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Tconcept

Creating Places For People

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Creating Places for People



Tconcept BV, based in the Netherlands is a company that specialises in architecture, concept design and placemaking across the globe. Here, RLI sits down with Founding Partner and General Manager Frank van Dongen to learn more about this up-and-coming company and what aspirations it has moving forward.



KIJKDUIN BEACH AREA
The Hague, Netherlands



PENDIK
Istanbul, Turkey



IZMIR KARSIKAYA
Izmir, Turkey

With a mission to create places that people like to go to and want to stay at, Tconcept designs concepts where the aesthetic, functional and economic aspects are all in full harmony.

Founded in 2014 by former partners and directors of T+T Design and Multi Development Corporation, the international team is already working in more than 10 countries and has already opened some remarkable projects in globally renowned locations as Istanbul, Amsterdam and Barcelona.

"Because of our background, we don't just think like designers, but we also think like developers and investors," explains Frank van Dongen, General Manager of Tconcept. "We understand how places work, why people like to stay somewhere and how to make them feasible in a smart way. We create value for all stake holders, for the citizens, for the city, the tenant, the developer and the investor."

In the last year the most important investment the group has made has been in its people, helping to educate them, to create an inspiring working environment and to find the best way to work and play. He feels this element of play remains an important aspect as it keeps the creative juices flowing.

Recently opened projects Tconcept were involved in include Finestrelles in Barcelona. Much more than a shopping centre, this open air experience has a retail space of 39,250sq m GLA, hanging gardens and a roof that features F&B and an event area joining student houses. Another shopping experience was launched in Izmir last October. The Izmir Karsiyaka Hilltown centre is a partly closed and partly open project set in a park like landscape. The enormous offer in terms of shops, the variety of gourmet cafes and restaurants and the leisure options on offer have made this the new meeting place in Izmir. In both cases Tconcept completed the concept design and architectural design.

In terms of new projects, the company is creating a beach village in The Hague in the Netherlands. The scheme is a raised boulevard with F&B overlooking the dunes, lots over luxury homes overlooking the sea and parallel to it guests can find shopping on the street level. Furthermore they are working on the redevelopment of the 60,000sq m Zuidplein shopping centre in Rotterdam after convincing more than 60 owners about the added value the redevelopment will bring!

Tconcept feels they are lucky to have clients who share the sense of ambition, passion and quality, whilst understanding that creating value for a space will create long-term financial value. When speaking about the organisation, Van Dongen explains that whilst they are a global designer, they only have one office in the Netherlands currently, so they are smaller than their main competitors. He and the team do not want to grow too fast in order to maintain the quality, which means they can be quite selective about the projects that they work on.

"That implies that our clients always know that one of our three partners will work on the projects. Our goal is to create the best within the framework given. Our mission is to surprise and if possible to convince the client to break out of that framework. Then it is a job well done," explains Van Dongen.

Working across diverse geographies, the company feels every place is unique and has its own story. For example, they are excited to work on a new project in Moscow, but at the same time there is just as much energy to work on a small scheme in Liverpool. For now the main area of focus is Europe, but some ideas are beginning to bear fruit in Central and South America, Africa and Asia.

Looking at design trends in the next few years, Van Dongen feels public spaces, landscaping and green spaces will become more and more prominent. "New places will be where people feel welcome, at home, comfortable and relaxed. Works spaces, public buildings, libraries, schools and sports should be mixed into the shopping spaces, delivering a more urban experience."

As we head towards the end of the interview, we ask what the group's strengths are, and what have been the key drivers behind the growth of the brand in its first five years of operation?

"The essence is we think in terms of creating spaces instead of thinking about creating buildings. The space between buildings, this is what carries architecture and is essential to success. Many architects only focus on buildings, but before the designing of these begins, it is key to get the urbanism and spaces between buildings right," says Van Dongen. "When looking forward, our objectives are to grow as architects, as people and as entrepreneurs. Life is a learning experience and one that we are embracing."

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WATERGARDEN
Istanbul, Turkey

TCONCEPT

architecture + concepts + place making



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