

## **Bureau SLA Creates a House-Shaped Art Gallery from HI-MACS® in a Former Armory in the Netherlands**



**Architecture and design are capable of transcending the limits of imagination and turning the impossible into reality to create spaces where functionality and aesthetics coexist perfectly. The project executed by Bureau SLA at the Fort Asperen armory is a good example of just that. The Dutch architecture studio inserted a structure clad in HI-MACS® into a former military building that now houses an art gallery.**

Repairing what is broken and making outstanding new additions without touching the rest was the rule followed by Bureau SLA, the Dutch architecture studio led by director Peter van Assche who were tasked with renovating the Fort Asperen arms depot. Built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to protect the Netherlands from invasions from the east, the impressive defense line that includes the armory was nominated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2011. The fortification, located in the town of Acquoy just 30 minutes from Utrecht, has been open to the public since 1986, although until now it had been closed during the winter.

Bureau SLA's challenge was to insulate the armory so that it could be used year-round in comfortable indoor conditions, while at the same time retaining its original ski-hut look. This dilemma was solved thanks to the skill and expertise of the architecture studio, which, instead of insulating the structure from the inside, came up with a completely innovative solution: inserting a new house-shaped structure that preserves the rustic ambiance of this 170-year-old historic building.



Inside the house, there is an exhibition and conference space. To build it, it was necessary to excavate a three-meter deep basement in order to add an extra level to the armory, making it possible to increase the size of the space without affecting the original wooden structure.

The use of HI-MACS® was essential to execute such an extraordinary project. This acrylic stone was the material chosen for cladding the outside of the house, since its excellent thermal properties enable the space to maintain an optimal temperature at all times. These improvements have made it possible to keep the armory open in winter as well.



The complex and geometrical shapes of this piece were achieved thanks to the incredible thermoforming properties of HI-MACS® and its seamless joints. Its smooth, non-porous surface, pleasant feel and the clean whiteness provided by the HI-MACS® Alpine White color scheme make the house shine with its own light. A perfect juxtaposition between acrylic stone and wood, old and new has thus been created, all while respecting the Dutch studio's underlying philosophy of only changing what is strictly necessary so as to avoid damaging the essence of the building. The original wooden beams perforate the structure of the new house-shaped construction, which benefits from exceptional brightness thanks to large windows that have been strategically positioned to match up with the windows of the armory.



## PROJECT REFERENCES

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**Project name:** Fort Asperen Armory

**Architects:** Bureau SLA - [www.bureausla.nl](http://www.bureausla.nl)

**Photos:** Frank Hanswijk

**Materials:** HI-MACS® Alpine White - [www.himacs.eu](http://www.himacs.eu)



## HI-MACS® by LG Hausys

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HI-MACS® is a solid surface material that can be moulded into any shape. It is widely used for architectural and interior applications, such as sculptural and high performance wall-cladding or kitchen, bathroom and furniture surfaces, in commercial, residential and public space projects. It is composed of acrylic, natural minerals and pigments that come together to provide a smooth, non-porous and visually seamless surface which meets the highest standards for aesthetics, fabrication, functionality and hygiene – offering manifold advantages over conventional materials.

HI-MACS® provides limitless possibilities for surfacing solutions and inspires creative minds from all over the world. **Zaha Hadid, Jean Nouvel, Rafael Moneo, Karim Rashid and David Chipperfield**, among others, have completed fabulous projects using HI-MACS®, from kitchens to bathrooms, including decorative items, in hotels as well as in museums, shopping centres and on external façades.

LG Hausys' HI-MACS® uses a simple heating process to give three-dimensional thermoplastic forming capabilities, allows visually seamless designs, offers a virtually limitless range of colours and – for some shades - exhibits a special translucency when exposed to light. Although HI-MACS® is almost as robust as stone, it can be worked in a similar way as wood: it can be sawn, routed, drilled or sanded.

HI-MACS® is manufactured using a new generation technology, the **thermal cure**. The temperature reached during the manufacturing process sets HI-MACS® apart from other solid surfaces and creates a denser, even more homogeneous, sturdy, durable surface – with a better resistance and superior thermoforming performance.

As regards hygiene, HI-MACS® does not absorb humidity, is highly resistant to stains, and is easy to clean, maintain and repair.

Countless internationally recognized certificates attest to the quality of HI-MACS® in terms of ecological commitment, hygiene and fire resistance – being the first Solid Surface in the market to receive the official **European Technical Approval (ETA) for façades** – for Alpine White S728 colour.

HI-MACS® offers the longest warranty on the solid surface market with a 15-year warranty for products fabricated and installed by a member of the HI-MACS® Quality Club.

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