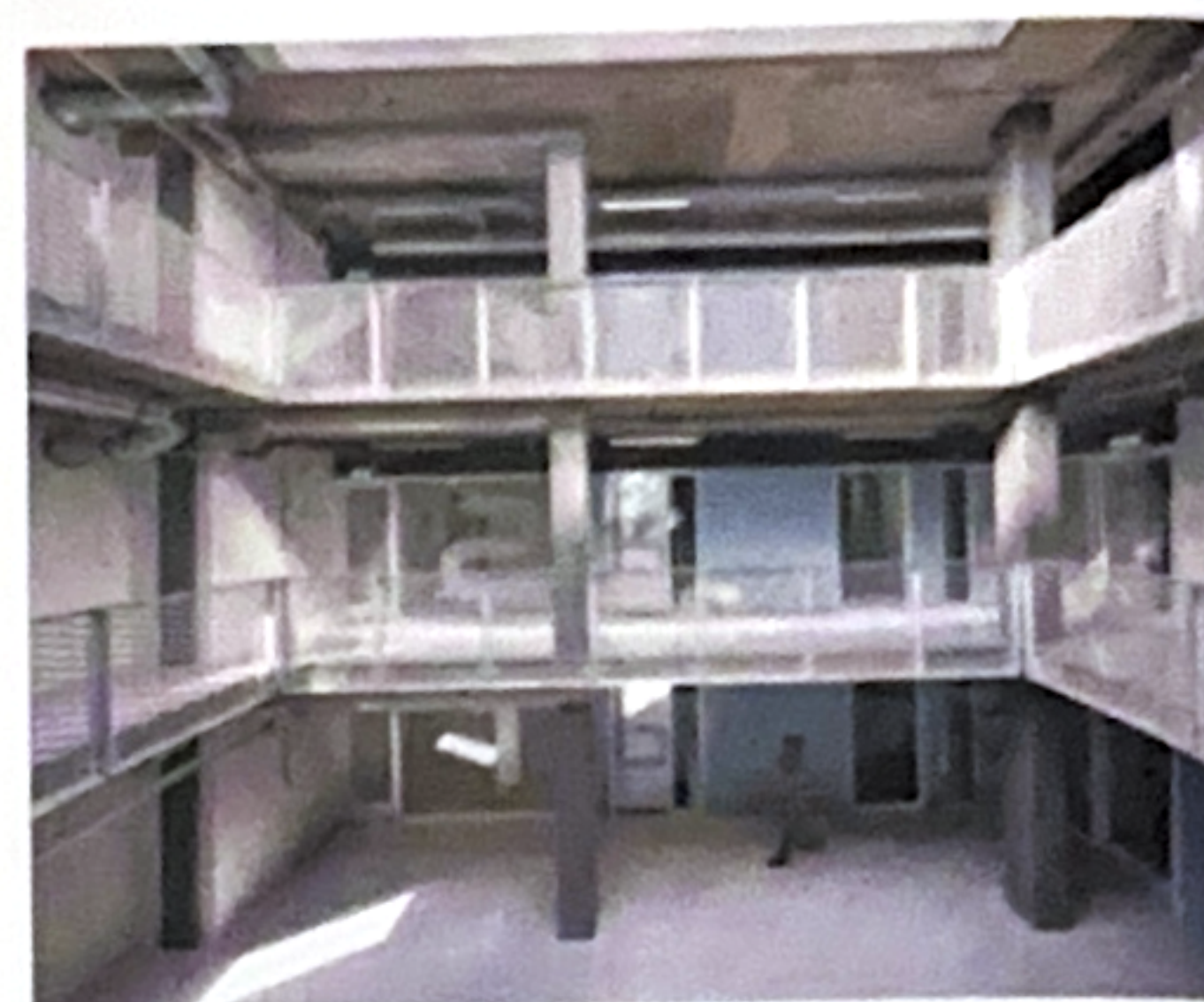




Building for now and then

TEXT: SOFIE COUWENBERGH | PHOTOS: PIETER KERS

Structures that answer the client's demands of today while being adaptable to his needs of tomorrow are structures that are built to last. At Borren Staalenhoef Architects, the team believes in looking ahead and designing creations that are sustainable in more ways than one.

"Clients often only think about what they want from a building today and forget to think about the future," says architect Jacob Borren. His bureau has therefore made it their mission to fulfil that task for their clients. By entering into a continuous conversation with its clients, the team is able to go beyond their immediate goals and think up houses and office spaces that will grow with them. "A couple may have small children running around today, but also the hopes that in a few years, they'll have to do their homework somewhere," Borren continues. "Those are things you only learn by asking and that should be implemented in the design."

Buildings are constructed in such a way that they are flexible and ready to evolve

together with their inhabitants. By incorporating current needs and leaving room for future ones, it becomes unnecessary to hire a contractor each time the client wants something new. It is a way to ensure sustainability through adaptability.

Sustainability is also achieved thanks to conscious material selection. Not only does Borren Staalenhoef work with long-lasting materials, it also employs them to be optimally functional. This no-nonsense approach allows them to create luxurious-looking projects for a limited budget. "We believe that it's exactly our functional and sustainable approach with eye for the immediate environment that creates aesthetically appealing buildings," says Borren.

These structures often look different depending on the time of day and the weather, their elements playing with incoming sunlight or mirrored clouds on the windows. Examples are a glass-dominated home in the middle of the woods and the famous Villa Juliana, which won the bureau the Prize Vredeman de

Vries in 2014. Just like the bureau's other clients, the people living in these houses had guts. They put their trust in the often tantalising style of Borren Staalenhoef Architects and have not regretted it for a moment.

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