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Audio tour text



ARCADIA

arcadia.frl/bouwurk

View the map of Bouwurk where you can find the audio tour points.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 1

Welcome to Bouwurk, and welcome to our cathedral of this time. Bouwurk is a true Mienskipshûs: a place where everyone is welcome to discover, create, and experience. There is always something going on here. Whether you come to admire art, listen to stories, or roll up your sleeves and get involved yourself – there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Let's go on a journey of discovery together through this special place.

Take a good look around. Do you see how Bouwurk is built from large wooden beams connected through purple corner pieces? These beams are made of Douglas fir wood. The structure is fully modular and demountable – which means Bouwurk can be taken apart in the future. The design was created by the designers of Overtreders W. Bouwurk and is a collaboration between Arcadia, the Municipality of Leeuwarden, and hundreds of other people, companies, and organizations. Once Arcadia has ended, the municipality can rebuild Bouwurk at another location and reuse it.

What makes Bouwurk extra special are all the people and companies who worked together on it. Friesland (Fryslân) is a global leader in the field of circular economy. How is that possible? In Friesland, there is a lot of collaboration. That's how we as Frisians make a difference together. One example is the Hemp Fiber Deal, where 30 parties collaborate to use locally produced hemp fiber as insulation material in over 1000 projects.

We also have a special collaboration for Bouwurk.

Three contractors worked together to build the frame of Bouwurk: construction companies Lont, Friso, and Dijkstra Draisma. Before starting this project, these companies had never worked together. But especially for Bouwurk, they joined forces.

Now look up. Do you see the colorful fabrics between the beams? There are 200 of them—you can hardly miss them. These fabrics are made from old, discarded hot air balloons from Team For Old Balloons, refurbished by the Northern Ballooning Center. They are too old and worn out to fly anymore—but perfect for a second life in Bouwurk.

To enter Bouwurk you have to take a big step, along the edge Bouwurk is 1 foot high. To make it easier for you, there are concrete steps around Bouwurk. These were made by SusPhos and the Leeuwarden Concrete Center. The concrete contains phosphate, a byproduct from urine and feces. It may sound strange, but that is precisely what makes the concrete extra sustainable.

Pay attention to the floor you're standing on. It is made from old pallets. These pallets were repaired and customized by Rewood Pallets, by people with a distance to the labor market. This way, used wood gets a second life—and everyone gets a chance to contribute to the construction.

Keep walking and step inside the Oase. There you will find the second QR code. Scan it, and we'll continue with the audio tour.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 2

Welcome to the Oase of Bouwurk – the green heart of our community house. Wander around and discover the hundreds of containers full of cuttings and plants, donated by volunteers. Almost every container grows something different. Maybe you recognize some of the trees from Bosk, the walking forest that toured the city in 2022. After that journey, these trees found a second home on the grounds of NHL Stenden. And now? They have returned especially for Bouwurk.

Among the Bosk trees, you will also find three very special specimens from the Art Workshop Smoel. These artistic trees are made from circular materials, such as rope, pallets, and old chair legs. Each tree has its character – and they are spread throughout the Oasis.

Have you seen our carillon yet? This was made by students from the Burgemeester Harmsma School. A carillon is a set of bells, like the ones found in church towers. But this one is special: it is not made of bells but of real shovels. Each shovel has its tone. Can you manage to play a song on it?

Here in this area, you will also find woven chairs made by artist Sanne van Balen. In collaboration with the National Basketry Museum, she created these chairs in the shape of lifebuoys. Feel free to sit down and enjoy the view from this special spot.

And... have you spotted the donation pots yet? Artist Koos Buster made five donation boxes, especially for Arcadia. Take a close look at what he is collecting for. With their quirky shapes and almost impossible goals, Buster challenges you to think: what can you do yourself for a better world? And what impact does that have? Like Bouwurk, it is an invitation not just to look, but to think. And maybe to help. Together, we build a world where everyone counts. Together, we make a big difference with small gestures.

If you now continue through the Oasis and keep right, you will find the third QR code there. Scan it, and then we'll continue with the audio tour.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 3

This is the third stop of the audio tour.

In front of you is Brenda, an impressive artwork by the Argentine artist Gabriel Chaile. Brenda is several meters tall and made of clay. Like the work of Koos Buster, it is part of our Paradys art route. Brenda is more than just an artwork – it is also an oven. During Arcadia, it will be used several times for real baking. Fire and food bring people together, and that is exactly what Gabriel Chaile hopes to achieve with his art.

In this part of Bouwurk, you can also listen to Future of the Past, created by PLOEGH EN EIDE. Six short stories based on scientific research from the community house De Klomp in Leeuwarden-East. Stories about memories, about gaps in memory, about what people want to take with them – and what they want to leave behind. The voices are fictional, but the feelings are real.

Also, take a look at the board opposite of you. Here you can follow the journey of Circle4Change. Artist Bruno Doedens cycles through Europe with a tree, searching for connection, stories, and change. The five-thousand-kilometer route is updated here daily. And do you still have a donation in your pocket? Here you'll also find a donation box by Koos Buster. What is he collecting for in this corner?

Now walk to the end of the Oasis, towards the side of the Oldehove. There you will find the fourth stop of this audio tour.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 4

Welcome to the fourth stop of the tour.

Stand with your back to the Oldehove and look towards Bouwurk. If you haven't noticed it before, you'll see it now: the stage in the Oasis. This was specially made for Bouwurk by the Spantenfabriek in Dokkum. The wood was milled using a CNC machine – a computer-controlled cutter that carves shapes out of wood very precisely. Just like Bouwurk, this stage can also be taken apart and later rebuilt in another location. Handy, right?

And do you see that listening chair shaped like an egg? That's the Ei-pod, an artwork by Joke Lunsing. Take a seat and disconnect from everything around you for a moment. Inside the chair, you'll find a button: press it and listen to a story, written and narrated by poet Joost Oomen. Take your time, listen, and look around.

Throughout Arcadia, and therefore also in Bouwurk, there are rain barrels. These catch rainwater, which we use, among other things, to water the plants in the Oasis during dry periods. This way, we save precious drinking water and help prevent waterlogging. All the water we collect in the barrels doesn't go to the sewer. Did you know that a large rain barrel can save up to 2,500 liters of water per year?

This was the last stop in the Oase. You'll find the fifth stop in the Maakruimte. Good luck!

AUDIO TOUR POINT 5

Welcome to the Maakruimte. Here, work is done, experiments take place, and knowledge is shared. New art is created here. Here, people paint, knit, weave, and most important of all: collaborate.

Let your eyes wander along the walls. Do you see the special wall made up of many different parts? This is our Load-Bearing Wall: a collection of windows, each filled by one of the many organizations, companies, and people who worked together to create Bouwurk.

What's special? This is only a part of all the collaborations. Each window has its design and tells its own story. Together, they form the big story of Bouwurk and pay tribute to working together. They prove what is possible when we collaborate. Look closely – especially for this wall, reed weaving artist Esmé Hofman, in collaboration with the National Basketry Museum Noordwolde, created four special panels. Can you spot them among the rest?

The rest of the walls, like the floor, are made from old pallet wood from Rewood. A lot of beauty can be made from waste.

Now look up at the little tower. Do you see the 8 stained-glass windows? They were created by glass artist Nanda Vandeberg. The more than 400 words you see come from students and teachers at Firda and Aeres. In their own languages, they answered the question: What do language and culture mean to you? Poets Marrit Jellema and Arjan Hut drew inspiration from their words and wrote a poem to accompany them.

Also, see the MegaZine – a gigantic workbook measuring three meters tall. It is the diary of Bouwurk. Every day, a new question is featured that invites you to leave something behind: a thought, an image, a story. The MegaZine grows daily, page by page, with contributions from everyone who visits. Will you add your voice to this collective artwork too?

Ready to move on? Then walk to the Whitebox – the sixth stop on this tour.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 6

Welcome to point 6. Welcome to the Whitebox. This is a special space — a kind of black box, but different. In theater, a black box means an empty space without a fixed setup, where creators have complete freedom. That's the case here too. Only: the walls are not black. The walls are insulated with real Frisian sheep's wool. Did you know that wool is an excellent building material? Friesland is the largest wool producer in the Netherlands, so it's local and sustainable. Especially when you know that 95% of all Dutch wool is currently being destroyed. What a waste, right?

The wool in the walls comes from many Frisian sheep. A big job coordinated by Plead in. The felt in the Whitebox comes from the Dutch Wool Collective. Together, these groups have made sure the Whitebox is warm and quiet. The wool not only creates a cozy atmosphere but also provides excellent insulation.

The wainscoting inside the room is a colorful collection of strips. All these strips were hand-knitted by the volunteers of knitting café De Steek. They worked on this for months before Bouwurk opened. And even now, they keep knitting every Thursday. Maybe you'll see them at work. Want to join in? We provide the needles and wool.

Also, take a look at the facade of this space. It's paneled with leftover wood from Miedema Bouwmaterialen. Different colors, sizes, and types of wood come together here. But that's exactly what gives it character, right?

The Whitebox is one of the few rooms in Bouwurk with a "real" door. Do you see anything special about the door? Almost all the doors you see in Bouwurk come from the old town hall of Menaam. That just goes to show: that everything in Bouwurk has its own story.

Now walk outside, behind the Whitebox. There you will find point 7 of this tour.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 7

Welcome outside, at point 7 of this tour. From here, you have a beautiful view of the Oldehove. Did you know that during the 100 days of Arcadia, you can rappel down from here several times? Keep an eye on the schedule — who knows, maybe you'll be zooming down soon too.

Take a look at the edge of the site. Do you see that row of bushes and trees in planters? That's a "houtwal" — typical for the Northern Frisian Woodlands (Noardlike Fryske Wâlden). In that region, farmers use this kind of dense hedge to separate pastures. It's not only beautiful but also a great place for birds, insects, and small mammals. Here, at the edge of Bouwurk, we bring a piece of the Wâlden into the city.

Walk a little further and discover Lift Me Up by Tryater. An audio installation inviting you to lie down and listen. Together with others, you are taken along in stories from people all over Friesland — stories about comfort, strength, and connection. While you listen, there is also a lot to see. What? That I won't spoil for you. And if you feel like taking a break: try the giant beanbag by Feedtuber. It's filled with compost, but don't worry — you won't get dirty. A perfect spot just to lie down and relax.

Do you see the different yellow stripes on the ground? These were painted by WMR from Rinsumageest. Each section frames a part of Bouwurk, making it easier to distinguish the different elements from the program booklet.

Now walk along the outside of Bouwurk. Point 8 is a little further on, on the side of Tresoar.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 8

Welcome to point 8 of this tour, on the outside of Bouwurk — on the side facing Tresoar. Here, plants grow in the vegetable garden, and ideas bloom.

Here you'll find painted wooden planters filled with plants. These were made for the Social Food Gardens Leeuwarden together with residents of the Heechterp-Schieringen neighborhood. Especially for Arcadia, these eight planters, filled with vegetables and crops, now stand at Bouwurk. Children from the neighborhood painted them together with graffiti artist Roy Schreuder. And here's something really nice: the vegetables we grow here are used in Bouwurk's kitchen.

There is plenty to sit on or in at Bouwurk: benches, chairs, beanbags. Have you seen the garden benches yet? They are made by Recell from recycled toilet paper. These benches prove that everything can be a raw material.

In this area, you'll also see the Future Chair, an artwork made by Grandparents for the Climate together with students from Firda and NHL Stenden. Climb up and take a seat. At the top, you'll find a QR code. If you scan it, you can watch several videos about a livable Earth. On your way back down, you'll come across cardboard trees covered with paper apples. On these apples, you're invited to write something: a wish, a thought, or something you've learned. What will you write?

And then: On the Field of Hope, Bouwurk's large vegetable garden. It was created by Peng Zhang, one of the artists from our visual art route Paradys. Peng's vegetable garden is not only beautiful to look at, but also special in how it works. Between the herbs and vegetables, two worlds meet. Peng works according to the traditional Chinese lunisolar calendar. This calendar doesn't follow months as we know them but is based on natural rhythms like solstices, day length, and changes in nature. This calendar is very important in Chinese culture and determines everything you do. For example, when you sow, harvest vegetables, take a rest — and when you celebrate.

There is plenty to experience in the vegetable garden. Peng offers workshops here, and you can help out in the garden. The vegetables and herbs from the garden are also used in cooking. Curious how that tastes? Check the schedule and be sure to visit when Peng is cooking.

In this garden, it's not only about what grows — but also about how you live. A vegetable garden requires patience. You can't ask a plant to grow faster. You need to pay attention to the rhythm of the seasons, the weather, and the earth. Want to discover for yourself what that's like? Sign up for one of Peng's workshops.

Now walk calmly on to the kitchen of Bouwurk — there you'll find point 9 of the tour.

AUDIO TOUR POINT 9

Welcome to point 9 of this tour. This is the Kitchen (Keuken) of Bouwurk.

A place to take a moment of rest, alone or together with others. Feel free to sit down at one of the tables and order a cup of coffee or a bowl of soup. And take your time. While you're sitting, take a good look around — there are stories hidden in the details here too.

The tables you see, and the stool you're sitting on, are made from panel material developed by the Veenweide Atelier. This material contains compressed fibers of miscanthus — plants commonly found in the Veenweide region.

The design is by Friso Wiersma, and the furniture was made at the social workshop Empatec.

Above the tables hang lamps. Each lamp was made by participants of the art workshop Smoel. Together with artist Juliet Ijpma, they got to work. What do you think of the result?

In the facade of this space, you'll find special panels incorporated. These panels are made from cattail (Lisdodde) and miscanthus, two plants that grow abundantly in the wet peat meadow landscape. Tjeerd Veenhoven developed these panels, especially for the Veenweide Atelier.

Besides these unique panels, the facade also contains Frisian hemp fiber and hemp insulation from Green Inclusive. On one side, the facade is made of glass so you can see it.

Have you looked at the windows above in the keuken? They were made by Steinfort Glas from pieces of leftover glass. Printed on each panel is a child's drawing, made by primary school children from all over Friesland. Their assignment was: to draw your dream view. The result? A collection of colorful windows, a playful take on stained glass.

In the keuken, you'll also find a special curtain made by Wad van Waarde. It's woven from Frisian flax — a plant that used to be grown all over the Netherlands to make fabric, but has now fallen into oblivion.

Ready for the last part of this tour? Then walk on to the little shop, where you'll find the final QR code.



AUDIO TOUR POINT 10

Welcome to point 10. You've arrived at the shop (winkelkje) of Bouwurk. And even here, there's still plenty to discover.

On the wall around the winkelkje, you'll see unique tiles made from silt from the Wadden Sea. These Wadden silt tiles were designed by design studio Humade as part of the project Sea Silt Ceramics, and produced by Royal Tichelaar Makkum. A little piece of the Wadden Sea in Bouwurk.

Take a moment to stop at the Kijkmannen, just in front of the "door" of Bouwurk. You may recognize them: men standing at a construction site, leaning on a bike, or sitting in a mobility scooter. They watch, they chat, and they have opinions about everything. This artwork by Marten Winters invites you to pause and reflect on the constant stream of opinions in our mienskip (community).

Inside the large Bouwurk, a small world is hidden as well. Michel Tilma, from Miniature People Leeuwarden, created a miniature artwork especially for Klein Geluk, inspired by the story "Om vier uur komt de grammofoon man".... translated as "At Four O'Clock Comes the Gramophone Man" by Nathalie Koch. Look closely: somewhere in this corner, the gramophone man is tucked away, with a tiny billboard beside him displaying a short excerpt from the story. Curious to read the rest? Or want to discover more of Klein Geluk? Visit kleingeluk.frl. The Gramophone Man is text number 42.

And then, there's the towering Hourglass. Were you here during the opening of Arcadia, the Grûnfestival? Then you might have seen how this hourglass was filled with soil brought by visitors themselves. Together, we make time tangible – and pass it on. The hourglass can now be found in the town hall.

Thank you for visiting Bouwurk and for listening to this audio tour. Did you start halfway through the tour? No worries! You can now head to point 1, located at the entrance of Bouwurk on the Obe building side, and catch up on the rest of the tour.

I hope you've discovered, tasted, listened – and perhaps found a moment of wonder. There is so much to see, feel, and experience here. Every time you walk through Bouwurk, you'll notice something new. Bouwurk exists thanks to countless collaborations. It was built by thousands of hands and nearly as many materials. All this effort, these materials, and these collaborations together tell a remarkable story. A story that explores the question: Can we still build together?

Feel free to take another stroll — there's always something new to discover. See you again – or better yet: oant sjen in Bouwurk, or at one of the many other parts of Arcadia.

