



The completion of a monumental country house, 135 years later.

History

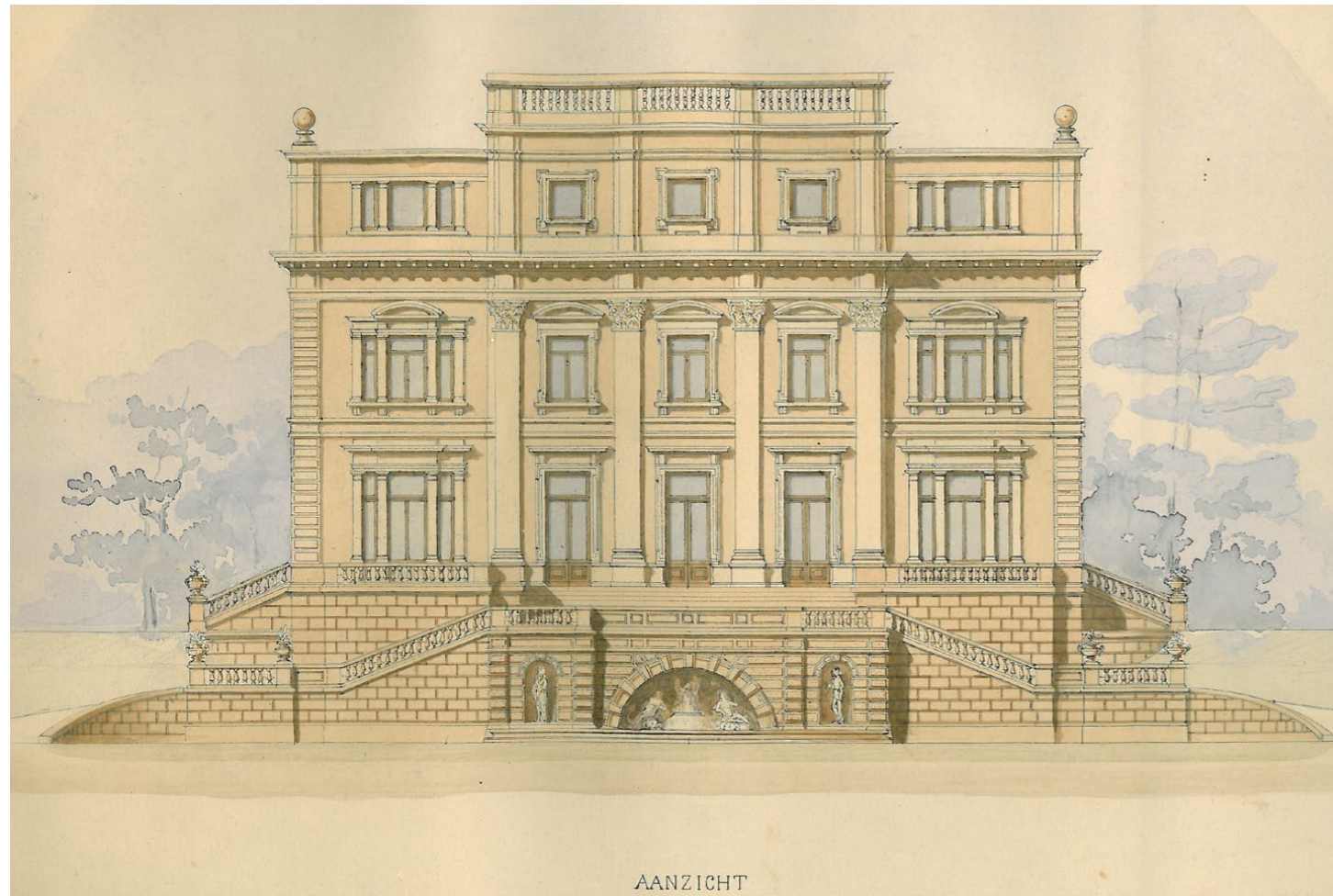
A brief history of Elswout

The Elswout country house is situated on the eponymous estate in Overveen, at the edge of the dunes. The house dates from 1633 and has known several owners but flourished in the nineteenth century under three generations of the Borski family who had acquired name and fame in the banking world. The widow of the first Borski in Elswout, Johanna Borski, funded 70% of the starting capital for the establishment of the Dutch Bank.

Elswout was in hands of Willem Borski III when the house took form as we know it today. He had great plans for the country house and famous architect Constantijn Muysken made the new building plans.

The construction had already started when suddenly Willem Borski III died in 1884. The project came to a halt and for more than a century, Elswout remained unfinished.

Drawing of Elswout by Muysken



Willem Borski III

Project

From competition to completion

In 1970 Staatsbosbeheer became the new owner of the estate and the house. As the years went by, they were unable to find a destination for the house and so they organised a contest for its reconstruction. The Cobraspen Group decided to participate with the idea to complete Elswout house according to Borski's plans. After a lot of archive research, they found the original construction drawings. It wasn't until ten years later that Staatsbos beheer declared Cobraspen Group the winner of the contest.

In 2004 the building and reconstruction began. The project started with the renovation of the glass dome roof and the remodelling of the exterior facades. The vanished natural stone balustrades on the roof were reapplied and the outer plasterwork of the facades was renewed. No less than 500 m² of plaster work was carried out in a 'comb' design.

The next major phase was the completion of the interior to what Willem Borski and architect Muysken had in mind. Everything that wasn't by Muysken's design was carefully removed first so they could begin finishing the house according to the original drawings. The design for Elswout's architecture is strongly Italian inspired and reminiscent of the open courtyards of palazzos in Rome. For the marble columns, balustrades, mantelpieces and the main staircase, Mr. Prins and architect Mr. Kentie travelled to China to find the right marble factory and to assure a high standard of quality.

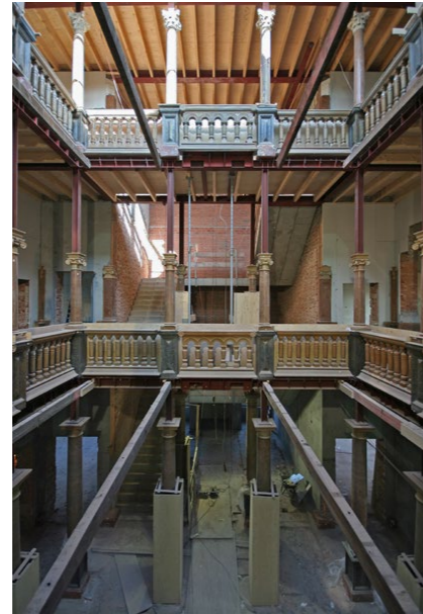
While the door frames were inspired by the early 17th century Dutch Renaissance, the doors were rather taken from Italian examples. It is a mix of influences that is distinctive in Muysken's designs, which we also come across in the architecture of the rooms. The massive oak doors were also craftily made in China and enriched with beautiful ornaments crafted from of a single piece of wood so there would be no colour difference.



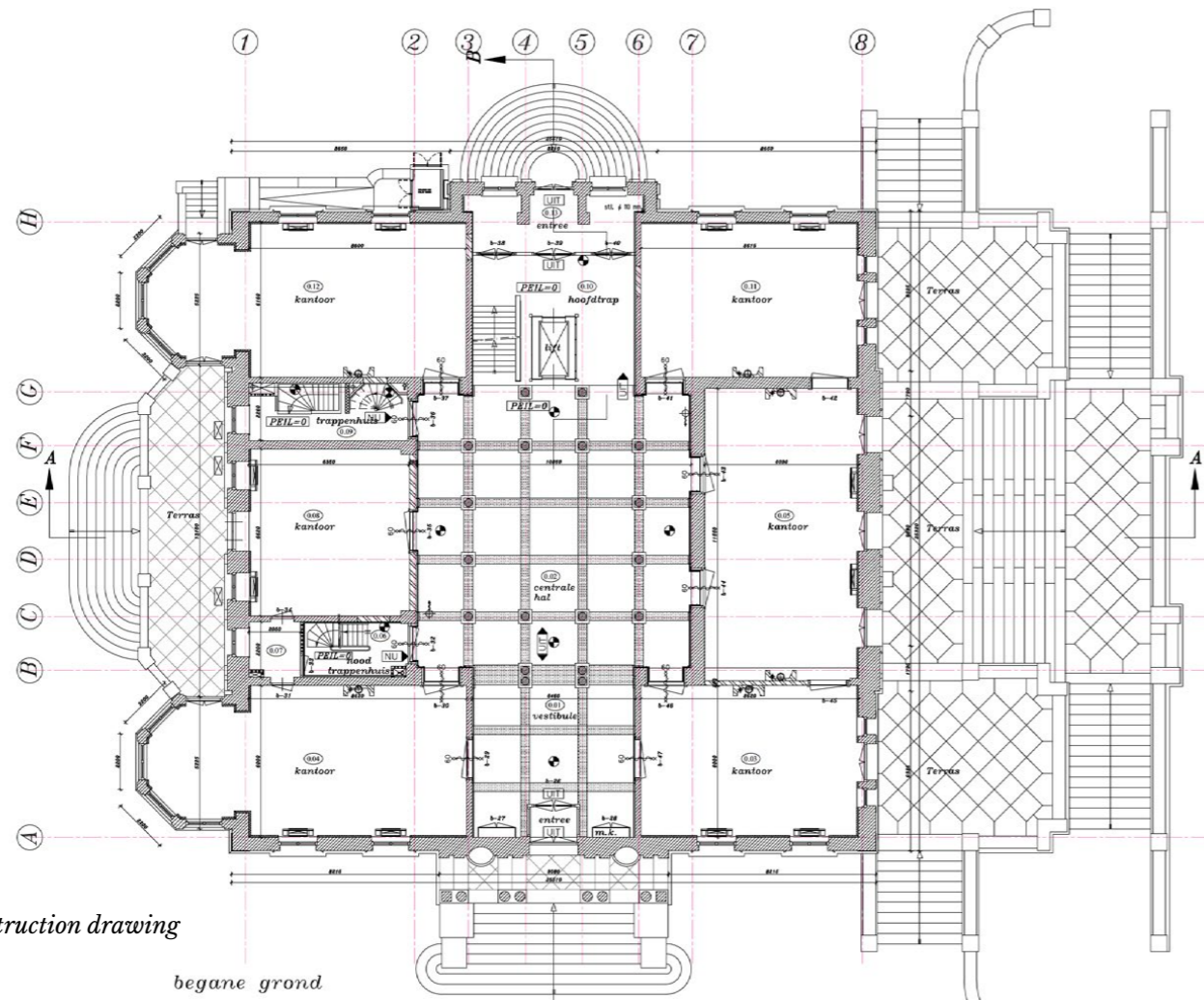
Project



The ground floor at the start of the construction works



Placing the marble balustrades and pillars



Ground floor construction drawing

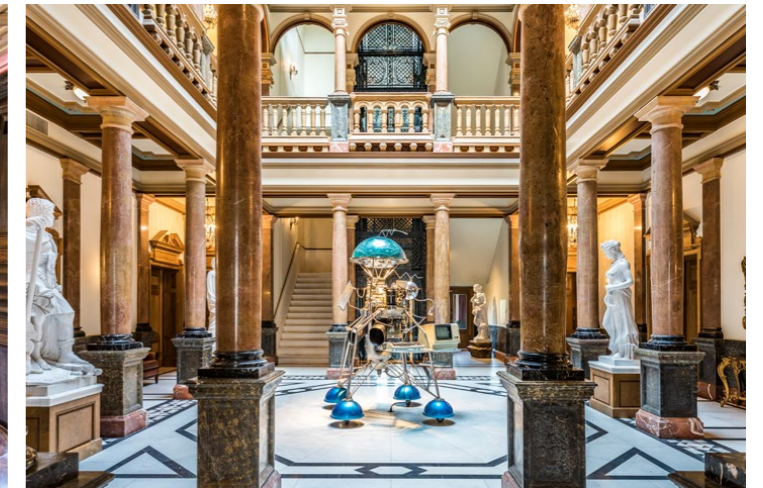
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Project

A place of splendour once again

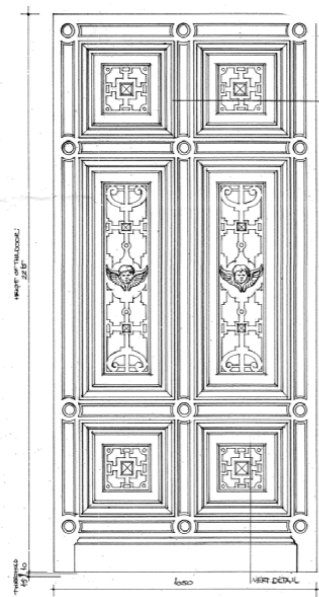
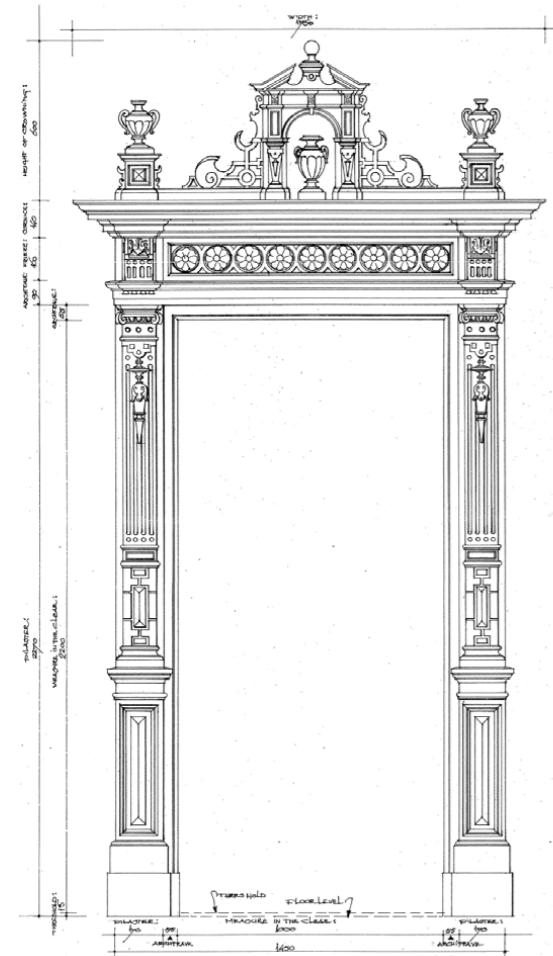
Nowadays Elswout functions as an office building. This influenced choices that had to be made regarding the interior. The building has been equipped with a climate installation and all floors are now also accessible by lift. At basement level a parking garage has been realized under the expanded terrace, completely hidden from view. The building also had to be insulated on the inside and to meet safety regulations, had to be divided into fire compartments. New additions such as toilet groups have been designed in style as much as possible.

Now that the entire restoration has been completed, the monumental country house has acquired its former grandeur after more than 135 years. Largely as Willem Borski and his architect Muysken had in mind.

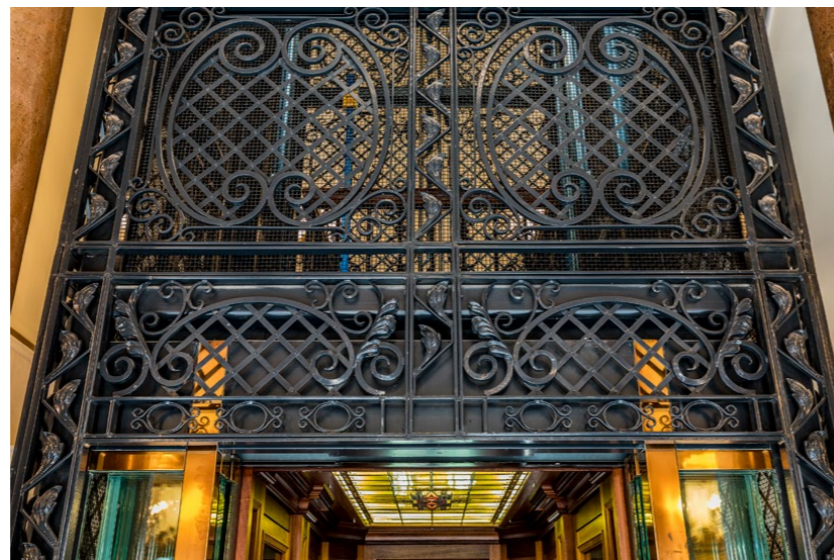
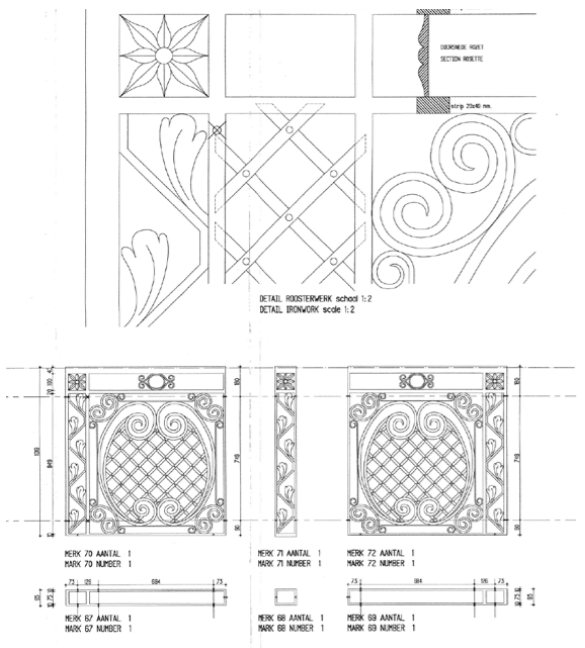


Project

Construction drawing of the doorframe and door



Details of the iron wrought lift doors



Project

We love the past and adore the future...

The Cobraspen Group is a real estate and concept developer active in the Amsterdam and Haarlem region.

What started with saving the spire of the Spaarnekerk from destruction, over the years grew into a company that now realises numerous challenging projects. Every building or area has a story to tell. When (re)developing Cobraspen Group always looks at the value of history and how it can be preserved for later generations.

It's in the DNA of the Cobraspen Group.

