

NICOLAS SCHUYBROEK
JJM HOUSE



In a previous publication of *Imagicasa* magazine we already introduced our readers to the timeless serenity of the projects by Nicolas Schuybroek. We can also use those words to describe the recently finished JJM House, although there is of course a great deal more we can tell you about it.

Moreover, the architect ensures that art and furniture also perfectly match the atmosphere and style of the house, which he then compares to a 'Gesamtkunstwerk'. We already saw what results this could lead to, but when we were introduced to this house in the municipality of Grez-Doiceau (Walloon Brabant) we were blown off our socks once again. Designed for a retired couple looking for peace and quiet and a strong connection with nature, this residence is another unique addition to Nicolas Schuybroek's portfolio.

LOCATION, LIGHT AND LINES

The location of JJM House played a major role in determining the architecture and layout of the house. Given the green surroundings with even a golf course nearby, the new building had to blend in with nature as discreetly as possible; this was already determined in the earliest phase of the design process. At the same time, the surroundings had to be tangible inside and there was to be a maximum focus on creating beautiful views and on making the most of the abundance of natural light. 'We got rid of all the clutter and created a minimal project where views and light from the surroundings would flow into the interiors,' the architect says about the unique design. As in most of his realisations, Nicolas Schuybroek therefore prefers a minimalist approach, but he interprets it in his



Last year, the Brussels architect already told us that tranquillity is a central theme – sometimes even an obsession – in his work. He creates this sensation mainly by allowing architecture and interior design to merge into one balanced whole. The two aspects interact, and Nicolas Schuybroek's projects therefore invariably radiate timelessness and serenity. In the end, every realisation is different and he knows how to amaze us again and again.

own way. For him, it is especially important not to create empty, cold interiors, but timeless living environments that feel warm, as is certainly the case here too.

Furthermore, the project is characterised by a very meticulous sense of proportion, geometry and lines. The simplicity that JJM House radiates as a result is further enhanced by the restrained palette of materials and colours, both in the architecture and in the interior. For the sleek, geometric facade, for example, a brick with a rough, natural look was chosen. The brushed cement mortar looks solid and the colour is very neutral, which makes the house blend in beautifully with its sur-





roundings. The interior was also kept as neutral as possible with natural materials such as wood and stone and soft colours. Despite some stylish eye-catchers in the furniture and decoration, it is once again the outdoor environment that attracts the majority of our attention. It should come as no surprise that the architect himself indicates the living room with the view of – and direct access to – the spacious terrace with swimming pool as his favourite space in the house. It is remarkable to see how Schuybroek uses a dynamic and interesting interplay of lines to create a simple and relaxing result.

**A DYNAMIC
AND INTERESTING
INTERPLAY OF
LINES FOR A
SIMPLE AND
RELAXING RESULT**

A HOUSE TO ENJOY ALL YEAR ROUND
Another important requirement of the owners was that they wanted a house that they could enjoy as much and for as long as possible. And so, they opted for a house of only one storey. However, this didn't mean a limited amount of space, as the total surface area of the house is still about 530 m². With four bedrooms, a swimming pool and an impressive terrace, guests are more than welcome here by the way.

Moreover, it is not only the architect who is proud of what he has achieved here, because the stylish living spaces with views of the surroundings also ensure that the residents themselves can enjoy every corner of the house throughout the year. The connection with nature and the surrounding garden is a constant joy to experience, whatever the temperature and weather conditions are. In any case, it's making us feel warm inside!

ADDED VALUE
And if it's not really a beautiful day outside and the view is feeling a little less inspiring, you'll still find a lot of interesting things to look at inside. Although Nicolas Schuybroek generally favours removing all elements that have no functional or aesthetic added value,



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the house is still beautifully filled with some eye-catching pieces of art, decoration and furniture. They have a function here after all and are certainly a delight to the eye, such as the white 'Reversible Chair' by Martin Eisler (a design from the 1950s) and the intriguing painting 'Traces II' by the New Zealand artist Kaye Mc Garva that you see in the living room above the fire place.

It may have been obvious to you when first seeing these images, but we happily point out that the owners of this house are real collectors with a good eye for unique pieces. A large part of the mid-century design collection (mainly Scandinavian and Brazilian designs) was compiled with the help of Morentz, the Dutch art and design dealership that focuses on creations from the 20th century.

There are many pieces that ensure that this house really can be described as 'Gesamtkunstwerk' and thus perfectly match the atmosphere and style of the interior, the architecture and the environment. The ultimate example of this is the 'Æil' or 'T22c' coffee table designed by Pierre Chapo in the early seventies. Made of solid elm wood and with the playful yet geometric pattern of a leaf, we cannot help but reflect on how perfectly it



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fits into this interior. It is the details like these that make a house look like a whole, even if you don't immediately understand how this came about. We also see the famous 'Library Chair' by Pierre Jeanneret in the bathroom, two wooden stools by designer Lina Bo Bardi in the entrance hall, a pair of 'SE42' chairs by Egon Eiermann in the office space and a Willy Rizzo table in travertine surrounded by a few 's45' dining chairs, another design by the French Pierre Chapo. All this is balanced by some geometric or abstract contemporary works of art by Reijiro Wada, Donald Judd and Latifa Echakhch.

**A HOUSE
TO ENJOY
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The well-considered combination of all these elements results in another unique residence designed by Nicolas Schuybroek. The general atmosphere and minimalistic design is serene and soothing, as we are used to from the architect, yet the result is warm and full of inspiring details. ✨

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