



DESIGN & BUILD N°12
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Each project is meant to be the best project we ever did

Robert Hornung about the quest for perfection,
and why EGB achieves the best results
if they design on purpose.

"You need structure in your work. Our projects are recognisable, yes, but they are not repetitions of themselves. From our side, you won't find the same design done again and again. It's not that repeating yourself would necessarily lead to bad results, but it's obvious that this way of working is kind of boring. Work that is too structured doesn't leave you enough room to really design", stresses Robert Hornung, EGB's Managing Partner.

"In many ways, EGB Interior Design looks at projects differently than other companies might do. Our work is qualified by individually building a solution together with the customer and their specific needs. This can be the time scheduling, the budget, but also the function. If you have a very tight schedule, you might have to opt for some detail that fits the criteria, so it's impossible to pick that out of a catalogue. The best results are achieved if we design on purpose. Each project – and it doesn't matter whether it's a big or a small one – is meant to be the best project we ever did. It deserves perfection." EGB Interior Design aspires to excellence, in every

single individual project they undertake. "Always tend to reach perfection. You can adapt that to any field, actually."

This quest for perfection can be achieved by staying rooted and authentic. "I am not very fond of opulence", Robert says, "because it's impossible to ever reach perfection in it. Take materials, for instance. You could go for three materials only – or hundreds of them. With three, it's likely to get closer to perfection. Now try to do the same with hundreds of materials. In design, it's our core to make something remarkable with a limited amount of materials. It is constantly forcing us to come up with new ideas, uses and contexts."

In the previous Design & Build editions, only finished projects with perfectly matched photos were featured. "In this issue, we focus on the process flow of the construction site and on the workers and technicians. In my opinion these construction site photos have their very own aesthetics. They show that the road to outstanding accomplishments is a dusty one."



↑ Disassembly and clearing of the entire office surface: partitions, false ceiling, part of the wiring

← Although almost all recent buildings are equipped with false floors and floor boxes – they always have to be adapted to the requirements of the new user



↓ Numerous drillings in the soundproof partition walls



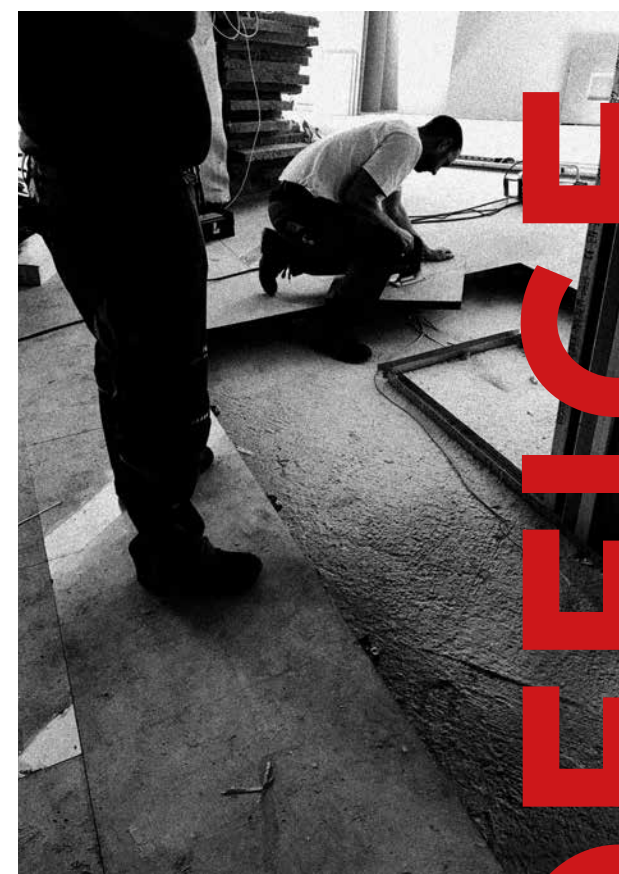
↑ One side of the partition wall stays open so that the various installations can be done before the partition wall is closed



↓ Concentration in front of the 'puzzle'



→ After installing the partition walls the intermediate bases need to be adjusted



↑ For acoustic reasons or firebreak compartments plasterboard partitions are mounted from slab to slab

↓ Approaching the end: carpet laid, furniture installed, fixtures mounted – ultimes finishes and settings on all sides



↑ Various quantities of cables, counted in kilometers



↑ The HVAC installation must be adapted to the needs of the new tenant

**"The end result
of this very challenging project
seems as obvious/simple as a musician's
commissioned performance.
The building site is our composition."**

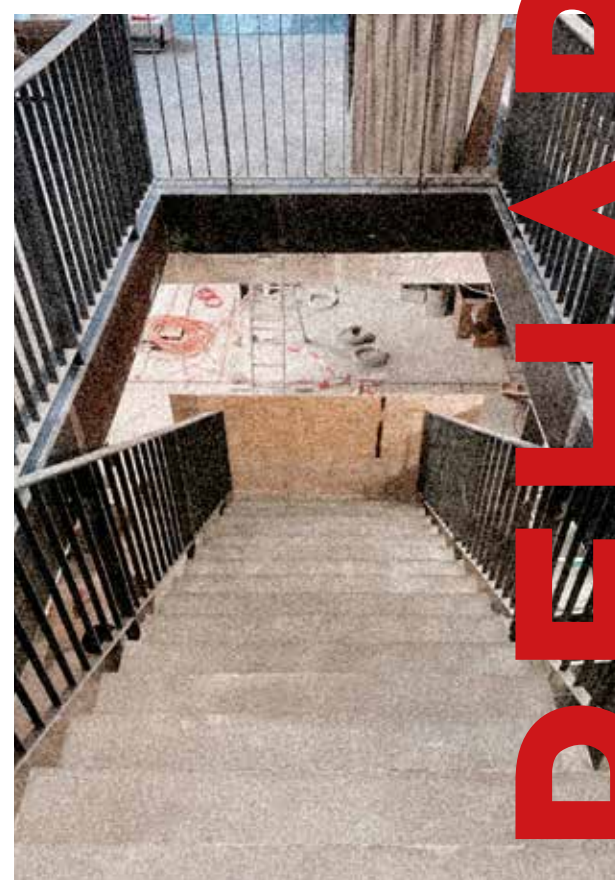
Olivier André, architect





← ↑ Platform with the installed plant and technical equipments

→ Technical platform on the roof / 8th floor



← Rehabilitation of a 1975 building, former Crédit Européen with a total surface of 3.500 m²

→ ↘ Cutting of the concrete slab between basement -1 and ground floor, followed by the installation of a steel staircase with cement steps



REHABILITATION

“In order to revive this 70^s building with its outdated structures we had to optimize complex problems in a timely manner.”

Luis Cardoso, architect



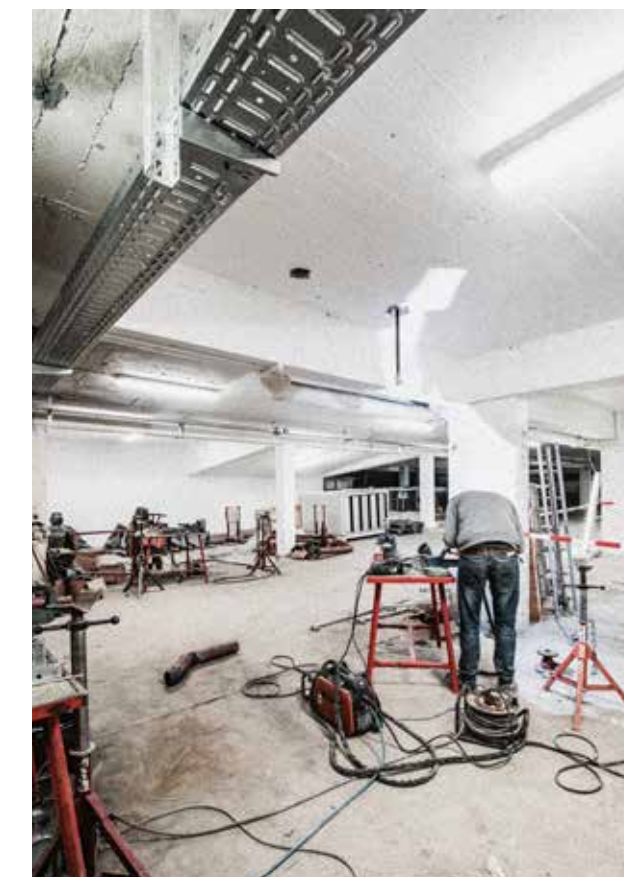
↓ Carbon reinforcements instead of metal structures



↓ Stripping the plaster before setting up the carbon reinforcements



← ↑ ↘ Due to a lack of space in the basement and a too low slab, the HVAC system had to be split into two parts



← Creation of 3 coves by sawing into the concrete wall in the basement on the south side

→ ↘ Before and after



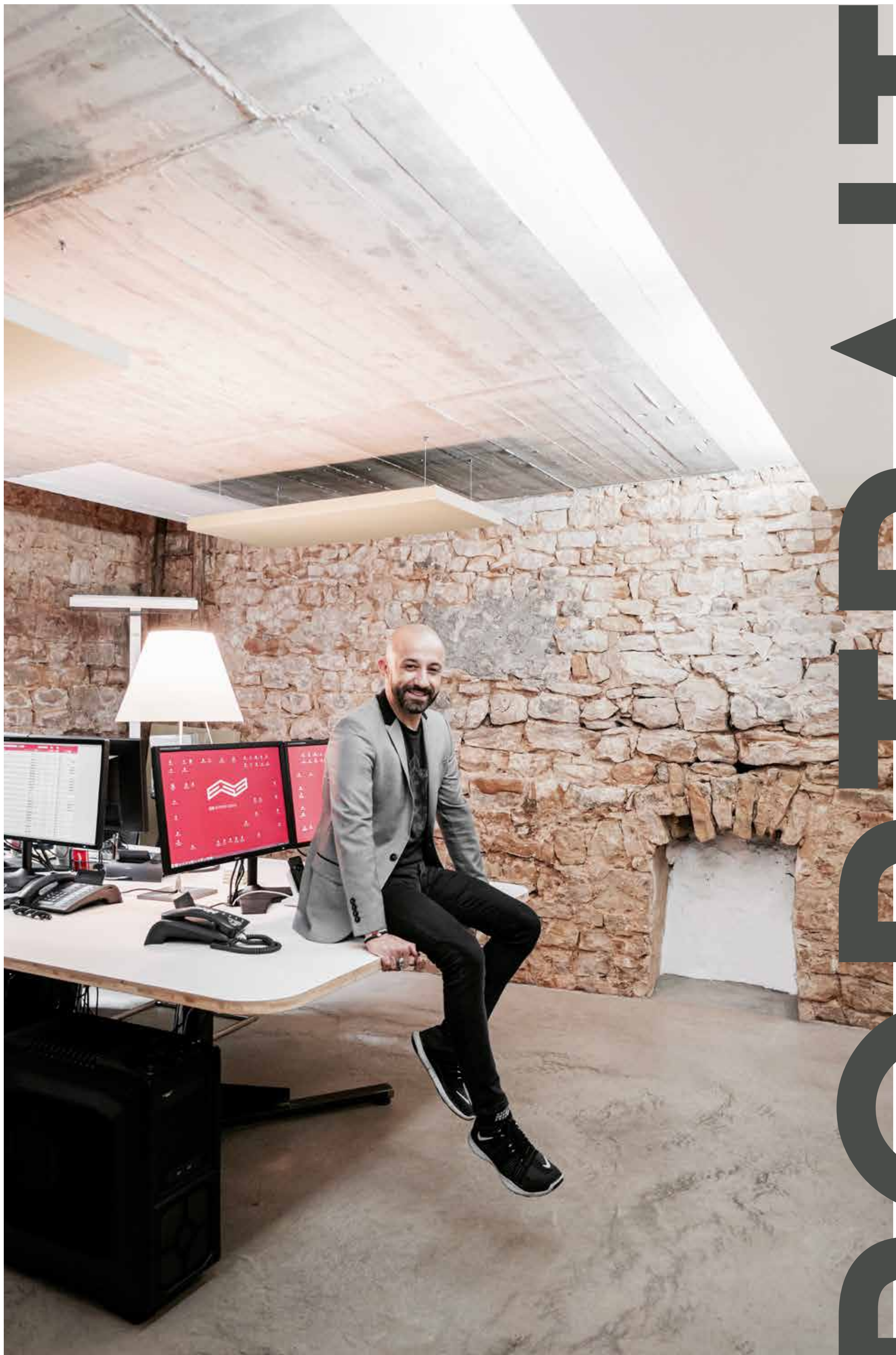
↑ In order to guarantee the proper function of the HVAC, it was essential to convince the landlord to replace all the windows as well as the interior insulation

→ 3 conference rooms and 1 board room: flexible arrangement by sliding partitions



“Thanks to my colleague Luis alias the ‘MacGyver of construction’ this tangram could be delivered just in time.”

Deniz Mercan, architect



INTERVIEW

I am here to lead you through the minefields

In conversation with Stéphane di Carlo
about helping customers stay on top of the game
and making better-informed decisions.

"I'm part of a dynamic team of interior designers, architects, strategists and interior fit-out specialists. Our goal is to create outstanding places to work and live in", says Stéphane di Carlo, Partner at EGB Interior Design. Each project needs careful and extensive planning, long before production even starts, as Stéphane explains: "If you go into the project realisation phase and then start changing things, you won't be in control of anything anymore. The result will be a disaster. A project consists of many different layers, and it soon becomes extremely complex. The phase before production has to be well coordinated. During that period, we work closely with our customer and get a better feel for their various needs."

Driven by delivering results, EGB Interior Design sees itself as a one-stop-shop for any building or reconstruction project: "It makes us go further than a traditional architecture practice, or a construction company", adds

Stéphane. "We deliver entire projects. You could say that we are unlike other companies on the market, because we simply are the single point of responsibility." Some constructors or developers might be able to come up with fantastic ideas, but they cannot guarantee that the project will be finished within the time frame, or respecting the legal criteria and budget limitations. "Our services make the whole production process less fragmented, because you get one contact person who ensures the planning, managing, monitoring and coordination of the pre-construction and construction phases and also the many different suppliers."

Stéphane di Carlo has been with EGB Interior Design for more than twenty years now. "I had the opportunity to go through all stages", he remembers. "I started out writing up BOQs – bills of quantities, basically documents that provide detailed information about the drawings and specifications for upcoming projects."

I also assisted designers while they were developing new projects in creating mood boards and selecting materials such as furniture, tiles, colour patterns and wallpaper." Passionate about developing projects, Stéphane is expert not only in finding people, but also in getting to know their projects: "My approach is to go directly to the client - we go out there and pick our projects. Of course, customers can reach us via our different media channels, but you should not underestimate the word-of-mouth recommendations, which are highly important when you actively get in touch with potential new customers."

EGB's customers appreciate that even after 25 years of being in the field, the company still holds on to its "independent" status. "Handling projects from start to finish is not an easy undertaking", says Stéphane, "so it's important to collaborate with many different providers. Sure, if you're a company looking for an office space, you need to go through a real estate agent. However, it is reasonable to have EGB on your side to ensure you detain an impartial perspective. It is our job to not only give our customers insights into the different preparatory stages, but also to help them stay on top of the game and thus making better-informed decisions. There are a lot of traps you can fall into, but my team and I are here to guide you through that minefield."

The majority of EGB's customers are looking to establish an office

space. "The question they need to ask themselves is: How much do you value your employees? Of course, an office is also about company branding, but the human resources have to be the priority. It's about creating a space that every employee enjoys working in, and about giving everyone the possibility to thrive and to stay with their company for a long time. We're not necessarily talking about designers furniture, but about the general office layout, and whether you're creating an environment that's enabling a positive and healthy long-time work situation. We are not imposing our ideas on our clients - we listen to their needs and provide them with an environment that works for them."

With the project atHomeFinance, the customer wanted a visible space that was both a statement and something approachable - a place where people could walk in, browse, and, well, feel at home. "With their plans to launch their finance service, it was a great opportunity to create something fitting to their aspirations. We opted for a concept that wouldn't remind people of a typical finance institution, and went for a contemporary look in order to convey a welcoming atmosphere - from the external garden area to the warm and inviting interior. The atHomeFinance office turned out to be a family-friendly, open and spacious surface where people could gather, feel comfortable and get curious about the provided services. It is a big success."

OPEN SPACE OFFICE



← ↑ → Assembling of the glass partitions and made-to-measure furniture



"Bridging the gap between paper and reality. It's about taking each project from concept to completion with a personal, hands-on approach."

Sophie Braconnier, interior designer

← ↓ Starting point of the project were the offices of the Consular Section of the Italian Embassy



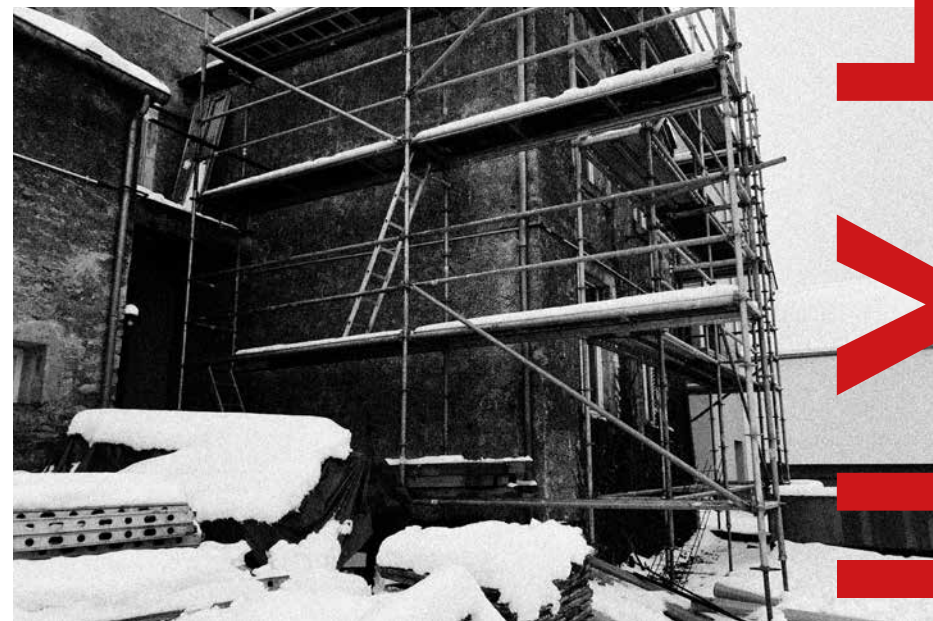
→ Transparency, open, bright: reconfiguration and reorganisation of the available surface

↓ Welcoming spacious waiting area





← ↑ → Just before takeoff



"You're basically starting over on a blank canvas."
'Dido House' is going to be a very beautiful family home."
 Sabrina Brandt, interior designer

FAMILY HOME



← ↑ → Demolition work, partition, brickwork, electrical installation, sanitary and heating



← ↑ All that remains is the old oak staircase

↓ Traces of the old partitioning between the 1st and the 2nd floor – the new central beam will serve as a support for the new slab



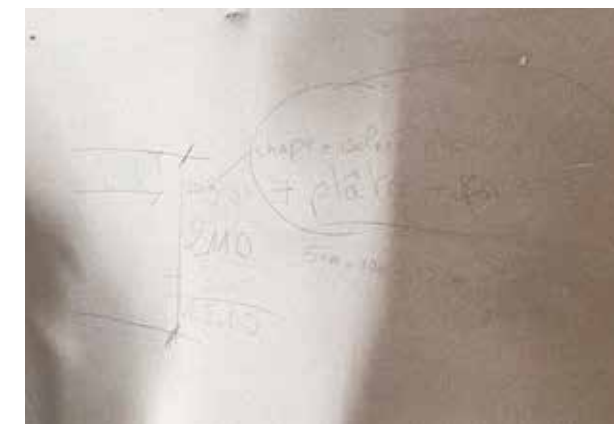
← Just before the summer holidays the roof was installed



→ Leg mounting brackets for the 1st floor slab formwork
 ↘ 1st floor slab reinforcement

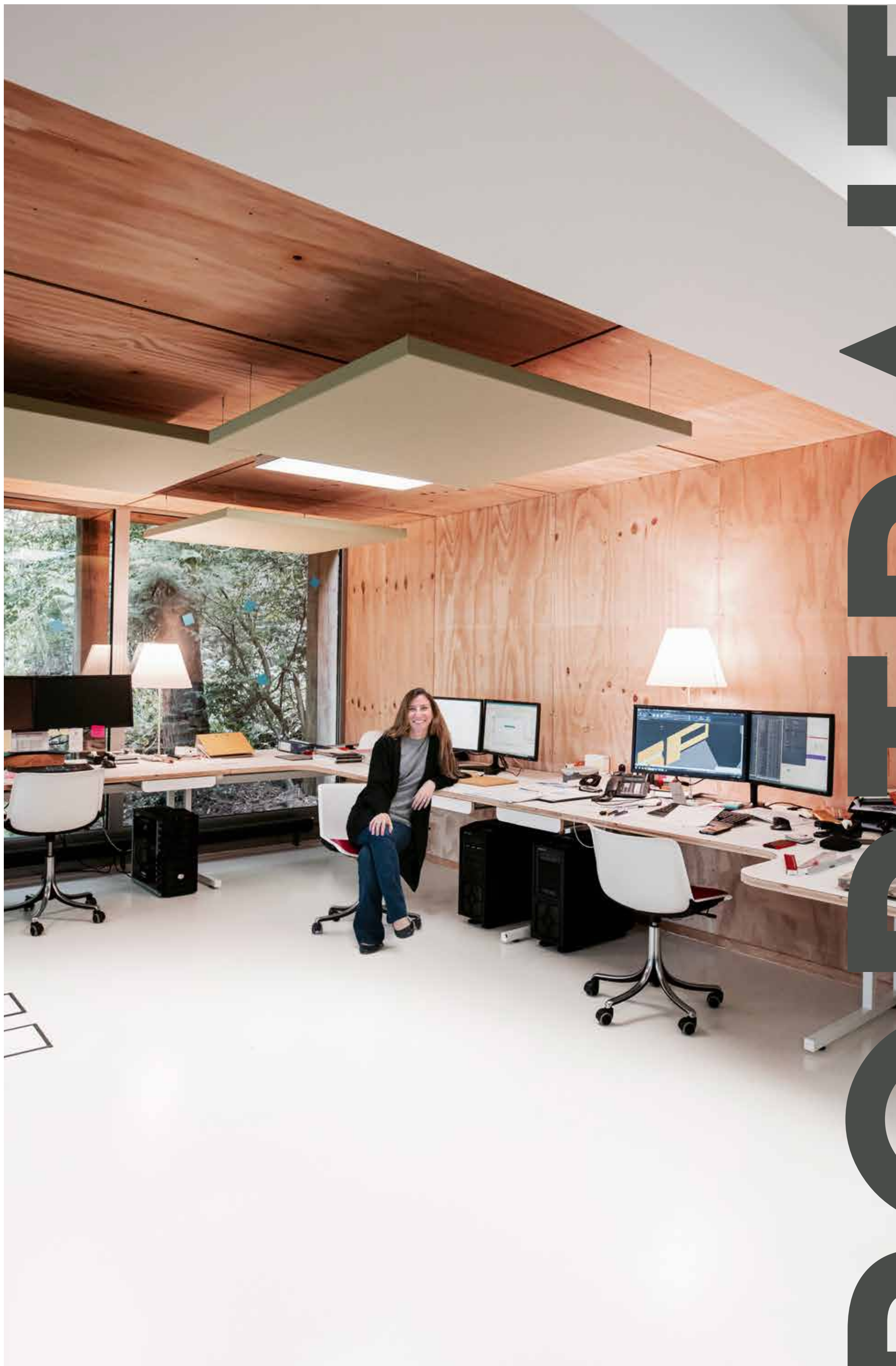


↓ Meaningful scribble by a pragmatic man



↓ Just after the formwork





INTERVIEW

Good results come from enthusiastic, open-minded and creative people

In conversation with Sabrina Brandt and Robert Hornung about taking the right decisions and working as part of a strong team.

With each project they take on, the EGB interior designers strive for nothing less than excellence. This is done by a team of talented individuals from all over the world, giving their creative input and taking care of the most varied projects. Leaving her home country Brazil behind her, Sabrina Brandt moved to Luxembourg and is currently reinforcing the EGB team in their ongoing projects. Sabrina explains why she decided to work at EGB, and what she has learned already during her time in the Grand Duchy.

"Three years ago, I decided to leave Brazil", Sabrina says, "because of the economic crisis. I used to have a super nice job at an architecture company in Rio de Janeiro, but when the crisis hit the country, I decided to move to Portugal and chose to specialise – and get a Master in interior design."

Lisbon turned out to be a great choice for Sabrina. She quickly made new friends and met her

husband Tomás. "Portugal still felt quite close to home because of the language, good weather and its many beaches and it made my move easier".

It was when Sabrina's husband received a job offer from Luxembourg that the couple started to think about moving. "I finished my studies in Lisbon first before we came to Luxembourg", says Sabrina. "I arrived without a job offer, which made me a bit nervous. I was browsing the job boards for a few months and found EGB, a company I could definitely see myself working with. It didn't take long until I met Robert Hornung, and we started talking."

While EGB Interior Design is attracting talent from many corners of the world, a lot of thought and energy have to go into hiring the right people in order to get the job done. Robert Hornung, Managing Partner at EGB, explains what he is looking for in a potential coworker: "Hiring someone is a difficult pro-

cess, and firing someone is even more difficult. Usually, there is a 20% chance that the person you're considering actually fits into your company."

Robert adds that looking for professional qualities does not necessarily pinpoint you to people you actually want to work with on a daily basis: "Of course, you need to check someone's skills, such as their language proficiency. It's surprising how distorted some applicants view on their level of German, French or English is. When you hire people, you have to filter through these factors, but the most rewarding experience will come if you primarily focus on who your applicants are as human beings."

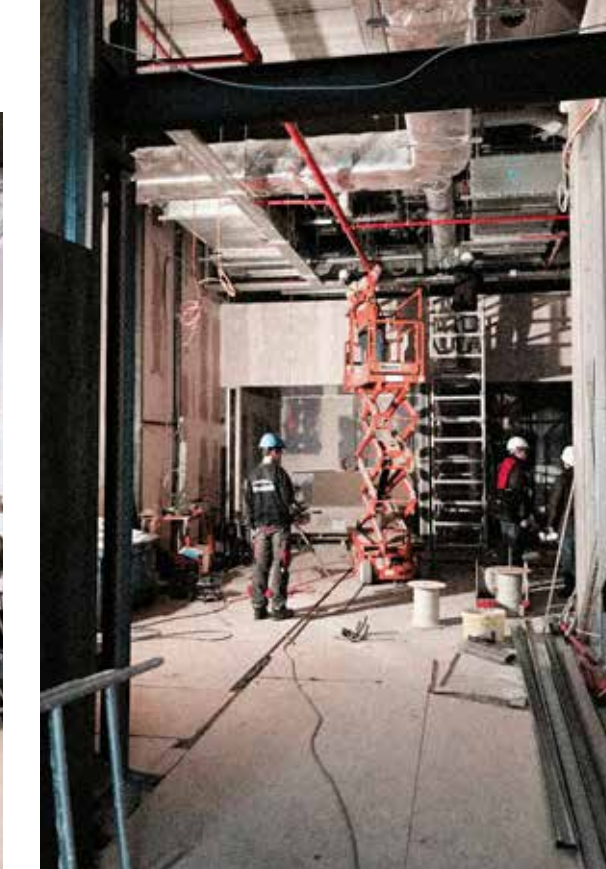
Back to Sabrina: her husband Tomás received yet another offer, this time leading the married couple to Dubai. "Moving to the United Arab Emirates meant as well that I had to postpone starting at EGB Interior Design", says Sabrina, "however, Robert was very understanding of my situation. Even though it was really interesting to spend some time in a country that is so different from what you're used to, it felt good to return to Luxembourg, where I could finally get started on new projects in a company that believes in my skills and is eager to make use of those."

"We need strong and individualistic people", says Robert, "people who can work as part of a team, but who also stand true to themselves and who are happy to give

their very own personal input. It's not about playing individual knowledge out against each other. Good results come from enthusiastic, open-minded and creative people with the most varied backgrounds. I on the other hand have to make sure we have the right mix."

Back in the Grand Duchy, Sabrina Brandt is embracing the Luxembourg life, even if it might have taken her a while to get used to the local customs. "I grew up in a big city, a city that never sleeps and that boasts itself in having so many things to do. I already felt the difference in Lisbon, where shops outside of downtown city close early and life in general is a bit quieter. Luxembourg is very small, and I was quite astonished at first. I remember my first Sunday here, when I wanted to go out and experience so many things – only to know that it's perfectly okay to not do any major things on a Sunday... By now I got used to the rhythm here, and it feels great."

Sabrina joined the team of Turkish-German architect Deniz Mercan, who is working on 'Dido House' in Gonderange. "It's a family house EGB is doing all over", explains the interior designer. "It used to be a farm, and we are currently renovating it. We only left the facade. Inside we are redoing everything. You're basically starting over on a blank canvas, and it's really exciting to get involved in such a unique project. 'Dido House' is going to be a very beautiful family home."



← ↑ → A "technical mountain" hidden behind the final trim



"It is always a challenge to literally work 'on top of each other' while having such a tight schedule."

Luis Cardoso, architect

← ↓ Literally working 'on top of each other' → Finished facade

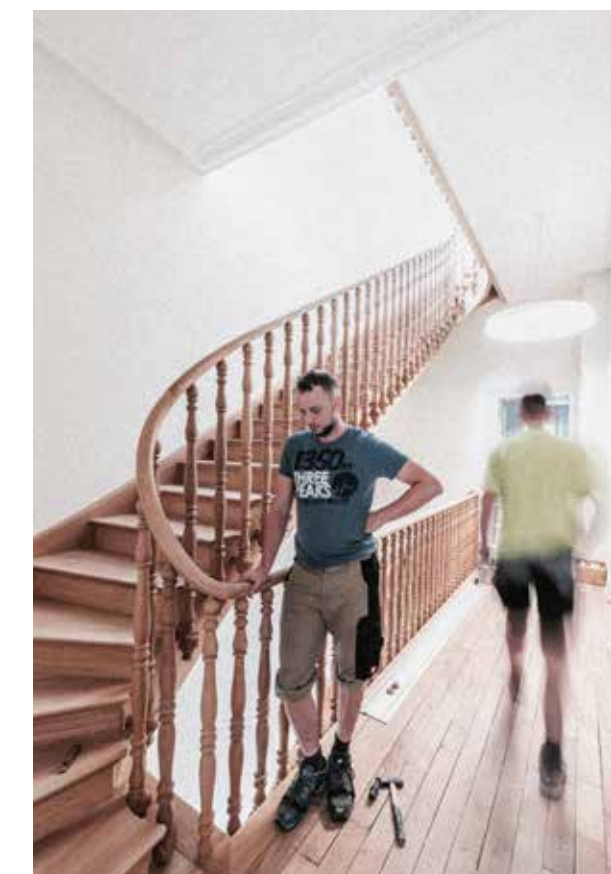
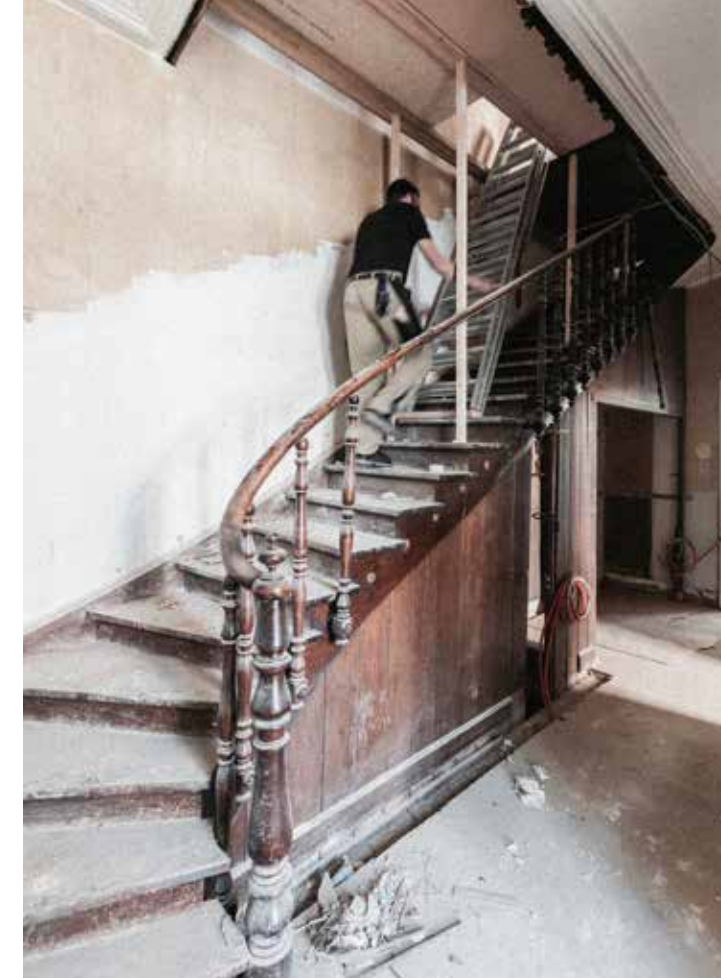


↓ Metallic and technical substructure





↑ Exterior work:
restoration of the roof,
new veranda
on the backside
of the building,
painting of the facade



← ↙ ↓ ↑ First impressions
of the almost
completed renovation



→ The whole house
had a good basis
but was in a
relatively old state



↑ Electrical and network cables
are laid under the old wooden floor

→ Wall breakthrough
in the bearing wall

→→ Demolition of
various partitions
on the 2nd floor



**“For this change of purpose –
from a former 19th century residential
building into a modern office –
complex reconstruction works
were necessary.”**

Héloïse Collin, interior architect



↑ Replacing the wooden staircase
is not an easy task
when you have
a ceiling height of 3,90 m



↓ Gardeners in action:
redevelopment of the garden

↓ Rear view with the new veranda
and the new pavement





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