

## **Canali Associati, Prada Group Logistics Hub, Levanella (Arezzo), Italy**

### **Text by Guido Canali**

The **Logistics Hub in Levanella** materializes, from the general urban layout down to the most minute details, the **respect for the territory** in which it is located and its contribution to combating the current climate crisis, as well as careful sensitivity towards the **well-being conditions of the people** who work within these spaces of privilege.

The new factory consists of three huge warehouses (total built area 44,000 square meters) and is aimed at reorganising and rationalising Prada Group's storage capacity for finished product being them clothing, footwear and leather goods.

In addition, there are three smaller pavilions dedicated to quality control, offices and the canteen.

The site, designed by **Canali Associati s.r.l.**, which has been signing the Prada Group's most qualified industrial projects for almost thirty years, is in line with the most up-to-date criteria of energy sustainability and is equipped with a geothermal air-conditioning system. The entire roof is covered with photovoltaic panels and the edge of the warehouses is banded by a dense green ring (trees, creepers, bushes), dotted with single-storey micro-buildings for meetings and coffee breaks.

Further on, at the edge, the lot is hemmed in by a double crown of cypress poplars, forming a jogging and relaxation path almost a kilometer and a half long.

The project was developed following two main themes, which are deeply integrated: the **well-being of the workers and the relationship between interior spaces and landscape**. The long tree-lined ring and the surrounding lush embankments visually mitigate the mass of the buildings and provide a green backdrop for those working inside.

The result is a **large green factory**, in which the integration between the Valdarno landscape and the workplace is particularly successful. The buildings, designed to ensure maximum visual permeability and abundant natural light from shed roofs and large glazed fronts, establish a close relationship with the surrounding landscape, opening onto gardens in which the architectural volumes are rarefied into ethereal metal frames, supporting the vegetation.

**The integration of interior spaces and landscape** is a common feature of Canali Associati's works for the Prada Group and, more generally, a distinctive feature of the studio.

At Levanella, the refined counterpoint between the precision of the metalwork of the frames and the unpredictability of the masses of creepers and trees proves to be the preferred tool for **blending architecture into the landscape**. This is to **make it pleasant for workers to stay inside the buildings**, in which they spend most of their day.

This linguistic research and this relationship with nature continue the figurative tradition of modern Italian architecture and sculpture - from the abstraction of Fausto Melotti's sculptures to that 'green element' that Luigi Figini recognised as the central feature of modern architecture - within which Canali Associati's tenacious research consistently proposes its own vital and constant declination.

The last pavilion of the Logistics Hub is the **canteen**, which is now open to employees. The canteen is built under the shelter of a **1,500 square meters pergola**, where copious creepers run forming a dense horizontal carpet to protect the area below from the sun.

Diners, raising their eyes to the glass ceiling, can visually enjoy a large green 'fresco', stimulating positive phytotherapeutic effects, as is now recognised by scientific research. The large pergola also helps the numerous trees to absorb CO<sub>2</sub>.

In this way, the Prada Group once again expresses its constant commitment to the creation of industrial buildings in which the wellbeing of workers and attention to sustainable design are at the heart of its choices.

## PROJECT SHEET

**Client:** Prada S.p.A.

**Project management:** Prada S.p.A. (engineering division)

**Project:** Canali Associati s.r.l.

**Design team:** Guido Canali (project manager); Paolo Simonetti, with Valentina Baldi Cantù, Valentina Tavella, Luca Roti, Andrea Mariotti, Marco Barbuti

**Coordination and structures:** GPA, Giovanni Cardinale with Edoardo Colzi

**Administrative Process Manager:** Area Associati, Francesco Papa

**Mechanical Engineering:** Esa Engineering, Massimo Bertini

**Electrical Engineering:** Pentium Associates, Gianluca Menchetti

**Acoustics:** Esa Engineering

**LEED consultant:** Greenwich

**Steel structure engineering; fabrication of carpentry and doors and windows:** Promo

**Other consultants** Marsigilab (green), Marco Sacchetti (geotechnics, roads, hydraulics and underground utilities)

**Creepers, roofs and green walls:** Poliflor, Stefano Frapoli

**Surfaces:** 93,000 sqm (site); 45,000 sqm (built)

**Completion:** 2022

### Prada Group's 'garden-factories' in brief

**Montevarchi**, Arezzo, Italy

Total surface area 6,600 m

Intended use Footwear

Green surface area 4,075 sqm

**Montegranaro**, Fermo, Italy - 2001

Total surface area 7,400 sq m

Intended use Footwear

Green surface area 5,200 sqm

**Valvigna**, Arezzo, Italy - 2017

Total surface area 28500 sqm

Intended use Industrial Headquarters and Leather Division

Green surface area 24,200 sqm

**Levanella Logistics Hub**, Arezzo, Italy - 2022

Total surface area 41500 sqm

Intended use Finished product logistics and quality control

Green Surface 29,400 sqm