BNA

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

WE ARE GOING CIRCULAR

FROM MANIFEST TO MOVEMENT WITH YOU IN THE LEAD

Imagine a world in which everything can be repaired, reused and regenerated. And imagine that you can help with this – here and now, by embracing this manifesto and adhering to the principles of circular design.

'Circular building' is an important link in a sustainable society that ensures that the needs of future generations can be met too. We see circularity as a means to create added value, promote health, purify air and water, and generate energy. Sustainability concerns people, and architecture is meaningless without people. Circularity without an eye for the human being is nothing. Buildings do not consume energy, people do. A building cannot be healthy, either – you want a healthy environment for people. The core of everything is man.

ON TO A CLOSED CYCLE

The essence of the circular economy* and specifically circular architecture is that construction materials no longer have a lifecycle with a beginning and an end. There is no waste in a circular economy, it is based on a closed loop that avoids the use of new raw materials. Products, components and materials are reused while maintaining the quality of structural properties: 'use' instead of 'consume'. The processes required for this must not be harmful to health and/or the environment. The starting point is the use of renewable energy.

ASK THE CIRCULAR QUESTION

At the start of a design commission, it is important to consider whether the functionality requested by the client is necessary. Our commitment to reducing the use of raw materials means that we also have to ask ourselves whether we should build new at all. In addition, a building must also have a high 'likeability' to ensure that we will continue to take care of it. It must be worthwhile (both financially and emotionally) to adapt it to the changing society.

* The circular economy is an economic system that maximizes the re-usability of products and raw materials, and minimizes their devaluation.
https://mvonederland.nl/dossier/circular-economy

THESE ARE THE FIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES FROM THE MANIFESTO. PRACTICAL AND FEASIBLE, APPLICABLE IN DESIGN PRACTICE.

1. A CIRCULAR BUSINESS MODEL IS THE STARTING POINT FOR CIRCULAR ARCHITECTURE

We want to provide insight into the hidden consequences of our design. That is why we challenge the client with regard to his request and business model. Circularity is about both the construction work and the integral process. Thinking differently about the (residual) value of a product leads directly to another revenue model. Other business models are also possible due to changes in ownership or return systems.
In order to achieve this, working together in teams (internally) or with chain partners is of great importance. Moreover, inter-disciplinary thinking ensures diversity, which makes our sector adaptive. A circular business model involves a long-term commitment to what you have made: architects then become recurring – 'circular' – architects. We take responsibility and can be held accountable.

2. NATURE IS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION AND A TEXTBOOK EXAMPLE OF CIRCULARITY

When solving design issues, we are inspired by nature, because biological systems offer us solutions that are intrinsically circular and holistic. Nature's optimized structures, processes and functions allow us to develop innovative design solutions. Solutions in which a maximum result can be achieved with a minimum of effort, materials or installations. We design buildings that are so well and cleverly constructed in terms of climatology that there is little need of any correction with installations.

3. A STRUCTURE IS ADAPTABLE AND FLEXIBLE DURING ITS LIFE

In designing, we take into account the entire lifecycle of a building in its context. That is why we do not design for the first user, but with the second or third user in mind. This requires an adaptive design that can respond to multiple functions and different occupants. We make a distinction between sustainable building elements with a long lifespan (such as a main loadbearing construction) and flexible built-in components with a shorter service life. We design buildings that are modular and smart so that parts that need to be repaired or replaced are easily accessible.

4. A BUILDING AND ITS COMPONENTS ARE EASY TO (DIS)ASSEMBLE AND CONSTRUCT

We see a structure as a temporary composition of components and materials that retain their value at the end of their lifecycle. That is why we opt for prefabrication (of components) wherever possible. This enables faster and safer assembly and eventual disassembly. Mechanical connections between parts of the main loadbearing structure and other components allow repeated (dis)assembly. If a flexible (watertight) connection is unavoidable, we use biodegradable materials and avoid the use of sealants and (pur)foam during assembly.
We design the main loadbearing structure in a way that ensures the stability of the structure during demolition or disassembly in order to safeguard the respect for and safety of people and nature. We take accessibility into account so that the (dis)assembly time is minimal. We encourage suppliers to adjust their products and building components so that optimal reuse is possible.

5. THE BUILDING MATERIALS ARE OF HIGH QUALITY, NONTOXIC AND EASILY REUSABLE

We believe it is important to understand the composition of the materials that building components and structures contain, because materials play an essential role in the circular economy. As a designer you can actively contribute to the minimization of waste by designing building components and using materials that are made of environment-friendly and safe ingredients. We prefer to choose materials with a long lifespan, to avoid materials with toxic components and we try to use non-composite materials wherever possible. Keeping good records of the materials utilized makes it possible to use a structure as a 'raw materials bank'.