

new European architecture

# A10



#34  
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## Ready

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- Social housing, Paris
- Psychiatric prison, Zeeland
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## Elastic lycra

**MANCHESTER (UK) / AMSTERDAM (NL)** — With her recent designs for two travelling pavilions, Zaha Hadid underscored the flexibility and 'mobility' of textiles. The first project was the Chanel Mobile Art pavilion, designed to mark the 50th anniversary of the Coco Chanel 2.55 handbag. Hadid fashioned the building from white fibre-reinforced polymer, a material that is strong enough to span a sizeable space (the interior measures 530 m<sup>2</sup>), but

also light and compact and consequently easy to transport. The original idea was that after Hong Kong, Tokyo and New York, the pavilion would travel to London, Moscow and Paris, but the financial crisis threw a spanner in the works and the European tour was cancelled. Europe did get to see the other pavilion, the JS Bach Chamber Music Hall, at the International Festival in Manchester (2009) and at this year's Holland Festival in Amsterdam. The 191-seat hall is on a much smaller

scale than the Chanel pavilion. In fact it is not a 'box within a box' that is constructed inside another building. Hadid used elastic lycra to create an appropriately 'dynamic' space in which the material folds itself around the audience and musicians like a meandering ribbon. Acoustic panels inside the ribbon reflect the sound back so that none is lost in the surrounding larger space. (KIRSTEN HANNEMA)

**JS BACH PAVILION, 2009–2010**  
Architect: Zaha Hadid  
Info: www.zaha-hadid.com



## Intelligent skin

**ASSE (BE)** — In the context of sustainable construction, architects are turning more and more to textiles as an alternative to the traditional facade brick. The reasons are obvious: textiles are extremely light and consequently more flexible than traditional facade materials. They also make it possible to combine various transmission and aesthetic properties in a single material. BLAF Architecten developed an

innovative textile skin for a private, 'passive' house. The house's location — as close as possible to schools, work, leisure activities and public transport — was the first step in the sustainable approach. Next there was the internal layout which was designed to be flexible enough to allow for modifications by a possible subsequent occupant. Another deliberate choice relating to sustainable use of the space is the interactive play area between house and street which replaces the usual front garden. The dwelling itself, built

according to passive house design principles, consists of a solid base that is half dug into the existing slope, and a timber-frame superstructure. Below are the bedrooms, above the substantially glazed living space adjoining the back garden. The base provides the required thermal mass, the areas of glass in the upper section guarantee a high heat yield, while void areas and the open-plan layout ensure that the warmth circulates freely through the dwelling. Measures had of course to be taken to avoid overheating. Here, too, the

architects sought flexible solutions using a minimum of means. They were keen to minimize the thickness of the outer walls and for this reason they chose EPDM rubber as a cladding for the base. For the upper facades an 'intelligent' skin was developed, consisting of a framework clad with UV-resistant glass-fibre fabric. In places where it is necessary this cloth can open and close and thus act as a sun blind. In the permanently closed sections the fabric protects the underlying wood foreboard. This innovative facade system not only

satisfies all the building performance requirements but also gives the dwelling a distinctive appearance that is in keeping with the architectural concept. (KIRSTEN HANNEMA)

**PASSIVE HOUSE, 2009**  
Architect: BLAF Architecten  
Client: private  
Address: Assse, Belgium  
Info: www.blaf.be



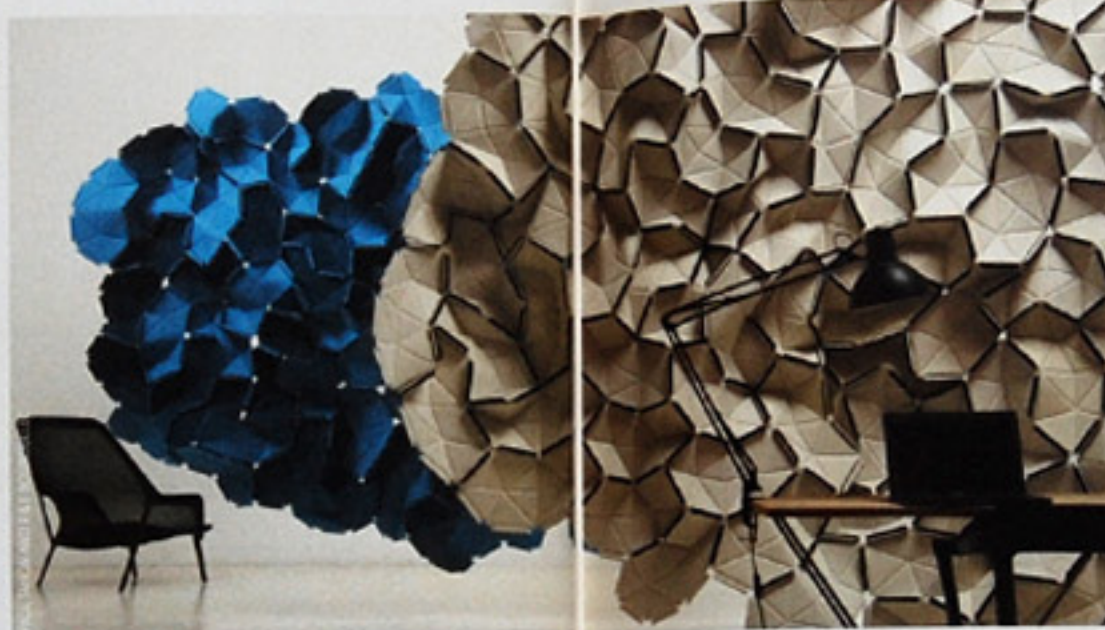
## Tiles and clouds

**COPENHAGEN (DK) / STOCKHOLM (SE)** — The tradition of using textiles as space dividers, in the form of curtains or folding screens, is centuries old, but walls built from textiles (leaving aside the tent) are a very recent phenomenon and quite unknown until the French designers Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec were commissioned by Danish textile manufacturer Kvadrat to develop two textile building blocks.

The first system, **North Tiles**, was originally designed for the Kvadrat showroom, which opened in Stockholm in 2006. They are thermo-compressed, foam-and-fabric tiles that connect by means of an ingenious folding system and can be used to build decorative walls and partitions. They also have an acoustic function because of the sound absorbency of the fabric.

The idea of textile tiles caught on and so a couple of years later Kvadrat asked the two brothers to devise a second tile concept that would be more suitable for a domestic setting and more easily moulded by the occupants. The outcome of their deliberations is **Clouds**, a simple system of irregularly shaped 'foldable' tiles that connect by means of rubber strips. The tiles can be used to create free-form, sculptural objects that can be attached to a ceiling, wall or floor. The result is a cross between a piece of furniture, an installation and a curtain. (KIRSTEN HANNEMA)

**NORTH TILES, 2006**  
**CLOUDS, 2009**  
Design: Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec  
Client: Kvadrat  
Info: www.bouroullec.com, www.kvadratclouds.com



## A wedding room with a difference

**THE HAGUE (NL)** — Pending completion of the new municipal offices in The Hague, which are scheduled to open in 2011, a presentation pavilion (Villa Escamp) has been erected next to the building site in order to give people a taste of what is to come. Designed by Korteeknie Stuhlmacher, the glasshouse structure is divided into a number of different rooms that reflect the diverse activities of the new municipal centre. There is a Museum Room, a Garden Room, a Planning Room, a Library Room and, very important for a municipal centre, a Wedding Room.

The **Wedding Chapel** was designed by DUS architects, a young Amsterdam practice that has made a name for itself with an artisanal and hands-on approach to architecture. Their often small, conceptual projects, in particular their 'public architecture',

frequently carry a hint of social criticism. Their 'Gecekondu Summerhouse Hotel' (an archetypical house made up of stacked Turkish shopping bags), for example, addressed the contentious issue of squatting and the related question of whether 'the formal is normal'. Architecture critic Tracy Metz proclaimed it the 'Best Architecture Project of 2009'. Other examples of DUS's unconventional use of everyday objects include a porch of recycled front doors, an open-air pavilion made from red umbrellas, and a 'cocoon' of woven bicycle inner tubes.

In the Villa Escamp Wedding Chapel, DUS shows how something as prosaic as ventilation pipes can be transformed into a structure that is not only serviceable but which has an almost numinous quality. The trick lies in the fabrication: the chapel is in fact a scaled-up crocheted hat. DUS spent three long days crocheting two kilometres of flexible white ventilation pipes (delivered in 15 metre lengths) together by hand using a

pattern worked out in collaboration with 'crochet expert' Sandy de Lange. The result is a six-metre-long, three-metre-high 'dome' that can accommodate 50 people (at a pinch). The pipes and the chinks in the crochet pattern filter the light. Couples are already permitted to 'marry for a day' there; the application to use the folly as a fully fledged wedding chapel is still being considered. It almost makes one hope that the municipal centre would suffer a slight delay. (HANNAH SCHUBERT)

**WEDDING CHAPEL, 2009**  
Architects: DUS architects  
Client: ASAM (Janie Broekman)  
Address: Villa Escamp, Leyweg 795, The Hague  
Info: www.dusarchitects.com

