



 **compañero**<sup>®</sup>  
partner in concrete patterns

### **Concrete, as versatile as mankind itself**

According to leading scientists, the ancient Egyptians used to use a primitive type of concrete in their pyramids. The Romans improved this construction material and used it extensively for building aqueducts, bridges and other structures.

However, concrete as we know it today has very different properties to its ancient predecessors. After all, one of mankind's greatest talents is the ability to modify construction materials to suit changing needs. This continuous process made growth in the form of compact urban concentrations possible during the 20th century.

In the 21st century, efficiency and a minimum impact on the surrounding area are crucial requirements for modern construction projects. Highly skilled craftsmen are capable of creating fully finished concrete elements in controlled conditions. It is a modern paradox: simplified and rapid assembly at the construction site is made possible by highly skilled manual work in the protected environment of a production workshop.

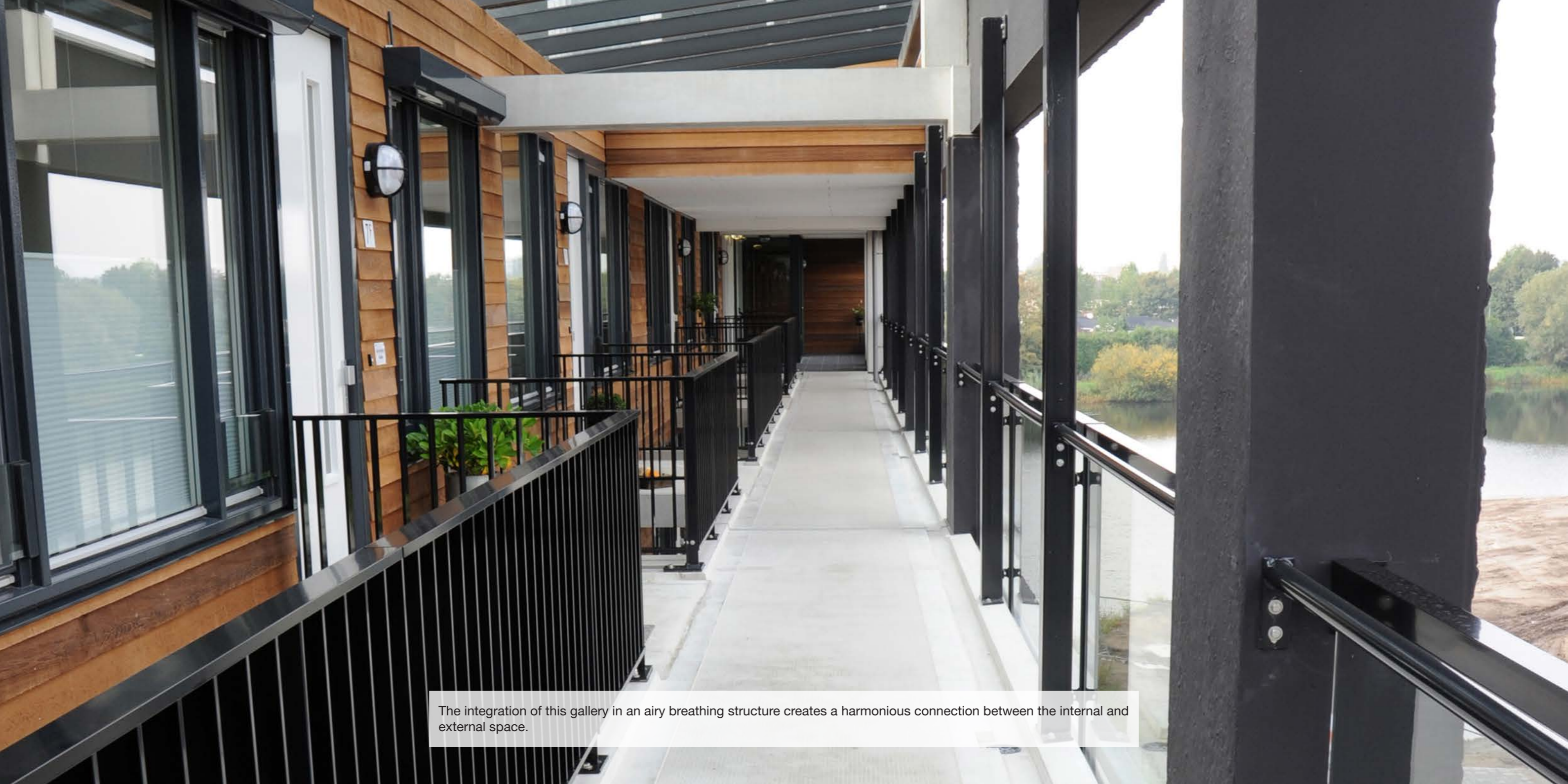
Concrete can also be shaped to suit aesthetic ideas, as evidenced by the differences between contemporary European building traditions. In countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgian, prefab concrete elements like stairs units and galleries are delivered in ready-to-install and ready-to-use state for residential complexes. Thanks to the anti-slip finish achieved with our GIAN formliners, these products are also completely safe. German contractors and architects on the other hand often finish stairs in natural stone, which is relatively slippery and also expensive due to the extra labour involved.

Interior stairwells are a commonly used element in traditional German construction. Residential complexes in neighbouring countries avoid stairwells through more intensive use of the exterior space. Concrete galleries not only allow a more compact construction design, they also provide extra living space for residents.

This photo album, which has been specially put together for BAU, illustrates the versatility of concrete as a material. We invite you to draw inspiration from the unusual applications that leading photographer Fabienne de Boer has recorded for posterity!

*Maarten de Graaf*

Managing director of Compañero



The integration of this gallery in an airy breathing structure creates a harmonious connection between the internal and external space.



By furnishing and decorating their balcony in accordance with their own taste, residents create a personal living space in the open air.



The concrete imprint of the GIAN 2 S square-pattern formliner in combination with sandblasting on the balcony means that residents are unlikely to slip and fall when enjoying their leisure time.



Concrete moulds are made in mirror image in many European countries (180 degrees). This method ensures that the walking or visible surfaces can be perfectly finished during the production process and given any desired texture.





Making moulds for prefab concrete is a job for skilled craftsmen. These professionals process the lightweight GIAN anti-slip formliners quickly and easily during this process.





The plastic GIAN formliners are very durable and can be reused several times when moulding concrete.

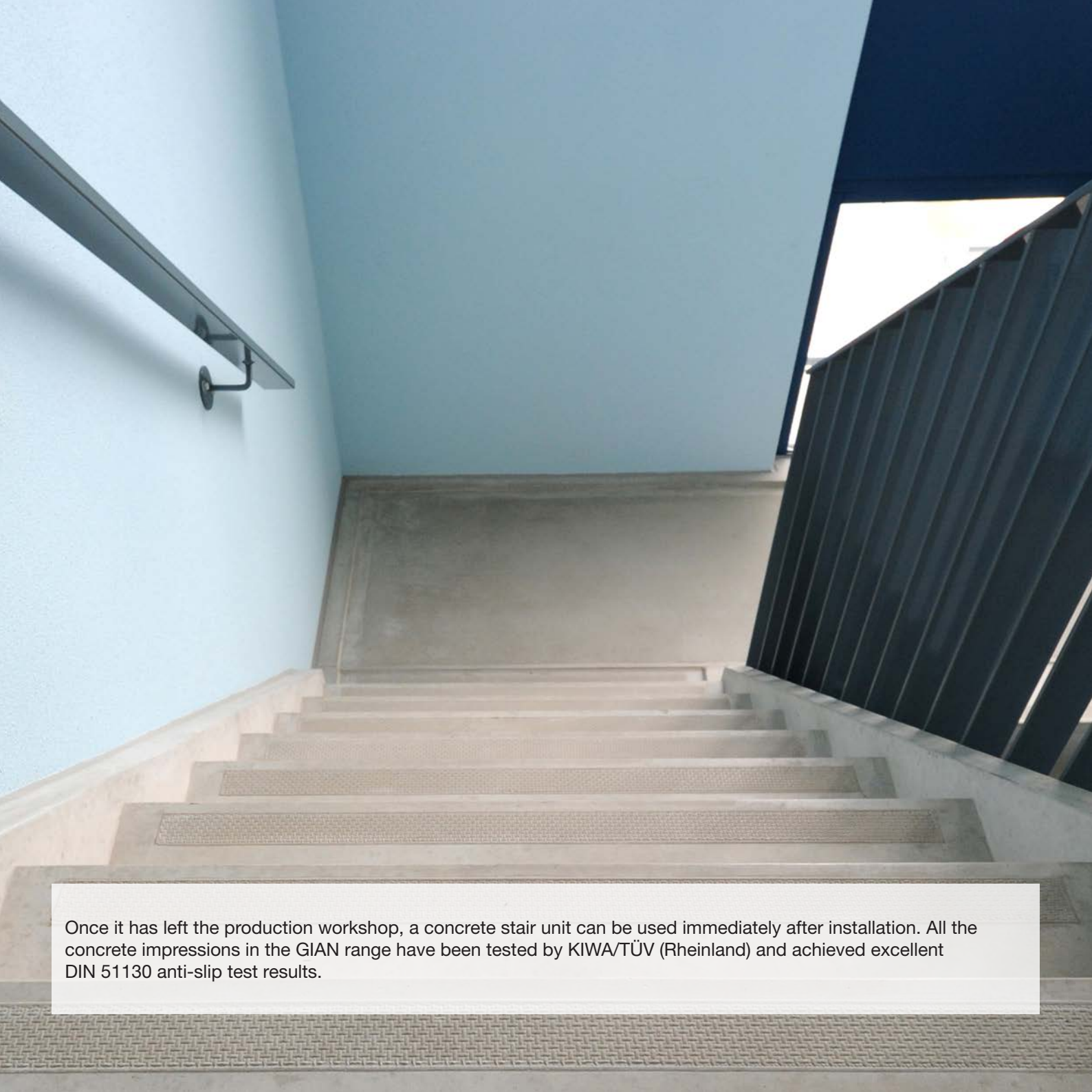


A modern paradox: highly skilled manual work in the protected environment of the production workshop makes rapid assembly possible at the building site.





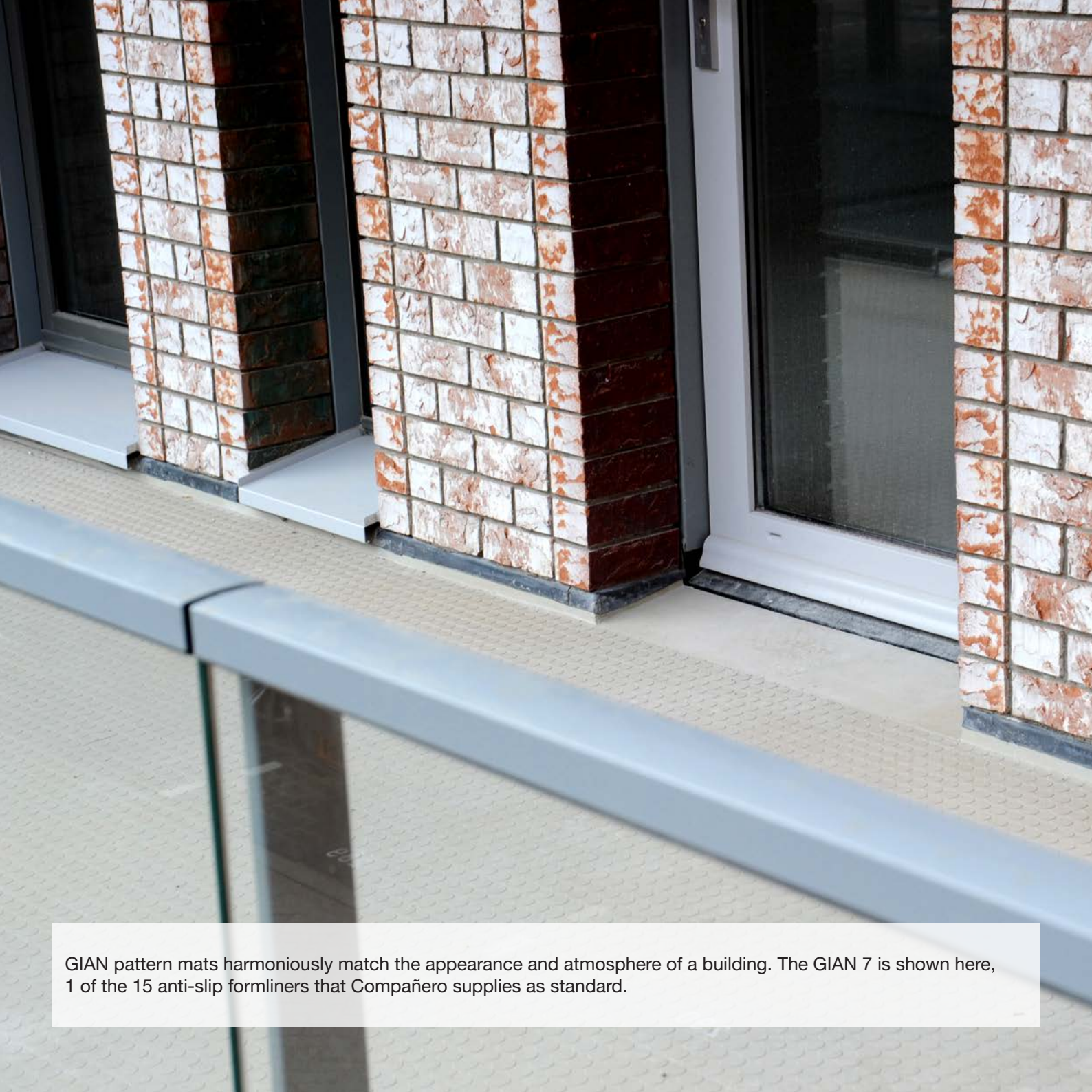
Controlled conditions and craftsmanship guarantee the quality of prefab concrete.



Once it has left the production workshop, a concrete stair unit can be used immediately after installation. All the concrete impressions in the GIAN range have been tested by KIWA/TÜV (Rheinland) and achieved excellent DIN 51130 anti-slip test results.



Thin prefab concrete and glass balustrades clamped in a narrow metal frame ensure a generous supply of natural light in the apartments and create an elegant exterior appearance.



GIAN pattern mats harmoniously match the appearance and atmosphere of a building. The GIAN 7 is shown here, 1 of the 15 anti-slip formliners that Compañero supplies as standard.



Slender concrete balconies are a perfect match for modern styling.





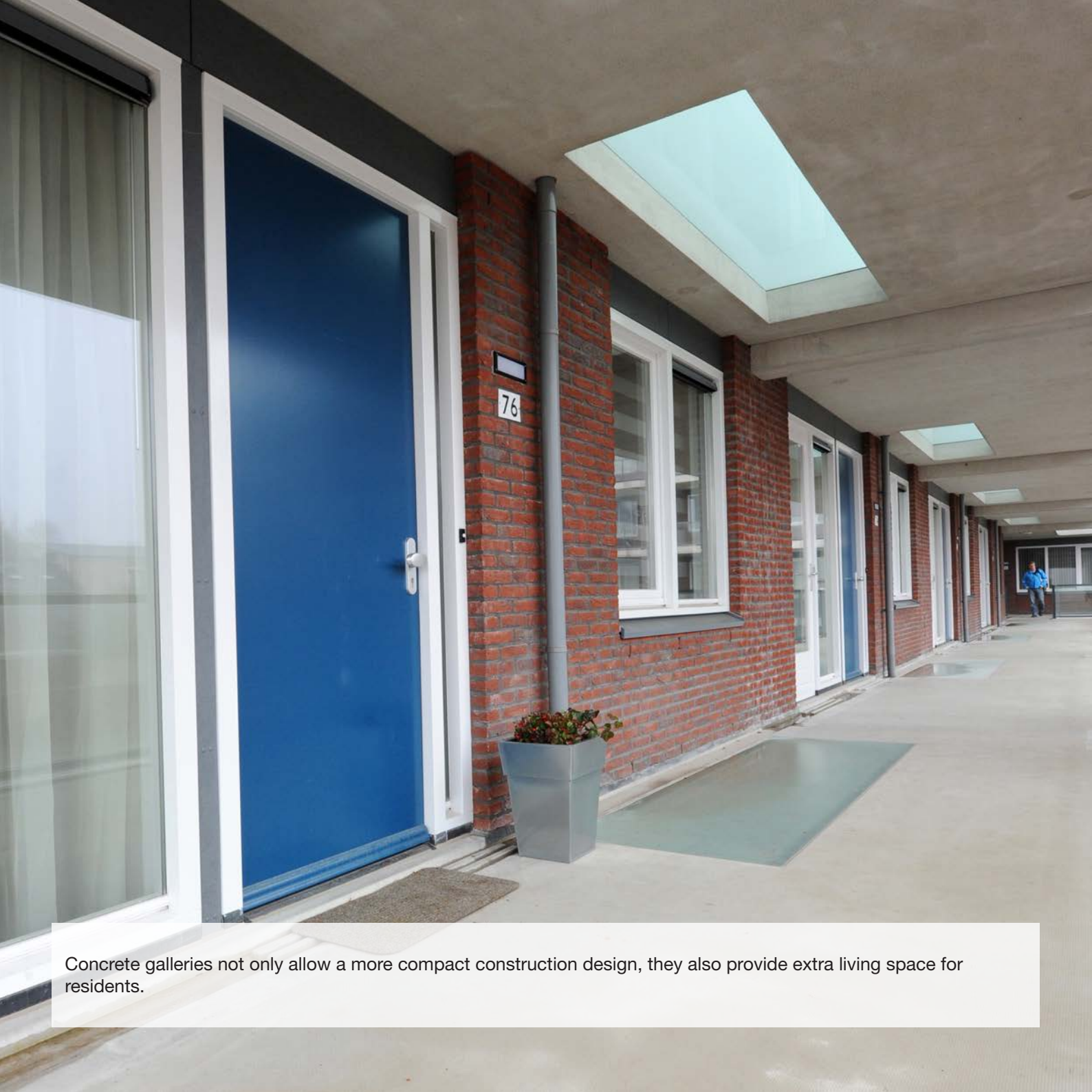
More intensive use of the outdoor space means that stairwells are less common in residential complexes in countries such as Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands.



The shape expresses how the outdoor space is an extension of the space indoors.



Different construction materials, fused together to form a single geometric pattern.



Concrete galleries not only allow a more compact construction design, they also provide extra living space for residents.



A living room in the open air. The concrete impression of the GIAN 2 S square-pattern formliner with a sandblasted finish fills the space like 'wall-to-wall' carpeting.



Modern urban square with a homely rural atmosphere.



The 21st century version of a manor house. The galleries on the ground floor of these apartment complexes create a kind of veranda.



Innovation and tradition, married together in concrete and brick.





### **Revealing the soul behind hard-faced concrete**

“I have tried to portray concrete emotionally, as an experience, in this book. I want to show that it is a versatile material, shaped by highly skilled craftsmen, which can be used to create a strikingly different urban living environment.”

Fabienne de Boer (31) regularly does photographic work for Compañero. She met the company’s managing director, Maarten de Graaf, in 2007 and has collaborated with this innovative company based in Utrecht ever since.

“If you had asked me to say something about concrete back in 2006, my first thought would have been: What could be more boring? Concrete is cold and grey; I had no connection with it whatsoever. But Maarten’s idea intrigued me. He wanted to reveal the soul behind hard-faced concrete. I normally photograph human subjects so I found that approach quite appealing.

So, to start the ball rolling for Compañero, I accompanied him on trips to different concrete factories. They turned out to be very interesting places: large, eerily lit spaces, moulds made in an intensive manual process ... I would never have thought that producing concrete was such a highly skilled task.

The next step was to take photographs of buildings. Although I do not see myself as an architectural photographer, this was a logical step within the context of this assignment. So I accepted the challenge. What I really wanted to show is that these are environments where people live. I achieve this by looking for specific details or by including people in the photographs. My objective is to bring concrete to life with my photos.”





GIAN Concrete Art is the strikingly unusual result of a technique that has been developed by Compañero. The GIAN formliner allows the customer's choice of words, symbols or images to be left as a permanent impression in the concrete surface. This technique is as versatile as concrete itself.

**compañero**<sup>®</sup>  
partner in concrete patterns

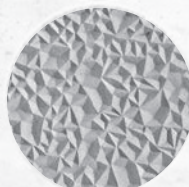
[www.companero.nl](http://www.companero.nl)



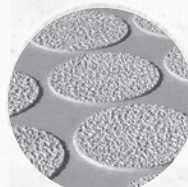
GIAN<sup>®</sup> 1  
large



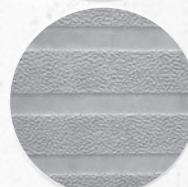
GIAN<sup>®</sup> 2S



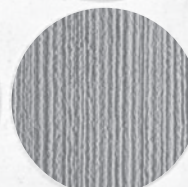
GIAN<sup>®</sup> 4



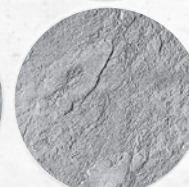
GIAN<sup>®</sup> 7



GIAN<sup>®</sup> 8



GIAN<sup>®</sup> 500



GIAN<sup>®</sup> 800