

# VANDERSANDEN

journal

Magazine for the future builders of Vandersanden  
November 2018

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A new look for a socially  
engaged neighbourhood - **6**

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Inspired by textile - **12**

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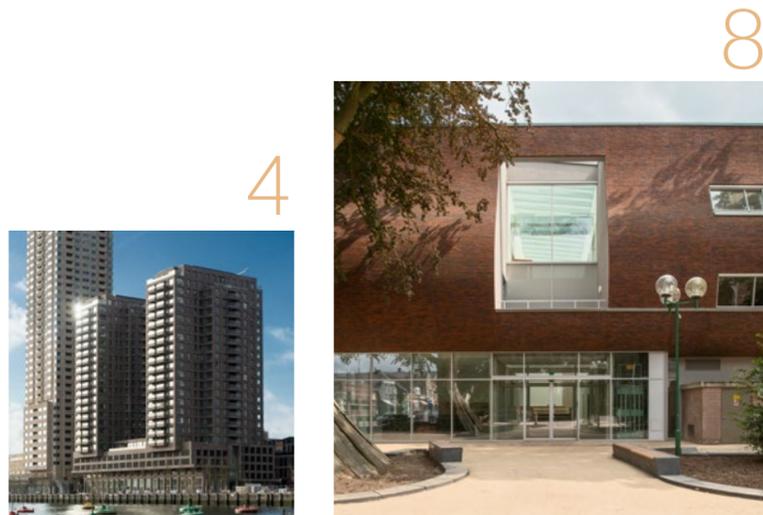
Bringing Earth to a  
Sinking Island - **16**

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**VANDERSANDEN**

TOGETHER WE BUILD GREATNESS



colofon

**Content**

Vandersanden

**Graphic design**

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**Dear Reader,**

I am very happy to present the first edition of the Vandersanden Journal to you. We want to use this journal to regularly inform you of all the new developments, engaging and special projects for buildings and houses, and provide the opportunity for a visionary to express their ideas.

In this first edition we have illustrated the completion of the De Cammeleur multi-purpose development project in Dongen (NL). This development, built with prefabricated elements, has a spherical brick façade, starting at the 1st floor and continuing over a length of 55 metres.

Let yourself be carried away into the future dream of architect and visionary Egide Meertens. For him, completing a building full of character is like playing in an orchestra.

We have also added two new colours to our range. Freya and Torben are engobed waterstruck bricks of an atypical colour. Freya has a soft yellow base with white, yellow and grey-green nuances. Torben is a bright red brick with a rich nuance of ochre, orange-red, dark purple and blue-grey.

Enjoy reading this journal.

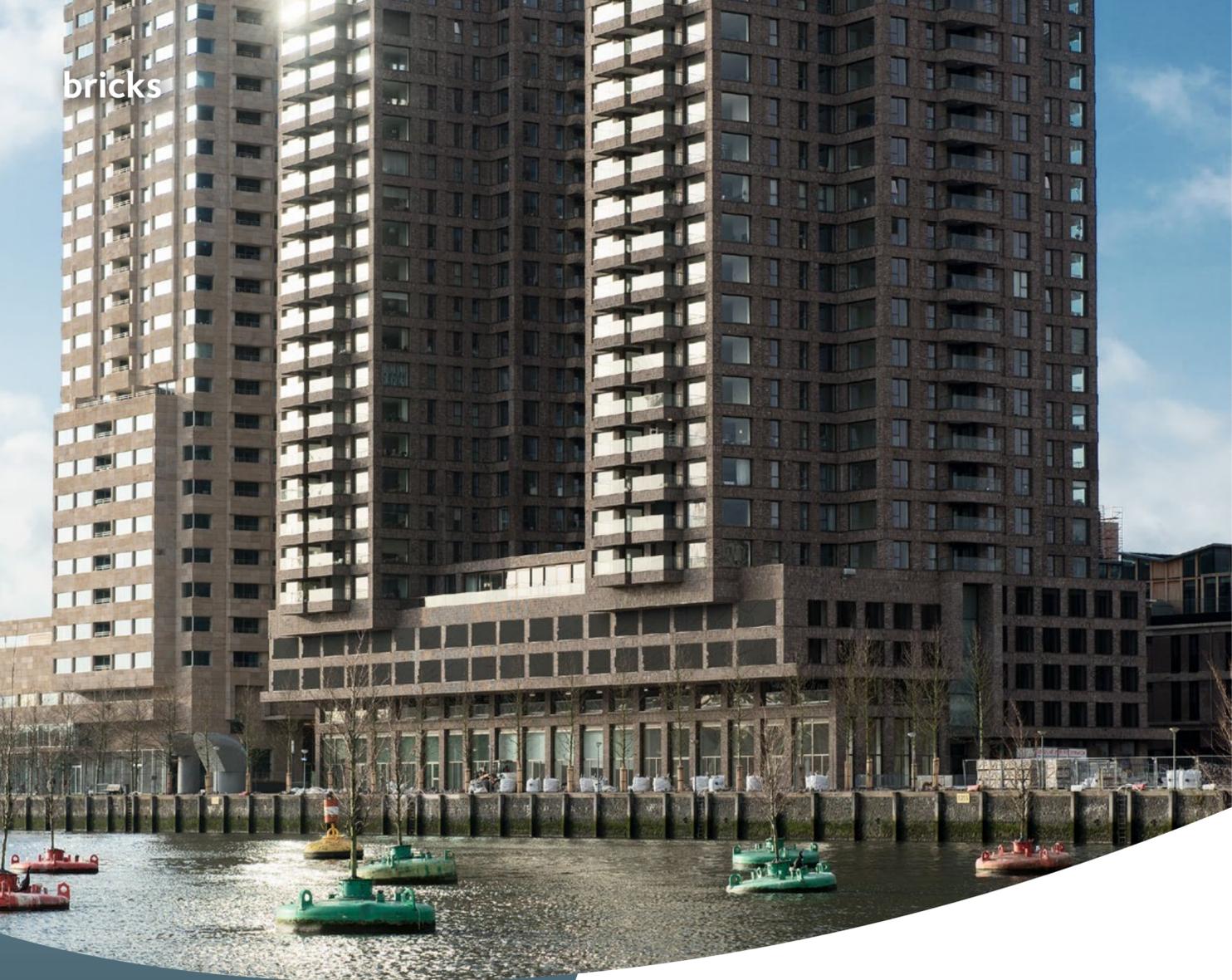
Naturally, we are very interested to know what you think about this Vandersanden journal, and we love to hear your feedback.

After all: Together we build greatness.

With kind regards,

**Jos Achten**  
Sales Director Belgium Bricks





## PROJECT DETAILS

**Architect:** Frits van Dongen, Patrick Koschuch (Van Dongen – Koschuch, NL)

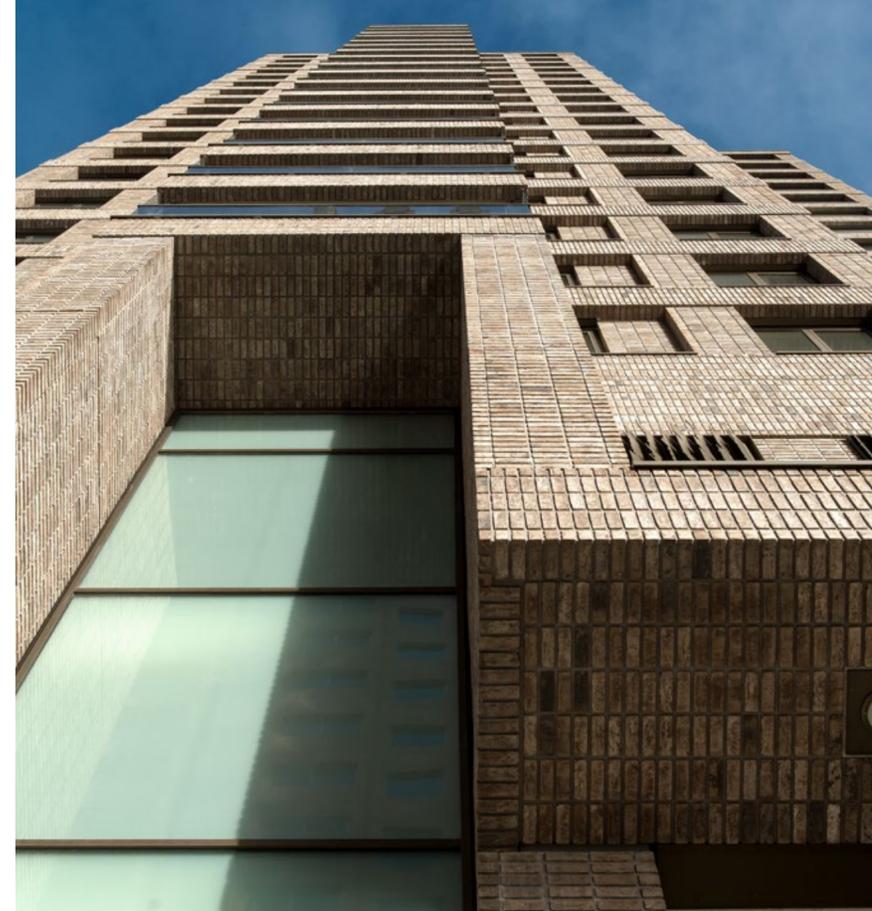
**Client:** V.O.F. Pier III

**Construction company:** J.P. van Eesteren (Gouda, NL)

**Bricks:** Vandersanden 147 Imperia (DF)

# Boston & Seattle Wilhelminapier Rotterdam (NL)

**In the past, Wilhelminakade (Rotterdam, the Netherlands) was a wharf for passenger ships bound for America, and the pier became a symbol during the 19th and 20th century of emigration to the United States. Architects Van Dongen – Koschuch were asked to design two apartment buildings within this historic context, which since the year 2000 has seen a period of rapid high-rise development.**

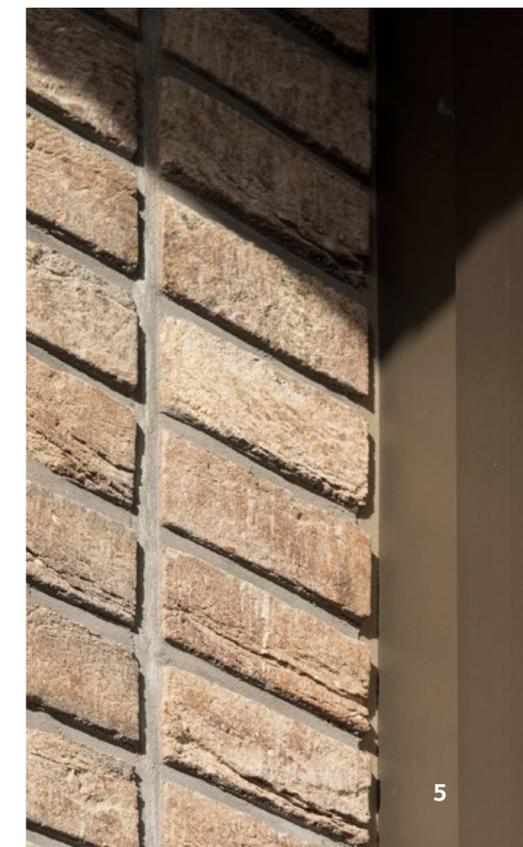
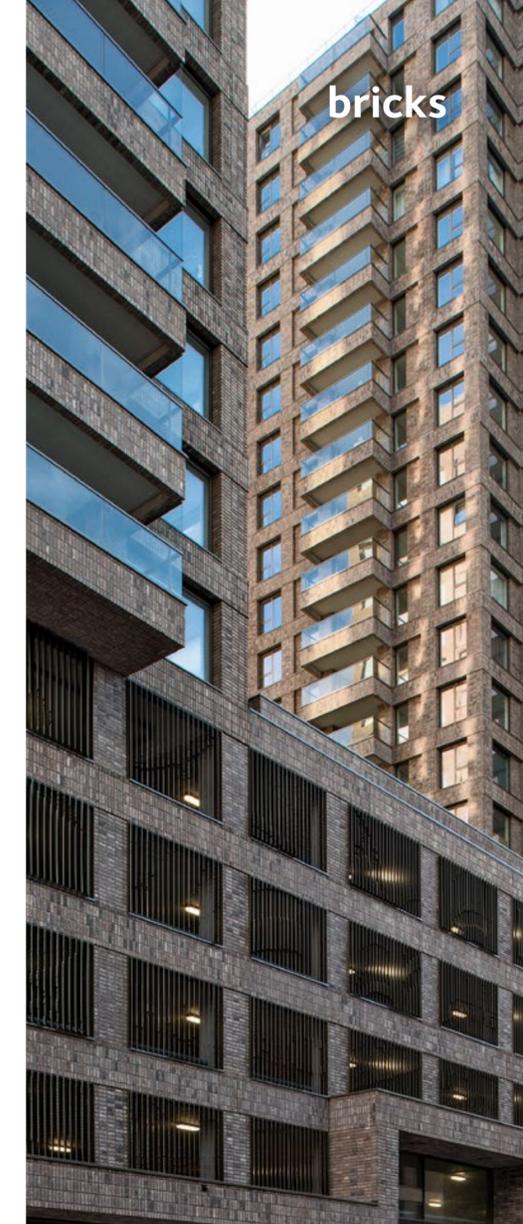
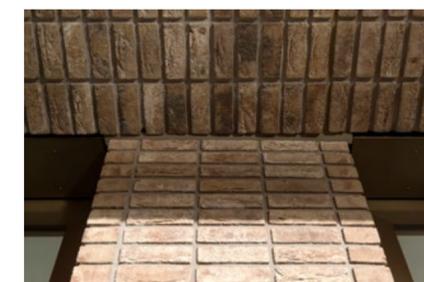


Both towers are 70 meters tall, and stand on a plinth of commercial spaces and 4 levels of above ground parking. The story's above have six apartments each, to a total of 220 homes. A green roof is the scenic link between the two towers where communal facilities such as a clubhouse and a panoramic terrace are brought together.

The towers have a cross formed footprint, for optimal views and excellent natural light. The cross form ensures a slender and elegant volume, along with large semi-indoor balconies. The challenge for the parking garage was to avoid designing an impenetrable box, through articulating a dialogue with the public space around the buildings. Responding to this, a façade concept was developed with artistic direction. Historical figurative images have been translated into a lamella structure that maintain privacy, natural light and ventilation. From the ground level, the façade is experienced as an interplay of light and see-through fragments as it sweeps around the building. This dynamic lamella structure combines with the robust grid of the towers and integrates in a timeless manner with the Wilhelmina pier.

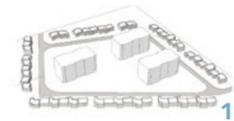
The bricks have been chosen to match the same introvert and robust character as the architecture, a brick with a timeless appearance and reference to the industrial peak of the 19th and early 20th century harbor activities of this space.

The shade of the bricks was supposed to be different from the surrounding high rise new buildings. A subtle contrasting color was selected that is in line with the nearby tower 'New Orleans' by Alvaro Siza and the 19th century warehouse "Meesteren" (which has recently been transformed to a hotel). The bigger DF format of the bricks worked very well and was a good combination with the robust façade design and the feasibility of the prefab sandwich elements.



# A new look for a socially engaged neighbourhood

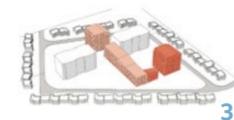
'PASPOEL ANDERS' GIVES SOCIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD IN TONGEREN A SECOND LIFE



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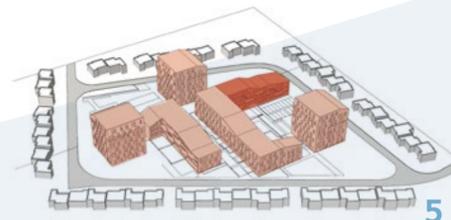
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The Paspoel II district, built at the end of the 70s, has been the largest district in Woonzo for many years. Here, 268 families live in a relatively small area. This neighbourhood is actually a 'village in the city'.

Since the Woonzo offices moved from this site to their current location at the Hasseltsesteenweg in 2004, Woonzo found that it was becoming harder to respond speedily to issues arising in the neighbourhood, such as technical problems with the apartments and matters concerning the quality of life in the neighbourhood.

The project, run by social housing company Woonzo, originated from an open call by the former Flemish Government Architect. This encompassed the demolition of the 3 existing residential tower blocks, and the construction of 3 new tower blocks of 8 floors, and 3 additional blocks of 3 to 5 floors, which together accounted for an identical number (192) of new apartments.

For this reason, a design was sought for the same number of apartments, which met current technical standards and that would improve the quality of life. The design by the London-based architectural firm S333, meets all these requirements. By choosing a project in 4 construction phases, Woonzo has tried to limit the inconvenience to the residents as far as possible.

'Paspoel Anders' is the largest construction operation ever conducted in Tongeren. The work began in the summer of 2015, and, if everything goes according to plan, will be completed by 2021. Paspoel will remain one large construction site for six years, however, inconvenience to the residents must be limited as far as possible. The construction will take place over four phases, and the tenants will only have to move house once. A block of 70 apartments is being built on an open space. Only when these are ready for habitation will the first residents move to their new flats.

## Public space

The space surrounding the existing housing blocks was largely unused, and lacking in character. Because of the layout of the building units, a number of different landscape areas - zones that each have a different character - were created and delineated. "The 'square zone' was created at the express request of Woonzo, who did not want the experience of the new project to be limited to the site's residents, but wanted to include the houses in the neighbourhood. The idea is to have residents walk through the project rather than around it. This public road is constructed and financed by the owners, Woonzo, and the city of Tongeren is responsible for operation and maintenance. One other request the owner made was that all tenant-occupants would continue to live on site (in a different location), and all move to the new building together with their current neighbours."

## PROJECT DETAILS

**Architect:** S333 Architecture + Urbanism

– London (UK)

**Client:** Woonzo Tongeren (BE)

**Construction company:** Strabag (BE)

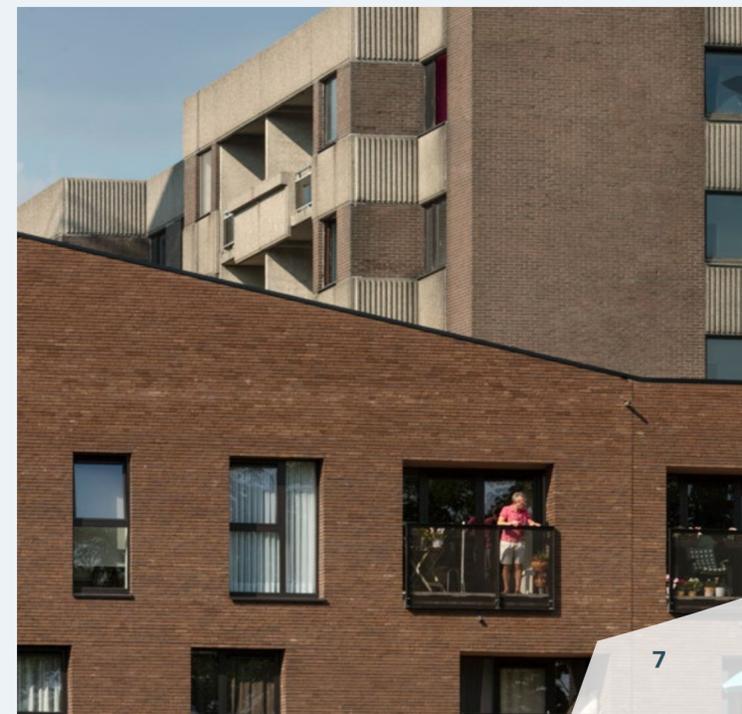
**Bricks:** Vandersanden 516 Flemming (WS)



## Dark facing brick vs soft facing plaster

With regard to the choice of façade materials, the owner and the architects opted for brown-black nuanced facing bricks, parallel to the surrounding houses - for all façades overlooking the street or the square. A softer façade plaster provides the necessary contrast for the cladding of the buildings adjacent to the gardens. The choice of Vandersanden's brown-black nuanced 'Flemming' waterstruck bricks demonstrates a preference for a brick with a more subtle texture and timeless character. These easy-to-use facing bricks are perfect for creating a small-scale look. The craggy character creates small colour differences. One type of brick, measuring just 5 cm in height, left plenty of room for a playful effect given the large volumes involved. Compared with the other surfaces, for example, these bricks protrude in certain façade surfaces. A thin-bed mortar was used. The extremely thin joint gives the bricks a slimmer look.

In the meantime, phase 1, the construction of a tower building and a low building between the existing residential blocks, which together total 71 apartments, has been completed and the inhabitants have moved in. In November, the construction of the second, smaller-scale phase began: a tower block in combination with the extension of a gallery building, together totalling 38 apartments. Phase 3 (2020-2021) is a larger phase comprising 61 apartments. In the final phase, a further 22 apartments will be built.





# Design & Build Challenge:

Hollow spherical and concave brick façade

**E-BOARD** ■■

**PROJECT DETAILS**

**Architect:** Coen Smits, KdV architectuur (NL)  
**Client:** Municipality of Dongen (NL)  
**Construction company:** BMV, Veldhoven (NL)  
**Bricks:** Vandersanden 513 Billund (brick slips) and Vandersanden 096 Brabant (full bricks)

**The architect, Coen Smits (KdV Architectuur) was commissioned by the construction company BMV to create a new ‘living room’ for the inhabitants of the Dutch village Dongen. This should develop to be a space where cultural activities, meetings and events can take place. It required a special synergy between the functions and the users of this specific building.**

The building is appointed to a distinct location: framed between some stately villa's and a historical park with very high quality. To melt together these two beautiful parts, the building was given a formal as well as a more informal façade. The fundamental starting point for the design was to create possibilities and spaces for people to meet and see each other.

This new multi-purpose accommodation “De Cammeleur” was designed to have a spherical brick façade, starting at the 1st floor and continuing over a length of 55 metres, connected by an atrium. The municipality turned the project into a Design & Build job. Cost control became as important as creativity.



The round shapes were not feasible with traditional masonry. A special solution was developed, based on E-Board® insulation technology; a complete system where an exterior of bricks can be easily created. Giant panels in dimensions of 600 x 220 cm have been constructed and a steel structure was chosen for the installation, which resulted in a unseen kind of prefab structure.

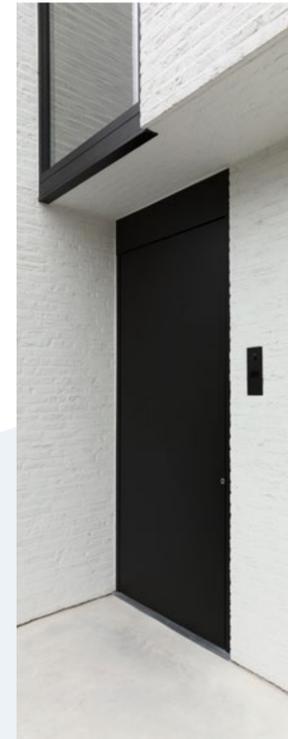
The façade was divided into 34 sections: some spherical, others concave. Each section was 6 metres high and built using a steel frame package, which is a solid, self-supporting and insulating steel frame.

The flowing movement of the façade connects the building to the organic shapes of the trees in the park, whereas the clear lines of the rest of the building are referring to the architecture of the stately villa on the other side.

The critical moment last summer arrived when construction work on the building site was in full swing. The building, situated next to a park with majestic trees, made it difficult to use cranes. The prefabricated structures with the E-Board® panels were lifted by a crane that had to be able to span 40m.

The building has been officially opened on September 1 and 2, 2018 and has been taken into use by the inhabitants of the village Dongen.





For their own home and office Architects Wim Baekelandt and Sylvie De Baets opted for **E-BOARD** ■■  
 “fast and detailed”

Architects Wim Baekelandt and Sylvie De Baets met while they were studying architecture at the University of Ghent and work together in their practice, the **Architektenburo**.

It is clear from their website, [architektenburo.be](http://architektenburo.be), that they are acolytes of their famous colleague Le Corbusier, who stated that space and light and order are things that men need just as much as they need bread or a place to sleep. Their designs exude that space, light and order. The pinnacle of that is their pièce de résistance: their own home and office in Knokke-Heist with high ceilings, lots of glass and clean lines.

**Unusual design**

Wim recounts how the half-open building was constructed with E-Board® in the leading role: “We had to build very quickly in 2014. We used aerated concrete so that we could install the windows quickly and then move in; and that saved us a lot of time. It’s easily another two to three months if you have to wait for façade bricks, insulation and pointing. That was when we opted for E-Board®. Construction started in March 2014 and we were

already living there by 1 January 2015. Our home wasn’t finished but it was habitable. That’s a really unusual way of building.” The building next door was built later: “The idea was to build it at the same time, but it didn’t work out. It is also constructed in a traditional way but with a façade brick from Vandersanden.”

Sylvie and Wim designed the building together. Sylvie laughs: “We do everything together. A design goes from my office to his office then comes back again until we think ‘that’s how it should be’. It’s easy to design for yourself because you really know how you want to live. If one of the two of you isn’t in building, it just raises more questions.”

**Simple**

Wim and Sylvie opted for E-Board® and it was the first time they had worked with it. “It was also because of the details. It made it easy for us to finish the underside of the ceiling with bricks at the entrance too. Full brickwork isn’t the obvious choice there, but it is possible with E-Board®. Above all, everything has to be insulated nowadays, even in corners and around windows, otherwise you get condensation and thermal bridges. That’s what is so good about the system; it makes it relatively simple.”

He also has some good advice for future users: “Remember that there will be scaffolding around the building for a bit longer. That’s a bit annoying if you’re already living there. And take care how you finish the corners where two rows of brick need to meet.”

**Nice contrast**

Afterwards they had the rows of brickwork painted white, Sylvie reveals: “That contrasts nicely with the darker woods we used, such as in the canopy over the patio. That was new in this area. It’s being used more often now, but we were one of the first to do so. The combination of white with the darker wood has been copied a number of times. In the white, you can see a relief of the brickwork rows next to wooden battens. That’s much nicer than a wide line completely of brick.” Painting the brickwork rows was a deliberate choice, he explains: “Plaster is too plain, has too little body. There is motion in this hand-moulded brick.” Sylvie: “These are small details, but they give something extra, distinctive. We could have left the brick exposed but we wanted it like this. Timeless yet modern. And we have had lots of positive reactions.”

**Content**

Wim was familiar with E-Board® mainly from renovations: “It’s so very easy. You leave the house standing and fit insulation and rows of brickwork around it, and it’s insulated and renovated in just a few weeks. But it’s a practical solution for a newbuild too. We had already had clients for E-Board® on a regular basis and referred them to Vandersanden.” Wim: “We are also working on other projects and E-Board® will certainly be considered for renovations. It is a somewhat newer method of construction. I think Western Flanders is still rather conservative. Working with aerated concrete and E-Board® façade insulation is not common here yet.” Sylvie: “Wim is a bit more technical than I am. So I asked him why he wanted this method: ‘Why don’t we build ‘normally’?’ But we would definitely build this way again. I wasn’t familiar with the system and was afraid it would fail.”

The same went for the contractor, Wim continues: “He hadn’t worked with E-Board® before. We supported him and there was also a Vandersanden representative with whom I visited a site. That is useful if you don’t know the system: to go and have a look at how everything is bonded and mechanically secured in the right way, and how the bricks are properly positioned in the mortar. Vandersanden also has a number of video clips for this. Once you’ve figured that out, it goes smoothly. It goes brick row by brick row, just as with bricklaying but quickly. The system is simple, even for the details.” And that also makes it easy to rectify a mistake, Wim says: “I had to make a wall thicker in places. A mistake by the contractor who constructed the shell meant that the window ran a bit outwards from the Ytong aerated concrete. But the system is flexible. So we had to correct a few centimetres. We simply thickened it with insulation and the problem was solved.”



Saxion Academy has grown and will continue to expand in the coming years. New and bigger buildings were needed. Not only to house the large group of new students, but also to provide more room for labs and research. In Enschede, the Academy built a completely new campus to provide for the extra space.

## Inspired by textile

### The newbuild for Saxion Academy

#### Blend in and stand out

When designing the building, the architects had to keep in mind that it has to adapt easily to even more growth of students in the future. Furthermore, IAA architects wanted it to blend into the environment: it had to look as if the building had always been there, without going unnoticed or being too mainstream.

Around the building, there's a mix of traditional architecture with typical ornaments and patterned brickwork, but also new, contemporary buildings. The Saxion campus had to blend in, and stand out at the same time.

#### A warm welcome

The use of bricks fits in a very long tradition and gives the building a classic appearance. At the same time, the innovative use of the brick slips in a textile pattern makes it very contemporary.

The pattern itself looks soft and touchable, and thus ensures that the building gives a warm welcome to new students. Often this building is the first encounter with Saxion for them, so this was an important requirement.

“  
 What's so beautiful about this facade is that it's a perfect mix of new approaches and established techniques.”

**HANS WICHERS SCHREUR**  
 Real Estate Director Saxion

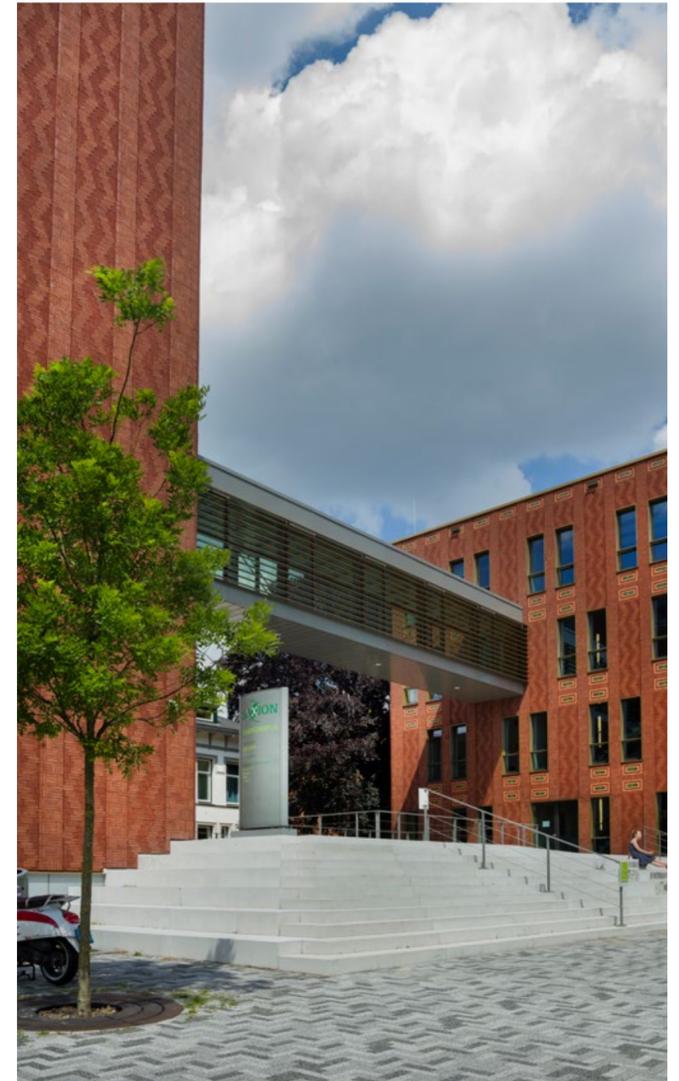
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#### Present and past

The Saxion building is a perfect mix between the present and the past. The facade panels offer a new, innovative technique, but at the same time, there's the certitude of the past by using (real) bricks. Signa® offers a traditional and sustainable system thanks to the bricks, but at the same time it is very modular: the Signa® Panels can easily be dismantled and re-used. Inspiration for the pattern

- Around the site of Saxion, some historical architecture is located. Part of the ornaments for the Saxion Academy are inspired by the beautiful ornaments on these buildings.
- Another source of inspiration was the fact that Enschede has a history of textile. Especially the woven aspect was an inspiration. The zigzag movement in the pattern is similar to the zigzag of the threads in a woven fabric.
- To make the pattern work, the choice of colours was crucial. For this, the architects worked closely together with Vandersanden, because of their deep knowledge of the products. Because this was such an innovative project, Saxion, the architects and Vandersanden worked closely together from the start.



“  
 It was really satisfying to study the masonry and play with the patterns. It's really fascinating what's possible with this modular system.”

**MARCO MATIC**  
 IAA architecten

”

**SIGNA.**

[www.vandersanden-signa.com](http://www.vandersanden-signa.com)



# New colours: Freya & Torben

A wide colour spectrum in one production run



We have recently added 2 new colours to our range. Freya - a soft yellow base with white, yellow and grey-green nuances and Torben - a bright red brick with a rich nuance of ochre, orange-red, dark purple and blue-grey.

Freya and Torben are made using the popular waterstruck - or wasserstrich - moulding technique. Unlike the well-known hand-moulded bricks, they have a finer, smoother texture with the typical vertical, delicate grooves.

**A sleek texture with a narrower colour spectrum**

The production process of waterstruck bricks is, however, quite similar to that of hand-moulded bricks. They both start with a ball of clay dropped into a brick mould, removed from the mould, dried and fired in modern tunnel kilns. However, there is one fundamental difference. Where the brick mould is filled with a thin layer of sand during the hand-moulding process, the waterstruck mould is filled with water to make it easier to remove the formed bricks, hence the name given to this technique. When the ball of clay drops into the

brick mould, the water escapes along the sides of the mould, thus creating a smoother and delicately grooved brick surface. The disadvantage of this technique is that the brickmaker cannot use surface sanding with this process. This is because, with the waterstruck technique, the sand is washed away once the brick has been moulded. This significantly lessens possible colour nuances and explains why waterstruck bricks are usually offered in uniform or soft shades.

**Not to worry. We can still apply engobing.**

Engobes are dyes that consist mainly of clay minerals and oxides. Mixing these in water creates a liquid mass that is sprayed with special nozzles in a thin layer on the bricks before firing. In the kiln, these engobes sinter onto the brick surface. This can be carried out using a variety of colours, and with engobe spotting that covers all or part of the surface.

Freya and Torben are fine examples of engobed waterstruck bricks of an atypical colour. Freya has a soft yellow base with white, yellow and grey-green nuances. The grey-green nuance, in particular, is not an obvious colour for a ceramic product, however, it does make Freya a unique facing brick. Torben is a bright red brick with a rich nuance of ochre, orange-red, dark purple and blue-grey. This wide spectrum is achieved by engobing in one production run, without mixing bricks from different firing runs. Engobing assures a wide range of colours by applying the waterstruck method. Good news for creative brickmakers, also for creative architects.

# “Bringing Earth to a Sinking Island”



Atelier X is a collective comprised of architectural photographer Steven Massart, architect Peter Van Impe and artist and potter An Roovers who, in their own unique way, want to initiate a dialogue in and about the city of Tienen, by using alternative ways to put Tienen on the world map.



Atelier X aims to investigate its own urban foundations, and attempts to understand the human attachment to Tienen's rich clay earth.

From their design research "Bringing Earth to a Sinking Island", they seek to understand the urban undercurrents, and try to transform these into strong, innovative concepts. In the search for possible answers to the questions of how they see the future of cities, and how they can enable concrete cities to flourish again!

**Model made from Tienen's clay and earth**

Potter Ann Roovers has made a model of the city of Tienen with clay and earth from Tienen. The model depicts the city in dialogue with the public about the future of the city.

For each of the model's 52 building units, they made one resident from Tienen the mentor of the building unit in which they work or live. Earth from the mentor's garden has been used in the colour layer or glaze for the shard.

The model is on display at the Venice Architecture Biennial, from 24 May until 25 November. They have literally brought Tienen to Venice, 'Bringing Earth to a Sinking Island' and have put Tienen on the world map in an alternative way.



# A taste for MORE

## CappuVino

### PROJECT DETAILS

**Project:** Coffee and wine bar CappuVino, Groningen (NL)

**Architect:** Architectural firm De Zwarte Hond, Groningen (NL)

**Contractor:** Bricklaying company Metselbedrijf Strijker, Nieuw-Balinge (NL)

**Merchant:** Steencentrum Utrecht (NL)

**Façade system:** E-Board®

**Brick slips:** Mix of 513 Billund WS, 511 Aalborg WS and 528 Riviëra WS

**Renovating a shop in the historic heart of Groningen (NL) without too much disruption, in as short a time as possible and taking into account the fact that, during the renovation, two restaurants were opening for business ... the CappuVino project in the Vismarkt was a huge challenge.**

### Coffee and wine

The building dates back to 1973 and did not blend in with its exceptional historical surroundings. Architects De Zwarte Hond created an entirely new design, giving all the floors a bar-style theme. The client was so pleased with the result that he decided to run the establishment himself, and so CappuVino - a coffee and wine bar - was born.

### Mix

It was a challenging project because the architect wanted to create an iconic façade, with an appearance that was in keeping with the neighbouring buildings. This made the colour of the bricks an important issue.

As far as possible, the architect's wishes were taken into account, and the final result was a unique mix of three reddish-orange Waterstruck facing bricks that blend in beautifully with the cityscape.

The renovation was carried out at a location with arguably the heaviest traffic in the North Netherlands. This made it all the more important to combine quality, speed and effectiveness because the impact of loading and unloading was extremely disruptive. E-Board® façade system fitted the brief perfectly: a lightweight construction of high-quality insulation panels with brick slip finish, and able to be fitted quickly.

### Interacts beautifully with its environment

The façade of the corner building consists largely of glass. The sides are traditional brickwork and the horizontal connections are fitted with E-Board®. The architect succeeded in creating a clear connection between this building and its Vismarkt surroundings. The façade has a huge transparent surface.

In the original design, they had planned to use horizontally sliding doors. Ultimately they decided on windows that can open all the way to the bottom, creating a kind of glass parapet, and allowing wonderful contact with the world outside.





“Accomplishing a stylish building is like playing in an orchestra.”

Egide Meertens  
Architect



## Future builders

Inspire, challenge, learn from each other... This is what Vandersanden does every day, together with other future builders.

Visionaries share their stimulating ideas with us. They describe how they shape our homes and living environment, and how they improve the quality of life.

Together with these visionaries, we look ahead and we consider the future, and, above all: how we can give shape and substance to houses, offices, buildings, and also our community and our quality of life in form and content. Because cooperation brings out the best.

**An architect is a designer and adviser, boxer and facilitator. This is a crucial role in the arena of the built environment. ‘Sometimes you need to be very stubborn,’ says Egide Meertens, ‘but if you also show a little flexibility, you get more done. Other people’s visions and practical obstacles are the mainstays that are necessary to build on.’**

Egide Meertens is a thoroughly professional craftsman, but not the pretentious type so often encountered in this profession. He’s more of a pragmatist. ‘Accomplishing a stylish building is like playing in an orchestra. It doesn’t matter with how much virtuosity I play my ‘instrument’, if I don’t harmonise with the others, the symphony will never be beautiful. I’m one of the players in a building project. I have the courage to fight for my ideas, but ultimately it is the interaction between the players that determines the quality.

### Liveability and perception

As a co-creator of the built environment, Meertens feels a responsibility: ‘Our way of life is changing, land is becoming scarcer, and construction has become more expensive. I think we should not allow any further fragmentation of the landscape. We will need to condense and strengthen residential areas, without sacrificing liveability. This is a huge challenge for the sector, especially as the essence of liveability is perception. How can we fulfil this perception if we start building more compact structures? For me, the key words are: location, user, individuality, regional materials. My designs and buildings must always communicate their affinity with the location. This guarantees liveability and perception. The ultimate reward for my work is when a user or resident says: this is where I feel at home, this is where I’m happy.’



### A guarantee of a lifetime

Meertens is continuously aware of his role in the building process: ‘Urban planners map out the guidelines. In my opinion, if one of the guidelines is not right, and I can substantiate my reasoning, I can usually get other people to see my point of view. It’s often quite a battle, but then that makes the project a lot stronger. I don’t want carte blanche.’

The trick is to make buildings which can, so to speak, move with the spirit of the times. How can we create a building that fits in with the context of a perception, that meets the demands of its time, and also offers future flexibility? ‘You must always offer the option of adding your own interpretation to a building. An architect provides the framework: for example pedestrian routes, sight lines, and use of materials sympathetic to the environment. Users can then add their own identity. That is the best guarantee that it will stand the test of time.

### A creative direction

Despite the importance of cooperation and interaction to improve the quality of a project, the personality of the architect and his ideas strongly affect its execution, to say the least. Keeping that personality sharp is, according to Meertens, a matter of being critical at work and participating constructively in the group process that is building: ‘I am immersed in architecture every single day. I store everything, consciously or unconsciously. Look, listen, absorb. Every production process has limitations, but by communicating, by connecting visions, by collaborating, these can be eliminated.’

# ECOfriendly Brick Slips

## Reducing our ecological footprint



### The world's first moulded brick slip.

0% material loss, 100% respect for our planet.

**Respect for the planet is our motto.** We have proven this once again with the ECO brick slips. These moulded (not cut!) brick slips combine a natural look & feel with an exceptionally sustainable profile. Less raw materials. Less energy consumption during production. No waste. The result is not only a beautiful façade or aesthetically pleasing interior, but the lowest possible impact on the environment. Together we build greatness!



70% less raw materials



1kg of raw materials = 1kg of brick slips



Waste-free production process



50% less energy consumption



reduced water absorption, prolonged aesthetics

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