

Interview: LEGO® House

By HispaBrick Magazine®

Images by HispaBrick Magazine® and LEGO® System A/S



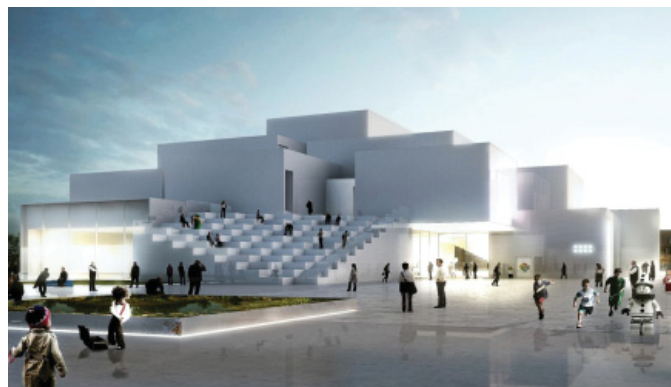
The works in the LEGO® House are evolving in a good way. One year after the interview with Astrid Mueller (Senior Event & Tour Manager of the LEGO House), HispaBrick Magazine had the opportunity to interview Trine Nissen (Senior Communications & PR manager of the LEGO House) and update our information with the latest news.

HispaBrick Magazine: Last year HBM had a sneak peek of the LEGO House. Could you explain how things have evolved from last year?

Trine Nissen: I was put on the project in November 2015. I'm the senior communications and PR manager. So in one way I have only been with the project for half a year, but then I have a background with the LEGO group. I worked here between 2000 and 2008 when I was in corporate communications. So in that respect I know the company quite well. Obviously a lot has happened in the meantime.

There is the floor where you come in and then there is a big square – 2000m². From there you have access to the huge LEGO shop, to the forum, the conference room, to three different restaurants and then there is the administration building. You have to book your ticket online and when you come you get a wristband which allows us to follow you throughout your visit. When you go through the turnstile with your secret wristband, and you walk up the stairs along a secret model that is being built right now in Kladno, you come to four different zones coloured in four different colours. I would love to talk more about exactly what this is because there has been a lot of change. When I came on in November there was also a new lead for our experience team – a guy called Søren Holm (Head of Experience of the LEGO House) – and he reworked everything because some of the experiences were good, but not phenomenal; so that's what he has been working

on – we are leveraging this. It has been approved by the steering committee and we are going with these four coloured zones, and some of these experiences we have seen before but a lot of them we haven't. I'm afraid I can't tell you any more for now.



HBM: Is everything going according to plan?

TN: Yes. The big thing for us was the arch and the steel bridge where we used 1900 tons of steel and that whole process postponed the project one year. So in the beginning we said we would launch in 2016 and then it was changed to 2017 – the second half. We are sticking to that and it is going really well. There is an extremely big dedicated team that works very hard and you can really feel that people (including myself) feel so privileged to be on this team. We really want to do our best and there are all these competencies. Because when you build a house like this you need a competency for managing the flow, you need marketing plans, you need designers for the experiences, IT people for the ticketing – there are so many different kinds of competencies being drawn into the company. I think that is a really cool thing about working here.



HBM: Will there be any areas that are open to all the public, including non-visitors?

TN: Yes. When you come into the area I mentioned before, with the big shop and restaurants, the forum and the administration, that is all open without payment. It is basically a roofed part of Billund. It would be open in summertime maybe from half past 8 in the morning till 10 in the evening and you can just go in and have a glimpse of that cool architectural building, and also you can walk here over the building without paying for a ticket and just have fun. There are a couple of terraces you can only go to from the paid zone, but there is this interesting mix between public/free and payed-for areas.

HBM: I heard the building was designed following the LEGO® system. How does the house fit in the LEGO system?

TN: On many different levels. If you look at the proportions of these 21 bricks, they have also been alternated, so they fit into the LEGO universe – that is one way. Then if you go past the building site at the moment, you will see that the tiles we put outside are also the same proportions as LEGO bricks – you either see a big one from the front or the side – so it also looks like it is built out of bricks. And then we are really taking this to the next level, because the whole idea of this system is built into the furniture we are building. We have specially made furniture. Down in the basement we have display cases carefully made to fit the proportions, so in every detail you get the feeling that everything fits together. You may also know about our masterpiece gallery that we have on top. We are going to invite 20+ skilled fans to build really cool models there – we really mean from the bottom of our heart for this to be a way to celebrate the creativity and skills that are out there.



HBM: How is LEGO as a company living the project of the LEGO House?

TN: We have done an internal PR plan to ignite this project throughout the entire organisation. Right now our managers do presentations when they have meetings. And because we are using all these different competencies from the entire company

that means we have a lot of ambassadors and contacts all over the company. It is very important for us to have people here who like the project and that the LEGO employees like it too. And I think we are succeeding there.

HBM: Are the people from Billund more confident about the project?

TN: Probably, because it is always a challenge. There are 17,000 people who work for LEGO, but only 5,000 here in Billund. Obviously we would love to say everybody has access, and if you come to Billund and are a LEGO employee you are welcome to visit us – you don't have to pay for that. But we cannot ship people in, so if you live here in Billund you can use it more and it is easier for you to invite your friends and family to come and see.

HBM: How do you think life in Billund will change with the LEGO House?

TN: I think it will change a lot. I think we will have 250,000 guests per year driving into the middle of what used to be a small town with not a lot of things happening, and suddenly you get this huge attraction. This has also inspired the rest of the city to have their own 2030 plans. They have made new plans for how the town is going to evolve and how it will expand. I think it will change dramatically.

HBM: Is there any fixed date for the grand opening?

TN: The date has not yet been set. We still say the second half of 2017*, but as soon as we know we will let you know.
#



Trine Nissen - LEGO House Senior Event & Tour Manager

* The official opening will be on September, 28th 2017

Note from Editor: This interview was done on June 2016