



PREFARENZEN 2026

A glimpse behind the façades of modern architecture



80
YEARS
OF QUALITY



Multi-family House with two Flats

Country: Hungary

Object, location: Multi-family house with two flats, Budapest

Category: New construction

Architecture: A Fiúk Építész Stúdió, Budapest

Installer: Richárd Tóth, Siófok

PREFA object consultant: Sándor Forró

Roof type: Prefalz

Roof colour: P.10 anthracite



Dániel N. Varga and Zoltán Kabdebó

»A House That Designs Itself«

Building with *A Fiúk Építész Stúdió* – the lads – is truly special. The office run by two Budapest architects, Zoltán Kabdebó and Dániel N. Varga, has a name that is not only appealing but also reflects a collaborative approach to planning. In Budapest's 12th district, they constructed a multi-generational villa for a discerning clientele, making excellent use of material properties and available space.

Set among old trees, elegant turn-of-the-century villa architecture, scattered socialist school buildings and park-like gardens in Budapest's West End, the architects' villa makes a distinctly contemporary statement.

House and Garden

For several decades, the client's family home stood on this coveted plot of land before it was demolished in 2022, and the decision was made to build a new one. A multi-generational house with two separate residential units under one roof was built on the long, narrow hillside plot. The ground floor features an apartment with direct access to the garden. The second, larger flat is located above it, spanning two floors and featuring spacious rooms with targeted views. A large balcony, accessible from the living room, and a roof terrace with a panoramic view of the city bring the outdoors and the surrounding area into the house. On the roof, a slightly protruding cube serves as a master suite and wellness area. It is both a retreat and a lookout point.

Compact with Contrasts

The structure is compact and remains consistently modern in its design. It is divided into two clearly distinguishable volumes: a solid base made of reddish-brown brick and a cube with an aluminium shell resting on top of it. Both volumes create a tension between each other. They do not overlap exactly, but are shifted in the floor plan, creating overhangs, incisions and sheltered open areas. Thanks to subtle contrasts, such as the change in material within individual sections of the façade and differentiated projections and recesses, the villa appears interesting yet serene. The brick façade breaks up the austerity of the clear structure, creating an elegant and enduring effect.













Brick and Aluminium

The choice of materials emphasises the contrast between the two structures. “We generally work with a limited number of materials. In this project, we used two durable and therefore sustainable materials side by side,” notes Zoltán Kabdebó in conversation. He refers to the solid-looking bricks on the one hand and the aluminium cladding of the anthracite-coloured roof structure on the other, which conveys a light, rather technical character. Daylight reinforces this contrast: the brick façade appears sculptural and lively thanks to the subtle rotation and deliberate offset of individual bricks, while the aluminium appears flat due to its smooth surface and the shadows cast by the standing seams. The horizontally laid bricks emphasise the horizontal lines, while the standing seams of the aluminium façade visually strive upwards. The seams run across the undersides, façade projections and the roof, drawing even shadow lines that continue up to the parapet of the base storey.



Technology and Design

Behind the brick façade lies a reinforced concrete ribbed structure filled with aerated concrete. The Prefalz façade, which is also rear-ventilated, was constructed like a roof, with double standing seams at the corners. All transition details were carefully adjusted by hand, and an internal drainage system ensures that no visible technical elements detract from the building's clear design language. The architects value high-quality materials that can be crafted by hand, which is also evident in the interior design, featuring fixtures made of marble, natural stone slabs and light oak in the kitchen, staircase, and bathrooms. Nevertheless, they move with the times. They have automated many aspects of the villa – sun protection, lighting, heating, accessibility and the underground car park door can all be controlled digitally.

Architecture as Relationship

For Zoltán Kabdebó and Dániel N. Varga, however, architecture is more than the sum of design, technology and execution. “At a certain point, a good house plans and creates itself,” says Zoltán Kabdebó. This does not mean a loss of control, but rather the ability to listen, observe and react during the design process. It is not only the architect, client, budget, location, building regulations, or building site that influence the result; the building also develops its own language and identity. The two architects see themselves as conductors of a relationship process. Their working method is open, dialogical and quality-oriented. The name of their office – A Fiúk, meaning “the boys” – is no coincidence, but rather an expression of the idea of understanding architecture as a collaboration between equals. Zoltán Kabdebó and Dániel N. Varga approach their collaboration with their clients with the same intensity as they do their designs. They clearly state how things should be built, but also explain when something does not seem sensible to them. “We find that clients often come to us with ideas that are far too clear-cut. For us, it is important that they engage in a joint process.”

Architecture Seeks Identity

According to Dániel N. Varga, since Western European architecture was introduced to Hungary, which had previously been dominated by socialism, in the early 1990s, many styles and fashions have been experimented with. As if searching for a new flavour, the new also brought with it a great deal of confusion and misdirection. Hungarian architecture, he says, is in search of a new identity. The fact that the bricks used

come from the Netherlands is more of a coincidence. What was decisive was their size, colour and quality. Although they do not speak the traditional Hungarian architectural language with this material, it is precisely this deliberate break that creates space for a new, independent expression.

Architecture is a Product

Despite all their creative ambition, the architects view their work from an economic perspective. Today, architecture is also a product – with a price, value and utility. They reject cheap compromises. They are aware that it is all about sales and a reasonable return on investment. They build for clients who appreciate quality and understand that good design and style are key selling points, but require expertise and experience.

“The Lads” Stands for Community

Immediately after the 2008 financial crisis, the architects launched their own business, focusing on interior design projects. Previously, both had worked for a Japanese Hungarian firm and were already an excellent team at that time. Over time, they further developed their profile, constructed buildings, and, because it provided a welcome change from the long planning and construction phases, entered competitions and won their first awards. However, working together on specific construction projects, such as the villa in the 12th district, remains particularly important to them to this day. This allows them to best realise their quality standards and design ideas.

In the Future?

Today, A Fiúk Építész Stúdió represents architecture that is robust in the face of trends and is created through open collaboration. The future? It is coming, bringing change, challenges and new tasks, everyone agrees. What remains is a wealth of shared project experience and a foundation of attitude, craftsmanship, and the pursuit of architectural identity.





Lightweight, Precise, Indestructible

Holiday homes, sailing yachts, sun loungers – Siófok on Lake Balaton is primarily a popular holiday destination. However, the fact that high-quality craftsmanship is also practised there is less well known internationally. **Richárd Tóth**, a tinsmith with heart and soul, was one of the first independent master tinsmiths to work with PREFE products in the Lake Balaton region when they were introduced to the Hungarian market in 2003

Richárd Tóth has remained loyal to PREFE products for many reasons. With each new project, he specialises in processing and values the lightness of the material and the well-designed installation system. As a master tinsmith, he bears full responsibility for the waterproofing of a building. Accordingly, he appreciates the advantages of high-quality products that simplify work processes.

For two months, he worked with a colleague on the façade elements, canopy, parapet and balcony cladding of the modern villa in Budapest's chic West End. He knew the client personally. Thanks to his professional expertise and precise execution, he quickly won over the project's architects as well.

One of the most striking features of the flat-roofed villa is the cladding of the broad, surrounding parapet with Prefalz P.10 anthracite. It completes the brick exterior walls, following their projections and recesses. The panels should extend from the parapet and visually blend into a cubic roof structure.



Richárd Tóth

Where the parapet changes direction, the panels are laid out like a fan. In the corners, the standing seams therefore run pointedly towards each other. These short parapet panels must be cut and folded with particular accuracy. The entire appearance resembles a tailor-made suit with carefully crafted seams and a perfect fit. Slightly narrower panels on the façades of the roof structure not only make its construction appear more elegant but also prevent deformation caused by unexpected wind suction.

“You can almost fold origami with aluminium,” says Richárd Tóth. He sees himself as a craftsman in the classic sense: someone who has mastered an art with his hands. Nevertheless, machine processing is also essential to him. Thanks to modern handheld machines, he can perform a significant amount of work directly on site, creating folds and connections more quickly and evenly. Fortunately, the days of working with a soldering iron and a bag full of heavy tools are over. Nevertheless, he still needs a good eye for his craft every day.

He continues to develop his skills, as no two days or projects are the same in the tinsmithing trade, he says. He is motivated by the idea that his great-great-grandchildren might see his work. “Roofs and façades, especially those made of aluminium, will still be standing in a hundred years. They have to look perfect and be very precise.” Nevertheless, it is fundamentally about understanding how water behaves on surfaces. After all, a house will only stand if its roof is watertight. At least, that's what they say in Hungary among the Bádógos, the tinsmiths.



