

Press release – 10/11/2020

10.000 trees to be planted for a new district that breathes in Braine-L'Alleud

Equilis plants the first tree in an urban wood of 35 ares, at the heart of its Terra Nostra project.

Equilis, in partnership with Urban Forests, has just symbolically planted the first tree in a wood located in the heart of the new Terra Nostra district in Braine-L'Alleud in the rather special circumstances.

A participative planting day involving young and old, future inhabitants, neighbours and amateur gardeners was initially planned for 8 November. But, due to developments in the health crisis situation, Equilis decided to postpone it to 2021.

In the meantime, the (reduced) teams from Equilis and Urban Forests were determined to symbolically plant the 1st tree of a wood which will eventually have 10,000 of them of around thirty different species. Around this wood, a whole new district will soon be built, placing the emphasis on well-being, through nature, peace and social harmony.



An urban forest of 10,000 trees planted using the Miyawaki method

Today, more than ever, man needs to rediscover his deep-rooted values, to recharge his batteries in order to escape the daily stress. Although Equilis had already explored this trend when it conceived Terra Nostra, the latest health, economic and environmental crises have definitively put nature and social harmony at the heart of our life projects.

A 35 ares forest, with some 10,000 trees planted and dozens of different species to promote biodiversity will soon spring up in this new district of Braine-L'Alleud, just round the corner from Waterloo and a bus ride from the capital. With the help of Urban Forests, the specialist in creating 100% natural, fast-growing, participative urban forests using the Miyawaki method, Terra Nostra will provide a veritable green oasis between city and countryside.

Nicolas de Brabandère - biologist, naturalist and founder of Urban Forests – explains: *“The Miyawaki method, developed by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, makes it possible to plant a native forest on degraded or*

urbanised land, and watch it grow in a minimum of time. Being particularly dense, they favour biodiversity (20 times more than conventional plantations), social contact and the well-being of the population by reducing anxiety, respiratory disorders and other cardiovascular diseases.

We have just planted 750 trees of 27 different species. The next phase, about 2,500 trees, is scheduled for February 2021 and the 3rd phase, 6,750 trees, for October 2021. So in the end we will create an urban forest of a total of 10,000 trees”.

A lifestyle combining peace and social harmony

Terra Nostra is one of Equilis' flagship projects. It offers a high quality living environment to its future residents. It will eventually include several landscape sequences that will animate district life. Residents will walk there among open-plan blocks and green spaces, with an orchard and pedestrian paths inviting them to stroll in the 2 residential parks or in the common wood, bike paths to promote soft mobility, a playground for the children, etc.

For **Hugues Hallard, en charge du projet Terra Nostra pour Equilis**, “the symbolic planting today is really the tree that will make it possible to see the wood! This common wood is a real ecological network in the middle of the site. In addition, the many outdoor developments planned aim to encourage the development of a district life cradled by peace, well-being and social harmony, values the project was based on from the start and which will be particularly meaningful in these troubled times.”

An exceptional setting for exceptional properties..

Located on what is currently the Plateau de Merbraine, this new green area will house in its first phase 44 luxury, spacious and bright flats with large terraces as well as 7 premises for the self-employed and the liberal professions which will strengthen the social exchange dynamic. In the second phase, a further 83 flats will round off the real estate offer.

Organised in open-plan blocks, the well ventilated and attractive architectural complex takes full advantage of natural light, with quality finishes, and optimum energy performance.

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ABOUT EQUILIS

We are Equilis and we build.

We build stories.

We create places where people build the stories of their lives.

Love stories, business stories.

Happy stories.

EQUILIS was established by Carl Mestdagh in 2006 as a commercial property developer in the Belgian market. Today the firm develops and completes demanding projects in a broad spectrum – from commercial and residential real estate to offices, brownfield recovery, senior citizen or student housing, recreational facilities, parking spaces, cultural and public spaces. Altogether EQUILIS has built 271,000 m² retail and 832 residential units. Currently a further 215,000 m² retail and 2,004 residential units are under development.

EQUILIS covers all aspects and works and has diversified its activities and expanded its portfolio in the European market. EQUILIS has offices in Belgium, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Poland and recently also in Germany. You will find more information about EQUILIS and its projects under www.equilis.net

ABOUT URBAN FORESTS AND THE Miyawaki METHOD

Dr Akira Miyawaki, botanist expert in plant ecology and university professor born in 1928 in Japan, developed a technique for restoring natural vegetation on degraded soils, industrial, urban or peri-urban. Miyawaki Urban Forests are beautiful, diverse ecosystems, balanced with current soil and climate conditions. Growth, biodiversity and density are increased tenfold compared to traditional forests (respectively x10, x20 and x30).

Dr Akira Miyawaki's work was awarded the Blue Planet Prize in 2006, the equivalent of a Nobel Prize for ecology.

URBAN FORESTS, established in 2016 by Nicolas de Brabandère - biologist and naturalist, is a specialist in the creation of 100% natural and rapid participatory urban forests according to the Miyawaki method.

More info on urban-forests.com/fr/

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