

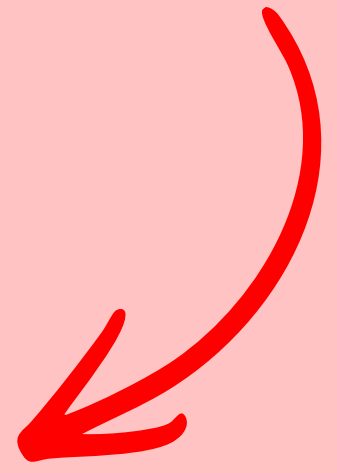


**A
SPOTTER'S
GUIDE
TO
HUDDAN
BUILDINGS**



Click any to go straight there!

CONTENTS



- > What *are* human buildings?
- > The elements of human buildings
 1. Is it interesting from three distances?
 2. Is it varied?
 3. Is there any detail or ornamentation?
 4. Is it made of interesting materials?
- > Why are human buildings so good for us?
 5. Are there touches of craft?
 6. Does it tell any stories?
 7. Is there any nature?
 8. Is it a bit playful?
- > How do buildings make you feel?
- > Get your phone out!
- > About Humanise
- > List of images



WHAT ARE HUMAN BUILDINGS?

Human buildings make you want to pause. You might want to go a bit closer to look at one. It might catch you unawares as you're strolling by, and make you, well, *feel* something.

A human building isn't defined by one architectural style or period. They're not all designed by certain sorts of people, or built with particular materials.



Once you start looking, you'll know it when you spot a human building. It'll be the one that's a bit more interesting than most of its neighbours. It might have more details, or more texture, or just make you feel like it was made by real people, with real hands and hearts. You'll likely *feel* something when you look at it too.

This guide introduces some of the elements which make buildings human. If you take it with you when you're out and about, you can use it to spot them wherever you are!

Scroll or click these buttons to move to the next page



THE ELEMENTS OF HUMAN BUILDINGS:

8 things to look for

So what exactly does a human building look like?

To find one, get out and about in a town or city and ask yourself the following eight questions.

The more you find the answer is 'yes', the more likely you're looking at something wonderfully human.



1. Is it interesting from three distances?

Human buildings are interesting enough to make you curious, and then to hold your attention.

Firstly, from further away (at ‘city distance’) – when you see the outline of the building against the sky, or next to its neighbours. Is there something about the shape of it which catches your eye?

Then when you’re a few metres away (‘street distance’). Does it make you want to go closer?

And finally, when you’re passing right by it (‘door distance’). Was it worth looking closer? Are there things you notice that you didn’t see from further away?

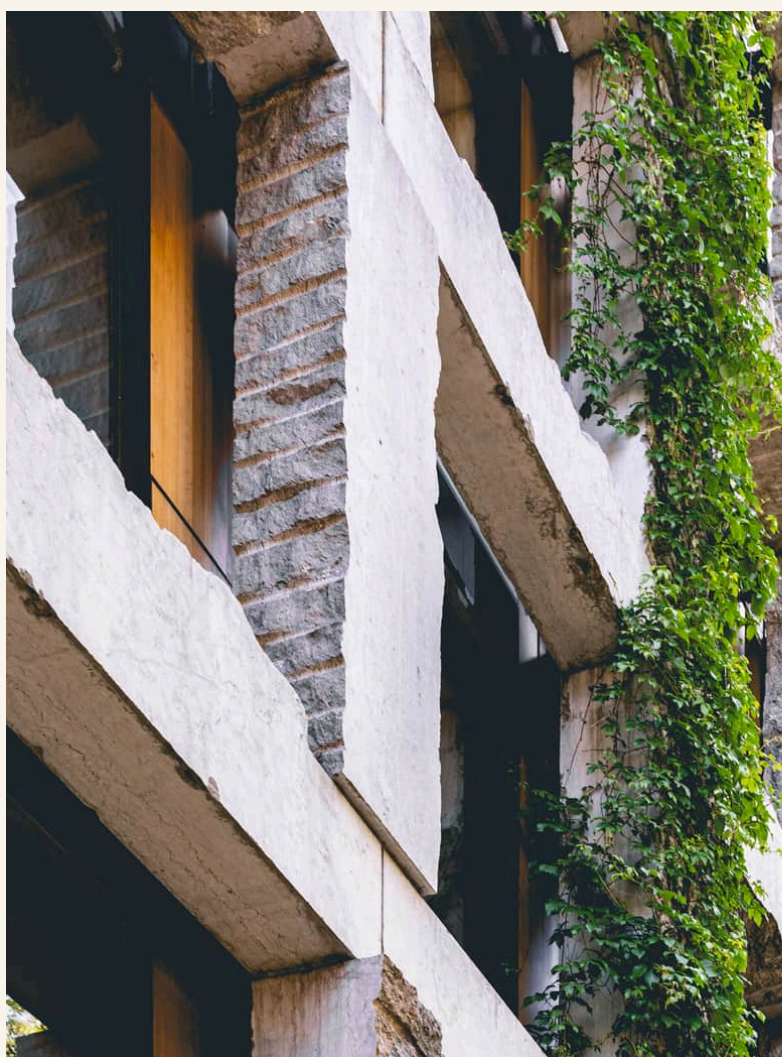




City distance



Street distance



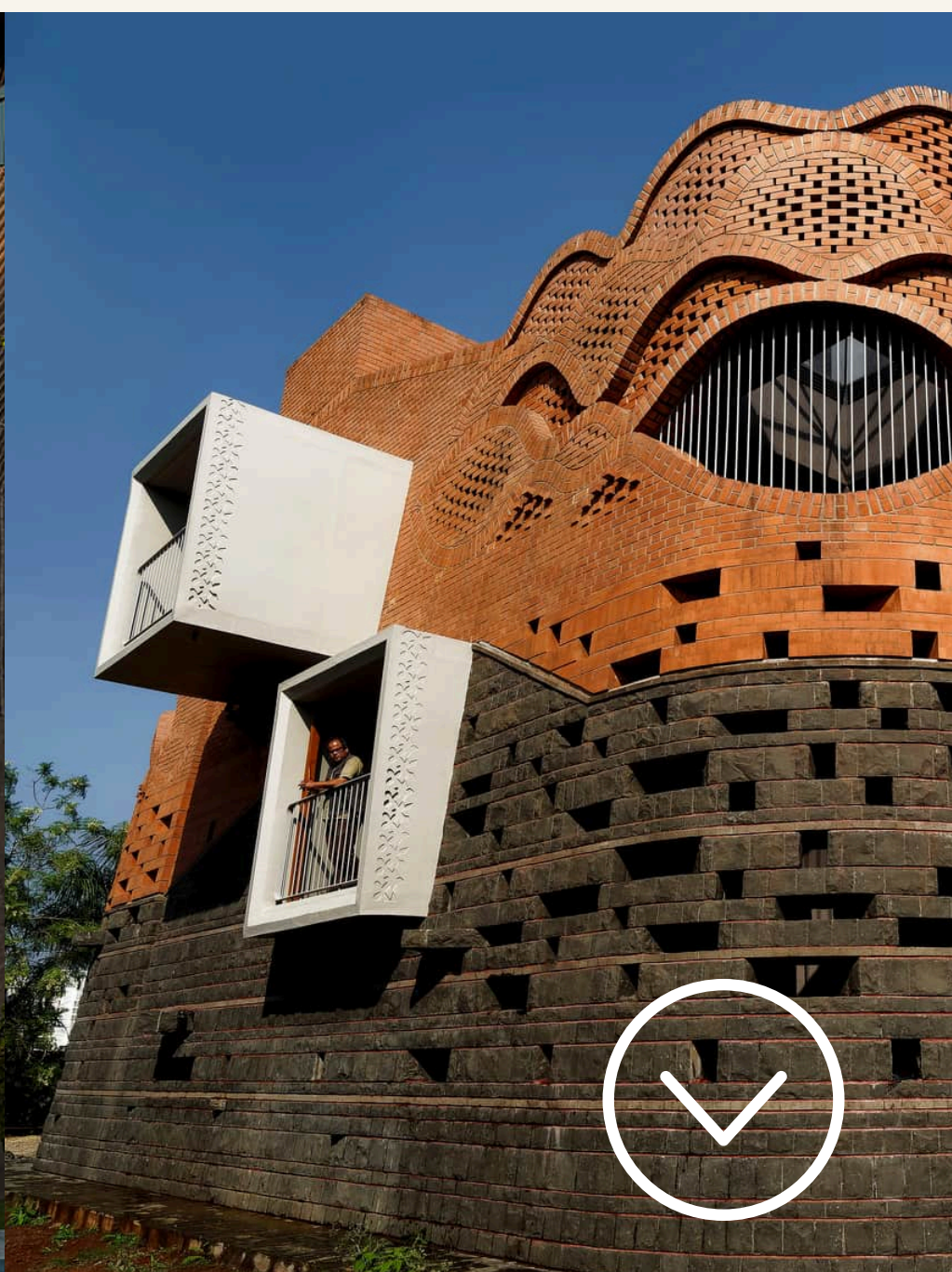
Door distance



2. Is it varied?

Some buildings are completely the same from one end to the other – think about the kind of city skyscrapers that are just a wall of glass, for instance. Boring!

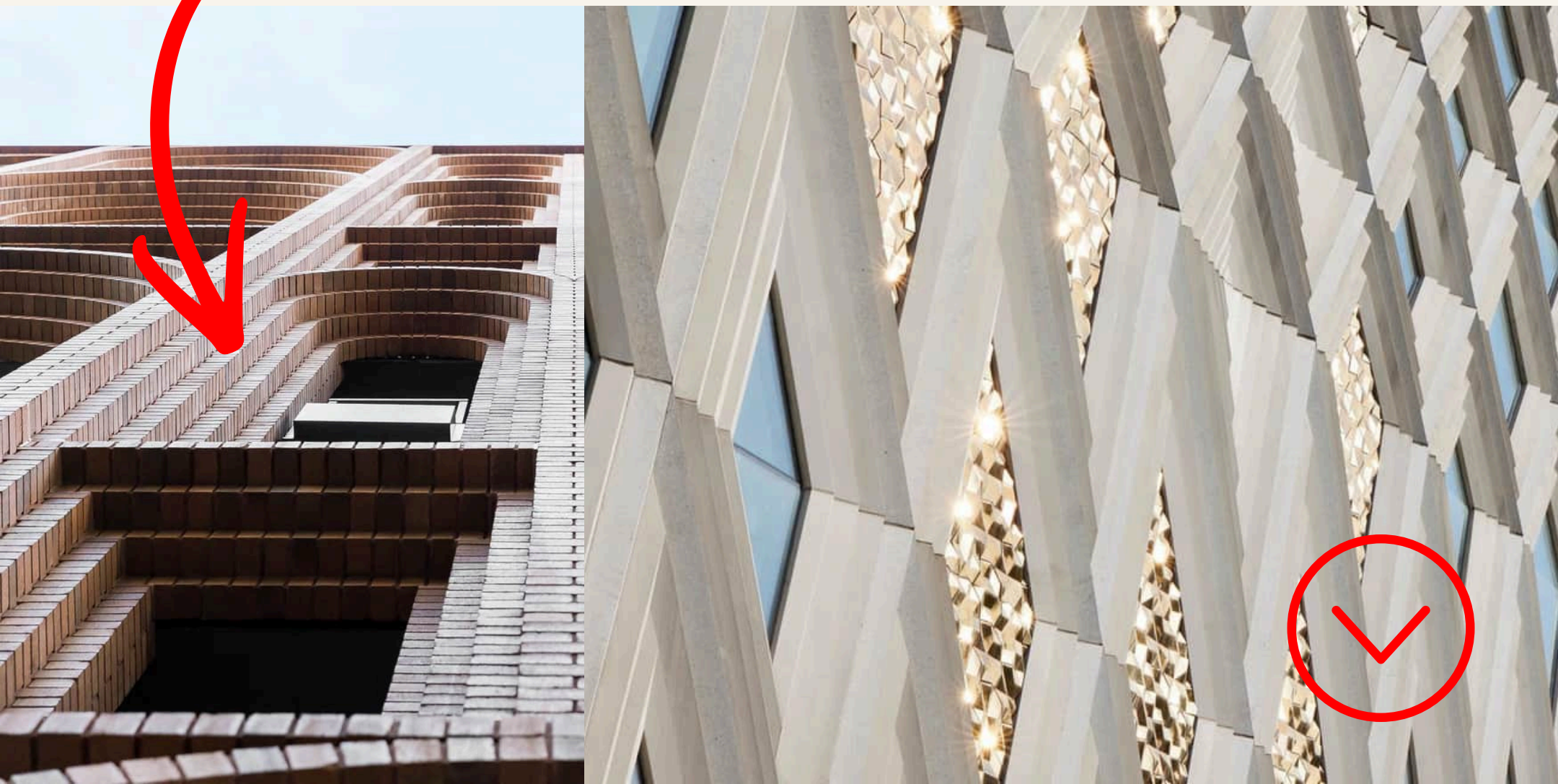
Human buildings have more variation – changes in their shape, curvy bits and straight bits, differences in texture, or variety in the materials they're built with.



3. Is there any detail or ornamentation?

Has the building been made of one plain surface, or are there details? Look around the doors and windows – they're often places where you might see some extra interest. And check out any balconies, steps or patterns in the materials which have been used. Did anyone take the time and trouble to make this building extra interesting?

Not just one frame round the windows, but three – adds interest and creates shadows



4. Is it made of interesting materials?

Human buildings often have more to say about *how* they're made, so you might notice interesting, unusual materials, like ceramic tiles, or bumpy bricks, or railings that don't look like they came off a standard production line.



The walls of buildings can be made of almost anything – this experimental one is made from brushes!

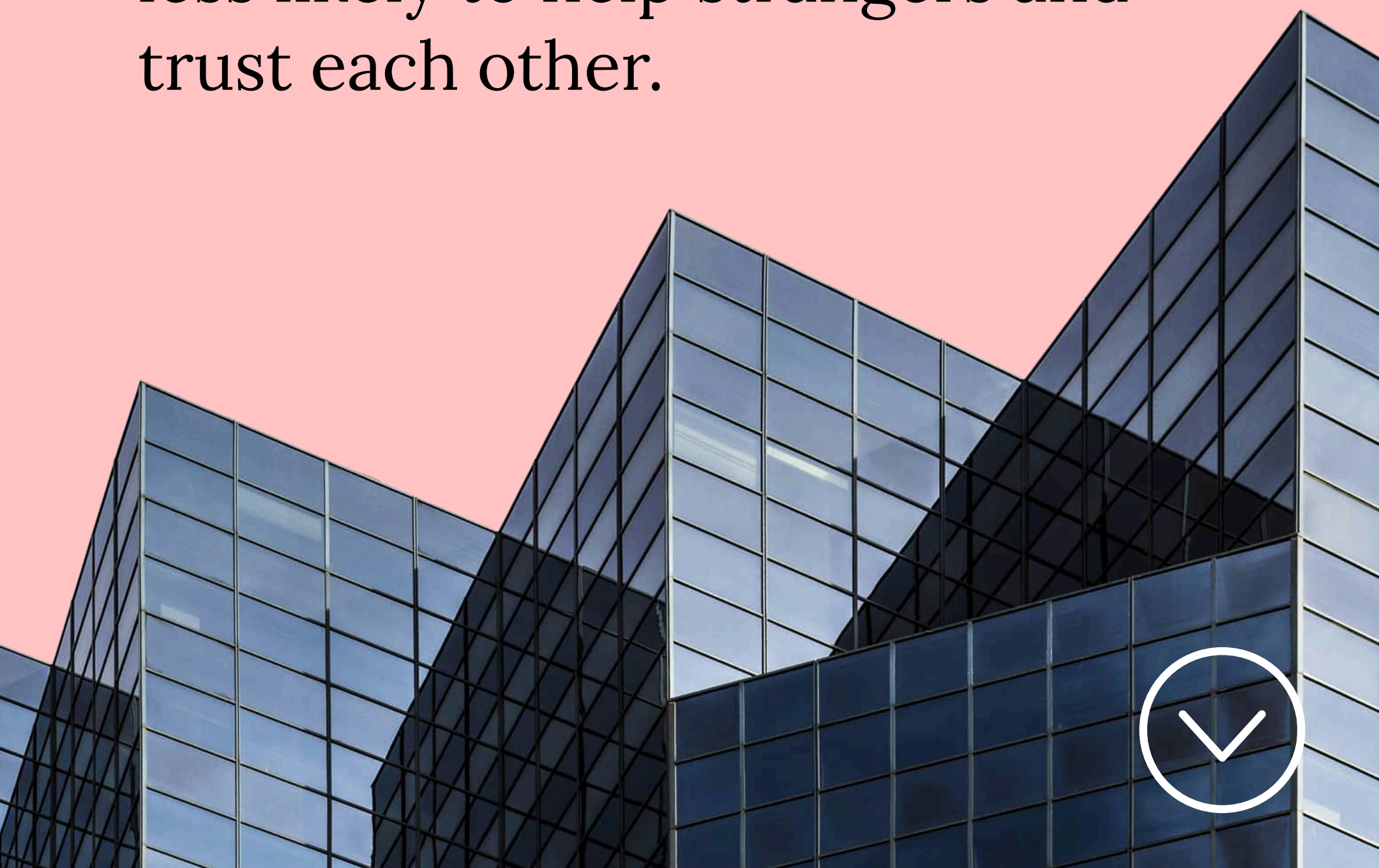


WHY ARE HUMAN BUILDINGS SO GOOD FOR US?

Buildings aren't just the backdrop to our urban lives. They have impacts on us which we're often not even conscious of – even when we just pass by them on the outside.



Neuroscientists have shown that buildings which loom over us, have a lot of sharp edges, and flat walls with repetitive patterns are bad for us. By carrying out experiments monitoring people's heart rate and sweat, they've shown that these types of buildings put us into a state of 'negative arousal', where we feel tense and agitated. When we're surrounded by buildings like this we're less likely to linger, look around, or engage with other people. Remarkably, we're also less likely to help strangers and trust each other.





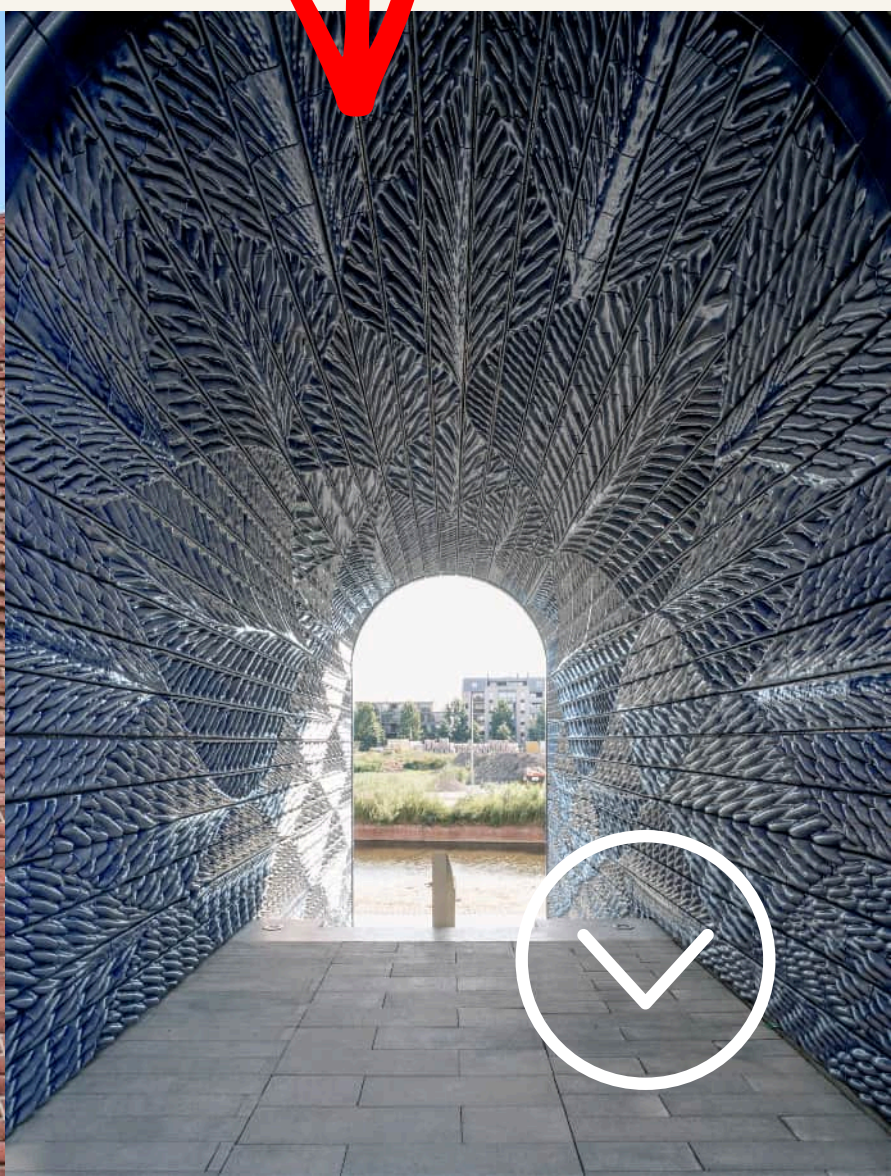
In contrast, when buildings are at a 'human scale', and when they have some variation, some curves and use more interesting materials, they actually help us regulate our nervous system and make us feel calmer and more sociable.



5. Are there touches of craft?

Can you spot anything about the building which tells you it was made by real people? Have the bricks been laid in an unusual pattern, is there timber cladding which curves around a corner beautifully, or are there any materials which look handmade?

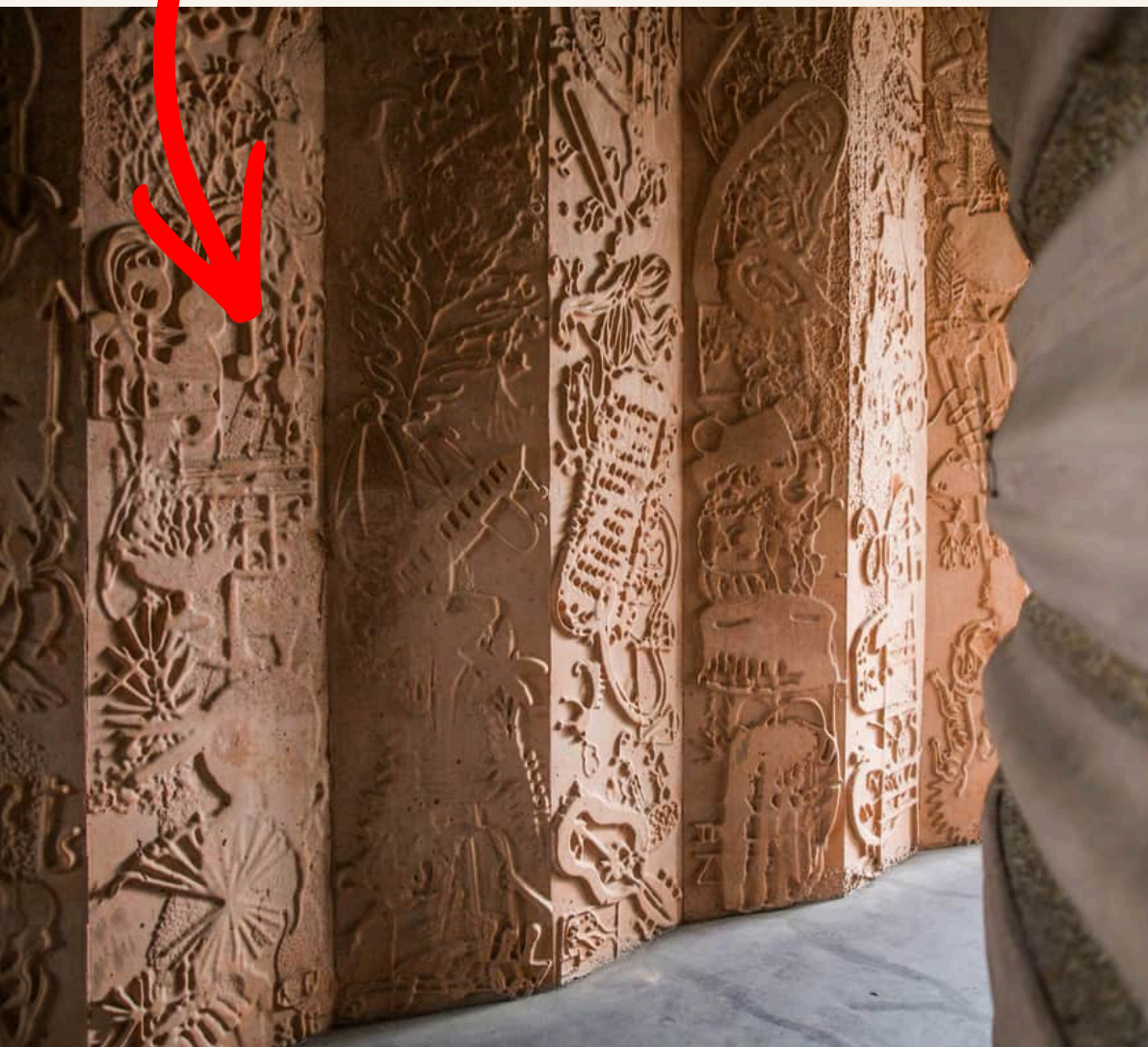
These ceramic tiles reference Delft pottery, but were created using the latest 3D printing technology



6. Does it tell any stories?

Is there anything about the building which might relate to where it is, or what was there before, or what the local area is famous for? The building on the right uses tiles which incorporate patterns created by local schoolchildren.

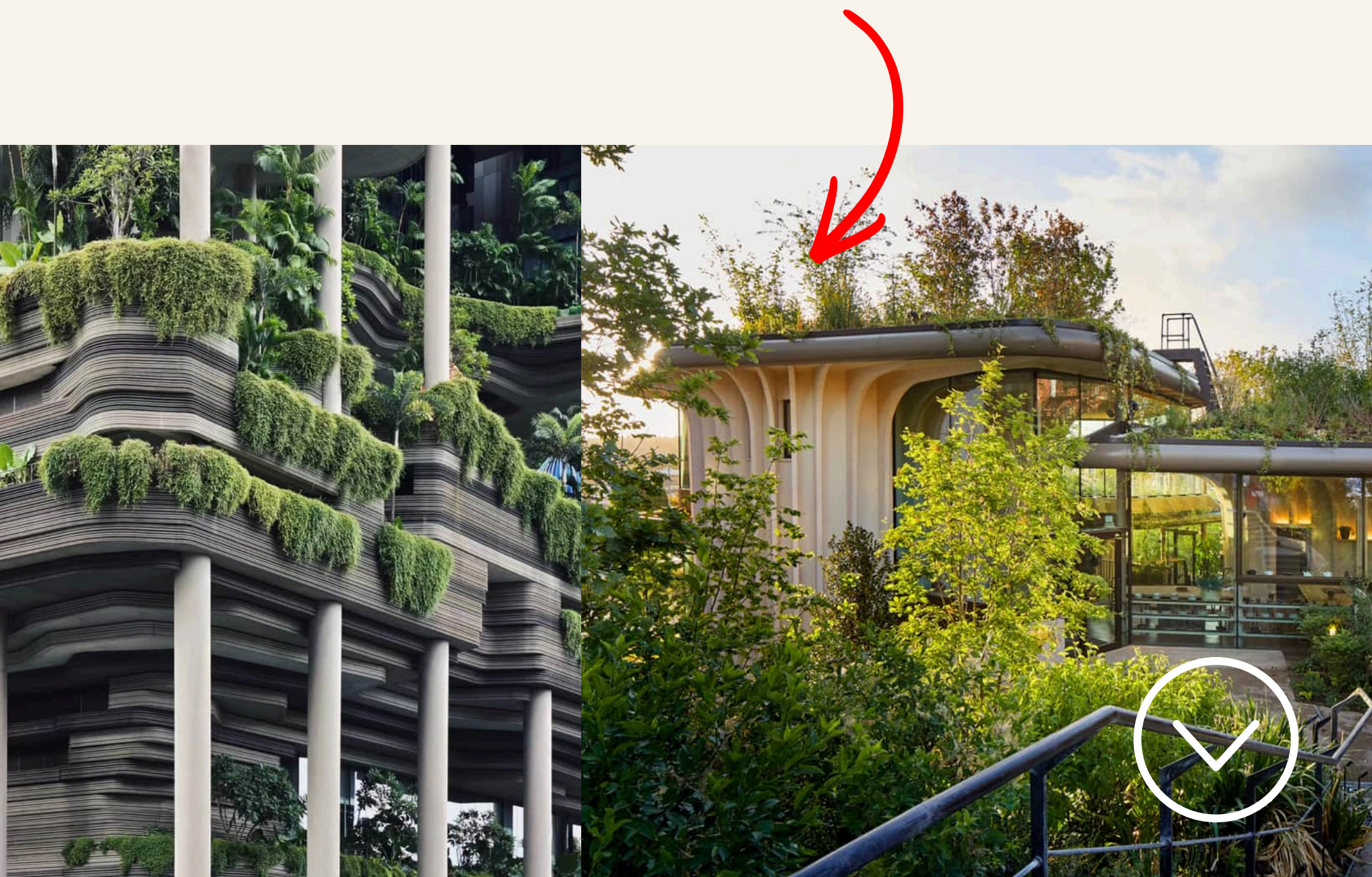
Artist's drawings cast into the walls of this university building highlight different learning subjects



7. Is there any nature?

Has planting been integrated in the building at all, or are there any more subtle natural references? The hotel below has an extreme amount of vegetation incorporated into the design, while the healthcare building on the right uses a lot of natural materials like wood, and curvy, natural shapes, to create a calm, welcoming atmosphere.

This building even looks a bit like a tree



8. Is it a bit playful?

When buildings are designed with a sense of playfulness, it makes people smile. The museum below was originally a dock warehouse, but architects added a pair of giant shiny, curvy staircases on the top – no way you can say that's boring!

Cheerful colours are nice to come home to (and help you find your way around!)



HOW DO BUILDINGS MAKE YOU FEEL?

It's not always an obvious question is it?

But if you start asking yourself how the buildings around you make you feel, you might be surprised at the different impacts they have on you and your mood.

You can even try imagining the building as a person. What are they like? How do they dress? What's their home and family life like? What's their job? And would you want to be their friend?



HOW DO BUILDINGS MAKE YOU FEEL?

anxious

valued

connected

numb

embarrassed

curious

depressed

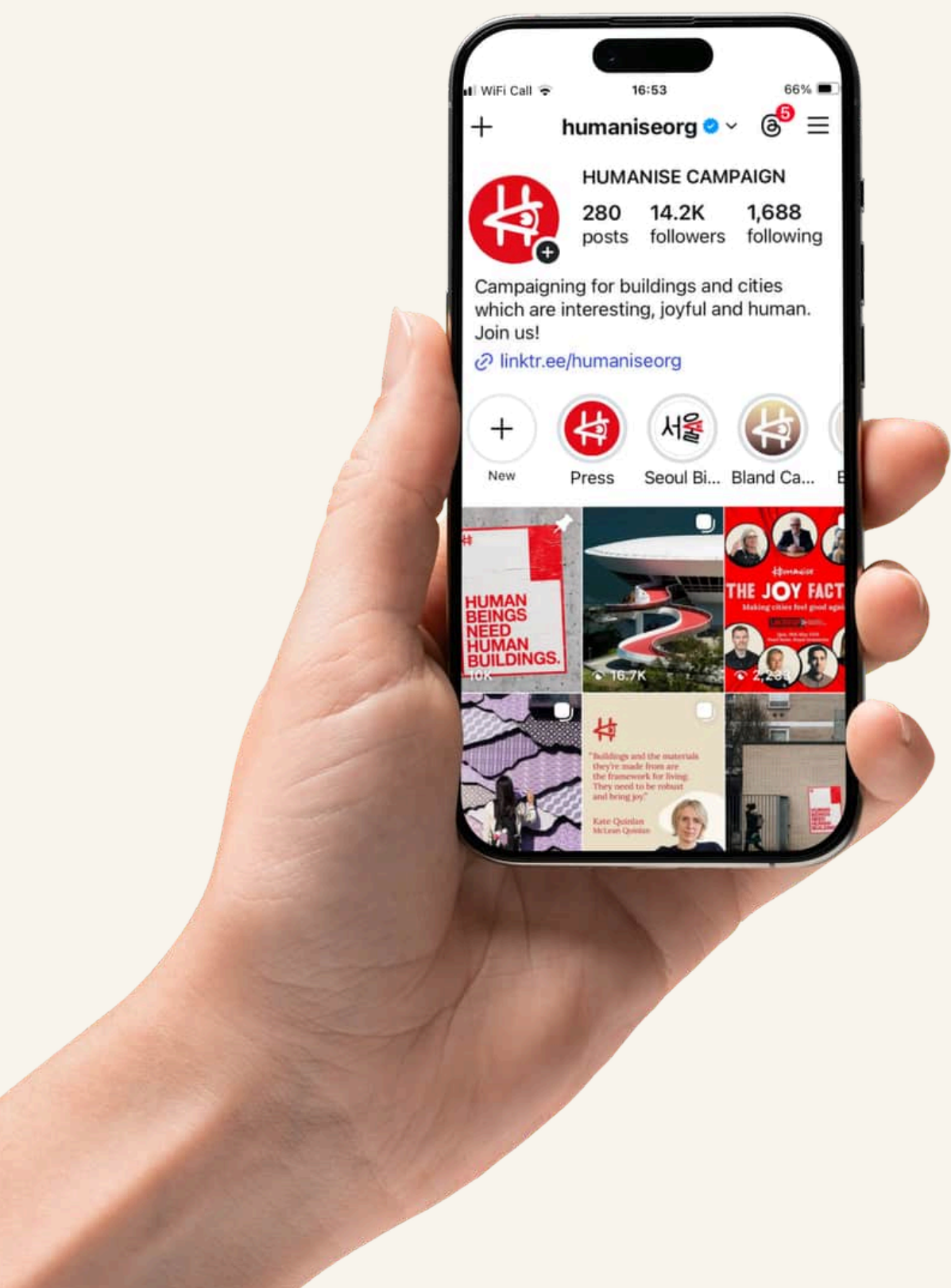
proud



GET YOUR PHONE OUT!

Taking pictures on your phone is a great way to document the buildings you find interesting - and to share them with others.

Wherever you are in the world, tell us about the human buildings you spot by tagging [@humaniseorg](https://www.instagram.com/humaniseorg) on Instagram.



ABOUT HUMANISE

Humanise is a global movement for buildings and cities which are interesting, joyful and human. We're calling out how dull, soulless buildings are bad for our brains, our bodies, our behaviours, our economy, and our planet.

Human beings need human buildings.

Find out more and join us at humanise.org.



LIST OF IMAGES

- p.3 The BuStop House by Conscious Design Studio (image: Jack Harrison Bunning)
- p.5 The Arches by DHaus (image: Matthew White)
- p.7 15 Clerkenwell Close by Amin Taha / GroupWork (image: Jarred Walker)
- p.8 Tirana Tower by Oppenheim Architecture (image: MIR)
- Gadi House by PMA Madhushala (image: Hemant Patil)
- p.9 Arc by Koichi Takada Architects (image: Tom Ferguson)
- John Lewis Leeds by Acme (image: Jack Hobhouse)
- p.10 Swept Away by Ronald Rael (image: Lee Jae-Won)
- p.11 Croydon Colonnade by Adam Nathaniel Furman (image: Gareth Gardner)



LIST OF IMAGES

(continued)

p.13 Shenzhen Women & Children's Centre
by MVRDV (image: Xia Zhi)

Hundred Thousand Bricks House by
LabWerk (image: Pankaj Anand)

p.14 Hundred Thousand Bricks House by
LabWerk (image: Pankaj Anand)

New Delft Blue by Studio RAP
(image: Riccardo De Vecchi)

p.15 Nanyang Learning Hub by Heatherwick
Studio (image: Joe Almond)

Paradise by Feilden Clegg Bradley
Studios (image: Nick Turpin)

p.16 Parkroyal Collection Singapore by
WOHA (image: Nurhidayat Z)

Maggie's Yorkshire by Heatherwick
Studio (image: Hufton + Crow)

p.17 Byker Estate by Ralph Erskine
(image: John East / C20 Society)

Fenix by MAD (image: Hufton + Crow).





HAPPY SPOTTING!

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