



## E-BOOK

### INTRO

**Carrying out your dream project can be a fascinating process, but one that often has a huge impact on our planet.** Did you know that the construction industry produces as much as 34% of all global waste? And we're not just talking about the amount of plastic that surrounds pallets, but also raw materials and other materials that are discarded throughout the construction process. It's time for a new vision for architecture, creativity and construction!

**Recycling, upcycling and circular construction methods have long been a focus for architectural firm Sept-A:** by concentrating on renovations and conversions, existing buildings can be transformed into contemporary spaces. From 17th century gatehouse to modern townhouse? No problem!

*We look at what we have to start with and then try and preserve existing elements as much as possible: designing in this way challenges us to be creative with authentic elements and robust materials. After all, why would we throw away a solid marble window sill? And just how important is it if a 200-year-old oak floor doesn't lie perfectly evenly?*





**Rather than focusing on “now” and “brand new,” here at Sept-A we think in terms of sustainability.** That is why we prefer to work with organic compounds that can be cleverly disassembled and reused within 20 years. And why we spend a long time considering the richness of raw materials and finding opportunities to rework them in contemporary homes.

**This sustainable vision of design and creation is what we want to emphasise in this e-book.** The notion that not all construction material has to roll off the factory conveyor belt and that so-called “construction waste” shouldn’t necessarily be written off. So take a look and be inspired by the world of circular construction, upcycling and recycling!

**Sept-A, pleased to meet you!**

As a Brussels-based architectural firm with lots of experience, we assist individuals and companies to achieve new construction projects, renovations, extensions, infill development and conversions. Our vision? Designs that are born from our passion for our profession, our customers’ stories and a love of materials. Together we will shape your dream project!



## CIRCULAR CONSTRUCTION

### Building with respect for rich resources

We live in a disposable society that revolves around consumption. This also applies to the construction industry, where we import raw materials en masse, process them and discard them as waste after they have been used. This is a linear approach that has a limited shelf life, simply because our resources of raw materials on the planet are not inexhaustible. Quite the contrary, in fact!

### Circular construction breaks the pattern

Minimal construction waste through the maximum reuse of raw materials: circular construction offers a sustainable alternative to mass production and consumption within the construction industry. After all, why not recover raw building components from an old building and use them in a new one? It's a subtle difference that remains invisible on the outside, but has a huge effect on the carbon footprint. Real recycling goes on behind the scenes!

**Urban mining is on the rise** | Schools, office sites, public centres, etc. Cities are teeming with valuable resources, which are stored in a variety of real estate. By dismantling these buildings instead of demolishing them, previously used raw materials can be recovered for a new project.

### By linking together organically, today's creations can be the recovery opportunities of tomorrow

The way we build also has a huge impact on the sustainability picture. For example, classic masonry is difficult to recover: in order to separate the bricks from each other, the wall needs to be demolished. Rather than gluing materials together (e.g., bricks and mortar), Sept-A prefers to use organic compounds, such as wood and nails. These materials can still be easily disassembled and reused within a few decades. A smart construction move!



## RECYCLING

### Inspire, recycle, create

Recycling in construction not only reduces waste, but also sparks creativity. Do you have a home with a 1950s bathroom that's in dire need of a makeover? Perhaps the window sills can be reused in the living room, or maybe the bathroom tiles can give the kitchen a unique, fresh look. There are so many different options!

### Building with character

« Waste is a failure of imagination » (unknown). Sept-A looks for potential in material that would otherwise be blindly discarded. Our love for high-quality, robust raw materials is the common thread that runs through everything. Marble accents, oak or pitch pine that is several centuries old... By preserving authentic elements of your property and bringing them back to be used in other spaces, we can put a unique stamp on your home or workspace.

### Be inspired by our previous projects.



## UPCYCLING

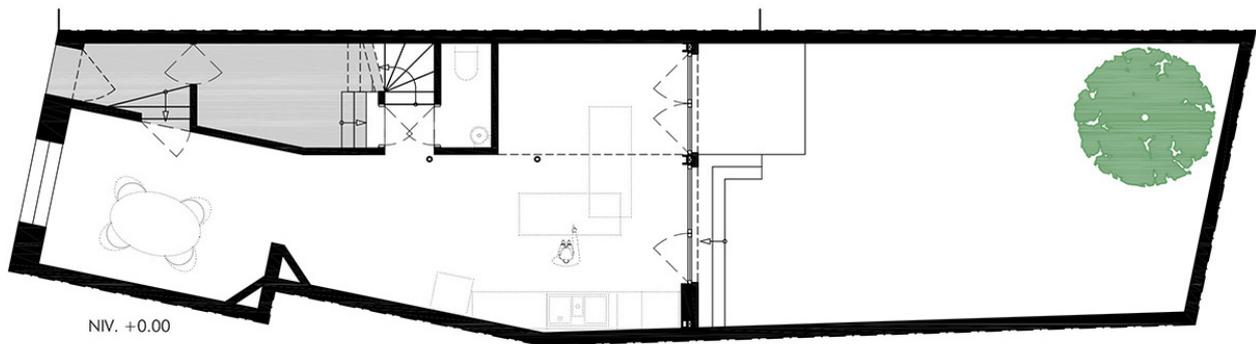
### From eyesore to...

Solid wood doors, panelling that is half a century old, and more. An old building often provides a wealth of unique elements and robust materials, but not often in the form that graces today's interior design magazines. And yet, these are the very elements that can add a valuable highlight to your home or apartment.

### ...to unique eye-catcher

Looking to adapt a 1930s home to your modern lifestyle without losing any of the charm? When you upcycle, you allow the original characteristics to creatively return in a different form. Turn the paneling into furniture, transform door panels into sofas or cabinets, and much more... Breathe new life into old elements and ensure they become a feature of your interior.

### Fancy upcycling like Sept-A? It goes a little bit like this!



Renovation of a single-family house in the commune of Etterbeek in Brussels. The existing wooden floor is preserved and the red brick wall remains partially visible. These materials present the remarkable soul of the house.



## Sept-A, our sustainability trail

**As a couple of architects from Brussels, we have renovated a huge number of buildings in recent years, both for clients and for ourselves.** Houses, apartments, furniture and materials... By getting thoroughly involved on the job site, we quickly discovered that each property offers a wealth of resources and opportunities.

So during one of our personal renovations, we were short of a few basement tiles. At that time we were working at another yard for a client and we happened to come across the same tiles, which had been discarded as rubbish. We asked if we could reclaim the tiles, the builder agreed and so we managed to finish our basement. Our vision of sustainability was immediately awoken!

*Tiles that would have disappeared into a dumpster on one job site, were the indispensable piece of the puzzle for our renovation. What other possibilities are there out there? Why don't we do this more often?*

**Since then, recycling and upcycling have been a major theme within our designs.** That shift in thinking was contagious! Customers do not always have the reflex to think in terms of reusing materials, but are often amazed by the possibilities. Increasingly over the past years, we have been following the principles of circular construction, which is more at the level of raw building materials.

*The idea of building something without creating waste or introducing new materials is very powerful and contagious. What do I have, what can I do with it? With our projects we want to inspire clients to look at (re)building in a different way.*



## OUTRO

**Do you want to continue the trend of circular construction in your new construction project? Are you looking to gain the highest potential out of your old home? Sept-A would love to hear about your premises and plans!**

Our architects will listen to your needs, introduce you to exciting mindsets and transform your ideas into reality. By doing this, we can achieve a renovation with maximum effect and minimum construction waste. Fancy getting started together? Schedule an exploratory meeting.

