



H USE

Home of the Brick™

By HispaBrick Magazine®

Images by Jan Beyer and LEGO® System A/S

On September 28, 2017 the LEGO® House will be officially opened. It will be a great event. A few months after doing the interview with the people in charge of the LEGO House, which is included in this issue, HispaBrick Magazine® has had the opportunity to be the first LEGO Fan Media to visit the construction site and to learn some as yet undisclosed details.

On 13th March, we had a nice chat with Gitte Nipper, LEGO House Head of Sales & Marketing, Jesper Vilstrup, General Manager of LEGO House and Søren Holm, LEGO House Head of Experiences. I think that before going into detail, I would like to highlight the enthusiasm that was conveyed to me in their explanations. You can see the passion that they put in every detail, big or small, in order to get an experience that is totally aligned with the expectations that the LEGO House has generated.



LEGO® House works

Home of the Brick

"Home of the Brick" is the motto they have chosen for the LEGO House. The nuance between House and Home is important, and after much internal discussions and consultations with outside groups (including the AFOLs), it was decided that "Home of the Brick" was the right one. The AFOLs were asked different questions, and here are some of their answers:

What associations come to mind when you hear the words "Home of the Brick"?

"The association is that the LEGO brick must have been invented here, at the" Home of the Brick "and that there must be more bricks here. I would hope to find lots of LEGO bricks in such a house which is the" Home of The Bricks. " *Dirk (Germany)*

"I imagine that there will be one room that looks like a normal room in any home, just everything is made out of the Lego bricks." *Rafal (Poland)*

What experiences do you expect to take place in a house that calls itself "Home of the Brick"?

1. Lots of LEGO Bricks to find and play with
2. Being invited to play with LEGO bricks
3. Home = feeling home, feeling invited, being well treated
4. Find out about the history of the LEGO bricks (a library of LEGO sets, anecdotes about TLC and the family behind etc.)
5. Learn things about the brick that I have not known so far -may be things not well known to the public. " *Dirk (Germany)*

"To be able to see and learn about the history of Lego (the product, the company, the family and the town);
To see a museum of past sets
To see what the future of Lego might hold;
To see how and where Lego is used around the world;
To have chances to interact with Lego -play, or science challenges / experiments
Some additional arts or cultural offerings over and above just Lego focused activities. " *Chris (USA)*

What do you see in the tagline "Home of the Brick"? Do you like it?

"It seems fine to me. Other taglines that come to mind are:

"Where bricks come to life" and "True life of a Brick"

But I think the original one is better suited for the whole house, and those could be used as the names of exhibits / rooms.

PROS:

- Short
- Strong
- To the point

CONS:

- "brick" is usually strongly linked to AFOL communities as word lego can't be used (Brickshelf, Bricklink, etc.). It is not really important with. " *Rafal (Poland)*

"I do not hate it, but it does not do anything for me. It feels very generic and boring.

I've listed in # 1 about the secondary market's association with the word brick. It does not feel official. " *Peter (USA)*

"I tried, but really could not come up with any cons for this. Pro: The statement is clear, which reinforces there is a place where the Lego brick's journey begins, where imagination and creativity join the brick." *Ralph (USA)*

A diagram of the positive and negative aspects of this study was made:



“Home” has many connotations, and here are some of which have taken into account:

- “Home is where the heart is”
- “Home is where my habits have a habitat”
- “Home is not a place, but rather, the people you love”
- “Home is where somebody notices when you are no longer there”

Therefore, “Home of the Brick” has exactly the meaning that is sought, with all the positive and negative aspects that it entails. All the interior and exterior design of the LEGO® House has as background that “Home” that has been thought so hard.

Visual Identity

One aspect that has also been taken into account is the visual identity of the building. I’m not just talking about the building being built like 21 interconnected bricks. Absolutely everything is inside the LEGO system. From the tiles that cover the building to the colour palette used in the interior.

In the talk I had with Gitte Nipper I discovered the extent to which the “obsession” that absolutely everything is related to the LEGO System is present. All the signage has proportions of different LEGO bricks, and the colors are based on the pantone used in the bricks. The basic colors (Blue, Red, Yellow and Green) are used, along with black and white. There are some key differences (darker and lighter) to allow you to distinguish some elements within the main colors. In addition they have chosen some secondary colors that serve as contrast for the main colors.



Evolution of the construction site, including the external tiles

But where AFOLs have had a major impact (again) is in choosing the signals that will help with mobility within the building. Fans were asked for ideas of logos for different concepts. The fans proposed many icons that have appeared throughout the history of the LEGO brick. From current logos to the oldest ones, which are unknown to many of today’s LEGO employees. They recognize that without the help of the fans, they would not have been able to use many of the signs that you will find in the LEGO House.

AREA	ICON DIRECTION	INSPIRATION
Dynamic City	SimCity Town planning	
Robotic Lab	Robots Programming	
Test Zone	Model assembling Crash seat dummy Experiment	
Endless Bricks	Waterfall Free build	
Masterbuilder Studio	Thinking Learning Experimenting	
Diorama	World of LEGO® Creations Home of the Minifigur	
Story Studio	Movie clipboard Stop motion film	
Character Creator	Iconic Minifigur female Iconic Minifigur male Unique Minifigs	
Fish Tank	Aquarium fish Marine fish	
History Collection	Timeline Brick history LEGO milestones	
Keystone	Gallery Showcase	

Icons requested to AFOLs were based on this list of areas

Fish Designer	1. Aquarium 2. Marine fish	
History Collection	1. Timeline 2. Brick history 3. LEGO Milestones	
Masterbuilder Gallery	1. Gallery 2. Showcase	
LEGO Store	1. Shopping basket 2. Shopping bag 3. Sign	
Painting House Blue	1. Substrate 2. Boat	
Painting House Green	1. Motorcycle 2. Bike 3. Vehicle	
Painting House Yellow	1. Air Flow 2. Air Station	
Painting House Red	1. Space ship / Rocket	

Icons proposed by AFOLs

Once the designs were chosen, an intensive work of renovation, fusion and adaptation was done. There were two main reasons: homogeneity (thickness of lines, colors, etc ...) and adaptation to the size of the signs (many logos come from bricks and / or minifigures that do not have the same proportions as the signs).



Example of logo adaptation



Approved icons



Definitive Icon Fish



Definitive Icon City Architect

Not only the AFOLS' opinion was used in this section. For example, some time ago LEGO requested ideas for the name of the restaurants in the building. One of them will be called "Brickaccino", a name proposed by the Community. Other names proposed by the Community were considered for the other two restaurants, but eventually they will have names of a more commercial character and that allow for a clear differentiation.

The LEGO® House

After this interesting introduction to visual identity, I had the opportunity to take a guided tour with Mr. Jesper Vilstrup, General Manager of the LEGO® House. I was able to walk both inside and outside the building. To this end I had to use individual safety elements such as special footwear, a reflective vest and a helmet.

We entered what will be the main square, from where you can observe the building “from the inside”. This will be a public square where you can purchase tickets and access the venue, but also walk, shop in the store or eat in the restaurant without purchasing an entrance ticket. Obviously, everything has the proportions of the brick (on a higher scale). I have commented that the exterior of the building simulates a building made up of 2x4 bricks, but for example, the main square floor seems to be built with 2x2 tiles, and it is like that with all other elements.



LEGO® Square (Simulation)

Speaking about restaurants, Jesper explained me something that shows how everything, in one way or another, is related to the LEGO brick. When someone enters the family restaurant, they will receive a bag with pieces. Each piece means a type of food, for instance a red brick could mean meat, a green brick means salad, a yellow brick pasta ... You have to “build your own food” with bricks, scan it, and after watching a video in which a Minifigures cook your order, you can pick it up and eat. Fun!!!

The opening of the LEGO House was delayed one year since the building could not be built with “traditional” techniques without adding columns. As adding columns into the building would ruin the architectural idea with the open space, the engineers had to think again. The solution was to add 1900 ton of steel into the building and change the construction technique to turn the building into a bridge, rather than a traditional building.



LEGO® Square

When you enter the showrooms, it is impressive to see such a large space without any columns. There are four areas with different experiences:

Red Zone: Creativity

Green Zone: Social skills

Yellow Zone: Emotions

Blue Zone: Cognitive competences

In addition, there will be the Masterpiece Gallery, which is the top piece of the building (the one with the studs). Here you will be able to see models made by AFOLs from all over the world, as well as three big models in which AFOLs have also participated ...



Red Zone (Simulation)

But there is also an “invisible” part of the building where some things will happen. It is the basement which will house the historical collection, with boxes and assembled models that will present a tour through the history of LEGO. In addition, there will be a central room simulating the interior of a brick. The three tubes will be interactive elements to explore the history of LEGO.

There will also be multipurpose rooms, where you can hold conferences, workshops or meetings of any kind, both by the company and by the fans.



Jesper Vilstrup and Lluís Gibert at the top of the LEGO® House

You will also be able to walk on the exterior of the building and will be allowed to reach the top of the upper brick. From there, you can step over to the studs and see the Masterpiece Gallery from above, or observe the landscape. For example, you can see the parking lot that has been built for visitors, which is built with the same bricks that had been part of the Astvej factory which was closed last year to build a new office building. It is an ecological and historical parking lot.

By the end of the visit I was very excited, and ready to start the last meeting with Søren Holm. He explained how some of the experiences of the different areas will be and how they have designed specific elements of decoration. Unfortunately I can not reveal the details since they are part of the opening surprise. I can only tell you that the waiting time will be worth it.

HispaBrick Magazine would like to thank Astrid Mueller, Jan Beyer and Kim E. Thomsen for their efforts to carry out the visit, and Jesper Vilstrup, Gitte Nipper and Søren Holm for their kindness and enthusiasm during the visit.

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