Designed by Erick van Egeraat, the new building for the City Hall of Grave in the Netherland, was officially opened this summer. The municipality shares the building with housing corporation Maasland and the regional historic archive of the Province of North Brabant, BHIC.

Seen from a distance, the building presents itself as a singular ensemble. Up close, however, specific identities of the users become apparent. The three parties present themselves to the public in the main entrance hall, an open environment on the ground floor, thereby stimulating interaction among the tenants and between tenants and visitors.

The building is part of a masterplan developed by EEA for Grave in 1998. The masterplan distinguishes between two zones; the historic centre of Grave and the green space surrounding the old fortress. The new city hall is situated on the border between these two zones, on the

exact location of the former fortification. The city hall's design refers to both, the historic centre and the surrounding landscape.

According to Erick van Egeraat, this urban transition influenced his design significantly: "I wanted the building to blend into its environment unobtrusively, while making it very accessible to the public. We mainly used natural materials, such as wood, natural stone and a grass roof. The design is sturdy and subtle at the same time. In this manner, the city hall opens itself towards the entrance of the town and invites the public to enter."

The surroundings were not only an inspiration for the building's materials, but also influenced its shape.

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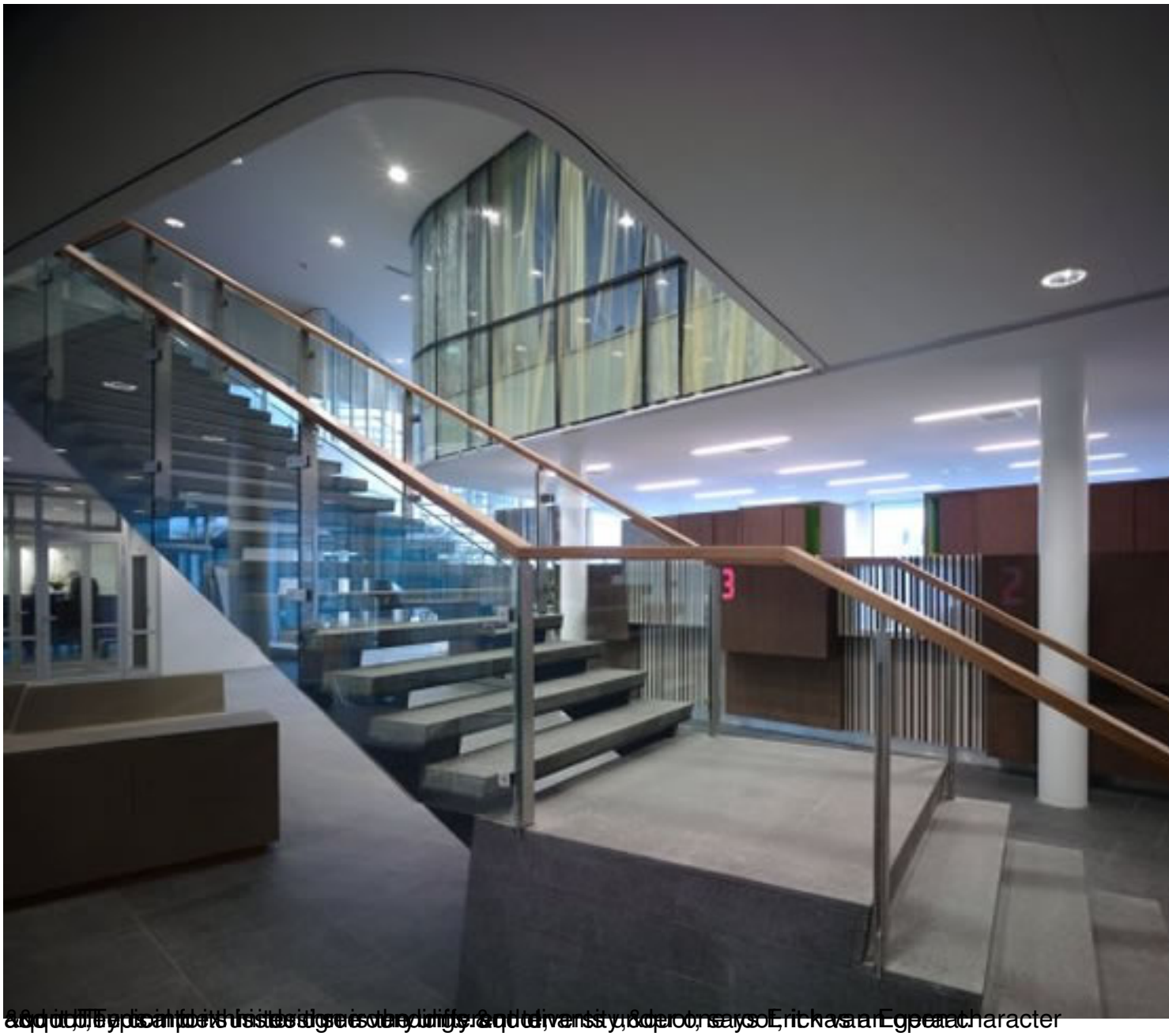

Erick van Egeraat character