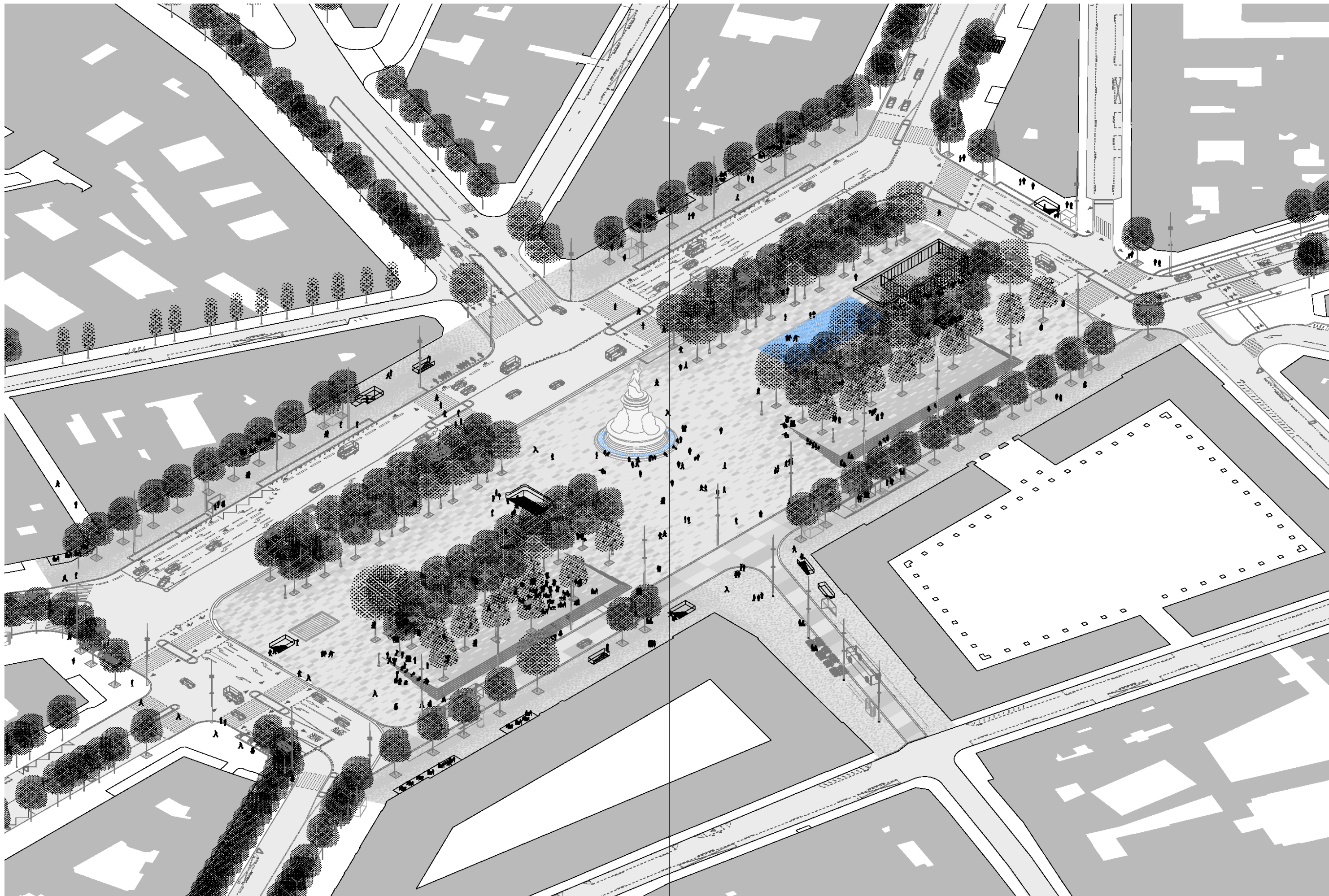
*A comfortable square, conscious of its environment*

From an environmental point of view, traffic has been routed through the shaded area of the square to free up a large pedestrian area in the sunny part. The square is comfortable as a result of a strategy that is at once urban, landscaped and architectural. The process is underpinned by the use of perennial materials and economic techniques.

Simple measures have been implemented to prevent the square becoming a “heat island”:

- *Increasing* planting and creating a unit of vegetation to provide maximum mass effect;
- *Allowing* the sun to penetrate and positioning the pedestrian areas in the sunniest areas;
- *Taking advantage* of the summer breezes, which are cooled by contact with the sheets of water in the centre and west of the esplanade;
- *Blocking* the cold winter winds by thickening the vegetation in the north;
- *Using* the layout and materials to improve comfort and combat the “heat island” effect;
- *Supporting and consolidating* the usage dynamic in the square to suit the prevailing conditions.











## COMPOSITION OF THE AREA AND SURFACE

The surface consists of paving slabs of different colours and sizes. The shady areas of the square are paved mostly in darker colours, while the open areas are generally paler.

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The choice of prefabricated concrete ensures good performance in all weather, offering maximum resistance to the greatest variety of uses. This material also enables the use of monochrome colours, creating continuity with the surrounding surfaces of roads and roofs.

Three types of concrete paving slabs have been used in the square, reflecting its overall layout:

- “large module” prefabricated slabs in the centre of the concourse, to give a wide perspective and cater for large-scale uses;
- “medium module” prefabricated slabs for the rest of the esplanade along the concourse;
- and lastly, “small module” prefabricated slabs (on a more ordinary scale) for the north and south pavements.

The bus lane to the north of the square is made of poured concrete.

### *Levels*

The density of the networks present under the Place de la République mean it also serves as a “roof”: the site is home to five Metro lines, sewers, telecom tunnels, etc.

The levels create a main movement of great simplicity, vital to the spatial comprehension of the square and an understanding of its vastness. The simple 1% incline of the central concourse

reveals two wide terraces at the back of the esplanade, in keeping with the scale of the surrounding area. The terraces continue the concourse but are edged to the north with steps. Between these terraces, the ground drops consistently towards the two large palace buildings and the shared trafficked area (pedestrians, cycles, buses, taxis), providing continuity of traffic flow and excellent accessibility.

### *A large garden, a large concourse*

The square is unified by the single grand compositional movement and the one inorganic surface treatment. This unity helps to indicate three distinct sections: the urban garden of over 2,000 m<sup>2</sup>, planted and organised into several sub-areas; the central concourse of almost 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> and 35 metres wide with the statue de la République as the focal point; the continuity of all the boulevards, with the road system on three of its sides and the widened pavement (13 metres on the longer side to the south west, which is the busiest side).

### *The terraces on the Place de la République*

At the rear end of the esplanade, two flat terraces are each marked by a single step on three of their sides, which conducive to sitting and socialising.

The new tree planting establishes a specific ambiance.

The terraces will be equipped with movable structures expressing day-to-day and local themes, and changing with the seasons (roundabout, toy library etc.).

The playground is now located on the east terrace.

## WATER

Water – in various forms and with a myriad of uses (climatic, social, recreational, aesthetic) – is a key feature of the central esplanade.

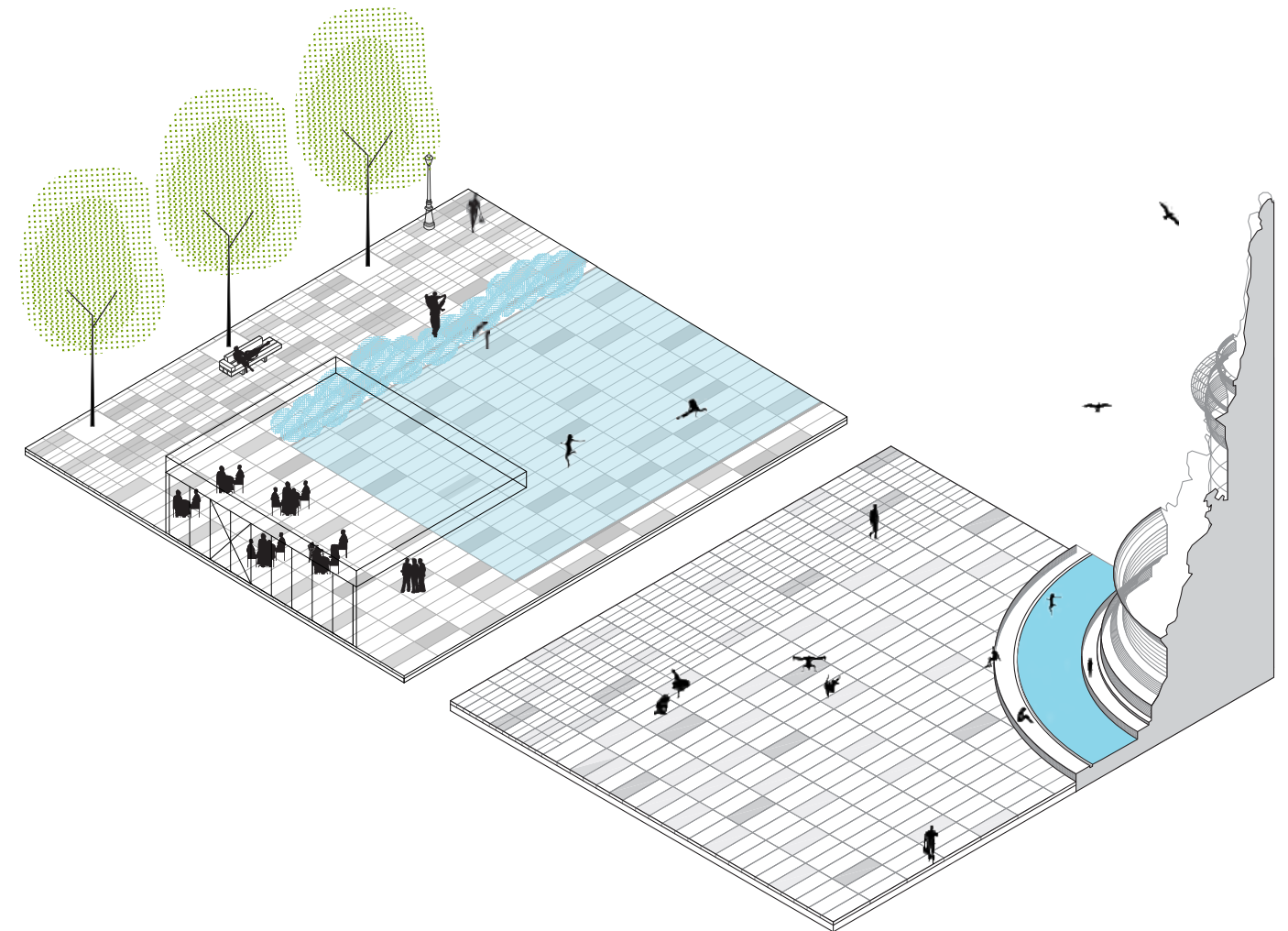
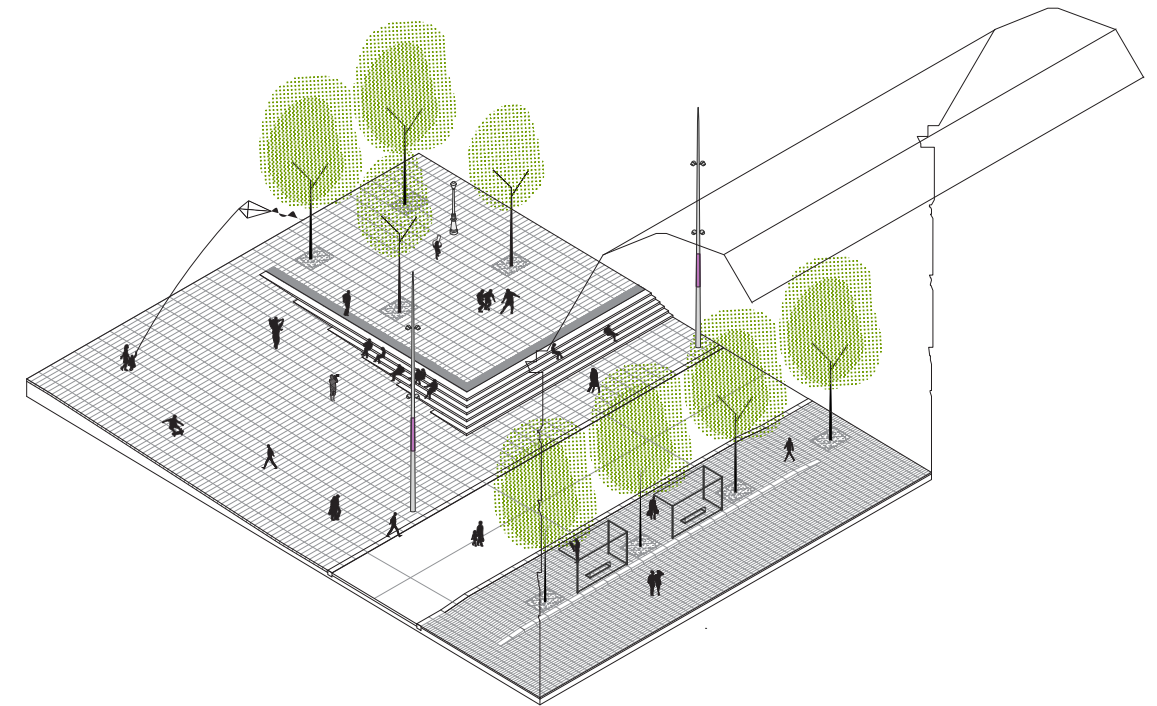
### *The monument basin*

The statue de la République dominates the centre of the new pedestrian esplanade. The new base takes the form of a large circular basin, at the edge of which visitors can sit, walk, play, or examine the bas-reliefs. During the summer months, it is filled with water, adding to the number of uses. The base also houses a new lighting system for the statue. Spotlights, sunk under the sheet of water, project moving reflections over the entire monument.

### *The reflecting pool*

On the west concourse of the esplanade, facing the Fluctuat Nec Mergitur Pavilion, the theme of water is repeated in a minimal, contemporary version. In summer, a fine sheet of water runs down the 1% slope, covering an area of more than 270 m<sup>2</sup> (23 × 12 m). Sprays are connected to this sheet of water.

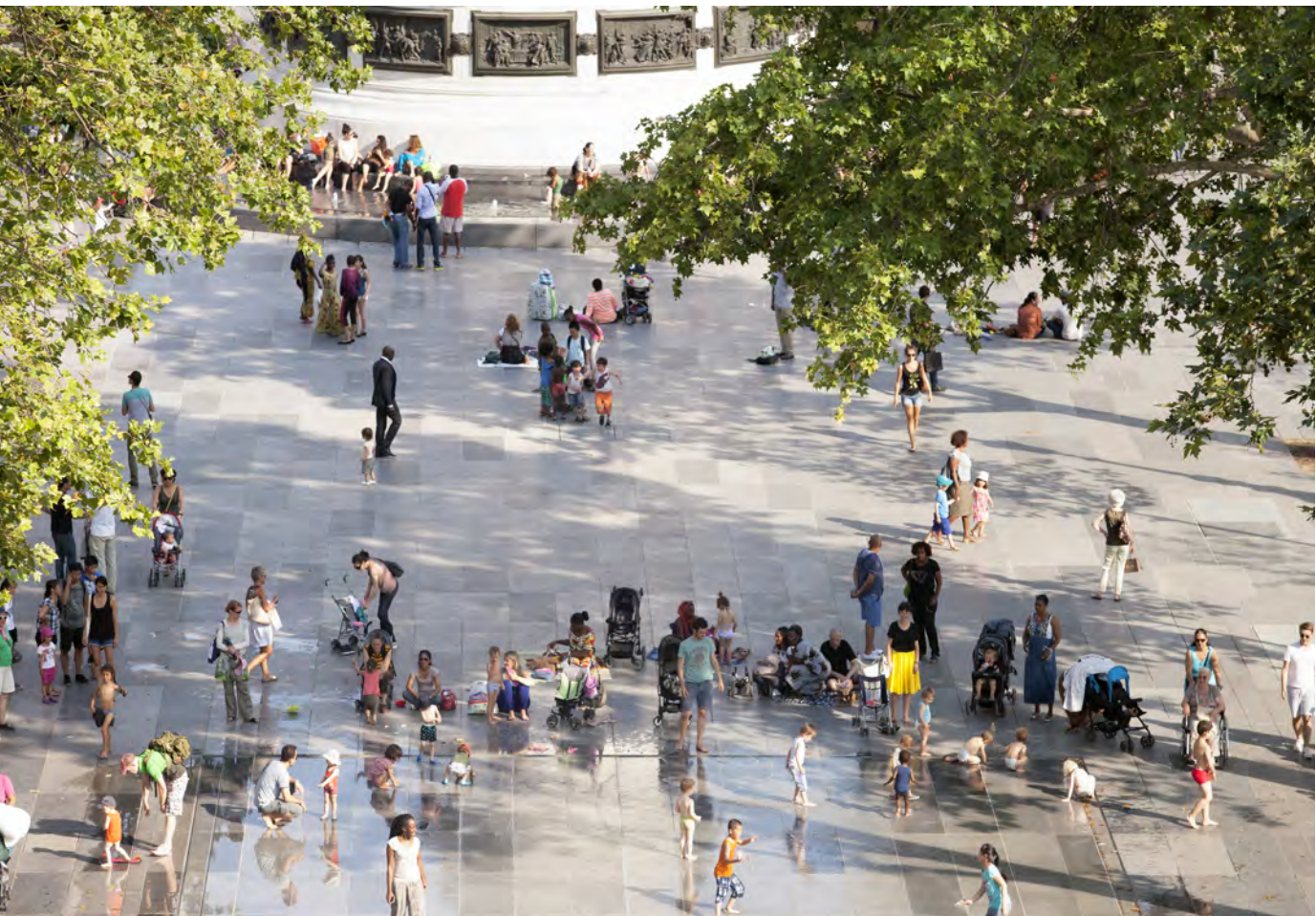
When switched off, they affect neither the topography nor the uses of the concourse, so are almost imperceptible.















## The Fluctuat Nec Mergitur Pavilion

In line with the principles adopted in the redevelopment of the Place de la République, the “Fluctuat Nec Mergitur” Pavilion is a perennial building, designed to last. It is scalable and adaptable, but also is a strong presence, opening onto the square. It is the only edifice in the new square. The Pavilion is sited on the southwest part, in line with the reflective pool and the statue de la République. It is fully glazed so as not to obscure the view and provides a continuous vista of the square. The pavilion houses a “World & Media” themed café and its entirely modular interior can host a wide variety of festive, social and cultural events and uses in all seasons and all weathers.

The pavilion’s envelope is entirely glazed. The visual impact of its structural assembly is minimal, so as not to perturb the prismatic appearance of the overall volume: the metallic elements are integrated to a maximum and the opening zones are concentrated to create an image of large glazed planes jointed together.

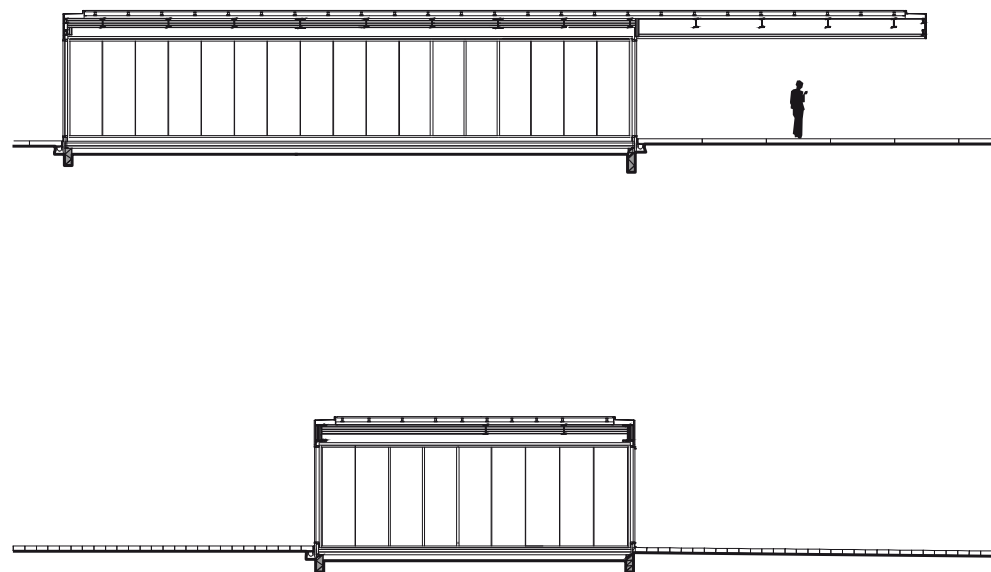
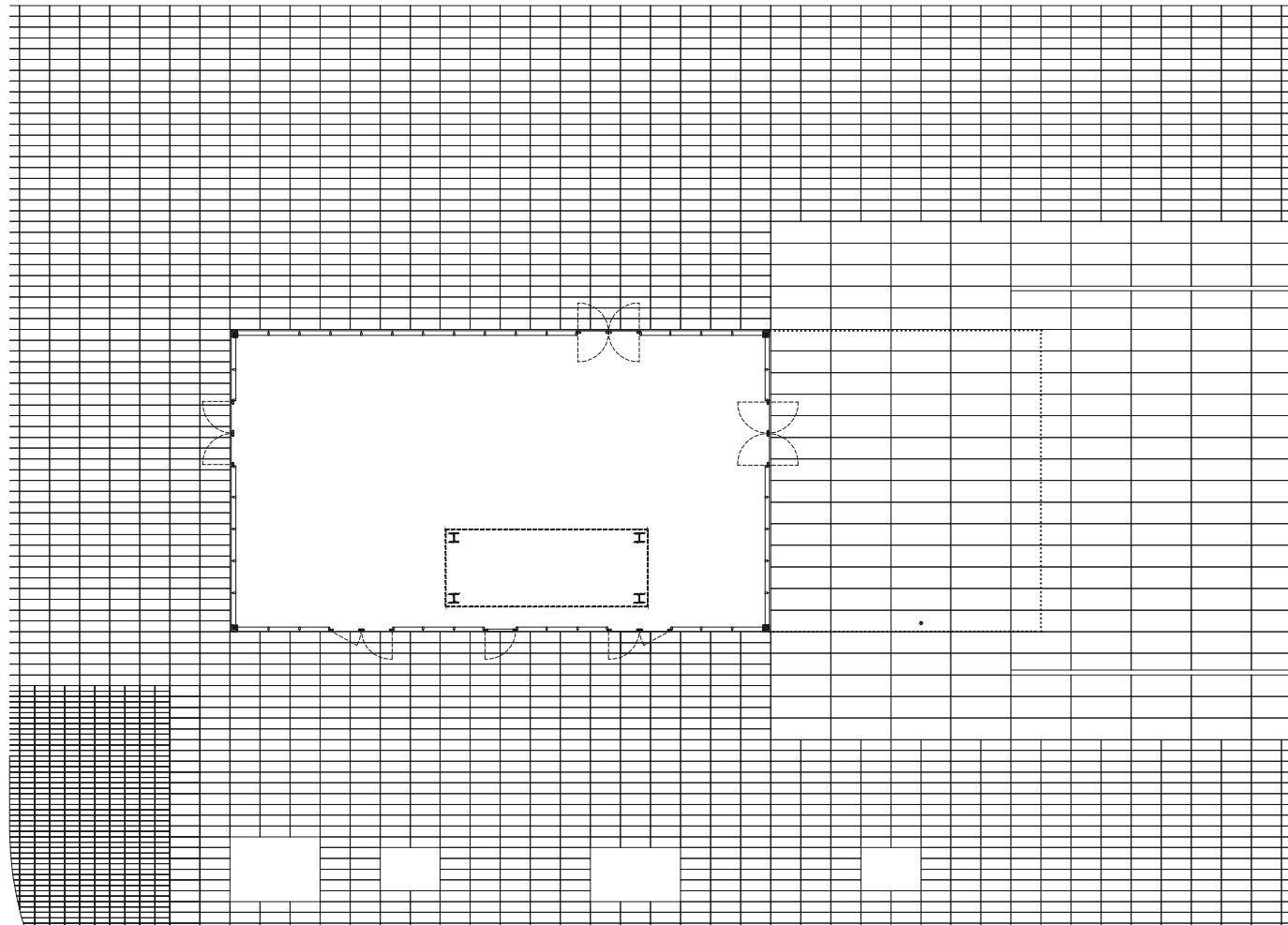
The supporting structure also participates in this self-effacement to achieve transparency: reduced to four small-diameter metallic posts at the corners, it is similar in design to the metallic elements. The roof band is composed of aluminium sheeting whose assemblage is invisible, with its horizontal and vertical aluminium rigidifying elements following the same rhythm as that of the glazed panels.

The cantilever’s underside is clad with large sheets of perforated aluminium. Echoing the large symmetrical composition of the Place de la République, the space’s interior organisation is dictated by a partition dividing it lengthways into two distinct and symmetrical areas.









0 1 5 m







#### VOLUME

- 9 m by 18 m (162 m<sup>2</sup>)
- 9.29 m by 18.20 m and 3 m high
- and a 0.75 m-thick roof with an 8.70 m cantilever

#### PROGRAMME

Fluctuat Nec Mergitur pavilion:  
café, conferences

#### BUDGET

687,000 € HT

#### THE PAVILION'S LAYOUT

##### *Counters*

"A scene open to multiple urban usages" [TVK]; the project developed on the entirety of the Place de la République should be regarded as a support of practices. Every space belongs to the square, every space constitutes it.

In that sense for the interior design of the café Fluctuat Nec Mergitur, NP2F proposed two bars (interior and exterior one). They are accessible, generous and shared.

One is a perfect square, open 360° to the square; the other one is elongated, stretching as much as possible in the room (1 m wide and 12.5 m long).

##### *Limits*

In this regard the limits between interior and exterior, between public space and the café become blurry, leaving the interpretation of the place open.

Dense vegetation is introduced into the pavilion, the façade disappears giving way to systematically glazed openings, concrete floor and bar extend the surface treatment of the square.

##### *Domesticity*

Objects positioned on the bar, specially designed for the café, corroborate those ideas.

At the same time fragile as they are moveable, and strong with their forms and colors, they enable multiple usages: newspaper rack, bananas bowl, display for crystal glasses, place to open a map of Paris, etc.





## Urban furniture

The square's identity is reinforced by a number of strong characteristic elements such as the large lighting masts set along the edge of the square. They are in keeping with the large scale of the place, and at the same time help to keep a vast central space free of any verticality (except for the trees and statue). The redevelopment project provides for three different types of seating, each meeting different requirements: wooden benches designed by TVK, a wooden deck, "movable chairs" and the ground.





## WOODEN BENCH

### DIMENSIONS

- Length: 288 cm
- Seat height: 45 cm
- Seat width: 47 cm
- Back height: 35 cm

### DESCRIPTION AND MATERIALS

The bench is an assembly of solid oak elements 180×220 mm in section. The use of wood as fine as oak in such thicknesses and lengths gives the bench its sober and monumental presence. The simplicity of the bench's design and its metallic elements highlights the use of this robust, high-quality material.

## SEATING

### *The ground*

The ground, which in itself already offers substantial possibilities for seating on the wide steps to the north of the square and the new base of the statue.

### *The wooden benches*

The wooden benches designed by TVK, set along the esplanade and on the peripheral pavements; conceived as an "urban sofa", the bench has a lateral armrest to facilitate use by people with reduced mobility, while its other end provides seating on three sides. The structure is an assemblage of massive pieces of solid oak. The use of oak in these dimensions gives the bench a sober monumentality, and the bases and metallic assemblage fittings heighten this sense of simplicity.

### *A wooden deck*

A wooden deck facing Boulevard Voltaire and close to the Metro exit on the central island, also designed by TVK.

### *"Movable" chairs*

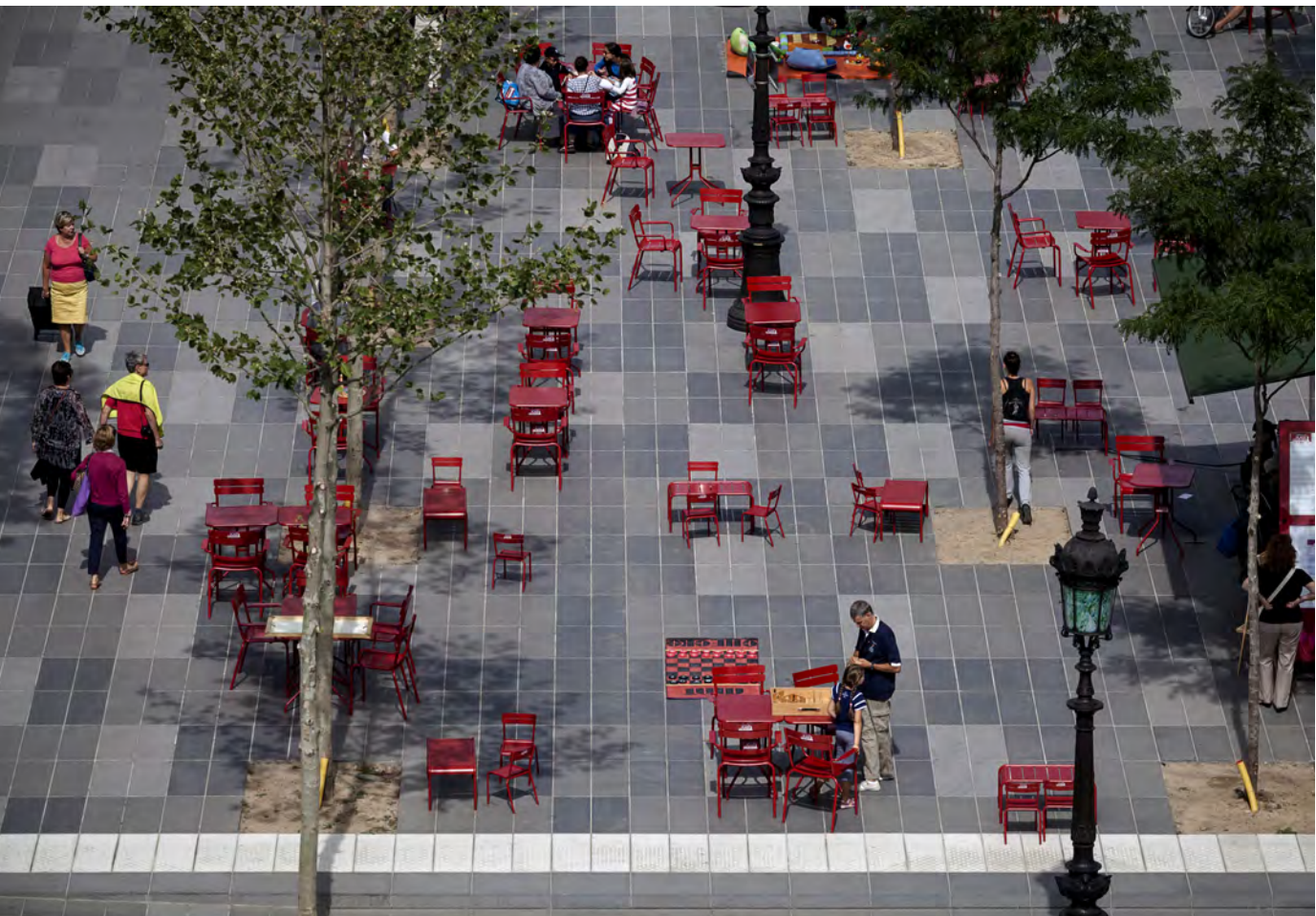
#### *available to everyone*

Fermob chairs are available for everyone. Freely accessed from the game library except during winter months, people are allowed to move red chairs and tables on the whole square's surface.

### *Around the pavilion*

The pavilion's terrace has the same Fermob furniture that can be used on the square. Only its colour is different: the terrace's furniture is green whereas the square's furniture is red.







CALL FOR PROPOSAL

If you wish to participate to the observation and documentation of Place de la République's new uses, photos, drawings, texts, articles or videos can be send to [republique@tvk.fr](mailto:republique@tvk.fr)

Visit the blog:  
<http://republique.tvk.fr>

PHOTOS

© Clément Guillaume  
© Pierre-Yves Brunaud

TO GET HD IMAGES  
[presse@tvk.fr](mailto:presse@tvk.fr)

CLIENT

City of Paris, Highways  
Department (Direction de la Voierie et Déplacements)

PROJECT MANAGEMENT  
SQUARE  
TVK

*project managers (Pierre Alain Trévelo and Antoine Viger-Kohler with Vincent Hertenberger, project manager and Agathe Lavielle)*

ATEC  
*technical consultants (Damien Bodénès et Audrey Marc)*  
AREAL + Martha Schwartz  
Partners  
*landscape architects (Christian Weier)*  
CITEC  
*traffic and movement consultants (Philippe Gasser, Alexis Dupont-Roc et Matthieu Baradel)*

JML Consultants  
*fountain consultants (Jean-Max Llorca)*  
AIK – Yann Kersale  
*lighting design (Fabienne Maman, Jean-Marie Priol et Clara Ritouret)*  
Transsolar  
*environmental consultants (Arnaud Billard)*  
Ville Ouverte  
*dialogue and consulting (Gwenaëlle d'Aboville et Pierre-Antoine Tiercelin with Samuel Poisson)*  
Segic  
*ingénierie (Fabrice Giudici)*

FIRMS SQUARE  
RAZEL – BEC + CentralPose  
*Lot 1: external works + laying slabs*  
Eiffage Énergie  
*Lot 2: EP + SLT*  
Kronimus  
*Lot 3: concrete slab supplier*  
Signature  
*Lot 4: horizontal signage*  
Linea BTP  
*Lot 5: vertical signage*  
Sogea  
*Lot 6: Soakaway pit*  
Eiffage Énergie  
*Lot 7: fountains*  
Minéral Service  
*Lot 9: concrete poured in situ*  
EMCB  
*Lot 10: wooden seating)*

PROJECT MANAGEMENT  
PAVILION  
TVK

*pavilion's architects (Pierre Alain Trévelo and Antoine Viger-Kohler, Victor Francisco, Vincent Hertenberger, Agathe Lavielle)*

NP2F Architectes  
*pavilion's layout (François Chas, Nicolas Guérin, Fabrice Long, Paul Maître-Devallon)*  
ARC  
*technical consultants*  
ATEC  
*technical consultants*  
TransSolar  
*environmental consultants*

FIRMS PAVILION  
MGE  
*General works*  
Pro Logis  
*Lot 1: earthworks and foundations)*  
ERTCM  
*Lot 2: framework*  
MGE  
*Lot 3: external joinery*  
Smac  
*Lot 4: scaling*  
EMT  
*Lot 6: plumbing, heating, ventilation*  
EAMS ELEC  
*Lot 7: electricity*  
ETAO  
*Lot 8: drilling, geothermal*



# TVK

23, rue Olivier Métra, 75020 Paris, France  
+33 (0)1 47 00 04 62, [agence@tvk.fr](mailto:agence@tvk.fr), [www.tvk.fr](http://www.tvk.fr)