39 | 2018

PETERSEN

A MAGAZINE ABOUT BRICKWORK AND RESPONSIBLE ARCHITECTURE

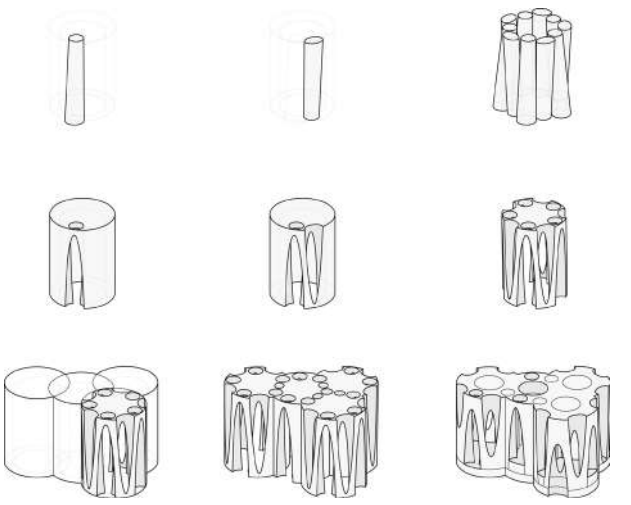




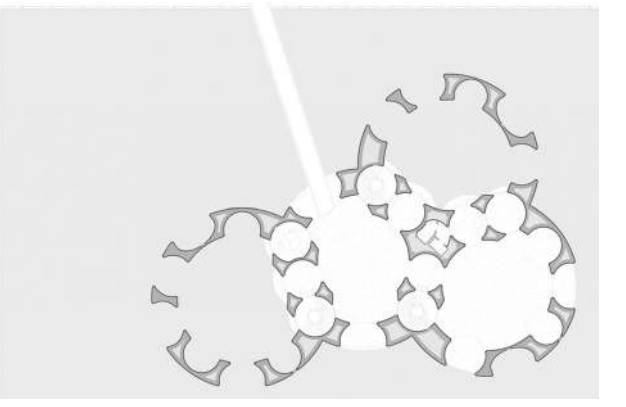
Fjordenhus uses fifteen different shades of brick, and three glazed versions. The concentration of blue near the top and green near the bottom serves to emphasise the movement from above to below – from the sky to the sea.



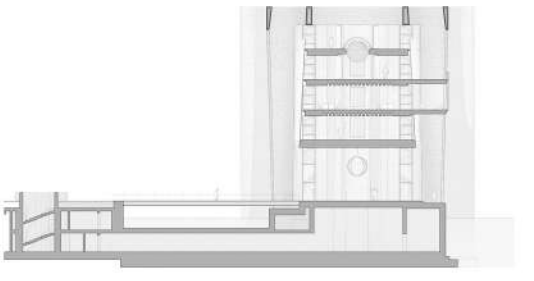
The upper section of the installation 'Den indre himmel' (The inner sky), which protrudes through the roof on the fourth floor and links the main conference room to the sky above.



Fjordenhus is based on a geometry of circles and ellipses.



Ground-floor plan



Section

FJORDENHUS

UP CLOSE, MOVINGLY BEAUTIFUL LIKE A MULTI-COLOURED, HAND-WOVEN KILIM RUG. FROM AFAR, LIKE A MIRAGE OF DISTANT AND MYSTERIOUS BEAUTY, IS ARCHITECT THOMAS BO JENSEN'S DESCRIPTION OF KIRK KAPITAL'S NEW HEADQUARTERS IN VEJLE, CREATED BY OLAFUR ELIASSON AND SEBASTIAN BEHMANN OF STUDIO OLAFUR ELIASSON.

From a distance, Fjordenhus is a striking building and overshadows everything else in Vejle Harbour, even 'The Wave' luxury apartment complex, which used to dominate the spot. From the nearby train line, or crossing Vejle Fjord by bridge in a tall enough vehicle, it is difficult to miss the new building, which protrudes out into the water like a Venetian palace. Like a medieval keep, the only link to the land is by a narrow bridge, making it easy to protect the site from prying eyes. Its organic forms, the brick-clad parabolas in different heights rising directly from the water, alternating between inward-facing and outward-facing elliptical arches, trigger associations with just about everything except contemporary Danish architecture. For architects, it is difficult not to see references to Louis Kahn's fabulous buildings in Dhaka in Bangladesh and Ahmedabad in India. Otherwise, the mental images queue up – from Moorish, Islamic and Persian architecture to old Nordic manor houses and castles. Whether people like it or not, this is very much an 'image evoking' architectural style, to fall back on a concept the famous Danish artist and architect Per Kirkeby used to describe buildings of which he was fond.

Access to Fjordenhus is via a narrow bridge from the quayside at Havneøen. As you approach, the brickwork catches the eye. Although 18 different types of bricks were used, some glazed, most in standard Danish format, the number is immaterial. The overwhelming sense is of a huge embroidery,



During the day, sunlight is directed into 'Den indre himmel' through a heliostat, while artificial light illuminates the installation from the inside during the hours of darkness. The filtered light casts a complex pattern of shadows into the conference room below.



From the circular canteen on the second floor, the employees of Kirk Kapital have a magnificent view of Vejle city and harbour. Circular lights have been inserted into the ceilings in patterns that provide light everywhere it is needed, biting deeply into the white concrete. The tables are created by Olafur Eliasson, the 109-chair is designed by Finn Juhl in 1946, both made of oak.



The brickwork in the staircase comprises silver-glazed as well as white, yellow and grey bricks. The silver-glazed bricks are concentrated at the top of the wall and reflect the daylight above.



Fjordenhus is made up of exclusively organic shapes, with its 28-metre high, brick-clad parabolas rising in different heights directly from the water, alternating between inward-facing and outward-facing elliptical arches. Residents and visitors access the ground floor via a narrow bridge.

featuring every colour under the sun, which looks as if it has just emerged from the blue-green deep below. The systematic pattern of the bonds is broken up by the random order and arbitrary positioning of vertical bricks, mixed with concentrations of glazed brick near the water and the top of the building. The corners of the parabolic apertures are 'welted' with solid strips of brickwork, which give the clear impression that the bricks create their own self-supporting structure. This would have been impossible without interior concrete constructions, of course, which were custom-made by the Odense-based robotics company, Odico Formwork Robotics. Like all good engineering, Odico's vital contribution to the building is invisible to the naked eye – all that can be seen is the fantastic spectacle of apparently self-supporting, solid, brick-clad constructions. Fjordenhus blends the best of the new digital age with the older world of manual skills and sensuality in beautiful harmony. I think of the bricklayers who made this happen with their bare hands. It is an awe-inspiring manual feat of a type rarely seen these days. "Up close, movingly beautiful like a multi-coloured, hand-woven kilim rug. From afar, like a mirage of distant and mysterious beauty,"

Once you have collected yourself and arrived 'on land' under the arches, you find yourself in a large outdoor area with a high ceiling and a giant spiralling art piece hanging from the ceiling; the first hint that Studio Olafur Eliasson's holistic approach to architecture and inventory is ubiquitous. Otherwise, water and brickwork play a crucial role in this exceptionally beautiful open space, which extends Vejle Harbour. The "interaction between mass and void" is clearly felt here, a key concept that was central to the design, as Olafur Eliasson's business partner, architect Sebastian Behmann, explains.

A large, light grey, spiralling, steel staircase leads up to the first floor, which sits several metres above the surface of the water. Delicately shaped, open-plan offices and conference rooms, clad in grey-green natural brick and with custom-made round kilim rugs in delicate shades of blue and green. All of the solid and loose fixtures, apart from the

"Fjordenhus was built for people. Brick is friendly, welcoming, atmospheric. The haptic quality was crucial for us. Using brick also allowed us to work with colour modulation in greater detail."
Olafur Eliasson



Fjordenhus' four linked cylindrical towers rise from the water and create a connection between Vejle Fjord and the centre of the town.



The brickwork is of the highest quality. The corners of the circular and parabolic apertures are 'welted' with solid brick lines.



The double-height ground floor is dedicated to the interaction between the building and the surrounding fjord, with the wind and weather reflected in the glazed bricks. Arched openings and windows frame the view out over the shores of the fjord and the harbour, while water flows through two of the ground floor rooms. The clay is processed and then hard-fired in a way that makes the bricks resistant to salt water and frost.

chairs, were designed by Studio Olafur Eliasson. Circular lights have been inserted into the ceilings in patterns that provide light everywhere it is needed, biting deeply into the white concrete and giving an appropriately heavy counterpoint to the brick surfaces. In this section, the light openings are in the shape of parabolas, which look like reflections of the large parabola-shaped windows.

The tables, storage shelves and kitchens were all produced according to a system of circles and ellipses that maximises the use of the massive oak elements and curved sheets of white-painted steel that form the side sections and legs of the furniture. Oak cabinets and kitchen units, built directly into the exposed brick walls, form an almost seamless transition between materials. The finishing is exquisite from start to finish with bespoke furniture and finishings across the board – as if the Moomins had moved to town and had an unlimited budget with which to do as they please. Everything is 'tip top' as it were.

The second and third floors are not open to the public, but we were lucky enough to be allowed a quick peek into the perfectly designed office space, on up through the gradually more silver staircases, all the way up to the terrace in the centre of the rooftop. and the impeccably executed strips of brickwork that form the pointed ends of the parabolic apertures. And the view is, of course, unbeatable.

Fjordenhus, headquarters of Kirk Kapital A/S, Vejle, Denmark
Client: Kirk Kapital A/S
Artist: Olafur Eliasson
Architects: Sebastian Behmann with Studio Olafur Eliasson
Local architect: Lundgaard & Tranberg Arkitekter
Landscape architect: Vogt Landscape Ltd.
Inaugurated: 2018
Brick, DNF: D33, D34, D35, D36, D37, D38, D42, D43, D46, D47, D48, D49, D73, D91, D99
Text: Professor Thomas Bo Jensen, Aarhus School of Architecture
Photos: Anders Sune Berg

“IT WAS ABOUT THE TACTILE, THE IMMEDIATE AND HUMAN PERSPECTIVE”

ARTIST OLAFUR ELIASSON IN CONVERSATION WITH ARCHITECT THOMAS BO JENSEN ABOUT THE THINKING BEHIND FJORDENHUS.

TBJ: It would be fair to say that the architects of today are “smitten by all things contemporary”. They have a tendency to reference each other all the time. They move gradually, en masse, in the same direction and pay close attention to the latest trends. The upshot is a certain degree of homogeneity and a lack of surprise and innovation. You blaze a trail down a completely different path. Why is that?

OE: Bucking trends weren’t really at the front of our minds when designing Fjordenhus. There are exciting newbuilds that might be categorised as part of one trend or another – and that’s not necessarily a bad thing. And I am actually interested in where architecture is at and where it’s going. But Fjordenhus was more about the elements – my interest in the interaction between a building and its surroundings, between a building and people, and how our patterns of movement influence our perception of the spaces around us. Fjordenhus emerged from questions like that. Taking the human body and its ability to orientate itself in a space as our starting point, we focused on circles and ellipses as design elements that accommodate these questions, or even activate them, if you like.

TBJ: Fjordenhus doesn’t seem to be influenced by the architecture around it. From a distance, it’s reminiscent of medieval castles with drawbridges and moats. Spøttrup Castle springs to mind, which offers a window into a distant past, surrounded by water, with no connection to the present. Others may detect Asian associations – shades of the stunning Chora Church in Istanbul, or maybe Arab or Persian architecture with all their parabolic shapes. As an architect, it’s hard not to see references to Louis Kahn’s buildings in India and Bangladesh as well. What architectural references did you discuss at the start of the process?

OE: Rather than looking at existing buildings, we started with the setting. Fjordenhus is on a site between built-up, natural and industrial areas. We were really interested in underlining the relationship between building and water, a bit like Venice. The fact that there is a mediating zone between the fjord and Fjordenhus was crucial to us. The dialogue between fjord and building is radical, ‘in your face’ – but funnily enough that didn’t make it difficult. It embraces the ephemeral and changeable nature of the site – with its shifting light, rippling water, ever-changing wind and weather conditions – and adds to the uniqueness of the building. The industrial silos, gas tanks and water towers so commonplace on industrial waterfronts were another reference. Personally, I’m pretty much into phenomenology, so monumentality wasn’t front of mind – it was more about the tactile, the immediate and human perspective. I also wanted a fusion of digitalisation and craftsmanship – two approaches often seen as contradictory because knowledge of manual skills is on the way out in the digital age. The almost expressive idiom of the arched vaults, coupled with the immediacy of the brickwork, was key for me.

TBJ: You’ve often talked about the relationship between art and architecture, and how practitioners can ‘swing back and forth on a hinge’ between the two. Could you elaborate on that?

OE: I’m so lucky to work with a team of brilliant architects led by Sebastian Behmann, who was the architectural driving force behind Fjordenhus. I used to think that it didn’t really matter whether you were an artist or an architect, but my thinking about this has crystallised over the years. I’m an artist, and just an artist. But I’m an artist who hugely enjoys working with architecture and architects. That’s why Sebastian and I founded Studio Other Spaces a few years ago, to work in the intersection between art and architecture. We’re an artist and an architect, each with a deep interest in space and in each other’s spatial language.

TBJ: Fjordenhus seems to be a sort of fusion between art and architecture, in the sense that it serves as both a building and as a sculptural form. Artistic features have also been integrated throughout. You might say that it can be seen both as a physical fusion of art and architecture, and as a relationship between the two, in the relationship between space and contents. What can you tell us about your approach to this duality in Fjordenhus?

OE: I really wanted to do everything because everything is interconnected. If you want to create spaces that users or visitors really ‘see’, then everything in it matters, everything has a reason. Everything must fit into the overall concept.

TBJ: From a distance, it’s the sculptural aspect that catches the eye, up close it’s the brickwork. The large parabola-shaped openings are made of seamlessly integrated concrete elements. Outside, the bricks act as a shell, a cloak around the building. Why did you not go ‘all in’ with concrete façades, given that concrete presented the best solution to the static challenges posed by the building?

OE: Fjordenhus was built for people. Brick is friendly, welcoming, atmospheric. The haptic quality was crucial for us. Using brick also allowed us to work with colour modulation in greater detail.

TBJ: You used 18 different types of brick on the façades – some perforated, some glazed. What was the thinking behind this? I mean, you could have opted for a more ‘monolithic’ look by using just one type of brick, for example.

OE: Each different brick represents an encounter with something deeply physical, with a geological mass that emerges from the firing and colours. Our planet has an extreme wealth and variety of materials. When it comes to building, there isn’t a ’right’ brick or a ’right’ answer – there are all sorts of options. So I went for a pluralistic approach – you might even call it an encyclopaedic one – to the bricks. For me, it’s a matter of showcasing the diversity of nature.

TBJ: High insulation requirements have reduced brick to providing thin facing walls with no effect on load-bearing structures. You might even say brick is out of date as a building material. If it didn’t already exist, nobody would invent it. What do you think about this ’dilemma’?

OE: In structural terms, this may well be the case but brick offers more – it’s beautiful and invites a tactile relationship with the building, almost like skin on another person. Skin holds the body together, but also acts as a mediating layer for all sorts of other functions, like emotions and presence. When choosing a material, its potential to establish a sense of presence is hugely important to me. I was also attracted by brick’s ability to help with important functions like the room temperature and the acoustics.



Artist, Olafur Eliasson, and architect, Sebastian Behmann, worked closely together on Fjordenhus.



All of the solid and loose fixtures, apart from the chairs, were specially designed for the building by Eliasson. The shape and idiom of the Shell Chair CH07, designed by Hans J. Wegner in 1963 and produced by Carl Hansen & Søn, could almost have been conceived for Fjordenhus.

“I’m an artist and just an artist. But I’m an artist who hugely enjoys working with architecture and architects.” Olafur Eliasson

A third of the Playhouse juts out in the harbour, where a wide, sculptural oak promenade affords access to the glass-covered lobby with its outstanding view of the harbour entrance. The upper cantilevered floor of the building, which is floor-to-ceiling glass, includes a changing room and canteen for theatre staff.

TEN YEARS OF A STRIKING BUILDING AND A STRIKING BRICK

COPENHAGEN TOOK THE PLAYHOUSE TO ITS HEART RIGHT AWAY WHEN IT WAS COMPLETED A DECADE AGO. THE BRICK USED HAS PROVEN EQUALLY SUSTAINABLE.

Petersen Tegl enjoys close relationships with architects all over the world. Some are closer than others and are truly special as the brickworks and the studios have developed new products together, which have later become an important part of the company's range and narrative.

One of these is Lundgaard & Tranberg, which first used Petersen products in 1990 and has often opted for innovative new products. They used a new version of Petersen Cover on Sorø Art Museum, which was inaugurated in 2012, a product now being used in more and more construction projects around the world. Four years later, Kannikegården in Ribe was completed, clad in 630 x 350 x 50 mm Cover, specially designed for the purpose by Lundgaard & Tranberg.

The Playhouse in Copenhagen celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, and it is an event very much worth marking, both for the many users and for Petersen Tegl, which played an important part in the project, a contribution crucial to the company's subsequent fortunes. When The Playhouse – which was the result of an open competition and built for 'the spoken word' – was completed in 2008, the people of Copenhagen took it to their hearts right away, and not just at theatre time. The inviting oak walkway around the building and along the waterfront and the large lobby and restaurant are teeming with life, all year round.

The waterfront location, surrounded by old brick warehouses, made a brick exterior the natural choice when the design process started almost two decades ago. The function and proportions of the building called for a brick with a different format and look than traditional products could offer.

Lundgaard & Tranberg derived inspiration from the handmade brick Peter Zumthor had developed along with Petersen Tegl in 2000 for the Kolumba Museum, which was later added to the company's range under the name Kolumba.

The architects wanted a darker brick and with more structure, and trials at the brickworks took several years, with a huge number of samples discarded until Christian A. Petersen came up with the idea of importing English clay.

It turned out to be an excellent idea. The clay copes with firing at extremely high temperatures, resulting in uneven bricks with burrs, marks from stacking them in the furnace and a rustic look. The hard-fired bricks are also suitable for buildings with foundations in the seabed, especially ones that are permanently submerged. The minimal absorbency of the brick meant that a special mortar had to be produced for use with it at the Playhouse.

Adding yellow mud and sand endows K57 Royal Playhouse, as the brick was named, with shades of grey, blue, brown and green. It also possesses a depth and beauty that completes the Playhouse's architectural idiom, harmonises beautifully and naturally with its surroundings, and makes the brick an absolutely integral part of the Playhouse's unique aesthetic DNA. It also turned out to be a beauty with universal appeal, and K57 is now used on buildings all over the world.

Photos: Anders Sune Berg
Text: Ida Præstegaard

Lundgaard & Tranberg further developed the Peter Zumthor version of Kolumba and came up with one in dark colours and with a more rustic look. The dimensions were adapted to conform with the Danish bricklaying tradition, i.e. the number of centimetres of the horizontal side of a brick plus a joint is divisible by 6, and the number of centimetres of the horizontal side of a brick plus a joint is divisible by 20. This meant that the brickwork could easily be adapted to the modular systems of the Playhouse's other components. The horizontal lines are emphasised by protruding stub joints and the recessed bed joints.









Top: The Playhouse is on the Copenhagen waterfront and surrounded by 18th century warehouses in one of the oldest parts of the city. Only the high stage tower in the middle of the Playhouse stands out in height from the rest of the buildings in the area.

Light streams into the big foyer and patrons enjoy the view from the restaurant, Ophelia, and from the balconies that run almost the entire length of the building.

Brick is also used indoor as cladding on the heavy core elements that house the three auditoria. There is a gap between the brickwork and the long balcony.

The main auditorium, (Hjertekammeret) is designed like a cave hollowed out from the mighty brick structure. The brickwork has big, rugged, cliff-like surfaces, in which the position of each individual brick is calculated to give the right refraction and spread the acoustics in the room.

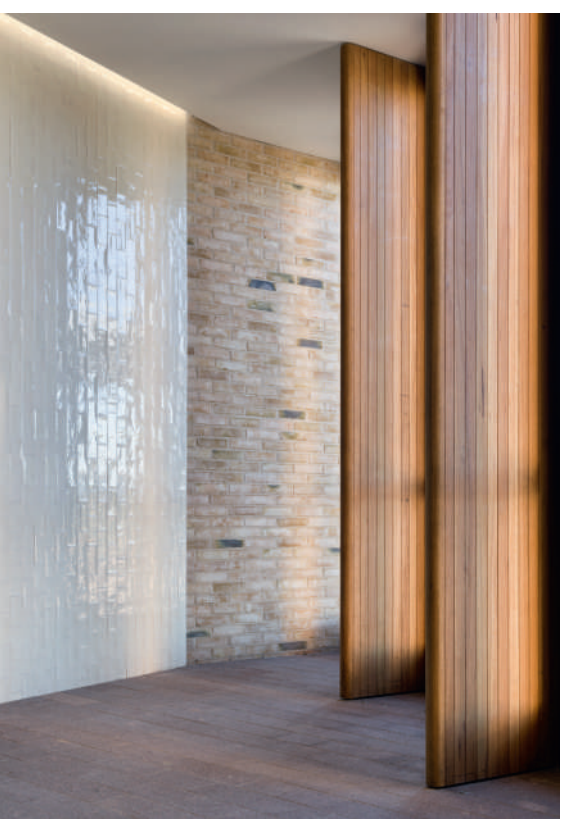




A number of rounded cornerstones were custom made for the project.



The rounded counter in the café is made of hard, blackbutt timber, as are the rectangular columns.



Indoor materials are coalfired and glazed bricks and blackbutt timber.



Maitland Riverlink is shaped like a large gateway with a minimal yet expressive idiom. The two weight-bearing sides are clad in brick and have a sculptural and precise look, with corners at angles of 18, 22, 40, 54, 60, 108 and 118 degrees. The large roof is made of steel, with the exterior coated in metal and the interior in blackbutt wood.

SHARP EDGES AND SOFT TONES

AS A LANDMARK, GATEWAY AND PLACE TO MEET, THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED RIVERLINK BUILDING IS A KEY ELEMENT IN THE REVITALISATION OF A PREVIOUSLY SOMEWHAT RUNDOWN AUSTRALIAN TRADING TOWN.

The Riverlink Building, designed by the renowned Sydney-based architects CHROFI, opened in spring 2018, instantly forming a new landmark in Maitland, New South Wales. It reconnects the centre of the city, both physically and visually, with the nearby Hunter River, the prerequisite for human settlement in the area since time immemorial.

Until the middle of the last century, Maitland was a thriving trading centre. Its commercial heart, High Street, followed the curving path of the river but turned its back on the water and its long uninterrupted line of buildings blocked access to the riverbanks and even to views of the Hunter.

There were good reasons for the buildings backing onto the river. It may have been an important transport route, but it was also notorious for bursting its banks. Repeated bouts of heavy and devastating flooding between 1949 and 1955, were a contributory factor to Maitland's subsequent decline. Commercial activity moved away from the river, and many of the historic buildings on the High Street stood empty. In 2010, the local council launched a revitalisation project to restore the High Street to its former glory and recognise the river's historical and recreational value to the city.

The Riverlink Building, erected on a specially cleared site on the High Street, is an important element in the transformation process. It serves mainly as a gateway, a magnificent and open passageway from the High Street to the riverbank. It is a place to meet – with its range of public facilities, cafés and restaurants – but the imposing gateway is also an attractive, covered urban space for outdoor events or simply to take a break.

In terms of architectural idiom, Riverlink stands in marked contrast to its surroundings. From a distance, the building appears monolithic, precise, and sharp-edged – an unequivocally modern statement in a historical setting. On closer inspection, however, the harmonious rapport with the other buildings in the area is clear to see, as is the beautiful and human scale of the new addition. This is down to the choice of materials – predominantly brick but supplemented by wood.

It was decided early on that brick would be the primary building material and that it had to be a very special type – one that "when you get close to it and touch it conveys a clear sense of something human and recognisable," explains Joshua Zoeller, an associate at CHROFI.

Samples of Petersen bricks had been lying around in the architects' studio for some time. They finally had the right project for them. "We had long been aware of these bricks," says Tai Ropiha, founding partner at CHROFI. "We liked their aesthetic look, the way they bring a more handmade and historic feel to modern architecture. We wanted Riverlink to embrace modernity but also complement the historic buildings on



Maitland Riverlink is on the banks of the Hunter River. Historically a significant transport route for the city, it was also notorious for bursting its banks and flooding the area.



The sculpture 'Clouds gathering', created for the site by artist Braddon Snape symbolises Maitland's complex history marked by floods. The sculpture also serves as a smaller gateway, the idea behind it being to encourage associations with the water's reflection, especially for children.



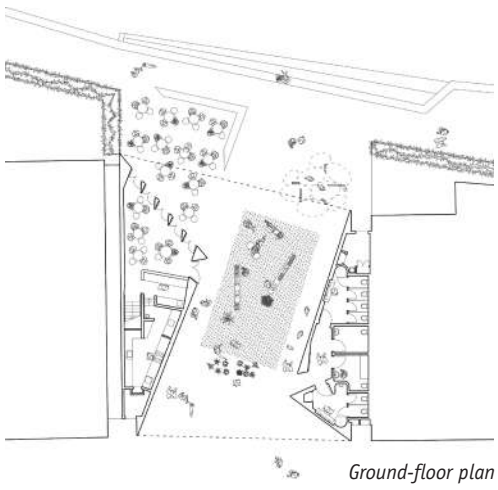
According to the architects, one of the reasons D71 was chosen was the softness that the brick exudes, which is reminiscent of sandstone eroded by time.

"We liked the aesthetic look of the bricks, the way they bring a more handmade and historic feel to modern architecture."
Tai Ropiha, architect, CHROFI

the High Street, which are mainly made of handmade brick," he continues.

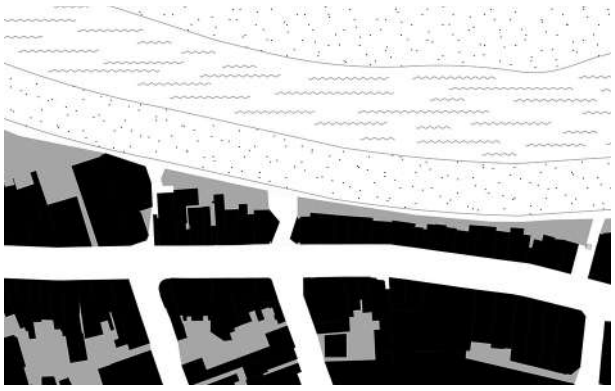
"The colours in the old façades alternate between soft yellow and cream, with some fine sandstone buildings dotted about in between," Zoeller adds. "Petersen D71 was the perfect fit. It has just the right powdered tone and even a tinge of soft sandstone."

The most striking formal aspect of the Riverlink Building is its sharply defined, tapered corners, which required special solutions. "At two of the corners, the walls meet at 18- and 22-degree angles, respectively," explains Zoeller. "We had to specially commission a number of bricks from Petersen, including some with rounded corners. While the corners look razor-sharp from a distance, up close you see that they are rounded off. This makes the idiom of the bricks change in a quite unique way."



Ground-floor plan

Maitland Riverlink, New South Wales, Australia
Client: Maitland City Council
Architect: CHROFI Architects
Engineer: SDA and Cardno
Landscape architect: McGregor Coxall
Lighting designer: Northrop
Built: 2018
Brick, DNF: D71, a total of 1,180 bricks in seven different specially moulded types
Text: Tina Jørstian, MA in Architecture
Photos: Justin Alexander
Photo, page 9, top: Brett Boardman



Site plan



Map of Dordrecht by Jacob van Deventer between 1545 and 1575. The map is from an atlas featuring drawings by van Deventer of all of the Dutch cities.



The historic centre of Dordrecht – the oldest city in the Netherlands – is rich in renaissance architecture with exquisitely ornate walled gables.



Of the 150 original renaissance gables built in the period 1500–1700, 60 remain standing and have been beautifully preserved.

REVIVING COLLECTIVE HISTORY

A NEW TOWNHOUSE IN DORDRECHT IN THE NETHERLANDS RECONCILES CONTEMPORARY STYLE WITH A HISTORICAL SETTING.

Throughout his career, the architect Andries Lugten has been passionate about the fascinating historical city of Dordrecht and played a part in a number of renovation projects to protect its fascinating cultural heritage. Houttuinen is one of the buildings he has designed along with his partner Theo Malschaert with whom he has shared a studio for 31 years.

Houttuinen consists of two flats, accessed via the remainder of a small listed building from 1840 – a former marble sawmill. Coincidentally, Lugten's first assignment as a young architect, 38 years ago, was to design a new factory for the company that owned the sawmill when they decided to move out of the city.

The building is located in Dordrecht's historic harbour area, 100 metres from the Grote Kerk. In English, the name means 'the lumberyards' – a reference to when timber from all over northern Europe was stored and traded on the quayside here in the Middle Ages. During the 17th century, the strategic importance of the city's riverside position faded – the timber trade was superseded by new industries, including companies that processed natural stone to meet the demands of the growing construction industry. After that, things went downhill and Dordrecht only really started to get back on its feet in the 1980s.

The marble sawmill was originally part of the river port, which until the 14th century was on the outskirts of Dordrecht by the city walls and fortifications. Later, a number of landfill projects along the river expanded the city and made the site more central. The fortifications feature in 16th- and 17th-century paintings by artists such as Jan van Goyen and Albert Cuyp, so we know exactly what they looked like.

The site for the new building was put up for sale in 2015. Lugten has long had a clear architectural vision for the area and submitted his proposal to the council building committee. It was accepted and the details published in the local newspaper, which attracted the interest of the two clients who now live in the flats.

The building is a three-storey, L-shaped structure, one wing of which runs along the riverside quays, the other along an alley perpendicular to the waterfront. The wings are connected by a tower erected on the foundations of a watchtower that was later demolished, along with the city wall. The entrance to the two flats (225 m^2 and 185 m^2) is via the spacious foyer of the listed, single-storey factory building. At ground-floor level, the building houses an office, which is connected to the lower of the two flats and parking space for six cars.

About a kilometre from the building, one solitary element of the original fortifications has been preserved – the Engelenborch Tower from 1429. As a counterpart to both the demolished and the new towers at Houttuinen, it informed the choice of materials for the new project. Lugten opted for a handmade brick, a grey Kolumba with a clay mixture that after firing resembles the patinated sandstone and slate of the nearby medieval tower. Petersen Tegl supplied both moulded and rounded bricks for the project.

Houttuinen is on a scale that matches its neighbours. The three volumes – with the tower in the middle, a simple façade and the subdued grey shades – make the new building a modern and positive addition to the city, not least because it recalls the site's forgotten history, without descending into pastiche.

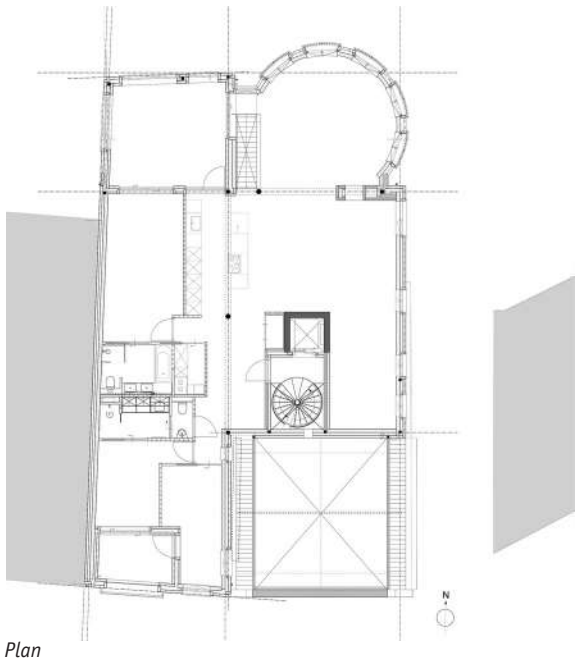
Houttuinen, a townhouse with two flats, Dordrecht, the Netherlands
Client: Private
Architect: Lugten Malschaert
Engineer: IMD Rotterdam
Built: 2017
Brick: K91, radial moulded bricks in the same clay
Text: Ida Præstegaard, MA in Architecture
Photos: Paul Kozlowski

Houttuinen is a new three-storey, L-shaped building, one wing of which runs along the riverside quays, the other along an alley perpendicular to the waterfront. The wings are connected by a tower erected on the foundations of a watchtower that was demolished, along with the city wall, in the 14th century.





The two wings envelop a listed, single-storey factory building, which now serves as a foyer and entrance to two flats.



Plan



Site plan



The new building is in the heart of the historic Dordrecht harbour area, 100 metres from the Grote Kerk church.

Engraving of Dordrecht from 1649, featuring the city wall and watchtowers along the waterfront.
Credit: Regionaal Archief Dordrecht, Hof van Nederland.



Photograph of the same view of Dordrecht in 2018.



One solitary element of the original fortifications has been preserved – the sandstone and brick Engelenborch Tower from 1429.



The tower in the new building matches the dimensions of the original watchtower. The grey Kolumba brick is a contemporary interpretation of original sandstone.





The 13th-century Marienkirche is in the original historic centre of Berlin. In the aftermath of World War II, the East German regime razed all the historic buildings in the area to the ground, with the church the only medieval building to survive the mass destruction.

HISTORY THROUGH MASONRY - MARIENKIRCHE IN BERLIN

KOLUMBA TAKES THE SPOTLIGHT IN A TRANQUIL, NEW, OPEN SPACE AROUND ONE OF THE OLDEST CHURCHES IN BERLIN.

The 13th-century Marienkirche, in the shadow of the iconic television tower on Alexanderplatz, remains a peaceful sanctuary amid the heavy traffic and angular post-war architecture of the German capital. The challenge of enriching the area and establishing an appropriately tranquil space around the church fell to Levin Monsigny Landscape Architects.

The church square is now ensconced behind a solid, low brick wall, and has been lowered to the level it would have been in the 16th century. The idea was to take visitors back, metaphorically, 500 years in the time it takes to descend from the street. The split level means that the wall is low and barely noticeable from the street but looks much higher from the square.

Landscape architect, Martina Levin, revealed some of the other ways in which the site's rich history was woven into the project. The paving around the church consists of worn cobblestones in slightly varied colours, which had been submerged below the city's asphalt streets for years before being cleaned and reused. It also includes rows of hard-fired, red bricks that form a life-size map of long-vanished streets, illustrating just how close the old houses were to the original church. The red brick lines stretch out onto Alexanderplatz, albeit only as painted lines at that stage.

The shape and height of the new wall vary considerably, creating a dynamic impression, which is further enhanced by a broad staircase and benches integrated into the inner side of the wall that echoes the style of the church pews inside. Both the wall and the benches are made of the same bricks – dark-grey and dark-red Kolumba – combined to create a pattern that harmonises nicely with the polychromatic brickwork of the church. Levin also highlights the serendipity of the long, narrow Kolumba evoking the geological strata that were exposed and removed while lowering the church square back down to its 16th-century level.

The highly prestigious nature of the location presented further challenges, and the developer – the city council –rejected three proposals before finally approving the fourth test sample. Now completed, the wall marks, in the most exquisite manner, the area around one of Berlin's most important churches and the project as a whole helps tell the history of the city. Encouragingly, the new addition seems to command the respect of the locals. "Well, the wall hasn't been covered in graffiti," says Levin, audibly relieved.



Marienkirche has languished in the shadow of the iconic television tower since 1963.



The area inside the wall has been lowered to the level it would have been in the 16th century, and the steps down into it are made of Kolumba brick.

New wall around the Marienkirche, Berlin
Client: Bezirksamt Mitte von Berlin
Architect: Levin Monsigny Landscape Architects GmbH
Construction: Otto Kittel GmbH
Completed: 2016
Brick: K53, K54
Text: Thomas Dickson, architect and author
Photos: Anders Sune Berg



THREE-FAMILY RESIDENCE ON MIQUELSTRASSE

This large, modern residence on the southern outskirts of Berlin elegantly complements the grand period homes of the lush surrounding area. Berlin-based Nalbach + Nalbach paid close attention to the neighbourhood when coming up with this modern building imbued with a distinct dash of classicism. It may look like one large family home, but the building actually comprises three apartments. Carefully positioning it in the middle of grounds surrounded by railings further enhances the refined look.

The architects have subtly woven contrasts into the overall look, including pulling back the top floor from the two below to tone down the modernist idiom bestowed by the flat roof. Elsewhere, the tall, single-pane windows are bordered by sandstone runners, further playing up the classical connotations.

The top floor of the three-family residence has been pulled back from the two below, making it a more subtle presence and creating space for terraces. The main façade has highly effective discreet ornamental reliefs near the top.



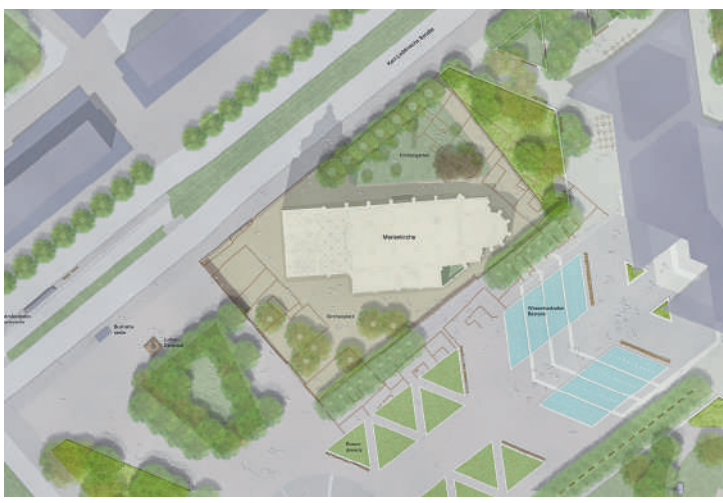
The wall is made of a mixture of K53 and K54, the red and grey shades of which harmonise beautifully with the various colours of the church exterior. The horizontal Kolumba also evokes the geological strata that were exposed and removed while lowering the square back down to its 16th-century level.



Before World War II, Marienkirche was in the former Neuer Markt square and surrounded by a densely populated neighbourhood.



The recently added lines of hard-fired, red bricks form a life-size map of long-vanished streets, illustrating just how close the old houses were to the 16th-century church.



Site plan

Architect and partner in the studio Professor Johanne Nalbach explains why Petersen bricks were chosen as a counterpoint to the clean, almost plastic form of the building. "The bricks are alive and mellow with time," she says. "They balance out the anodised aluminium of the windows." Subtle reliefs near the top of the building also add a self-effacing modern form of ornamentation.

Residential building on Miquelstraße, Berlin
Client: Private
Architect: Nalbach + Nalbach
Built: 2014
Brick, DNF: D71
Text: Thomas Dickson, architect and author
Photos: Anders Sune Berg



The stately and classical edifice in the middle of the site has an equally classical entrance in the middle of its sustained symmetrical front.





At street level, the façade is defined by a high, wave-patterned band of concrete, which acts as a visual foundation for the brick-clad floors above.

The façade in Saarbrücker Strasse effortlessly asserts its own identity. All of the windows and street doors are edged with protruding brickwork flush with the rhombic pattern in the same brick on the rest of the façade.

RESIDENTIAL BLOCK IN PRENZLAUER BERG

Prenzlauer Berg may encapsulate the very essence of old East Berlin and be steeped in history, but the neighbourhood is undergoing a transformation, with new buildings shooting up on every vacant lot. One of the most notable is on Saarbrücker Strasse, where a private investor commissioned Stefano Viviani to design a rental property that had that little something extra – something with an Italian touch – rather than just another concrete box.

The result is a six-storey property with 33 properties for rent, the majority of them flats of around 100 m². The external façade is adorned with yellow D72 bricks, arranged in a striking and distinctive rhombus pattern – or the pullover pattern, as the locals call it. According to Viviani, the bricks are a nod to the history of the area, which used to be dominated by yellow brick buildings, including several breweries.

The 52 homes in Tilia Resort are a mixture of detached and terraced houses along a paved pathway.



TILIA LIVING RESORT NEAR POTSDAM

Nestled in a scenic spot near Potsdam is the Tilia Living Resort – a complex of 52 charming detached and terraced houses. They are varied yet share features such as flat roofs and have a cubist air. Some of them look out over Lake Griebnitzsee, the others have views of the surrounding forests.

Most of the houses form a ring around the perimeter of the 33,000-m² complex. The rest are nearer the centre, where towering old trees have been preserved and an artificial lake added. The homes have either two or two-and-a-half floors and range between 125 and 375 m². They all have access to a garden and have either a balcony or a roof terrace.

In addition to the yellow brickwork, the houses are defined by large glass panels, some partially bordered by dark-wood shutters, and by the fact that the top floors are



The light, coal-fired brick and white balconies harmonise with the colours in the rest of the street.

At street level, the façade is defined by a high, wave-patterned band of concrete. This provides the visual foundation for the brick-clad floors above, the tall windows and big white balconies, all of which comes together in a rounded malleable idiom. The building also has a pleasant back yard, and the hilltop location affords views across central Berlin from several of the flats.

Residential block, Saarbrücker Strasse, Prenzlauer Berg
Client: Private
Architect: Stefano Viviani
Built: 2014
Brick, DNF: D72
Text: Thomas Dickson, architect and author
Photos: Anders Sune Berg



The look of the six-storey building is reminiscent of 1930s residential architecture. Tall windows provide ample daylight and large balconies allow for outside living.



Site plan

pulled back from the ones below. The project, overseen by the investment company Tilia, prioritised environmental concerns and recycling, for example, all of the properties are highly insulated and heated by an on-site geothermal plant.

Tilia Living Resort, Housing complex, Potsdam, Berlin
Client: Stofanel Investment AG
Architect: QBQ + Partner, Berlin
Built: 2014
Brick, DNF: D71
Text: Thomas Dickson, architect and author
Photos: Anders Sune Berg

The common denominators are flat roofs and fronts in light, coal-fired brick.



A TOWNHOUSE IN AARHUS

CLADDING A NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDING IN AARHUS WITH PETERSEN COVER TURNED OUT TO BE THE RIGHT CHOICE IN PRACTICAL AND FINANCIAL TERMS. THE EFFECT IS ALSO BEAUTIFUL.

The prominent location on Vesterbro Torv called for a striking exterior, a view shared by the city architect and the property company Høgh & Rousing Invest, which bought the site to build 32 flats and shops on the ground floor.

"The job was precisely defined. We took on a project where planning permission had already been granted for concrete elements, but we wanted to change the exterior. We had to come up with a concept that harmonised with the existing windows and doorways, and commissioned LOOP Architects to do the job," says Kim Richter, Technical Director of Høgh & Rousing Invest.

"Almost all of the surrounding buildings have brick fronts, so that was our starting point. But we also wanted the building to look different, to be a new interpretation and of high quality. Petersen Cover had not previously been used in an urban context in Aarhus, so it was an ideal opportunity. Our studio also places great emphasis on sustainability, so we like the fact that bricks can be taken down and recycled. Balconies, window frames and covers made of anodised aluminium have a golden sheen, which beautifully complements the red brick, so the look is as beautiful as we hoped," says architect Morten Nymann, LOOP Architects.

According to Richter, the choice of Cover was welcomed not only as an architecturally exciting, but also as a construction-friendly solution. The fact that Cover turned out to have financial benefits on that particular site was an added bonus.

"The building is special because the curvature follows the road. The radius changes every 60 cm and no two parts of it are the same. This would have made a traditional facing wall a challenge because all of the lintels would have had to be curved and not two are the same. In addition, the brickwork would have had to be curved, something you would normally use a mould for. In this case, the moulds would only have been used for a very short section. We would have had to make a lot of them, and it would all have turned into a really complicated business," Richter explains.

The financial benefit also has to do with the curved shape of the building: "The Cover façade turned out to be 25% cheaper than a facing wall would have been on this site. If the exterior had been a straight line, it would have been the other way round. The fact that the façade ended up being rather expensive was due to the solutions we chose for balconies and window frames. It had nothing to do with the brick product," concludes Richter.

Residential building with 32 flats, Vesterbro Torv, Aarhus
Client: Høgh & Rousing Invest A/S
Architecture, façade concept: LOOP Architects
Engineer and contractor: Tækker Group
Other architectual advisers: Gottlieb Paludan Architects
Built: 2017
Brick: C48
Text: Ida Præstegaard, MA in Architecture
Photos: Anders Sune Berg



Almost all of the other buildings in the area around Vesterbro Torv boast brick façades, so a brick cladding was an obvious choice. Using Cover allowed the architects to re-interpret the classic townhouse.

From the roof terrace, residents enjoy a view of Aarhus from 17 metres up.





The front on Vesterbro Torv is straight, but the side along Vesterport follows the bend of the street.



The new block fits harmoniously into the row of red-brick buildings.

A TOWNHOUSE IN HEIDELBERG

THE REDDISH PETERSEN COVER IN TEGULA VILLEN HARMONISES WITH LOCAL BRICK AND SANDSTONE.

The site for the new building with the nine flats marks the transition from an area of tenement blocks in the centre of Heidelberg to one of a smaller, detached homes. After consultation with their client, Epple GmbH, Element A Architekten designed the Tegula Villen complex as two buildings – one four-storey and one five – to relate to the scale of the areas on either side of the site. The buildings are connected by a glass passageway and both make use of their attic space in a deferential nod to the exquisitely ornamental mansard roof of the 19th-century property next door.

"We and our client both wanted to use the same material for the roof and façade, which was one reason why we chose Petersen Cover," says architect Christian Taufelbach. "Both the structure and the colour played important parts. Several of the surrounding buildings have elements of red sandstone, a popular building material in the Neckar region, but brick is also common in Heidelberg. Using brick with shades of red sandstone was a harmonious solution."

The architects made use of the fact that Cover is available in a range of sizes when designing the details for the façades.

"The ground floor is clad in 170 mm high Cover, the upper floors in the 240 mm version. The differentiation creates a visual base, reflecting the tradition of the older buildings in the area, but in a modern and understated way," Taufelbach explains.

Tegula Villen, A residential complex with nine flats, Heidelberg, Germany
Client: Epple GmbH
Architect: Element A Architekten
Built: 2017
Brick: C48
Text: Ida Præstegaard, MA in Architecture
Photos: Paul Kozlowski

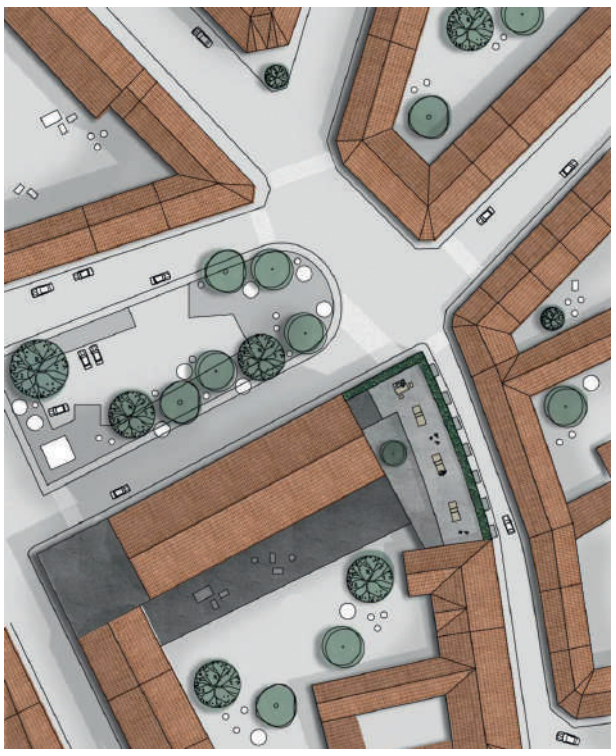


The attic space in Tegula Villen represents a deferential nod to the exquisitely ornamental mansard roof on the 19th-century property next door.



The two buildings are at different heights to fit in with their neighbours.

Site plan



Site plan



The ground floor is clad in 170 mm Cover, the upper floors in 240 mm Cover. The difference reflects the modern interpretation of the new buildings' base.



GEOMETRICAL BUT ORGANIC

PERCHED ON A CLIFF HIGH ABOVE THE SEA, THIS HOLIDAY HOME ON RENNESØY, AN ISLAND JUST OFF STAVANGER IN NORWAY, AFFORDS SPECTACULARLY BREATHTAKING VIEWS.



Rennesøy is one of several islands in the Rogaland region, north of Stavanger. The new holiday home affords sublime and dramatic views of the sea 107 metres below.

Meltwater trickles through the vegetation and down over the cliffs. The road follows the coastline, then winds its meandering way uphill until its destination, some 100 metres above sea level. The house stands on a small plateau embedded into the cliff behind it. Architect and professor Espen Surnevik says, "The splendid and distinctive setting informed the choice of materials: concrete and brick. We wanted a long brick to reflect the horizontal stratification in the cliffs. Kolumba was a great match in shape and colour."

As soon as you enter the house, the panorama is unmissable. "You have two amazing views from the site: the impressive views out to sea and a close-up view of the imposing natural rock. To enhance these, we incorporated large windows facing the mountain," explains Surnevik. "During the day, your gaze is directed out towards the sea and the horizon. In the evening, as darkness falls, the rock faces take over."

The property is a sleek, ultra-modern take on a ranch-style house, atop a plateau of concrete cast on site. "The basic floor plan is strictly ordered, consisting of squares of 3.5 x 3.5 metres, set diagonally adjacent to one another at 45°," Surnevik goes on. "All of the rooms are arranged around this plan, and so they are all interconnected. But where some walls are made of brick, others are made of glass or wood, bringing variety to the interior. The layout also means that you can see all the way through the house, which gives you a sense of movement as the walls slide in and out of each other."

Black-painted railings and organically shaped canopies over some of the windows break up the otherwise rigid geometry. "There's a tension between nature's organic forms and the slightly regimented building. The railings are more playful. They get to be free and individual. The strict basic structure is accompanied by solos on these free elements," says Surnevik.

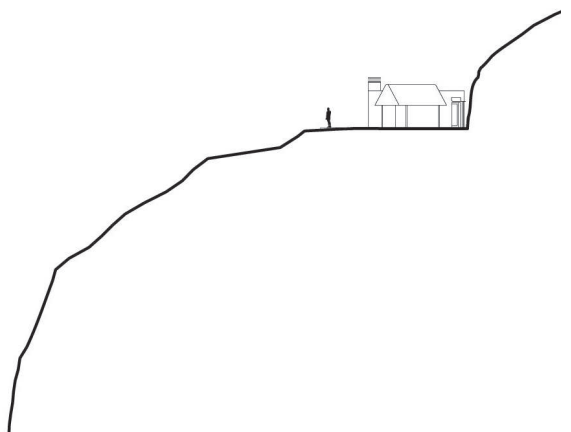
The oak trees around the building inspired the use of the same wood for the sliding doors, panels, ceilings and cupboards. Its golden tones imbue the building with warmth and subtle acoustics. "It's very green and lush here in the summer. Very intense," says the client, a Norwegian businesswoman who lives in Stavanger. "While the house is a rather rigid and precise construction, the surrounding area is teeming with trees. Nature has been invited in."

At each end of the house is a bedroom and bathroom, the centre features an open-plan kitchen and a living area with a fireplace. The open space can be separated into sections using sliding doors. The client explains: "I was focused on how the house would be used. It had to accommodate both small groups of people and large groups, without them having to spend all of their time together. Hence the various sliding doors and niches. When there are a lot of kids here, they all disappear into the niches with their iPads."

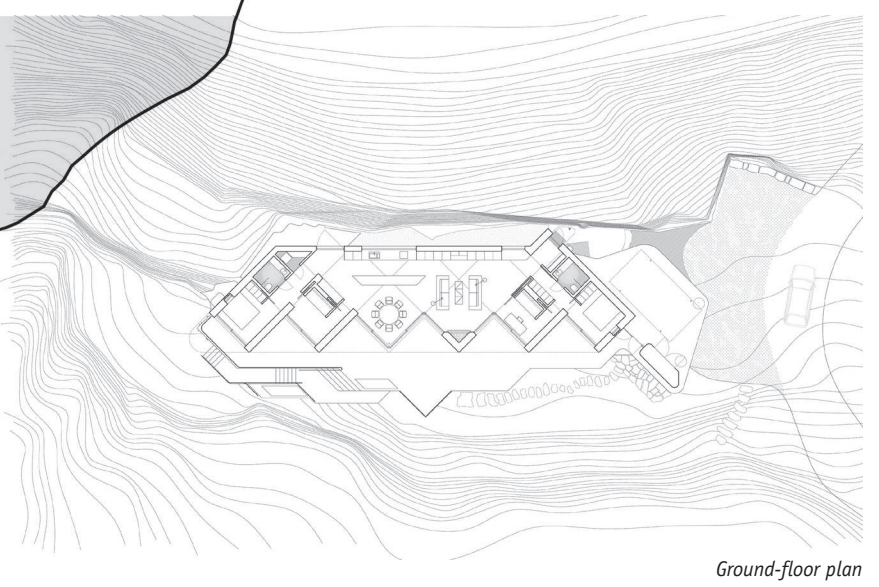
The family also owns several of the surrounding properties. "We all spent our childhood summers here," she says. "We have strong family ties to this place. The whole extended family, including cousins from each side of the family, gathers here. I use the house as much as I can, almost every weekend. It's more than just a house for me. It represents a feeling."

House on Rennesøy, Rogaland, Norway
Client: Private
Architect: Espen Surnevik
Contractor: Høie Ueland AS
Built: 2017
Brick: K96
Text: Martin Søberg PhD, architectural historian
Photos: Sindre Ellingsen

Inspired by the beauty of the mountainside, the architect and client opted for mineral materials – concrete and brick. Its horizontal form and grey shades made K96 the closest thing to the layered, grey, rock formations.

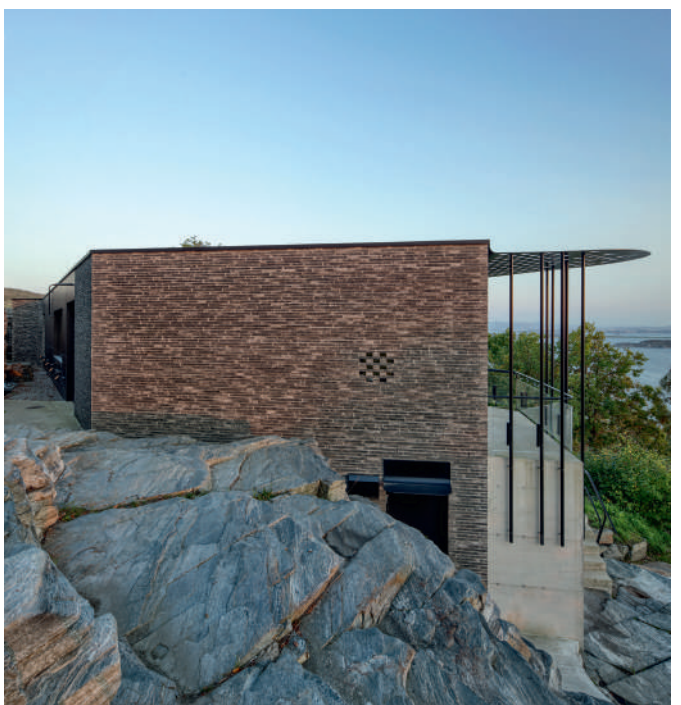


"We wanted a long brick to reflect the horizontal stratification in the cliffs. Kolumba was a great match in shape and colour."
Espen Surnevik, architect



Ground-floor plan

The house is literally built into the cliff. In the sunset the bricks become rose-coloured.







Perched on a small concrete plateau right by the mountainside, the flat-roofed house pays homage to its setting.



From the kitchen window, you look straight into the mountainside just a metre away.



One of the wall sections has a built-in fireplace.



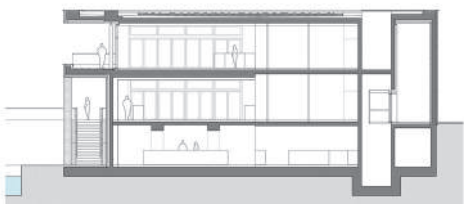
The diagonal walls leave space for plenty of sheltered outdoor spaces.



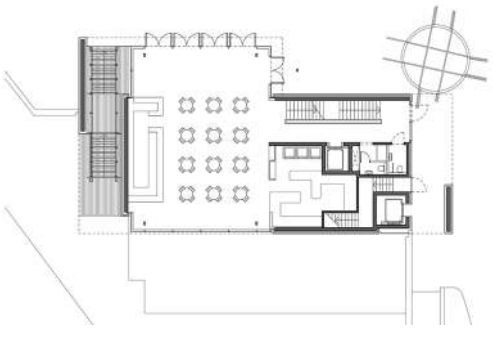
Covering a total of 27 hectares, the King's Cross Central Masterplan in London is one of the biggest new urban development projects in Europe. In a few years, work is expected to have been completed on 2,000 new homes as well as workplaces and study facilities. The Lighterman, on a beautiful site next to Regent's Canal, is one of the new restaurants in the area.

The restaurant has a large terrace, which affords beautiful views of the canal and the nearby historic buildings.

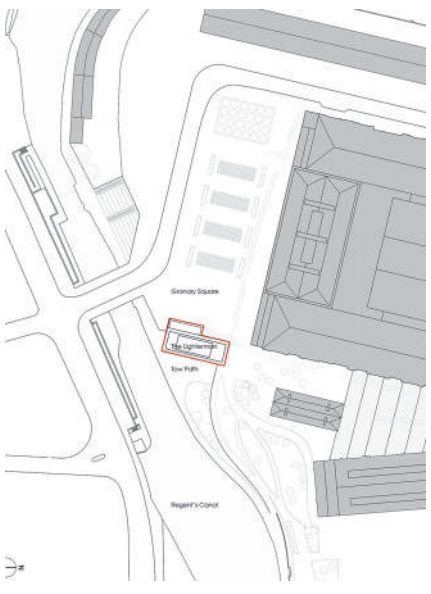




Section



Ground-floor plan (Square)



Site plan

The restaurant has two floors facing onto Granary Square but three facing Regent's Canal which is on a lower level. A public staircase runs through the building, connecting the two levels.





In this slightly raw industrial setting, The Lighterman stands out as a refined, dark structure with straight, horizontal lines.

MODERN ELEGANCE AMONG VICTORIAN WAREHOUSES

OLD GAS TANKS, WAREHOUSES AND RAILWAY TRACKS SPEAK OF THE INDUSTRIAL PAST OF NORTH LONDON'S KING'S CROSS DISTRICT, BUT IN JUST A FEW YEARS IT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A VIBRANT, CREATIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD, AT THE HEART OF WHICH STANDS AN ANGULAR AND ULTRA-MODERN RESTAURANT, THE LIGHTERMAN.

The Lighterman, King's Cross, London
Client: Argent
Architects: Stanton Williams
Engineers: AKT II, Grontmij, AECOM
Built: 2016
Brick: K58
Text: Martin Søberg PhD, architectural historian
Photos: Paul Kozlowski



The dark hard-fired K58 enters into a close dialogue with the famous college of art and design, Central Saint Martins, which has taken up residence in a former warehouse made of classic London stock brick.

It's a balmy June evening and King's Cross is buzzing. Long queues snake across the central plaza, Granary Square, waiting for the graduate show at the famous college of art and design, Central Saint Martins, which has taken up residence in the Granary – a huge 19th-century warehouse built to store wheat for London's bakeries. The ghosts of bygone industry have given way to vibrant creativity. Educational institutions, flats, shops and offices have taken over the old buildings or sprung up between them in new, architecturally ambitious formats.

Diners at The Lighterman people-watch the crowds from the terraces overlooking the plaza. The three-storey restaurant, which is significantly lower than many of its older industrial neighbours, almost looks like a pavilion. Two of the floors mark the eastern edge of Granary Square, while the ground floor connects to footpaths and cycle paths along the Regent's Canal. A public staircase runs through the building, connecting the two levels, the square and the canal.

The Regent's Canal opened in 1820 and made this an important industrial area all the way up until the 1960s. The canal linked King's Cross with the industrial cities of the North, and brought coal, building materials and food to the capital. All sorts of goods and materials were stored in huge warehouses here, and the area was home to the biggest gasworks in London as well as St Pancras and King's Cross railway stations, the latter of which also links the capital to the North.

In this slightly raw industrial setting, The Lighterman stands out as a refined, dark structure with straight, horizontal lines and bold textures. The choice of Kolumba brick was a crucial element in establishing its character.

"The elongated brick suited the building because it meant fewer joints and a very elegant profile. We wanted to accentuate the horizontal rather than the vertical. Concealing all the expansion joints helped us achieve a monolithic look," explains associate architect William Kavanagh of Stanton Williams.

The dark brickwork endows the building with a texture and weight that matches the patina of the Victorian buildings in the neighbourhood. The use of steel and glass also helps bestow an industrial air on the new building.

"We ended up using a dark brick, but it has yellow traces that interact well with the local brickwork. We felt that the dark grey was quite timeless, but it also complements the old, dark slate roofs. And Kolumba stands out on its own. It isn't an attempt to match the surrounding bricks. It has its own distinct identity and is more like a new member of the family," Kavanagh adds.

Bricks have also been inset into the concrete canopies. "The cantilevered element gives a dramatic, unobstructed view with no columns, just glass doors. It offers a 270°, panoramic view out over King's Cross. From the upper terrace you can see the sun set over the square, and watch people. It's a wonderful spot," he says.

On this particular June evening, there is plenty to see. The Lighterman's terraces are filled to capacity with diners as the last rays of the evening sun cast a soft light over the historical but revitalised industrial area.

According to the architect, "Kolumba stands out on its own. It isn't an attempt to match the surrounding bricks. It has its own distinct identity and is more like a new member of the family."





North Germany has many red-brick towns and cities. A prime example is Lüneburg, which is well-preserved having avoided the destruction of World War II. To maintain a rapport with the traditional material, GMD Architekten mainly uses brick in its projects, albeit mainly yellow ones to stand out from the crowd.



Bremen's landmark brick elephant was erected in 1932 as a monument to German colonialism in Africa. In 1990, it was renamed the Anti-Colonialism Memorial.

BREMEN STUDIO REFINES THE MICRO-APARTMENT CONCEPT

SMALL HOMES MAKE FINANCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SENSE. GMD ARCHITEKTEN CONSTANTLY STRIVES TO REFINE THE MICRO-APARTMENT CONCEPT, WHICH THEY BELIEVE CALLS FOR HIGH-QUALITY FAÇADES.



The student apartments at STU Lüneburg are in an idyllic spot by the river Ilmenau.

I met GMD Architekten in Überseestadt, near Bremen. The dynamic studio, which celebrates its fifth anniversary next year, has been based in a former warehouse, now a listed building, at Speicher 1, Konsul-Smidt-Strasse since 2017. The 226 x 30-metre concrete and brick warehouse built in 1948 has been meticulously restored and houses several companies. GMD leases 152 m^2, which has also housed Petersen Tegl's new showroom in northern Germany since September 2018.

Although its main focus is in the local area, GMD is a national company involved in projects in Frankfurt-am-Main and the Baltic Sea region. Its accomplishments range from detached houses and daycare facilities for children to hotels and micro-apartments. The portfolio of micro-apartments is particularly strong. GMD has specialised in and refined the concept in several projects.

"With 24,000 students, Bremen is a major university city and needs large numbers of small apartments. Designing small homes that work as well as possible is a fascinating challenge. We've designed housing developments consisting solely of micro-apartments not just for students. Making small spaces functional makes sustainable, social and financial sense – and that alone makes it exciting work," explains architect Patrick Denker, one of the three founding partners along with architects Nico Grashoff and Lars Müller.

Three of the partners at GMD Architekten, Lars Müller, Patrick Denker and Nico Grashoff.



GMD Architekten has been based in a 226-metre long former warehouse, now a listed building, at Speicher 1, Konsul-Smidt-Strasse since 2017. Since September 2018, the space has also housed Petersen Tegl's new showroom in northern Germany.





The student flats at STU Lüneburg have simple shapes clad in a light, coal-fired D71. The gables are finished with patterned brickwork.



MA Bremen is a complex consisting of micro-apartments in large blocks connected by a single-storey walkway.

GMD has both private and public-sector clients, and only a handful of its projects are the result of competitions."In the five years since we started, we've built up a good network with investors. We also act on our own initiative, identifying suitable sites, drafting proposals and presenting them to potential clients," says Denker.

Almost all GMD buildings are made of brick, about which the three partners are passionate."Brick façades last almost forever and require minimal maintenance. Brick also makes it possible to add variations and relief effects that you just can't do with a plastered finish. Brick buildings are also much better investments. Our clients know that brick buildings sell better and faster than plaster ones."

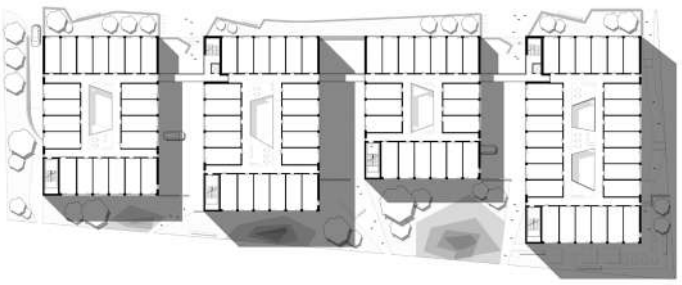
"Historically, red brick has been by far the most common building material in the north of Germany. Because we work with a minimal, modern idiom, we like to differentiate our buildings by using different colours of brick. Working with the local planning authorities, we often recommend a quite light, coal-fired brick for outside walls. Buildings that consist solely of small apartments, all of which need plenty of natural light and big windows, almost invariably means you end up with regular façades, so it's crucial that they're well-proportioned and made of durable and beautiful materials," Denker concludes.

STU Lüneburg
Student apartments, Lüneburg, Germany
311 apartments measuring approximately 23 m²
Architect: GMD Architekten
Built: 2017
Brick, DNF: D71

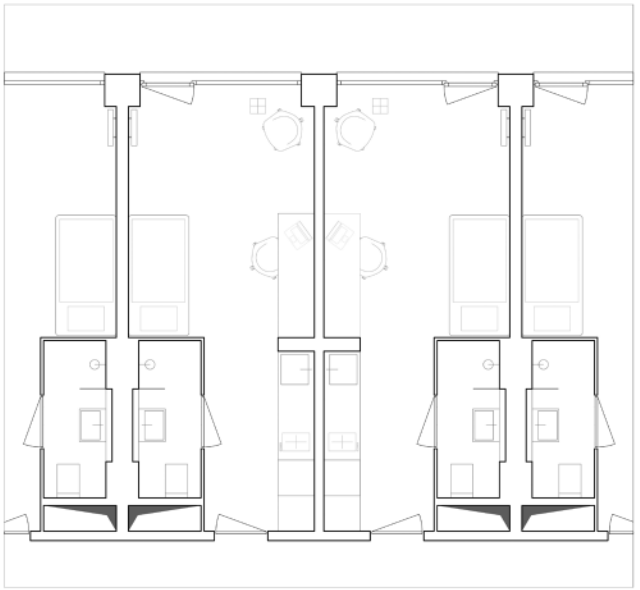
MA Bremen
Micro-apartments
533 apartments measuring 21 m²–63 m²
Architect: GMD Architekten
Built: 2018
Brick, DNF: D71

Text: Ida Præstegaard, MA in Architecture
Photos: Paul Kozlowski

"Brick buildings are also much better investments. Our clients know that they sell better and faster than plaster ones."
Patrick Denker, architect, GMD Architekten



Development plan, STU Lüneburg.



Examples of micro-apartments.

PETERSEN TEGL IN BREMEN

THE NEW SHOWROOM IS THE THIRD IN GERMANY. THE OTHERS ARE SITUATED IN HAMDORF AND COLOGNE.

Petersen Tegl has set up its North German showroom in the ground floor of the Speicher warehouse, in the same space as GMD Architekten.



BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA VENEZIA 2018

HAND-MOULDED TILES MADE FOR A BELGIAN MUSEUM TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT THE VENICE BIENNIAL 2018.





When the curators Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara invited architect Francesca Torzo to exhibit at the Biennale, she decided to focus on just one of her projects: the extension to the Z33 House for Contemporary Art in Hasselt, Belgium, due for completion in 2019.

Francesca Torzo and Petersen Tegl have developed a customised, rhombus-shaped tile, hand-moulded from a combination of German and Danish clay for the exterior walls.

Torzo's exhibition in the Corderie building in Arsenale features life-size wall sections, as well as 1:5 and 1:10 models and a range of design elements created by Torzo for the Belgian museum.

The Corderie building's original 16th-century wood and brick provide a stunning backdrop to this harmonious and poetic exhibition, which runs until 25 November.



SALONE DEL MOBILE MILANO 2018

LIGHT-COLOURED COVER CREATES AN IDEAL BACKGROUND FOR HIGH-QUALITY FURNITURE.



When GamFratesi were commissioned to design a stand for the furniture company DEDON at the 2018 Salone del Mobile in Milan, they focused on creating a space to showcase the suitability of the company's furniture for both indoor and outdoor use. "To create the right atmosphere, we looked for 100% natural materials and chose to clad the walls with Petersen Cover in a delicate, light yellow shade," says Enrico Fratesi. "Each of the Cover bricks is unique, exuding hand-made vibes and beautifully complementing the furniture. The Cover walls have an appearance of mass and solidity, but use lightweight elements that don't require mortar – making them ideal to use at Salone del Mobile."

In October this year, DEDON is set to open a new showroom in New York, again designed by GamFratesi. Cover will be part of the decor there, too.

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LAYOUT
ZANGENBERG DESIGN

TRANSLATION
TRANSLATION CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

PRINT
STRANDBYGAARD

REPRO
EHRHORN HUMMERSTON

PRINT RUN
104,000

RIBA · CPD PROVIDERS NETWORK · RIBA