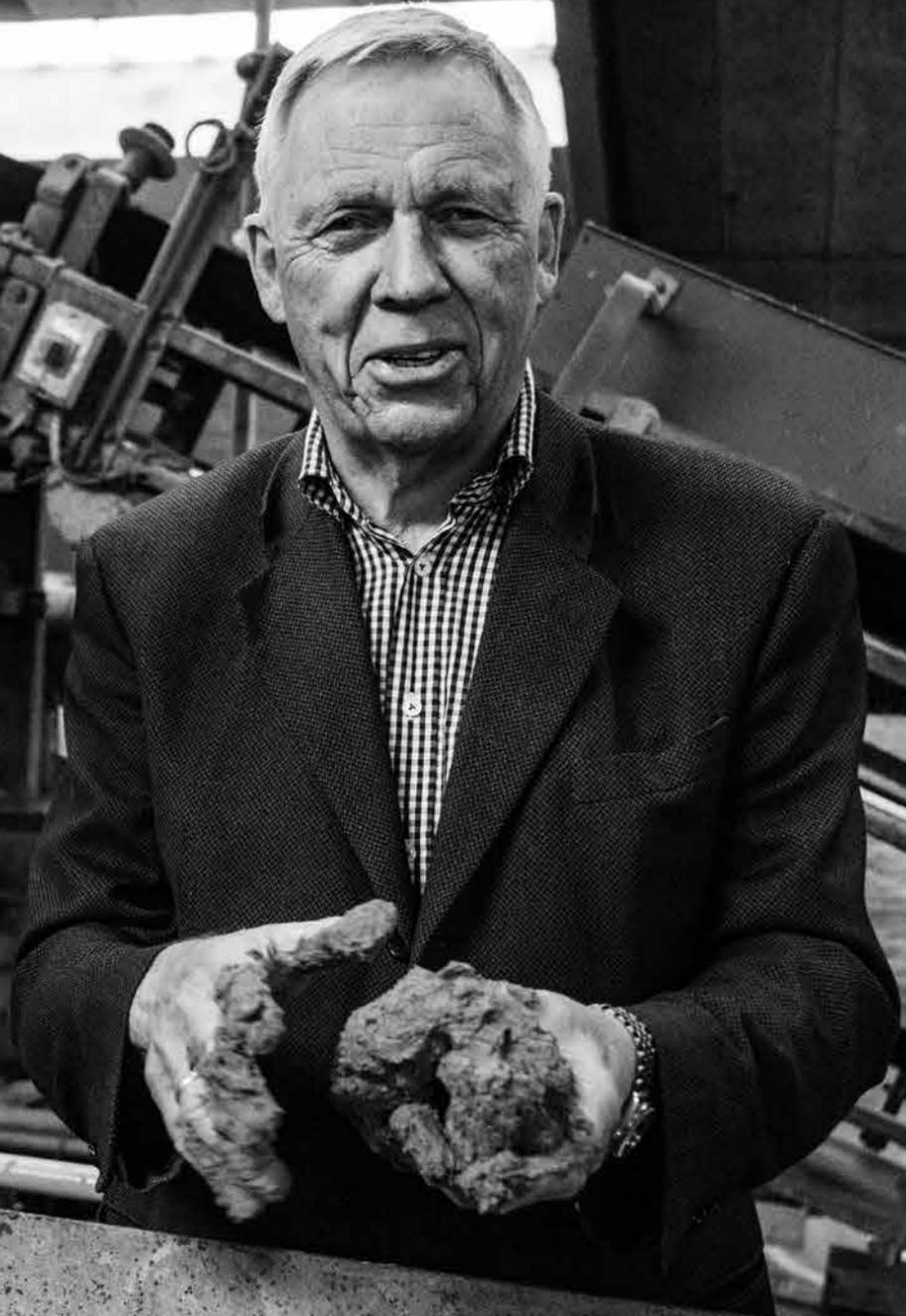


PETERSEN

A MAGAZINE ABOUT BRICKWORK AND RESPONSIBLE ARCHITECTURE



225 YEARS



Christian A. Petersen is passionate about bonsai trees, which he finds and cultivates.



The yellow-washed house at Nybøl Nor has been the home of the Petersen family for several generations.

AND WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN...

CHRISTIAN A. PETERSEN, WHO IS THE SEVENTH GENERATION TO OWN THE BRICKWORKS, AND WHO TURNS 75 ON 8 JUNE THIS YEAR, TALKS ABOUT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE BRICKWORKS – WHICH IS VERY MUCH HIS OWN FAMILY HISTORY, TOO.

Lukas Thomsen, son of Vibeke Petersen, working on a customised brick product.



The Chief Financial Officer Poul Kjeldsen and Chief Executive Officer Jørn Enderlein have been with Petersen Tegl since 2003.



It is 225 years to the day since King Christian VII granted your great-great-great-grandfather, the smallholder Peter Andresen, a permit to burn bricks. What would Peter say if he visited the brickworks today?

“He’d be speechless. In those days, brick was only sold locally. He would have thought it impossible that brick could be transported beyond the local area – let alone to the other side of the world. In fact, he probably never travelled beyond South Jutland himself.”

What does it mean to you that your family has run the business for all these years?

“It’s fantastic that one family has been able to keep making a product in exactly the same way for so many years – especially a product that consists of such simple elements as clay, sand and water. It also gives me great pleasure that my daughters are involved with the company, and that my grandchildren are set to follow them. After 225 years of uninterrupted production, I can confidently state that continuity has been a huge advantage.”

How did you get started in the company?

“In 1962, when I was 21, I was sent to an engineering school for ordinary ceramics in Landshut, Lower Bavaria, to learn about brickmaking. Then I worked for the Swiss Laufen Group, which made all sorts of architectural ceramics. After the sudden death of my father in 1969, I had to come home and take over the brickworks in Broager. At the time, the market consisted of nothing but machine-made, uniform red and yellow bricks. My father went his own way – he

fired his brick a little harder, giving it more depth and nuance, and he was able to charge a bit more for them. I wanted to do things differently, too. Even before I came back to Denmark in 1970, I had ordered a Dutch unit for producing hand-moulded, sanded brick, which soon started selling well.”

When did you start coal-firing bricks?

“Oil was expensive in the early 1980s, so we started using coal. We made all sorts of mistakes and burnt the bricks too much, but the architects were actually thrilled with the varied results – and so were we! At that time, I was a member of ‘United Brickworks’, a sales association for brickworks in the area, which supplied brick via lumber yards. I found out that the association’s salesman had been instructed to keep my bricks hidden, because they were a bit too popular. I resigned forthwith and started visiting design studios in person. None of the other brickworks were doing that, but it seemed absolutely logical to me – after all, it’s the architects who decide on the building materials.”

Petersen made a big impression on the world of brick with Kolumba – how did that come about?

“In 2000, I found out that the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor had been commissioned to design the Kolumba Museum in Cologne and was looking for just the right brick for the project. I called him and he agreed to meet me in his studio in Switzerland and show me the model of the museum. Afterwards, we sent him a total of 30 samples. Ten months later, we met on the building site in Cologne, where Zumthor asked if I would be able to make bricks in

HISTORICAL DATES

1791

King Christian VII grants a trading licence to smallholder Peter Andresen, permitting him to fire bricks on the site by Nybøl Nor.

1910

Christian A. Petersen (Christian A. Petersen’s grandfather) takes over the brickworks.

1948

Hans A. Petersen (Christian A. Petersen’s father) takes over the brickworks.

1970

Christian A. Petersen takes over the brickworks.

1982

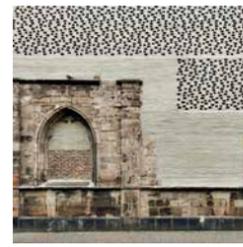
Petersen Tegl starts coal-firing bricks.

2002

Architect Peter Zumthor and Petersen Tegl collaborate on a new brick product, Kolumba, in an oblong format for the Kolumba Museum in Cologne, which was inaugurated in 2007. Kolumba is hereby launched.

2002

Lundgaard & Tranberg Architects refine Kolumba, using English clay and changing the format. It is used for the Royal Danish Playhouse in Copenhagen, which was inaugurated in 2008.





In the 18th century, Nybøl Nor was lined with brickworks. Only six remain.



Proximity to water used to be essential for transporting brick. The company still owns a single vessel, on which customers are invited to have lunch.

THIS YEAR MARKS THE 225TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST BRICK EMERGING OUT OF THE PETERSEN FAMILY FURNACE, ON THE SHORES OF NYBØL NOR IN SOUTH JUTLAND. AN UNBROKEN LINE OF FAMILY MEMBERS HAS LIVED AND MADE BRICKS HERE EVER SINCE. OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS, BUSINESS HAS REALLY TAKEN OFF THOUGH, AND THE BRICKWORKS NOW EXPORTS ITS RANGE OF 83 DIFFERENT BRICKS – AND ITS EXTENSIVE PRODUCTION OF CUSTOMISED SOLUTIONS – TO COUNTRIES ALL OVER THE WORLD.

the kind of oblong format used in Roman times. I worked out on the spot that we could make bricks that were 540 mm long, 39 mm high and 90 or 220 mm wide – and the deal was struck. First we sent samples, which were accepted, followed by a test wall. A production error meant that the grey brick wasn't fired properly, and turned out greenish – but Zumthor asked us to send it anyway. Not long afterwards, he sent back a message saying 'Please deliver 300,000 badly fired bricks!' But we ran into all sorts of problems. My finance director has told me that the project cost us more than € million Euro. But it turned out to be an invaluable investment. Before the Museum was finished, the Danish architects Lundgaard & Tranberg asked us to refine Kolumba for the Playhouse in Copenhagen. This time, we used a mixture of English and German clay to bring out the dark and hard-fired look they wanted in their version of the product. And since then, it's been all go. You will now find buildings made of Kolumba all over the world."

What are your thoughts about the two business prizes you received recently?

"I was very proud and happy when the trade union 3F named us 'Best Workplace in South Jutland' back in November 2014. We are fond of saying that 150 people work at the brickworks, and that 150 of them are in the development department. Every morning between 7 and 8 am, I go for a walk through the three brickworks, say good morning and see how things are going.

The DI Initiative Prize we received in January was also a huge pat on the back. It was presented

at a conference about the challenges of digitalisation. The fact that we were awarded a prize for producing and exporting such a simple, low-tech product at an event like that was a huge accolade!"

How do you explain the global renaissance in brick?

"We can see that architects and contractors all over the world are increasingly aware of the multiple options bricks give them in terms of colour, texture and format. Patterned brickwork is also getting more and more popular. As everyone in the construction industry knows, brick is a natural material that lasts for hundreds of years, is virtually maintenance-free and ages beautifully – unlike, for example, synthetic materials, steel and concrete. We predict that brick has an extremely bright future – and we've only just begun!"

Text: Ida Præstegaard
Photos: Anders Sune Berg

The 8th and 9th generation. Chair of the board, Vibeke Petersen, and two of her four children, Jonas and Felix.



Daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren. Back row from the left: Lukas and Aenne Thomsen and Peter Zinck. Front row from the left: Emma, Theo and Annette Petersen.



2008

The first prototype of Petersen Cover, developed by Min2 bouw-kunst and further developed by Lundgaard & Tranberg, sees the light of day.



2014

Petersen Tegl now supplies bricks to 39 countries worldwide.



2014

Petersen Tegl is named "Best Workplace in the Sønderborg Area" by the trade union, 3F.

2015

Petersen Tegl receives the WAN Award for Petersen Cover in the "Innovative Product" category.



2015

The number of employees reaches 150.



2015

Petersen Tegl is awarded the Initiative Prize by Danish Industry.



2015

Petersen Tegl buys the neighbouring Tychsen's brickworks. Following refurbishment, production of Kolumba is expanded by 100%. The company now has three brickworks at its disposal.



EVERY MORNING BETWEEN SEVEN AND EIGHT

.... CHRISTIAN A. PETERSEN GOES FOR A WALK AROUND THE BRICKWORKS, GREETING EVERYBODY AND CHATTING TO MANY OF THEM.
PHOTOGRAPHER ANDERS SUNE BERG ACCOMPANIED HIM ONE MORNING IN FEBRUARY.





LEVRING HOUSE

A SCULPTURAL, COMFORTABLE AND EXCEPTIONALLY BEAUTIFUL HOME IN THE BLOOMSBURY AREA OF LONDON – DESIGNED BY A LOCAL ARCHITECT, FOR A DANISH CLIENT, AND USING DANISH, COAL-FIRED BRICK.

The moment I turn the corner into the narrow street, the atmosphere changes. Whoosh! The traffic noise from busy Guilford Street is swept away, replaced by a peace and quiet so all pervasive that birdsong is audible. The street is a typical feature of 18th- and 19th-century London: The mews, i.e. narrow alleyways without pavements that run parallel to streets lined by upmarket residential buildings. The low buildings along the mews housed stables and carriage stores, and servants quarters were squeezed in amid the

rafters. After World War II, large numbers of mews were adopted by musicians, writers and other artists, who turned these humble dwellings into places in which to work and live.

My destination is a quite exceptional home, designed by Jamie Fobert Architects and completed in 2014. Even from a distance, it is clear this is something special. With simple, sculptural shapes gliding around the street corner, the idiom is understated and clearly modern. The ground and first-floor façades are clad in brick, which harmo-

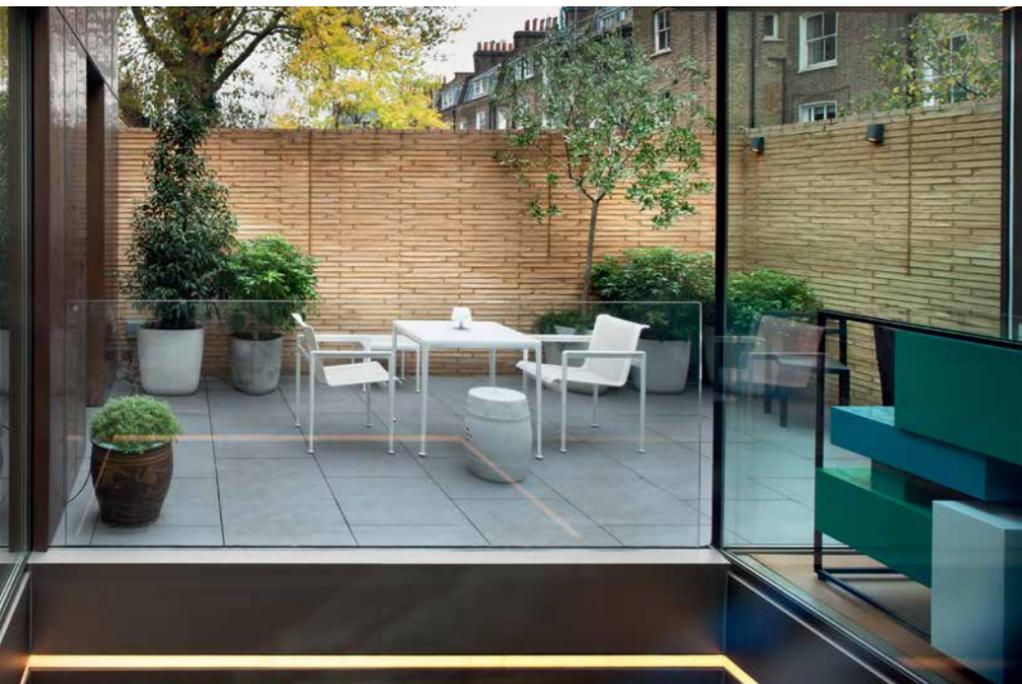
nises with the rest of the street. The bronze-clad façade on the top floor is set back from the floor below which is in keeping with the rest of the mews with setback second floors.

I arrive at the entrance, which is also clad in bronze, and meet resident and client Troels Levring, architect Jamie Fobert and project architect Oliver Bindloss. We sit at the big Finn Juhl table in the double-height living room on the first floor, the most exquisite morning light streaming in via the big, southeast-facing glass section.

Fobert is the first to speak. “We began by asking the two future residents what kind of living space they wanted. They were living in a classic Georgian townhouse at the time, with more or less just one room on each floor. They had to go down three flights of stairs to make a cup of tea in the morning. So rather than an architectural ‘statement’, they wanted their new place to be comfortable and easy to live in. Along the way it became clear that Troels, being a Dane, had a much clearer idea of how he wanted to live than



The Levring House is at the end of a classic mews. In 18th-19th-century London, the mews housed servants, horses and carriages belonging to the gentry of the parallel streets.



One of the four terraces is on the first floor at the rear of the house facing northwest. The wall around the terrace is made of Kolumba with a golden hue.

Architect Jamie Fobert.



The interview with the architects and clients was conducted on a sunny morning in the house in Bloomsbury.





the traditional British client. But then again, he is also an architect."

"And that had you worried," Troels Levring interrupts.

"Yes. Never work for architects" replies Fobert with a smile.

"The house was designed from the inside out and was designed through a series of physical card models – with double-height rooms. We chose not to work with sections. Even though it's the first thing you learn at architecture school, there just isn't a single

section anywhere that shows how the building works!"

"That was absolutely central to the brief," Levring adds. "We wanted a building that allowed for vertical communication from top to bottom, and we got it. Visually, it doesn't feel as if the building is on four levels because we can see and hear each other from all of them. The house is intimate and works well when it is just the two of us at home even though the first floor can just as easily accommodate 150 guests at a time. It's the

total opposite of our last home, where you couldn't tell if somebody was upstairs or on the floor below."

"The house evolved from the inside, but we had to keep the challenging, atypical site in mind all of the time. The classic British townhouse has a street facade, a front garden, two party walls, a rear façade and a back garden. We had two street facades, but no rear ones. Planning law protects the residents of the buildings behind the new house from sight lines into their homes and

garden, as well as from restrictions to their sunlight. That made windows to the rear out of the question – so we built in a light well to direct daylight down to the lower floors. In practice, this means that when you open the sliding glass door to the basement pool, you are effectively swimming al fresco – in Bloomsbury!" says Jamie Fobert.

With a large glass area facing onto a terrace towards the northwest, the 1st floor is the only one that also receives daylight through the rear of the house. A wall on the



Jamie Fobert Architects have managed to design a house with a total of 650 m² on the 205 m² plot, without it overpowering the rest of the street. The coal-fired yellow brick fronts help the new building blend in.

Architect Oliver Bindloss.



The lack of a next-door neighbour to the south makes the southeast-facing terraces private.



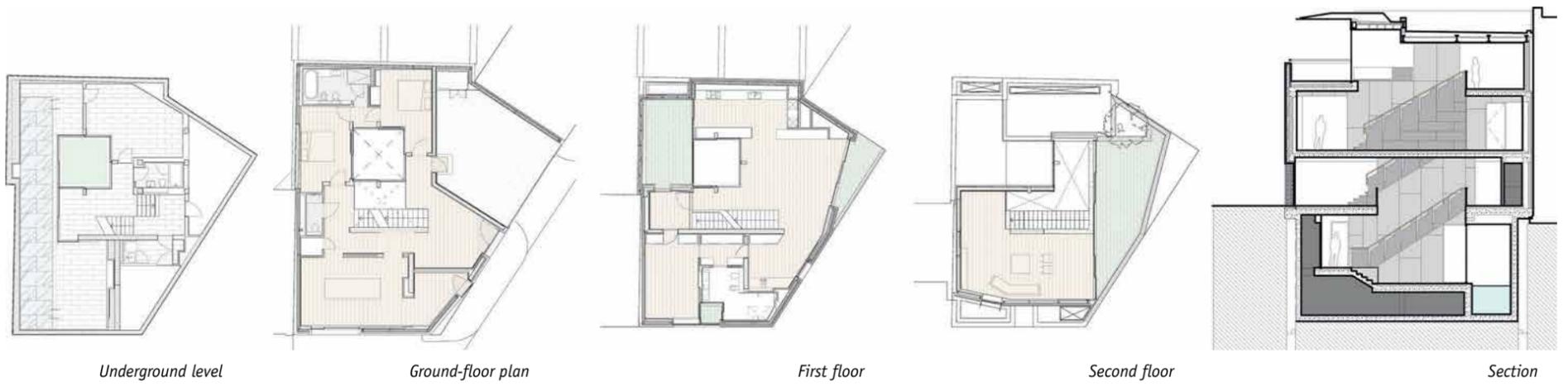
The view down to the small sedum garden in the light well.

Client and resident Troels Levring.



»Our intention was to stitch back together a piece of missing urban fabric.«
Jamie Fobert, architect





Underground level

Ground-floor plan

First floor

Second floor

Section

»The exterior of the house is the result of a series of small and careful moves. All made while wanting to create a sculptural object of beauty.«
Jamie Fobert, architect



The garage, entrance and top floor are clad in bronze, the reddish-brown tones of which harmonise beautifully with the golden hues of the facing brick.



Levring House, Bloomsbury, London
 Client: Private
 Architect: Jamie Fobert Architects
 Engineer, construction: Eckersley O'Callaghan
 Engineer, M&E: Mendick Waring Ltd
 Lighting: PJC Light Studio Limited
 Brick: D72, FF and K70
 Joints: 50% lime and 50% cement
 in a greyish tone, brushed
 Text: Ida Præstegaard, architect
 Photos: Philip Vile



Site plan

terrace blocks any line of sight into neighbouring properties and vice versa.

One early idea was that the façades could be in bronze, but that was abandoned following a meeting with the council, who said: "If you design a contemporary house with brick façades, you have a 50% chance of a building permit. If you build in anything but brick, you have a 5% chance." "We weren't put off by this. A house with a bronze façade might well have been overly shouting anyway," says Fobert.

Originally, Levring wanted to find a British brick. "My family have been professional builders for several generations, and we've always tried to use local materials."

"We did a lot of research in order to find a London stock brick in the right shade," says

architect Oliver Bindloss. "We considered a number of UK-based brick suppliers but were unhappy with the colour of the bricks we sampled. We also found that many of the bricks were machine made and so very uniform in size and shape and this we felt wouldn't offer the variation we were looking for, so we decided to look further afield. Eventually we turned to Petersen Tegl, where the coal-firing process gives its products plenty of subtle nuances.

We looked at a dark brick as well as something more in keeping with a traditional 'London stock' brick, we were also looking for a brick that was irregular but not too irregular. As we were conscious that the two main façades would be in the full view of the sun throughout the day casting various

shadows. This interplay between the shape of the brick, the colour variation over the brick wall and the sunlight falling over the wall were key to the texture we were trying to create. In the end it was agreed that the house would be made from a D72 in a Flensburg size brick."

Awards and nominations

RIBA London Award 2015.

RIBA National award 2015.

Camden Design Award Winner, 2015.

Nominated for WAN House of the Year, 2015.

Nominated for RIBA House of the Year, 2015.

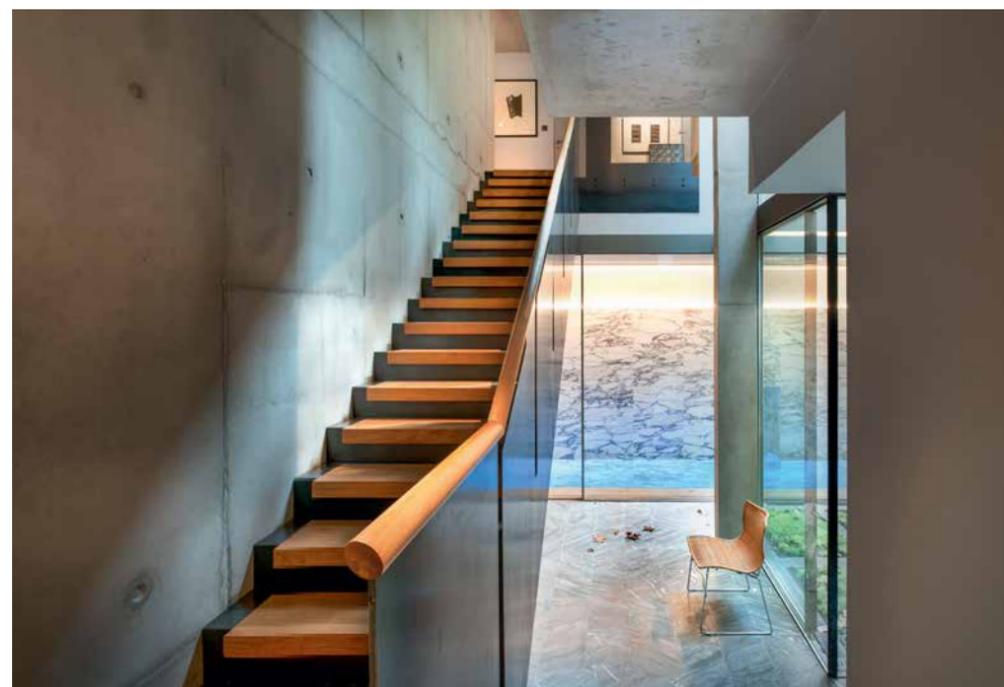
A series about the nominated houses, produced by Channel 4, shows the production at Petersen Tegl.



The large, southeast-facing windows allow plenty of daylight into the double-height living room on the first floor. The lightwell – to the left in the photograph – means that daylight reaches all the way down to the bottom of the building.



The interior is designed to facilitate communication between all of the floors, which makes it feel intimate despite its size.



At the bottom, there is a 14-metre swimming pool, which overlooks the garden in the lightwell – to the right in the photograph.

Architects and clients on the brickwork:

The façade curves around a 120-degree corner. We chose not to use special bricks but to let the geometry of the building express itself in the way the bricks meet at the corners – in what is known as a burglar bond.

To add weight and make it look as if the house has been carved out of a solid mass, the windows are set back from the façade.

We used expansion joints sporadically, only where absolutely necessary, which means the façade does not look disjointed, which would detract from the whole look of the brickwork.

The brick is in Flensburg format – the narrow, elegant dimensions suit the building – using a runner bond.

The walls on the terraces are made of Kolumba in a golden hue, K70, close to the nuances of D72, which adds variation to the brickwork. Also the copings were made specially for all the parapets of a 300 mm long Kolumba.

We chose a joint consisting of 50 % lime and 50 % cement, in a greyish tone that harmonises with the brick. The joint is only 8 mm wide and is brushed away ever so slightly.

Old acquaintances were renewed in the Levring House. Troels Levring's uncle, Finn Harald Simonsen, was the developer and client behind the extremely beautiful Charlottelhaven residential and hotel complex in Copenhagen from 2004, which was designed by Lundgaard & Tranberg and made of D58.

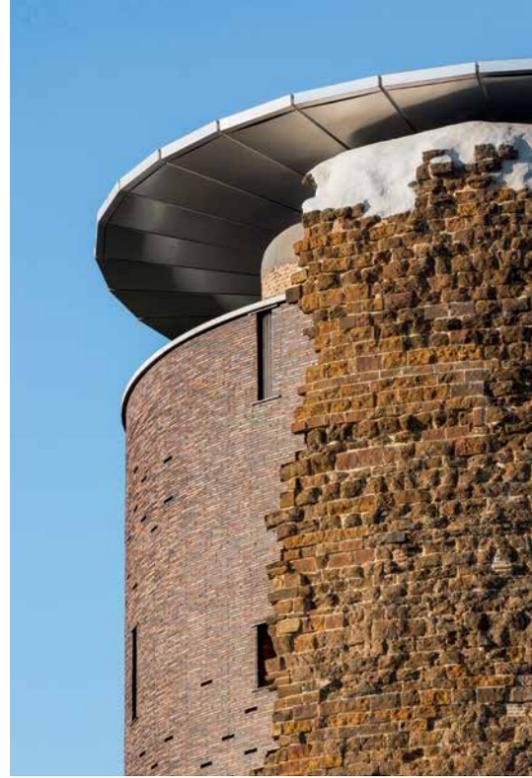




The approximately 800-year-old tower in Flanders partially collapsed in 2006. Studio Roma was commissioned to restore it.



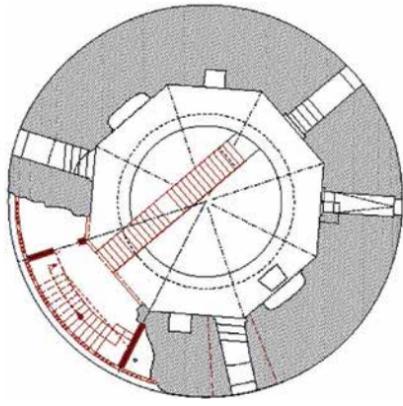
The top of the tower offers panoramic views on two levels over the protected natural landscape and the historic village of Zichem.



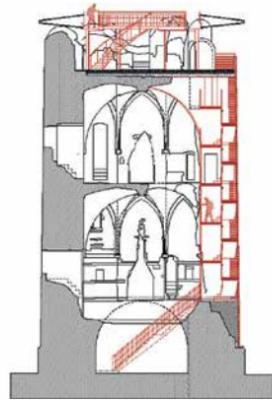
An exciting combination of materials: Sandstone, brick and steel.



Originally surrounded by a moat, Maagdentoren stands guard on the banks of the River Demer in north-east Flanders. No attempt has been made to mask the fault lines visible after the partial collapse approximately ten years ago. Instead, the new look brings out the textural contrast between the golden-brown sandstone and brownish-lilac Kolumba brick.



Plan



Section

FABULOUS HYBRID

NEW LIFE HAS BEEN INJECTED INTO THE HISTORIC VIRGIN TOWER (MAAGDENTOREN) IN FLANDERS, WHICH HAS BEEN RESTORED WITH A FLAIR FOR STARK CONTRASTS BETWEEN BRICK, SANDSTONE AND STEEL.

The River Demer meanders through the green countryside of north-east Flanders. On its way, it passes by traces of human activity from multiple eras, including the village of Zichem, where the Virgin Tower has been standing guard since the 14th century. "It is not entirely clear why the tower was built. Probably as some kind of defense and residence," explains architect Marc Vanderauwera from Studio Roma. The studio has been responsible for the comprehensive restoration of the tower, which became necessary after large parts of the outer wall collapsed in 2006. The restoration entailed a balancing act between protecting the surviving historic elements and preparing the tower for its new function as a viewing platform.

The result is full of contrasts and serves as an evocative encounter between old and new. "We looked for ways to restore the tower in a manner befitting its past. We even considered leaving the ruins untouched," says Marc Vanderauwera. "In the end, we decided to rebuild the outer wall in order to stabilise the structure and make it accessible to visitors. Architecturally, this allowed the building's original form – a cylindrical tower – to re-emerge from the ruins."

Originally, the tower comprised four storeys, but as the floors and vaulted ceilings collapsed, the interior became one big space. Some traces of the original floors still remain, along with some of the decorative paintwork. At the bottom of the tower, where the walls are four metres thick, there was a store room. On the first floor was a reception room with two fireplaces, remnants of which survive. The second floor was a living area with a cross-vaulted ceiling, while the third floor probably contained bedrooms.

The architectural relics of all four floors are now incorporated into a single, high-roofed, fragmented space. "We wanted to preserve the historical part, to keep it as intact and untouched as possible," says Vanderauwera. "The new stairway helps to stabilise the new bit of the tower. The atmosphere in the narrow interior is cave-like – dark, with narrow openings to the outside world that provide a little daylight but no view. The tower is completely closed. Outsiders have no idea what lies inside. They need to use their imagination."

From the entrance at the bottom, visitors go up through the tower via the steel and concrete staircase to the new viewing platform at the top. From here, there are beautiful panoramic views over the surrounding nature conservation area, dotted with spires and windmills, through which winds the River Demer.

The historical parts of the outer wall were made of a ferrous local sandstone with a golden-brown hue. However, the collapsed part of the wall has been rebuilt using a Kolumba brick with a brownish-lilac hue. Marc Vanderauwera explains. "We wanted to make a clear distinction between the old and new parts, using a modern material but with historical references. Brick is a very old material, and we decided early on in the process that we would use it. Kolumba is wonderful, both in terms of its colour and the way it is made. It gives the façade texture – it doesn't just look flat. The long, narrow brick articulates the tower's cylindrical structure and dimension, and accentuates the encounter between new and old as clearly as possible."

The tower has had several different names throughout its history, but it is most commonly known as Maagdentoren (the Virgin Tower). According to tradition, the name stems from the time that the tower's owner, a nobleman, held his daughter prisoner there after she refused to enter into an arranged marriage. Maagdentoren has witnessed a range of other dramatic events over the centuries, too. In the late 1500s, it was partially destroyed by the Spanish army during the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Netherlands. It was later restored several times, but eventually the rot set in and its collapse became inevitable. Fortunately, the tower's story has a happy ending. Maagdentoren once again stands out clearly in the landscape – a fabulous hybrid of old and new, a historical monument, standing guard over the forest.

Maagdentoren, Scherpenheuvel-Zichem, Belgium

Client: Vlaamse Overheid

Architect: Studio Roma

Architect for the new parts:

De Smet Vermeulen Architecten

Engineering, statics: Norbert Provoost Engineering

Electrical Engineer: Tecno

Historical decorations: Linda Van Dijk

Brick: K46 (50%), K49 (50%)

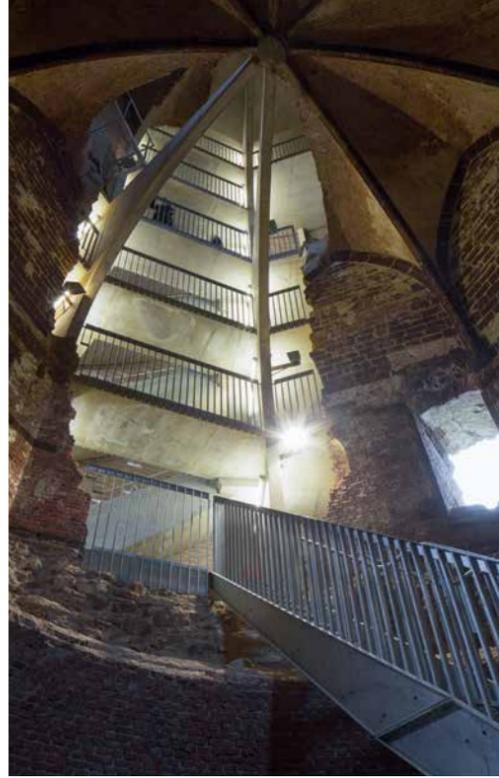
Joint, exterior: Weber, 2773, cement, inclined

Joint, interior: Weber, 2773, cement

Text: Martin Søberg PhD, architectural historian

Photos: Paul Kozłowski

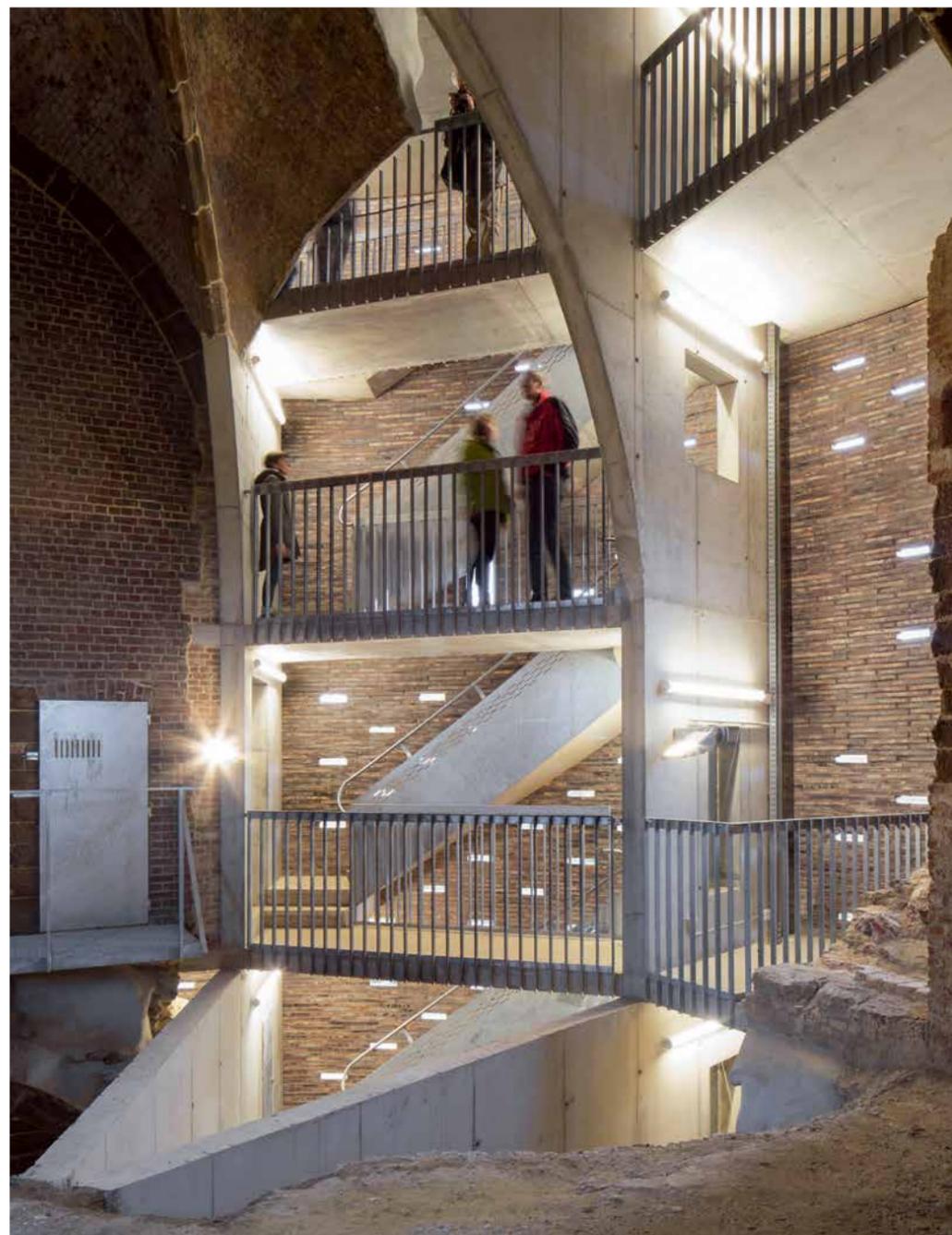
Photo/before: Kris Vandevorst, ©Vlaamse Gemeenschap



The geometry of the cross-vault has been restored, but the differences between old and new are plain to see.



The many small openings in the wall allow light into the interior and form an irregular pattern on the curved surface.



Concrete walls and a new staircase help to stabilise the tower, which is now a popular viewing platform.

»Kolumba gives the façade texture – it doesn't just look flat. The long, narrow brick articulates the tower's cylindrical structure and dimension and the encounter between new and old as clearly as possible.«
Marc Vanderauwera, architect



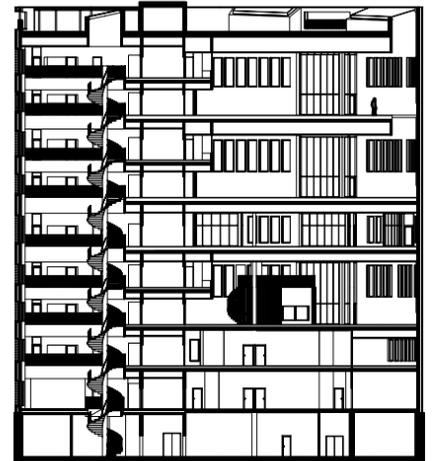
The architects Marc Vanderauwera of Studio Roma and Henk De Smet of De Smet Vermeulen Architects worked together on the project.



Traffic Tower East is out among the railway tracks about two kilometres southwest of City Hall Square in central Copenhagen.



Henrik Plenge Jacobsen created the art in the tower and was also responsible for the African-inspired bronze mask on the front wall at the entrance.



Section



The windows have been pulled back to make room for open balconies, or hidden behind sections where gaps in the brickwork perforate the rounded wall. The architects insisted that the façade be built up from the ground, and chose the hard-fired D48 for the job.

»Brick is a basic material. I have great veneration for fired clay and it is far too rarely deployed. It seemed only natural to continue using brick on the inside of the building.«
Henrik Plenge Jacobsen, artist

Artist Henrik Plenge Jacobsen and architect Christian Tranberg worked well together to integrate art into the new building.



FUNCTIONAL LANDMARKS CLAD IN BRICK

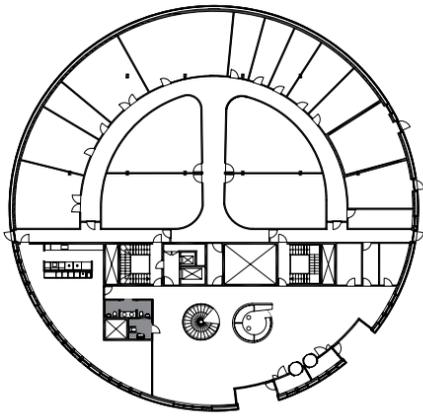
RAIL AND ROAD TRAFFIC IN DENMARK WILL BE MONITORED FROM TWO NEW TOWERS IN DARK RED, COAL-FIRED BRICK.



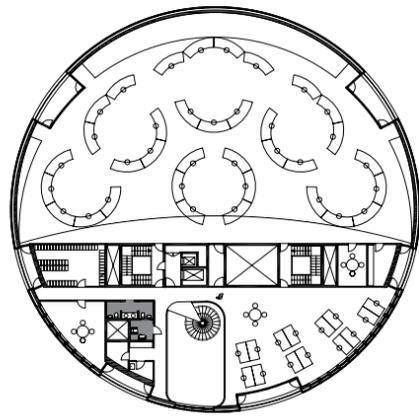
AFRICA CONTROL

Artist Henrik Plenge Jacobsen has created the artistic centrepiece of Traffic Tower East, including a new interpretation of Foucault's pendulum. Plenge Jacobsen explains his ideas:

"Brick is a basic material. I have great veneration for fired clay and it is far too rarely deployed. It seemed only natural to continue using brick on the inside of the building.



Ground-floor plan



5th floor – with control room.

One characteristic of an architecturally successful building is that it looks as if it has always been there. That is certainly true of the new, monumental Traffic Tower East, which rises from a former marshalling yard in the middle of the railway tracks at Kalvebod Brygge in Copenhagen, offering panoramic views across the city.

With its exterior of coal-fired red brick, the myriad shades of which reflect the surrounding rusty pylons, railway tracks and brick buildings, the tower co-exists in beautiful harmony with its environs. Similarly well considered in terms of function and shape is the large, cylindrical nature of the structure, which is characterised by clean lines that belie its inner complexity. This well-functioning building is the result of a long and demanding process, in which Tranberg Architects, in

addition to the design of the building, were responsible for the building programme, site plan and local plan for the area – the latter in collaboration with the landscape architects SLA.

The tower was built to fulfil Denmark's need for a new traffic-management infrastructure. Traffic Tower East will manage all local and long-distance trains and road traffic on Zealand and Funen, work that was previously carried out at several different addresses. Traffic Tower West – slightly smaller and also designed by Tranberg Architects – in Fredericia will manage all traffic in Jutland. The two new towers signal the end of relay-based management and the introduction of modern, digital signalling. The plan is for the new system to be fully operational in 2021, at a total cost of approximately 3

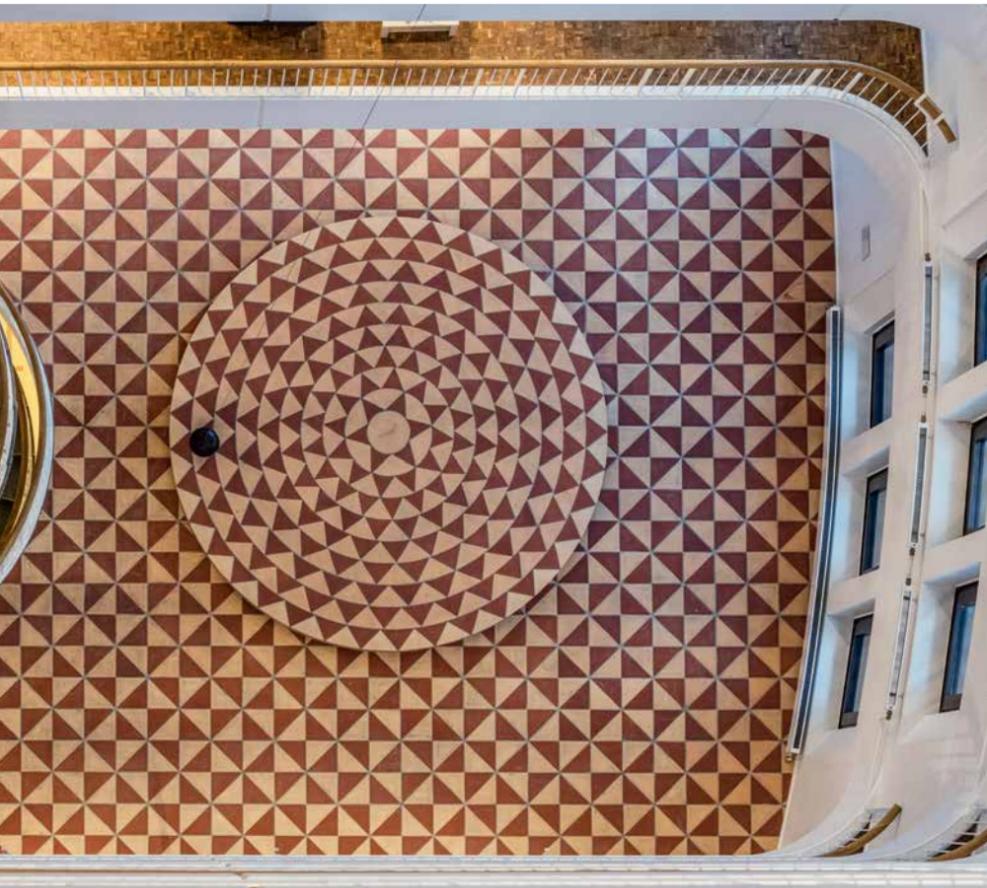


The tower has three double-height control rooms, each measuring 750 m². The perforated brickwork provides delicately filtered daylight, ensuring that the people working at the screens are not bothered by glare.

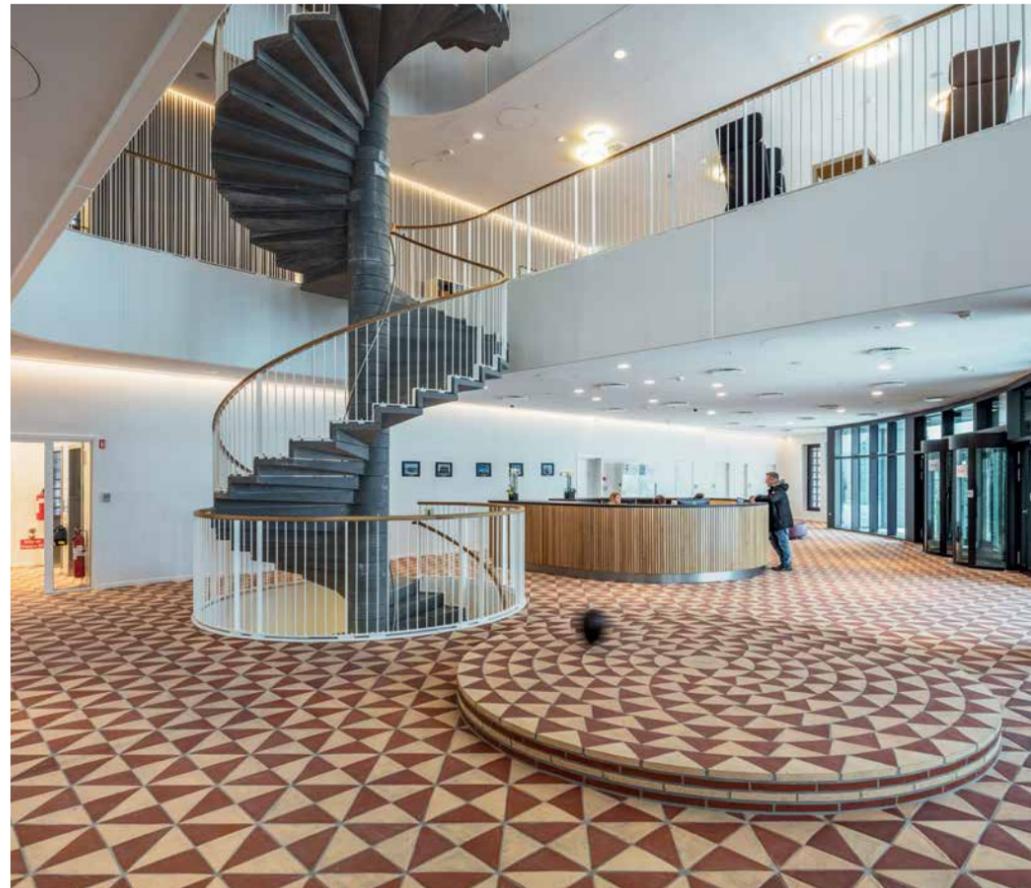
billion Euro. The advanced technology in the towers accounts for 75% of the construction costs, and safety and security requirements have played a key role throughout the project. Both towers are raised three metres above the ground as a flood-prevention measure, the glass in the two lower floors' windows is bomb-proof, and staff and guests access the building via a sluice system. The safety and security requirements and the need to minimise glare from sunlight on screens in control rooms of this kind have led other countries to choose radical solutions. The equivalent tower in Lisbon, for example, has no windows at all, while the centre in Malmö is underground. Traffic Tower East has three two-storey, 750 m² control rooms for monitoring long-distance trains, local trains and road traffic. Traffic Tower West has one.

In both towers, the shape of the building helps minimise glare and provide shade.

Traffic Tower East is 42 metres tall and 42 metres in diameter, although the fact that they are the same is imperceptible. The final design was the result of a number of preliminary studies using rectangular shapes. "A round building is more in keeping with the heterogeneous surroundings in Copenhagen, and it looks smaller than it actually is. In terms of its internal layout, a round building is not the easiest space to use, but it is by far the most efficient. A square building based on the same dimensions would have more floor space than it really needs. The client also wanted the control room to resemble an amphitheatre, so the round shape was an obvious choice," says architect Christian Tranberg.



Seen from above, the patterned floor is framed by the soft, rounded shape of the floors above. Foucault's Pendulum also looks fascinating from this angle.



The traffic towers make far greater use of texture than is the norm in modern office blocks. In Traffic Tower East, you enter directly onto a floor made of handmade tiles.

The tower's shape and the materials used on the exterior both have associations with the Middle Ages and its beautiful, patterned tiled floors in the churches and banqueting halls, which have survived hundreds of years of wear and tear.

A traffic tower symbolises the journey as a phenomenon. This is where Africa comes into the picture, as a remote destination and a wellspring of inspiration for patterns like the ones I have created. Right now, Africa is experiencing massive economic growth – it is the continent of tomorrow. Hence the title Africa Control. The African theme is

visible again on the exterior, in the form of the large bronze mask at the main entrance, modelled on an original from the Ivory Coast.

Foucault's pendulum, which here in the atrium takes 26 hours to draw its circle, also symbolises a journey. It's a good example of an installation that adds to – rather than detracts from – its beautiful surroundings. The pendulum, a bronze coconut, is another African feature.

The hand-made Petersen Tegl bricks, made of red and blue clay, comprise the main human element in the house. We surround ourselves with artificial materials, laminated

desks and computer screens, so it is important to retain a sense that the human hand has also been involved in the process. The rustic brick and tiles will last for hundreds of years, far longer than the tower's other materials. Brick also makes for a better indoor climate, and provides better acoustics than concrete, for example."



The pendulum is designed as a bronze coconut



The ceiling on the outdoor balconies in Traffic Tower West is – as in the East – made of the same brick used on the façade, D48.

»The towers also had to express robustness and solidity, something that brick does very well. It was important that the brickwork did not look like an added outer shell, but was built up from the ground. This required a hard-fired brick.«
Architect Christian Tranberg

Traffic Tower East, Copenhagen and Traffic Tower West, Fredericia

Client: Banedanmark
 Architect: Tranberg Architects
 Engineer: Rambøll Danmark A/S
 Full-service consultants: Rambøll Danmark A/S, Atkins Danmark A/S, Emch+Berger Holding AG, Parsons
 Main contractor, Traffic Tower East: KPC Danmark A/S
 Main contractor, Traffic Tower West: Hansson & Knudsen A/S
 Landscape architect: Atkins Danmark A/S, Tranberg Arkitekter
 Art, Traffic Tower East: Henrik Plenge Jacobsen
 Art, Traffic Tower West: Signe Guttormsen
 Brick, façades: D48
 Joint: Weber, 1093, cement, antracit grey
 Brick flooring in Traffic Tower East: Handmade tiles from Petersen Teglg
 Laying of the brickfloor: Murbo Aps.
 Text: Ida Præstegaard, architect
 Photos: Anders Sune Berg

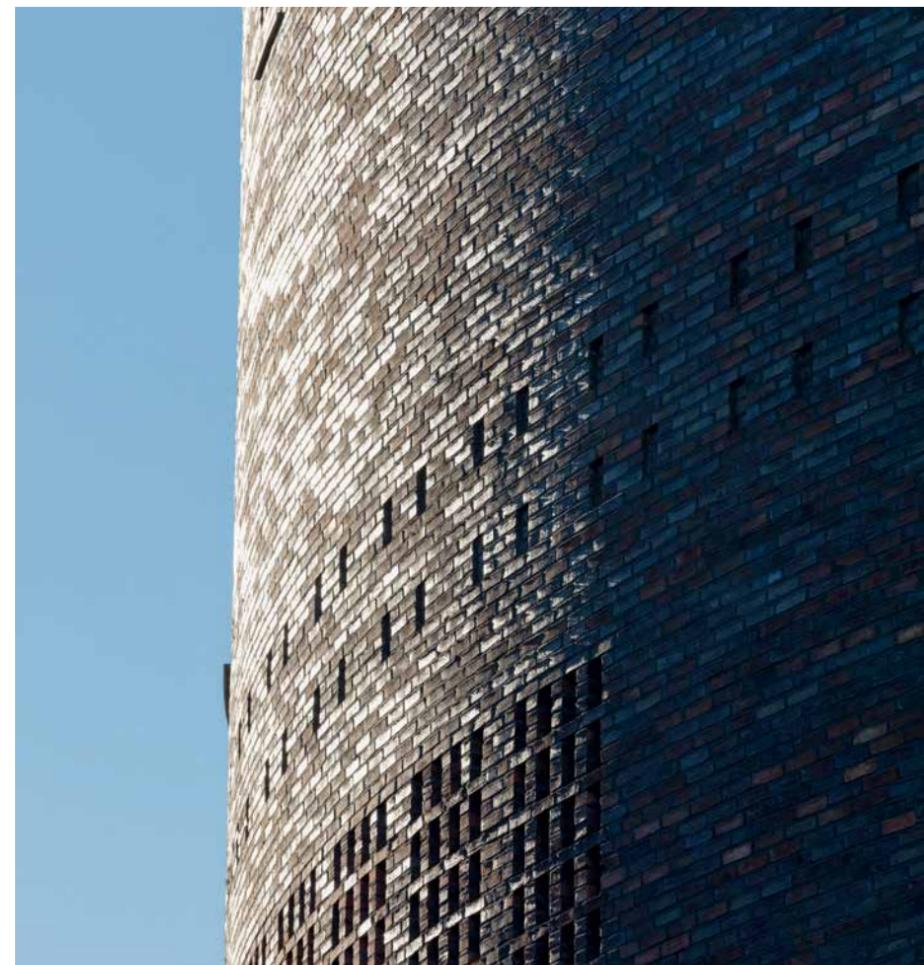


Traffic Tower West is next to Fredericia station in Jutland. Unlike its big sister in Copenhagen, it is on a scenic plot near a residential neighbourhood.

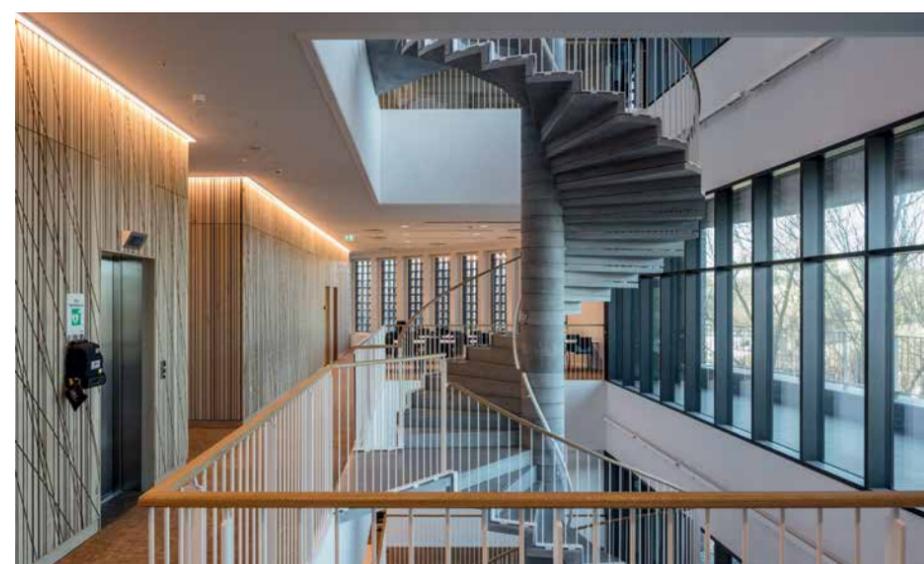
Regarding the choice of façade materials, the architects were never in doubt. "Of course, the towers had to refer to the red-brick railway stations – often with patterned masonry – seen all over Denmark. They also had to evoke robustness and solidity, something that brick does very well. It was important that the brickwork didn't resemble an extra outer shell, but looked as if it emerged from the soil. This required a hard-fired brick like D48. It was just as important to let the

brick surface determine the whole architectural idiom. The façade consists of patterned brickwork with recessed headers, as well as sections with perforated, interlaced brickwork that shield the windows behind it from sunlight," explains Christian Tranberg.

The robust, heterogeneous look of the façade extends into the interior, where the architects have used proportioning and materials to create a warm, intimate atmosphere. A low-ceilinged reception area is furnished



The different floors are marked by headers that form a fine and discreet belt around the towers. The windows are behind the perforated pattern of the brickwork.



For her decoration of Traffic Tower West, the artist Signe Guttormsen was inspired by the building's function. The walls of the big atrium are oak-clad on all of the floors in patterns associated with railway tracks and crossings.

with a round, oak-panelled desk. A spiral staircase in concrete, with oak handrails, climbs 38 metres from the atrium to the top floor.

The artist Henrik Plenge Jacobsen was responsible for the decorative elements, which he integrated seamlessly into the architecture. The entire ground floor is covered with triangular yellow and red tiles, arranged in a beautiful pattern. The rustic idiom makes a significant contribution to the warm atmos-

phere, which is a far cry from a conventional, sterile office building. His artistic input includes a Foucault's pendulum – a bronze coconut. The pendulum hangs from the roof of the building and continually circles a slightly raised and beautifully tiled plinth at ground-floor level.

PROUD BRICK TRADITION IN SWEDEN

FROM APPROXIMATELY 1900 TO 1970, SWEDEN WAS A PIONEER IN HIGH-QUALITY BRICK BUILDINGS. THE MATERIAL FELL OUT OF USE FOR A WHILE AFTER THAT, BUT IT IS MAKING A COMEBACK. ARCHITECT RASMUS WÆRN LOOKS BACK AT THE HISTORY OF BRICK IN SWEDEN.

In 1904, the Swedish architect Ivar Tengbom (1878–1968) wrote an account of his trip to Denmark, during which he had studied buildings made of brick. Published in the journal *Arkitektur och dekorativ konst* (Architecture and Decorative Art), it was a damning critique of Swedish brick architecture and of the unattractive range of bricks available at the time. “Not without a certain sense of loss, we see the old trade – with all its flaws and virtues – being replaced by modern, arrogant big industry, with its mediocrity and alleged infallibility.” According to Tengbom, handbrick, used in the right way, not only allows for the creation of beautiful surfaces, but it also sets much needed limitations on architecture after the perceived ornamental excesses of the previous century.

Tengbom’s writing had the desired effect. After 1904, brick enjoyed a resurgence – in Gothenburg, in the form of the yellow brick previously associated with the city’s exquisite 18th-century brick edifices. Elsewhere in the country, red brick dominated – usually hand-moulded from clay pits in Skåne and Mälardalen. The building designed by Carl Westman (1866–1936) for the Swedish Society of Medicine (1906) in Stockholm represented a breakthrough, even though the brick was still laid in the traditional Danish and British style, i.e. forming smooth façades.

Hand-moulded brick began to gain ground with the stadium built for the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm, designed by Danish/Swedish architect Torben Grut (1871–1945).

Other experiments were to follow. Westman burned various figures into the still wet, hand-moulded bricks for Röhsska Museum in Gothenburg (1913–14). The Swedish Patent and Registration Office in Stockholm, designed by Ragnar Östberg (1866–1945) and completed in 1921, also dates from this period. As early as 1908, Östberg wrote about the potential of sculptural brick, and a few years later his ideas were realised in practice. In 1923, the City Hall in Stockholm – also designed by Östberg – was inaugurated. The walls of its famous Blue Hall (where the annual Nobel awards are held) owe their fascinating and unique look to an innovative chasing process.

With the advent of functionalism, brick fell out of favour for a decade, but shortages of steel, concrete and asphalt during the World War II hastened its return. The

architect Sigurd Lewerentz (1885–1975) conducted the most groundbreaking experiments with brick in Sweden. In two of his churches, he endowed the material with an almost metaphysical significance. Just as congregations are made of people, so churches are made of brick – and, like people, they must never be “torn asunder”. While building Saint Peter’s in Klippan (1964–66), the architect kept a close watch on the construction site to make sure none of the bricklayers were tempted to break any of the bricks. Any irregularities were instead counteracted in the joints, where the tolerance is greater. This made it possible to work with several different formats in a single wall. The exterior walls of Saint Mark’s in Stockholm (1955–60) have joints reminiscent of the striped bark of birch trees, while the interior walls are a collage of many different bricks. Lewerentz himself was rarely forthcoming about his work, but he did mention Persian brickwork as one source of inspiration.

Despite this proud history, there was a clear gap in the use of brick between Bernt Nyberg’s chapel in Höör (1972) and Johan Celsing’s Nobel Forum (1993). This gap is also reflected in the winners of the most prestigious architectural prize in Sweden, the Kasper Salin Prize. During the 1960s, the first decade during which it was awarded, brick buildings dominated the list of winners. After that, the numbers fell, and if there were any brick prize-winners at all, they tended to be churches.

Since the breakthrough of industrialised construction, around 1960, brick has almost exclusively been used for facing walls to clad façades. The extensive use of pre-fabricated concrete façades meant that bricklaying became a more exclusive trade, and therefore rare and costly. On the other hand, this exclusivity has created a new interest in old building techniques, with an artisanal idiom once again an important component of the nature of many new buildings. This is reflected in the fascination with buildings like Johan Celsing’s church in Årsta (2011), Gustav Appell’s Saluhall in Gothenburg (2011), Gert Wingårdh’s tower block in Karlstad (2012) and his extension to the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences (2013) in Stockholm. The resurgence is also due to increased awareness of the durability and sustainability of brick, which probably means we can look forward to seeing even more of it in the future.

1



3



4



6



8



10



12



2



5



7



9



11



13



1 Gothenburg City Theatre (1934), Architect Carl Bergsten

2 The Museum of Gothenburg (1762), Architect Bengt Wilhelm Carlberg

3 Härlanda Church, Gothenburg (1958), Architect Peter Celsing

4 St. Mark's Church, Stockholm (1960), Architect Sigurd Lewerentz

5 St Mark's Church, facade made of brick in different formats

6 The Röhsska Museum, Gothenburg (1914), Architect Carl Westman

7 Swedish Match, Gothenburg (1930), Architect Cyrillus Johansson

8 The Swedish Patent and Registration Office, Stockholm, (1921), Architect Ragnar Östberg

9 Stockholm City Hall (1923), Architect Ragnar Östberg

10,11 Stockholm City Hall, the Blue Hall, chased-brick walls

12 The Olympic Stadium, Stockholm (1912), Architect Torben Grut

13 Centrumhuset, Stockholm (1931), Architect Cyrillus Johansson.



*Tower block in Karlstad (2012)
Wingårdh Architects
Article in PETERSEN no. 29
Photo Anders Sune Berg.*



*Saluhallen in Gothenburg (2011)
Appel Architects
Article in PETERSEN no. 33
Photo Ulf Celander.*



*Årsta Church, Stockholm (2011)
Architect Johan Celsing
Article in PETERSEN no. 26
Photo Ioana Marinescu.*



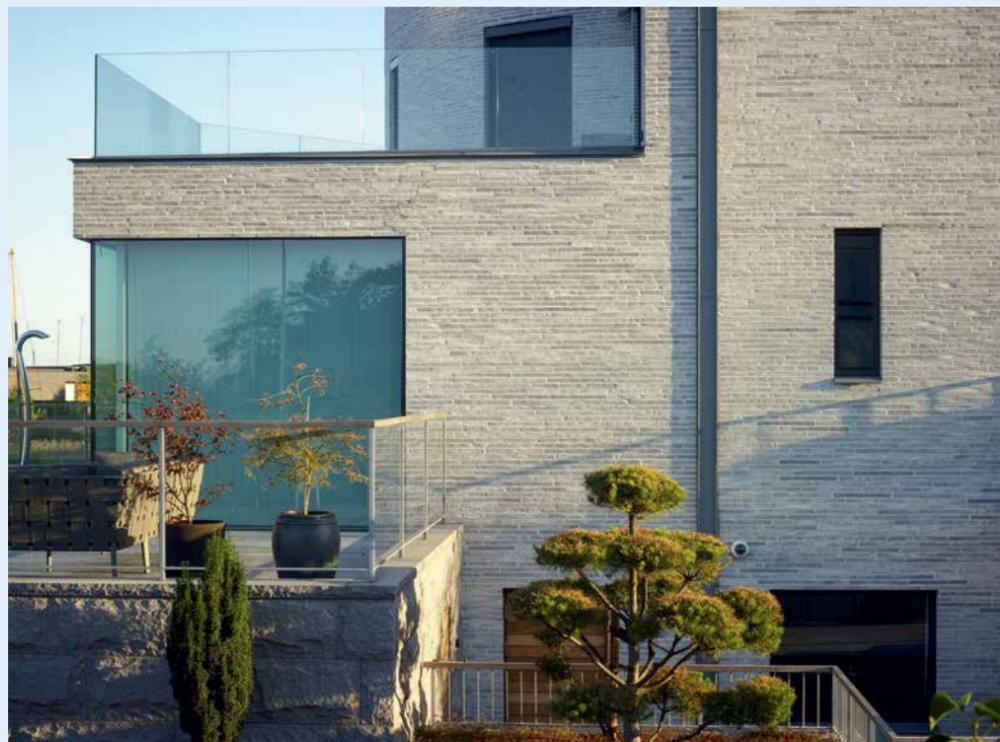
The walls of Amhult Church reveal a number of messages, e.g. the word 'Love'.

PROUD BRICK TRADITION RESURRECTED

A NUMBER OF NEW BUILDINGS IN SWEDEN HAVE USED BRICK IN A HIGHLY QUALITY-CONSCIOUS MANNER IN RECENT YEARS.



The house, which was completed in 2015, is located on the navigation channel between Långedrag and Saltholmen, south of Gothenburg. The area is densely populated, and it was a strict and tricky requirement that the neighbours' views were to remain undisturbed.



The main body of the house is highly modulated with many openings in the wall. The architects found it natural to aim for a calm looking brick effect with flat joints in a colour close to that of the grey shades of the brick.

VILLA SOUTH OF GOTHENBURG

NEWLY-BUILT HOME ON THE WATERFRONT ADOPTS A VARYING IDIOM IN RESPONSE TO ITS EXCEPTIONAL LOCATION.

Viewed from the water, the 650 m² brick-clad house located 10 minutes outside central Gothenburg has a subtle nautical touch, mainly due to the cylindrical structure with a wraparound balcony that juts out from the body of the building. From the street and the city, it has a tighter, more cubic and urban look. The three-storey house stands right at the channel, on a small plot laid out as terraces on several levels. The first-floor level of the house extends to sun terraces and balconies. The Inobi architect studio was faced with the difficult task of designing a large house that would fit into the unique

site without obscuring neighbours' views, and also be protected against future high tides. The key element is the cylindrical volume, which consists of a basement with spa, a ground-floor living room and, on the first floor, the master bedroom, leading to the circular balcony. All of the other rooms are grouped around the cylinder to ensure optimal functionality and views. The house is built of concrete cast in situ and concrete blocks, with façades clad in Kolumba K91 brick with flat joints. The curved bricks on the cylinder are custom made, as are the cornerstones for the dis-

tinctively obliquely-angled corners. These unique details and the choice of brick serve to emphasise the variations in shape. Overall, the grey-toned brick – along with the use of granite and teak – exudes a solid, timeless quality.

House near Gothenburg
Client: Private
Architect: Inobi Architects
Brick: K91
Joints: Weber, 23039, cement, white, brushed
Photos: Ulf Celander



According to the architects, bricks' "ability to age with dignity" was the decisive factor in their choice of façade cladding – especially in a school environment that requires robust and strong surfaces.



The Brink School is in a clearing surrounded by tall pine trees. The complex consists of three rectangular buildings grouped around the playground and recreational areas.

THE BRINK SCHOOL IN TÄBY

REQUIREMENTS FOR DURABILITY AND AN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY LED TO BRICK FAÇADE ON SCHOOL.

The Brink School in Täby, north of Stockholm, embodies the basic principle of "learning from each other". The school, which has 500 pupils from pre-school to junior secondary level, was designed by LINK Arkitektur AB in close collaboration with the teachers and pupils. The goal was to create a physical framework that could support a flexible educational environment – from small to large, open to closed, quiet to lively – and accommodate every type of learning situation.

Other areas of focus were ecological, social and economic sustainability. At an early stage, brick was proposed as a building material that met all of these requirements. In its own way, it also reflects the school's basic principle – from a distance, the stacked bricks work together to form a cohesive whole, while up close they are seen as individual pieces, each with its own distinctive features.

Brink School has three separate, brick-clad parts, which are connected by an open central space that houses the entrance hall, assembly hall, dining hall and library. The brick buildings contain teaching and communal spaces, all of which are connected to the central space.

The school is surrounded by tall pines, and its materials have been adapted to blend in with them. The brick is a dark D48 from Petersen Tegl with a wild bond. The reddish,

golden-brown hues are also found in the red window frames and in the wood-clad façades of the central space.

Brink School, Stockholm

Client: Täby Kommune

Architect: Link Arkitektur AB

Brick: D48

Joints: Weber, 23002, cement

Photos: Ulf Celander



After the small hall, you find yourself in a 220 m² multipurpose room called "the church square" from which three doors open onto the church hall. Skylights provide plenty of light and also highlight the structure of the brickwork. Like the façades, it is made of D72.



The materials for the church were chosen for their ability to age gracefully: Brick façades combined with oak cladding on the ceiling under the eaves.

The façades on the bell tower are made of D72 and frosted glass.

AMHULT CHURCH

A SUCCESSFUL INTERPRETATION OF THE SITE AND THE TRADITIONAL ECCLESIASTIC ARCHETYPES.

The newly-built church, east of Gothenburg, stands behind a rocky massif and is surrounded by ancient oaks. Designed by SWECO Architects, the church is a three-part complex, built in grey-yellow brick combined with untreated oak and brass detailing.

The nave surges upwards into a gabled volume with an asymmetric, zinc-clad pitched roof. A brass crucifix, a number of freely placed light columns and patches of headers provide subtle and understated ornamentation on the gable.

The nave is surrounded by a flat-roofed building, containing the indoor church square, meeting hall, café, music and children's rooms, and offices. The flat roof provides shelter at the front of the church, while large windows in the façade link the interior to the outside world. The third element of the complex is its freestanding bell tower.

The vertical and horizontal lines refer to traditional ecclesiastical archetypes but are also site-specific – the nave discreetly mimics the massif behind, the flat roof echoes the field and the bell tower recalls the oak trees.

Amhult Church radiates great dignity and quality, both in its overall appearance and in its details, but remains open and inviting to the congregation.

Amhult Church, Gothenborg

Client: Svenska Kyrkan, Gothenborg

Architect: SWECO Architects

Brick: D72

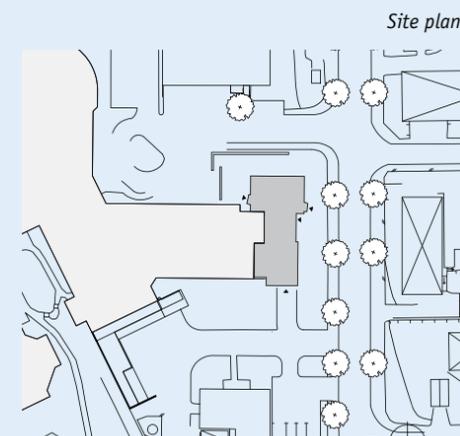
Joints: Weber, 23003, cement, white/grey, brushed

Photos: Ulf Celander





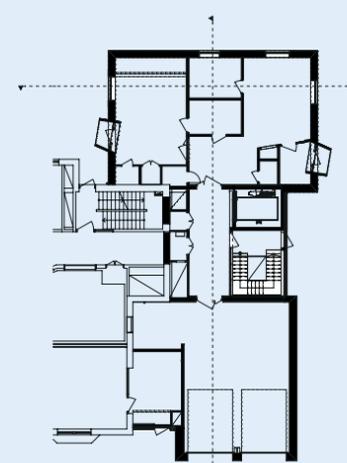
The façades at the visitors' entrance have a diagonal relief pattern that runs all of the way around the building. Doors and windows have wide concrete borders.



You arrive at the new mortuary via a small, quiet square with tall lime trees.



Section



Plan



The viewing room has a relief pattern in the brickwork across the whole back wall which changes appearance as the light changes during the day.



Part of the façade has a header bond.



All four of the brick's surfaces are used in the indoor wall relief.

MORTUARY AT NORRTÄLJE HOSPITAL

EXEMPLARY USE OF BRICK'S TACTILE QUALITIES CREATES A WORTHY SETTING FOR LAST GOODBYES.

Providing a dignified farewell to the newly departed, regardless of religious convictions, was the fundamental aim of the new mortuary at Norrtälje Hospital. It consists of a garage, a reception area, and rooms for viewings and meetings. Preparation of the dead, embalming and minor autopsies take place in the basement.

Like the rest of the hospital, the mortuary is made of brick, with different binds separating the two functions. The garage section uses a traditional runner bond with flat joints, and has a pure and simple

appearance, with no openings other than the garage door.

The brickwork on the rear is more expressive. The exterior has a diagonal recurring relief pattern, created by a header bond with half-brick displacements in height and heavily recessed joints. A similar diagonal pattern surrounds the entrance.

Inside, too, the thick walls are brick-clad, while the deep window recesses are clad in sandstone.

In the viewing room, the rear wall carries an irregular pattern of recessed and relief

bricks, while the other walls are clad in light ash plywood. A skylight casts beams of light over the brick relief pattern, and the changing light and shadow play endows the room with a quiet, solemn character.

Overall, the brick and the finely-detailed patterns give the mortuary both a fitting gravity and a welcoming textural effect.

Mortuary at Norrtälje Hospital

Client: Locum AB:

(Stockholms lanstings fastighetsbolag)

Architect: Link Arkitektur

Brick, exterior: D36

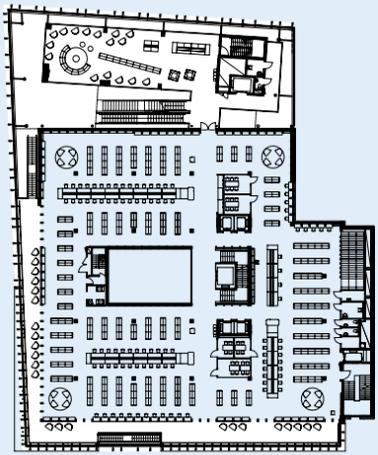
Brick, interior: D72

Joints: Weber, 23033, cement, light grey

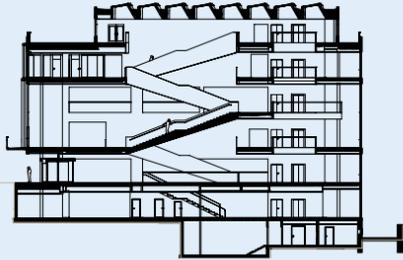
Photos: Åke E:son

The transformation in 2014 has made it visually much more inviting and open. The yellow-brick pillars retain the link with the surrounding historic, yellow-brick buildings.

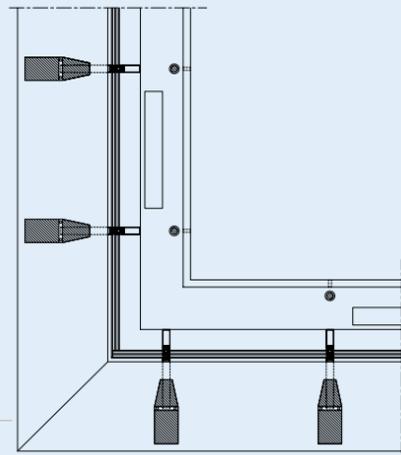
Gothenburg City Library was designed by Lund & Valentin Arkitekter and built in 1967.



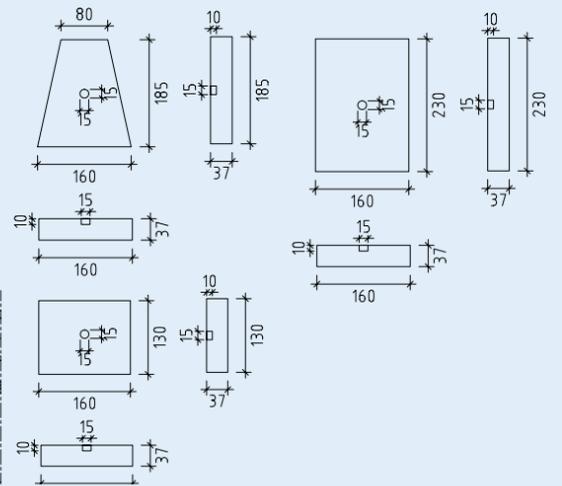
Second floor – addition marked.



Section



Vertical section, the conical, hung pillars.



The three special moulded bricks.



To the south and east, the library now has new three-metre deep galleries into which light pours through the new glass façade.



Erséus Architects designed three different moulded bricks, including a conical one, which ends the pillars with their tapered shape. All of the moulded bricks are 37mm high.



On the first floor, the new extension has been used for long terraces that run all the way around the southwest and northwest sides of the building.

EXTENSION OF GOTHENBURG CITY LIBRARY

THE ROWS OF SLIM BRICK PILLARS IN FRONT OF THE GLASS FAÇADES ENSURE THAT THE BRICK MOTIF IS MAINTAINED.

Built on Götapladsen in 1967, Gothenburg City Library stands side by side with many of the city's grand old cultural institutions, all of which are in yellow brick. In order to adapt to its monumental surroundings, the library also has yellow-brick façades, albeit reflecting their own era in shape and idiom.

The library was refurbished and extended by Erséus Architects, 2012–14. Rather than expanding north, the architects chose to wrap the extension around the existing building on three sides to avoid the need to extend into the neighbouring park.

The largest part of the extension in terms of floor space is still to the north, however, including the new main entrance and foyer, conference facilities and a big café. To the south and east, three-metre deep galleries have been added.

The three-sided glass extension also gives the exterior a new and modern look. However, continuing the visual motif of the surrounding cultural institutions, it also retains a monolithic quality by virtue of the slender columns of greyish-yellow brick on the glass façades. Viewed head on, the

exteriors appear open and transparent, but the brick character becomes increasingly obvious from more oblique viewing angles. This effect is achieved by sinking the pillars to a depth of two bricks and by making them two bricks deep with a slightly narrowed shape - broader outwards and narrower towards the glass façade.

Gothenburg City Library, extension

Client: Higab

Architect: Erséus Architects

Brick: D32, special bricks in three formats

Joints: Weber, 23003, cement, white/grey

Text: Tina Jørstian, architect

Photos: Ulf Celandner



Thesing & Thesing's new studio consists of two concrete gables covered with grey Kolumba on both the interior and exterior. Two glass façades span the gap between the gables, creating a completely open connection between the garden and the studio.



A slit in the wall lets in light from the south.

ARCHITECTURAL STUDIO AS A GARDEN ATELIER

GERMAN ARCHITECTS' STUDIO REINTERPRETS, IN AN ELEGANT AND CONVINCING MANNER, THE ROMANTIC IDEA OF A SHELTERED PLACE AT ONE WITH NATURE, PROVIDING PHYSICAL AND MENTAL SPACE FOR CREATIVE EXPRESSION.

The German architecture firm Thesing & Thesing Architekten now runs its studio from an atelier-like building, which has such an open and direct relationship with the surrounding gardens that it comes across as just a place to shelter from the rain.

It was precisely this effect that the company's owners, Professor Manuel Thesing and Sabine Thesing, sought to achieve when they decided to vacate their former 1970s-built studio in favour of a new one.

Thesing & Thesing Architekten, based in the Westphalian town of Heiden wanted to move to new premises for several reasons, including a lack of space, outdated facilities and a desire for more light and air.

First, the architects acquired a plot with mature fruit trees near the centre of town.

The basic idea was to put on a barn, a long-house as if it had been there for decades. Actually just a big roof.

The new design studio stands out by virtue of a few, well-chosen features. The gables are in massive concrete, covered with bricks on the interior and the exterior. Two glass-clad façades span between the gables, creating a completely open connection between the garden and the studio.

The interior converges around two free-standing concrete cores that house secondary facilities. A concrete deck with an arched underside stretches like a sail between the two gable walls. The floor plan is symmetrical and simple: The central section consists of one big, open workspace with a balcony floor. At each end, the concrete cores – sup-

plemented with glass panels – form the walls of separate office and meeting spaces.

The transparent façades and simple approach to spatiality give the working space an open, light and airy feel, and provide unobstructed views of the surrounding garden's trees and shrubs.

Like the shape and structure, the choice of materials was kept simple: Concrete and glass, as well as light oak floors and greyish Kolumba-covered gable walls to add warmth and tactility.

The choice of this particular brick format is a nod to the region's traditional brick, and reflects the desire to give the surfaces a calm, horizontal character. Manuel Thesing visited the brickworks in Broager to find just the right shade.

Overall, the simple design and subdued materials contribute to an overall harmony and an easy, natural feel so that the studio merges smoothly into the old, green garden – which was the whole idea.

Atelier im Garten, design studio for Thesing & Thesing Architekten BDA, Heiden, Germany

Client: Sabine & Manuel Thesing

Architect: Thesing & Thesing Architekten I BDA

Engineer: Ingenieurgesellschaft Führer-Kosch-Jürges

Brick: K51

Joints: Billebeck FM 136674, cement, grey/white

Text: Tina Jørstian, architect

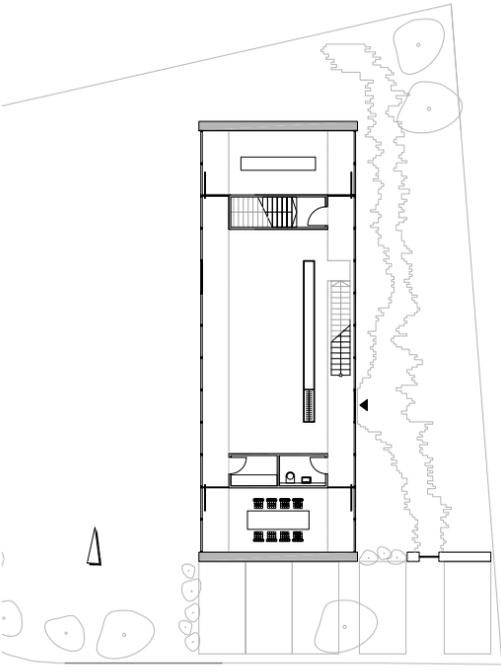
Photos: Paul Kozlowski

Visitors arrive from the east, and enter via the large south-facing glass façade.

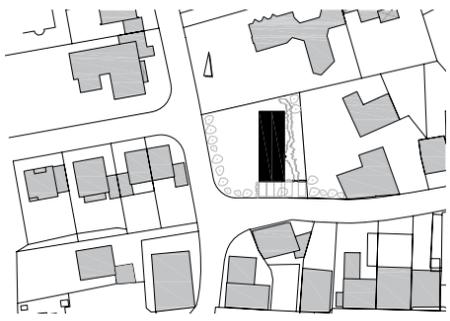


A concrete deck with an arched underside stretches like a taut sail between the two gable walls.





Ground-floor plan



Site plan



The distance of 1.5 metres between the concrete deck and glass façade ensures a comfortable working environment without direct sunlight.

The almost 12-metre long concrete deck is born by concrete cores at opposite ends of the building, which has no pillars.

Thesing & Thesing Architekten was founded more than 50 years ago and is now run by the second generation, Professor Manuel Thesing and Sabine Thesing.





Villa Rotonda is tight and precise, with gable-end chimneys and a 44-degree pitched roof.

CONTRAST AND ILLUSION

WITH ITS REFINED BALANCE OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY, THIS DUTCH HOUSE IS AT THE SAME TIME OPEN AND CLOSED, ASCETIC AND EXTRAVAGANT – AND SUBTLY TRANSCENDS ITS OWN IMMEDIATE TYPOLOGY.

Villa Rotonda towers behind high protective walls, tight and precise, with a sharply-delineated, steeply-pitched roof crowned by two gable chimneys. On the face of it, this is a beautifully-proportioned interpretation of a typical, rectangular two-storey house.

The houses in Goirle, in the south of the Netherlands, are characterised by precisely the kind of traditional Dutch style echoed in the slender, symmetrical profile of Villa Rotonda's gables. The protective outer walls also echo the building's clean, simple lines and draw on a classic architectural motif. The overall impression is refined, almost ascetic.

The house stands on a corner plot, flanked by two roads and a busy roundabout. At first glance, you might think that the location explains the high protective walls. But they are partly an illusion – indeed, one of several.

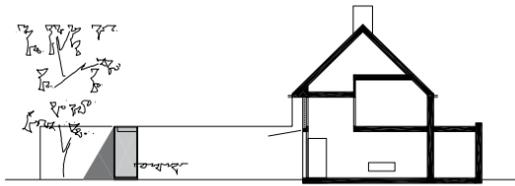
Shielding the house from noise and onlookers, the walls do have a protective function – but they are much more than just walls. They partially constitute the house's outer façades at ground-floor level. The footprint is therefore not rectangular, but L-shaped. One wall forms the exterior of the side wing, while the one that lies flush with the façade forms the exterior of the entrance.

The whole complex is built in greyish brick, while dark-grey slate covers the pitched roof. The materials exude honesty, quality and a certain solidity, which is subtly counteracted by the gently rippling effect reflected from the pond in front of the house.

The façades and wall elements facing the road are all but closed, broken only by a single window in each of the angled, protective walls.



With the exception of a single window, the angle at which you approach Villa Rotonda is completely closed. The patio and reflecting pool under it reflect daylight into the building.



Section

Sheltered behind the walls are two large glass sections seen only in glimpses. Stretching between the wall and the main part of the house, the windows allow light, greenery and the pond's reflections to bring a sense of space to the interior.

The garden is partially shielded by walls on both sides, evoking a traditional monastery garden and further reinforcing the impression given by the front of the building. However, this impression is misleading. In fact, Villa Rotonda's character is the exact opposite of how it first appears. It is surprisingly transparent and open, with a glass façade flanked by large, covered terraces, one of which leads to a swimming pool. Interior and exterior merge into one. From the garden, the house still looks simple and precise, but with a modernist idiom that verges on the extravagant.

Designed by the Dutch architects Pieter and Thomas Bedaux, Villa Rotonda plays, in an elegant and surprising manner, with contrast and illusion. The brothers are the third generation of a renowned architectural dynasty. Several of Villa Rotonda's features are refined interpretations of established family traditions – for example, the choice of grey brick. "Our father, grandfather and the Bedaux studio generally are known for coating façades with a thin layer of cement that gives the buildings a grey hue," Thomas Bedaux explains. "Pieter and I wanted to add a twist to this tradition, and went in search of grey-tone brick. A sample from Petersen Tegl made all the difference – we had found our material. We visited the brickworks in Denmark with the client, and the future resident of Villa Rotonda fell for the brick."

Villa Rotonda, Goirle, the Netherlands

Client: Private

Architect: Bedaux de Brouwer Architecten

Engineer: H4D Raadgevend Ingenieurs B.V.

Landscape architect: Puur Groenprojecten

Brick: D91

Joints: 1 part white Heidelberg cement,

1 part Wittekind Portland cement,

8 parts masonry sand,

finished with a hard broom.

Text: Tina Jørstian, architect

Photos: Paul Kozlowski



The building is on a corner, and is flanked by two roads and a roundabout, from which it shields itself off.



The architects chose a brick with shades of grey reminiscent of the roughcast façades for which the previous generation in the studio was renowned.

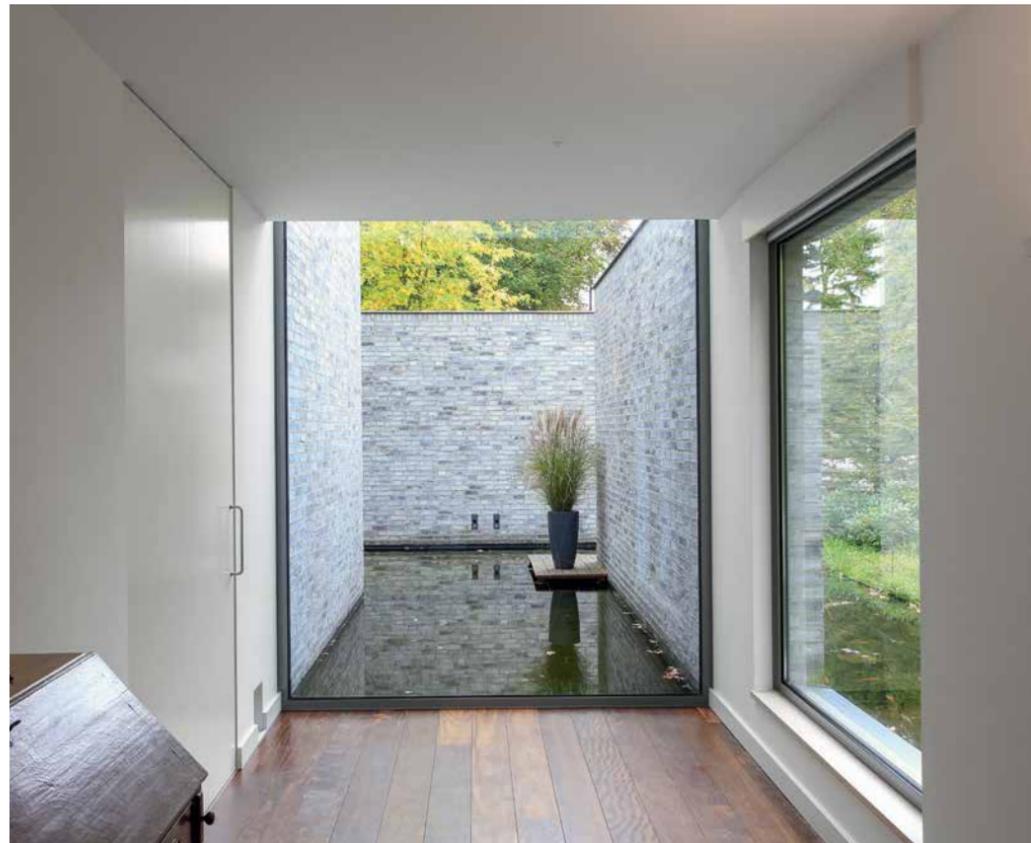


A glass façade faces onto the garden. The garden is sheltered by walls on two sides and greenery on the third.

From the hall there is a view of the pond through a large glass window.



Ground floor and first level.





Christian A. Petersen says thank you for the prize.
Photos: DI



Christian A. Petersen, flanked by his two daughters, Vibeke and Annette Petersen.
Next, HRH Prince Joachim, the DI Chair Lars Mikkjelgaard-Jensen and CEO Karsten Dybvad.

THE DI INITIATIVE PRIZE

Petersen Tegl has been named the winner of the Danish Industry Initiative Prize. HRH Prince Joachim presented the award at DI's annual conference for small and medium-size enterprises at the organisation's HQ in Copenhagen on 20 January 2016. The company came out on top of the 19 regional nominations.

"This year's winner brings centuries of experience, knowledge and craftsmanship into the modern age. The company has a unique ability to see opportunities and turn ideas into action. It does things a little bit better and a little bit differently than others, and never shies away from innovation," HRH Prince Joachim said as he revealed the winner.

The CEO of Danish Industry, Karsten Dybvad, explained the choice. "Petersen Tegl makes unique products and does not hesitate to develop new ones and conduct experiments to meet its customers' needs. That is why they are able to sell bricks that are far more expensive than the competition. The brickyard has found its niche and is extremely dynamic for a 200-year-old."

PRESTIGIOUS PRIZES

WORKPLACE OF THE YEAR

Petersen Tegl also received the equally distinguished accolade of being named "Best Workplace in the Sønderborg Area" by the trade union 3F in November 2015.

About 100 members of staff accompanied Christian A. Petersen, his family and the rest of the brickyard management to a particularly

festive ceremony to celebrate the fact that the company has been recognised by the outside world as a good place to work.

The afternoon began with speeches by Steve Belting, the vice-chair of 3F Sønderborg, Mads Andersen, the chair of Industri 3F and Erik Lauritzen, the Mayor of Sønderborg.

After a visibly moved Christian A. Petersen had thanked the union for the diploma, everybody was treated to whole roasted pig in one of the large production halls at the brickworks.



Deputy chair of 3F Steve Belting presented the award to Christian A. Petersen.
Photos: Anders Sune Berg

A happy and proud owner surrounded by his staff.
Photos: Anders Sune Berg



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