

100+

best
architecture
firms
2019

domus

100+

Domus is proud to present its first **100+ Best architecture firms**, the result of a complex operation worthy of 90 years of architecture and design exploration. Our approach follows a new paradigm of associated life, where architecture is a central if not crucial point of discussion.

But **Best architecture firms 2019** is more. It is the latest phase in the metamorphosis of *Domus*, a magazine that is evolving into an ecosystem of contemporary knowledge and competencies, an open workshop where the critical review of architecture and design is expressed in diverse and complementary learning experiences – magazine, website, social media, focus topics, themed forums and data analysis – in a word, investigation. Our intent is to make **Best architecture firms 2019** the first of a yearly outline of the state of the art of a field that has never been as important as now. The compilation aims to be a well-honed tool, indispensable to the different communities that have always formed the *Domus* mainstay: architecture and design professionals, public officials, elites and enthusiasts (not in order of importance).

When we began conceptualising the guide, we were aware of the risks of the undertaking. We did not want a consumer product undistinguishable from the many offerings of the “culture industry”. In order to construct an authoritative source of reference, we adhered to the unique formula that has been serving us as an elevated standard. We asked the last ten editors-in-chief – plus the current one – to compile a selection of architecture firms known for cultural innovation. In exchange, we promised them anonymity. The result is a rich array. Of course some names are missing, mainly the above-mentioned *Domus* editors. That’s a question of style, an omission we wish to reward by stating here that they fully belong to our **Best Architecture Firms**. Otherwise, they would not have been chosen to conceptually lead *Domus*.

Walter Mariotti, editorial director

Vincent Van Duysen Architects

Principal

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Ever since the beginning of his career in 1990, Vincent Van Duysen (Lokeren, Belgium, 1962) has produced work ranging from architecture to interior design and even down to the object. The scale of the design is not important since each discipline completes the other, with his aim of exploring the project's very essence. In his décors, especially those made for specific commissions, Van Duysen demonstrates the ability to transform space, while in his architecture he prefers to concentrate on the smallest details of his materials or textures. The works that best capture his way of approaching the project include the private residence DC II in Tielrode, Belgium (2012), where the buildings are covered by a uniform fabric of wooden slats that continue even to the peak of the roof. Van Duysen creates environments that are essential and minimal, yet they succeed in radiating a certain warmth as they explore the expressive nature of traditional materials and architectural typologies. This can be seen in the TR residence and farm in Knokke, Belgium (2014), in which he fuses the archetypal forms of house, stable and hayloft applying a single model to develop all the functions. The three volumes are in black-painted wood which has also been used to define the interiors. In general, Van Duysen chooses pure and tactile materials such as bricks and ceramics, exposed concrete and wood, for a clean and timeless design as well as for an aesthetic that lasts beyond fashions and design trends. In 2016 he was named art director of the Molteni&C and Dada brands, handling their global image and designing their individual brand stores, exhibition stands and furnishings. In 2018 he became part of the creative team behind product development at Sahco, the Dutch brand owned by Kvadrat.

Valentina Croci