

FROM EINDHOVEN TO ANTWERP – & INBETWEEN (1/2)

DECEMBER 23, 2017 KAREN 2 COMMENTS EDIT





I quite like a ferry crossing, although I don't think I've been on one since the Hull to Zeebrugge over-nighter of 2014 where everyone was drunk before we even left the port and I ended up on a winning streak in the casino.

This trip was different though, this was [DFDS](#) Dover to Dunkirk, with peaceful Premium Lounge passes and excellent eggs benedict. It seemed to be over in a flash, and then we were on the road. It feels like everyone I know gets on the ferry and then heads south through France, but we were going against the norm, turning left, and heading to the 'city of light', Eindhoven.





I was excited to get a tour of the city, to look at the beautiful tiled floor in the station, to see the public art, to wander through the [Downtown Gourmet Market](#) (*I will come back for you delicious foods of the world!*) and, to see the spots where the famous [Philips](#) factories had been.

Eindhoven was the home of Philips from 1891. They were there so long that when they left, 100 years later, the city had to totally regenerate. Many of the iconic factory buildings were repurposed, filled with creative people, new technology and innovation.

Eindhoven is hip. They've got a logo called 'the vibe', a building called 'The Blob', and their motto is '*if you choose, you get chosen*'.

They've also got a building called 'The Brown Lord'.

We went to [Vane Skybar](#), drank speciality cocktails called 'The Homer' (as in, homing pigeon. I love pigeons), overlooking the city lights.





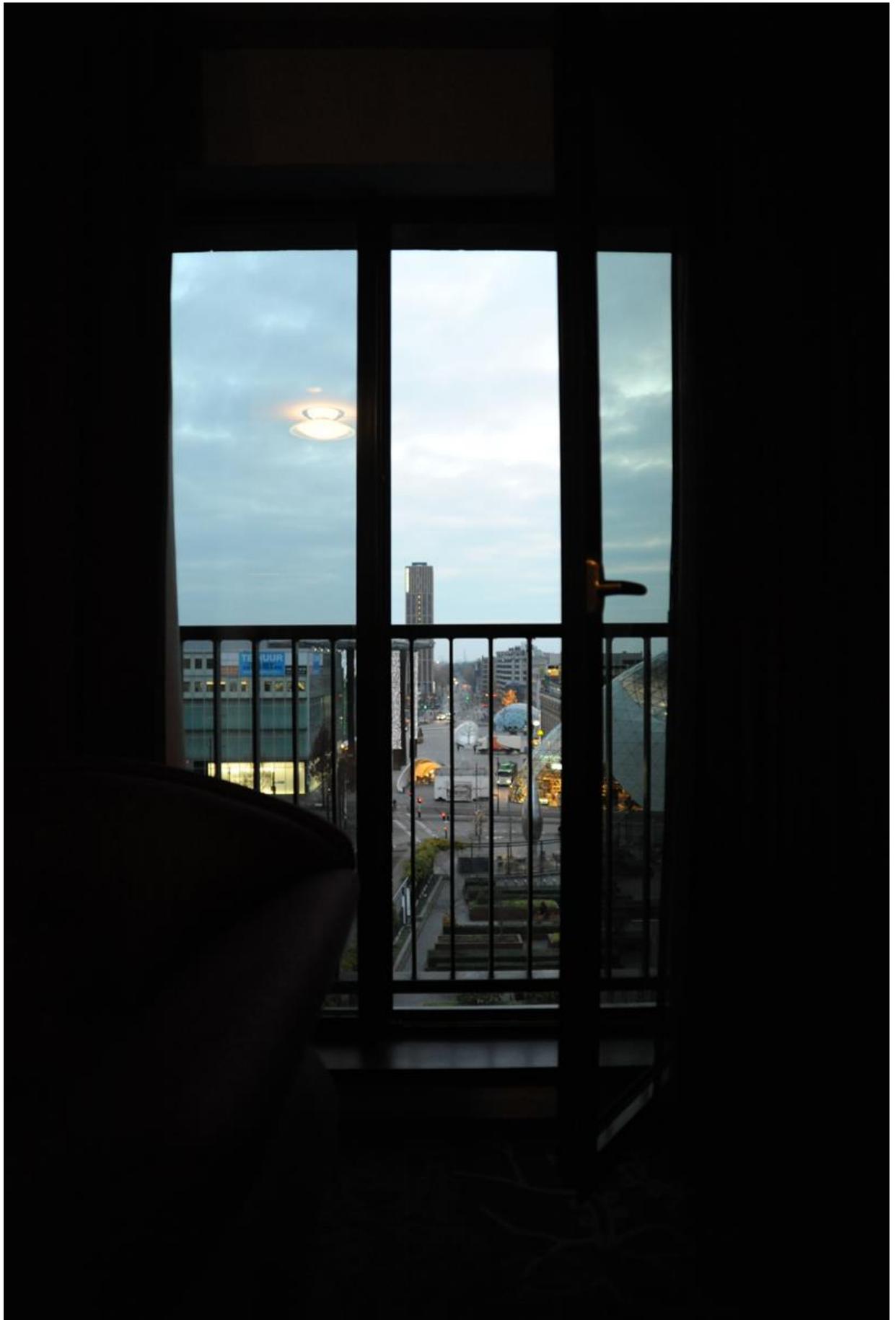




Finally we arrived at [Kazerne](#) for dinner. Beautiful [Alex De Witte](#) lights hung above the bar like balloons in perpetual motion. Plants and dark walls, fantastic [Dutch Invertuals](#) exhibition on display, and someone had parked a phat AMG C63 outside. I was in my element, then they cranked it up a notch with the most delicious dinner.

The tour of the city was so good I even got my guide book signed.

Later that night in the Lumen Bar I learnt the saying '*as dark as a dick*'. Apparently, it's a Dutch thing.



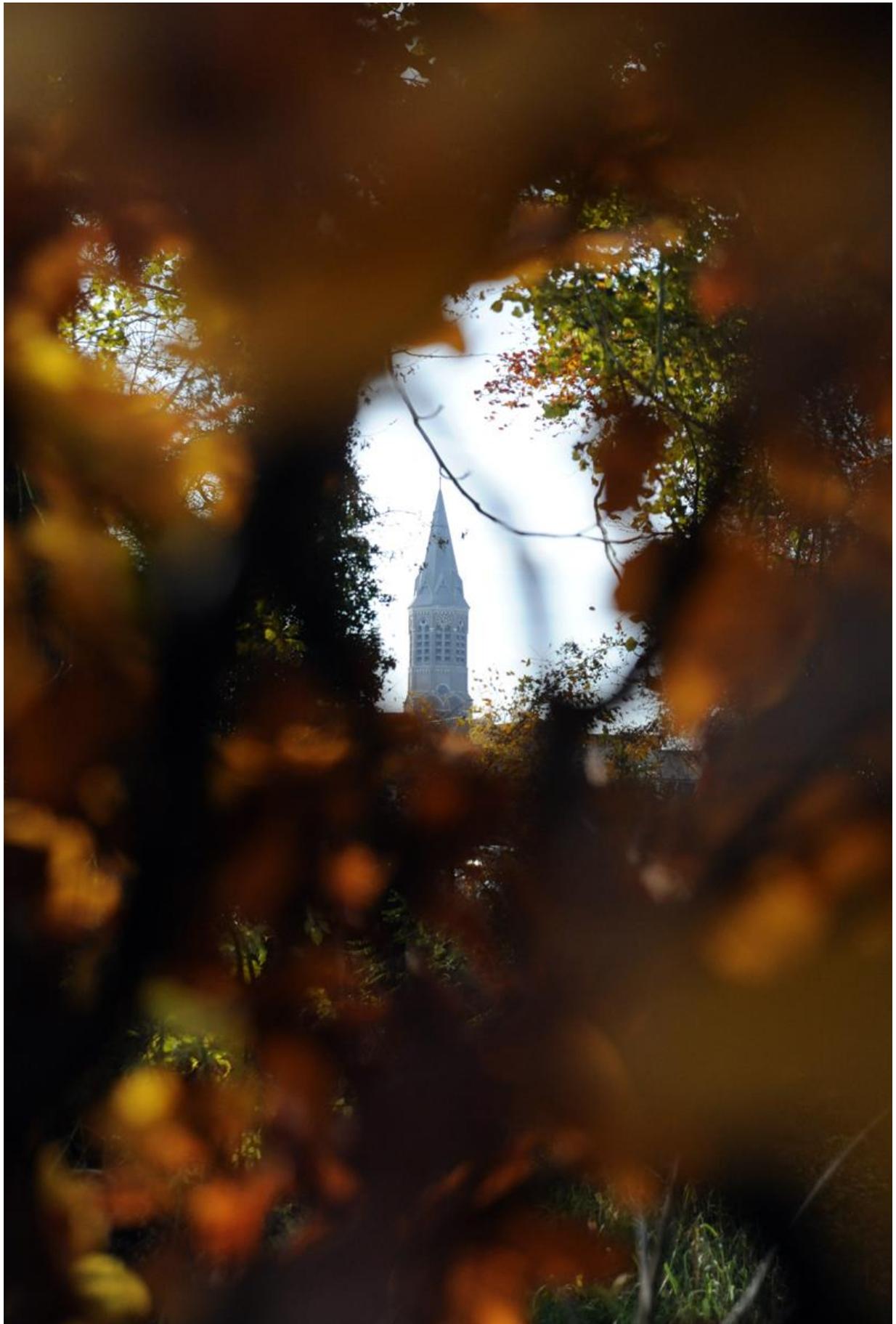




We stayed at the [Inntel hotel Art Eindhoven](#). In the morning I pulled open the curtains and looked up at the Light Tower. This fabulous industrial monument, now part of the hotel, was built between 1909 – 1921. Inside it hundreds of thousands of filament bulbs were tested – the tower was lit day and night. Sounds quite magical to me. I like lightbulbs.

In the hotel lobby there was an exhibition, not what I was expecting from such a modern space – cottages, cart horses, boobies and a portrait of Princess Diana.

After breakfast we headed straight to Nuenen, the countryside village where Vincent Van Gogh lived for two years and produced a quarter of all his works, including [*The Potato Eaters*](#). I like potatoes.

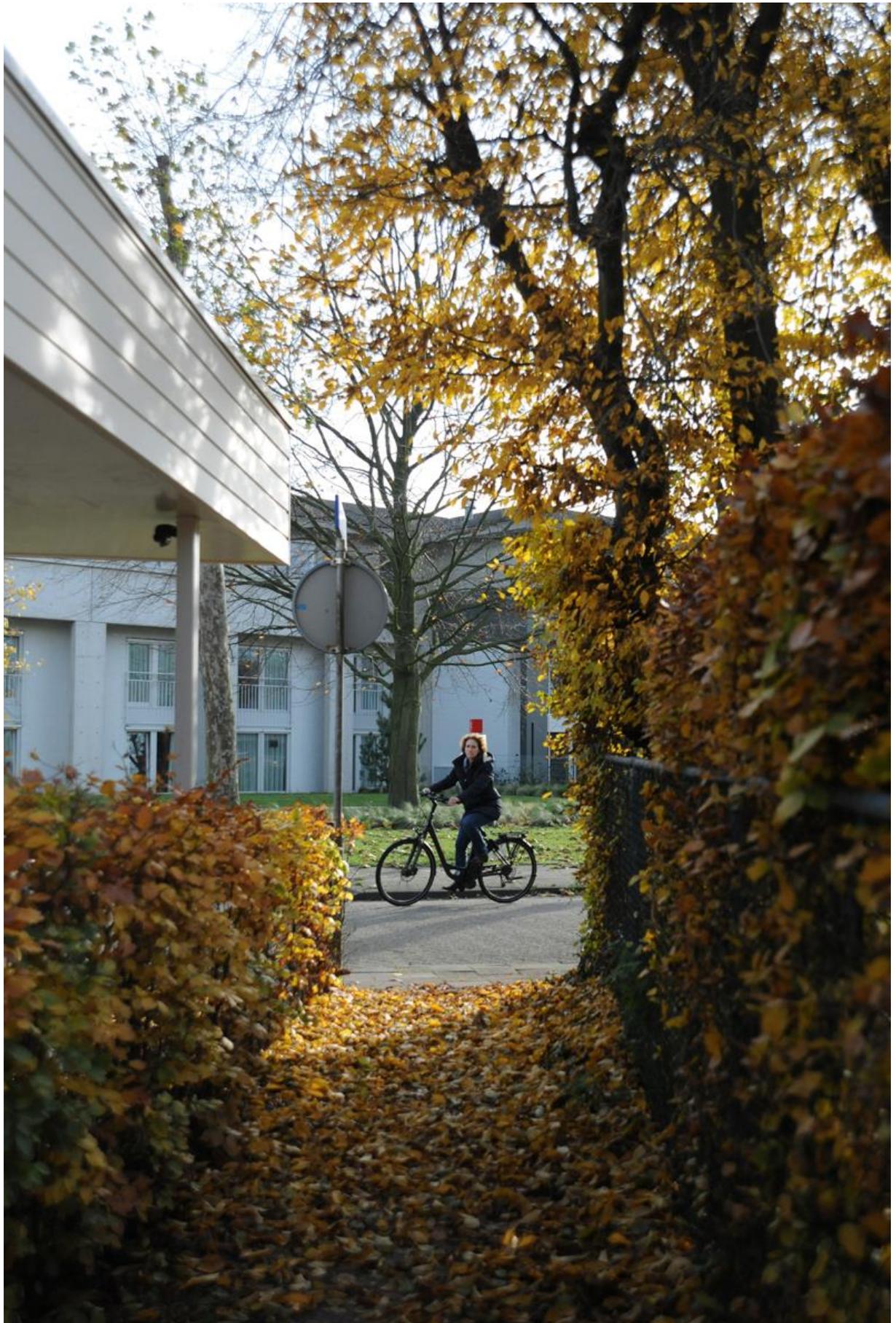






We visited the [Vincentre](#) and watched a short film about Van Gogh. Read from his diary, the words '*Winter is snow with black trimmings,*' stuck with me, a vision through his eyes. We walked around Neunen, treading in his footsteps. I picked up an oak leaf from the pavement outside Nune Ville Parsonage. For a year Van Gogh lived and worked in the washhouse, here at his parents' house. He must have seen that same tree, for a full year of seasons.

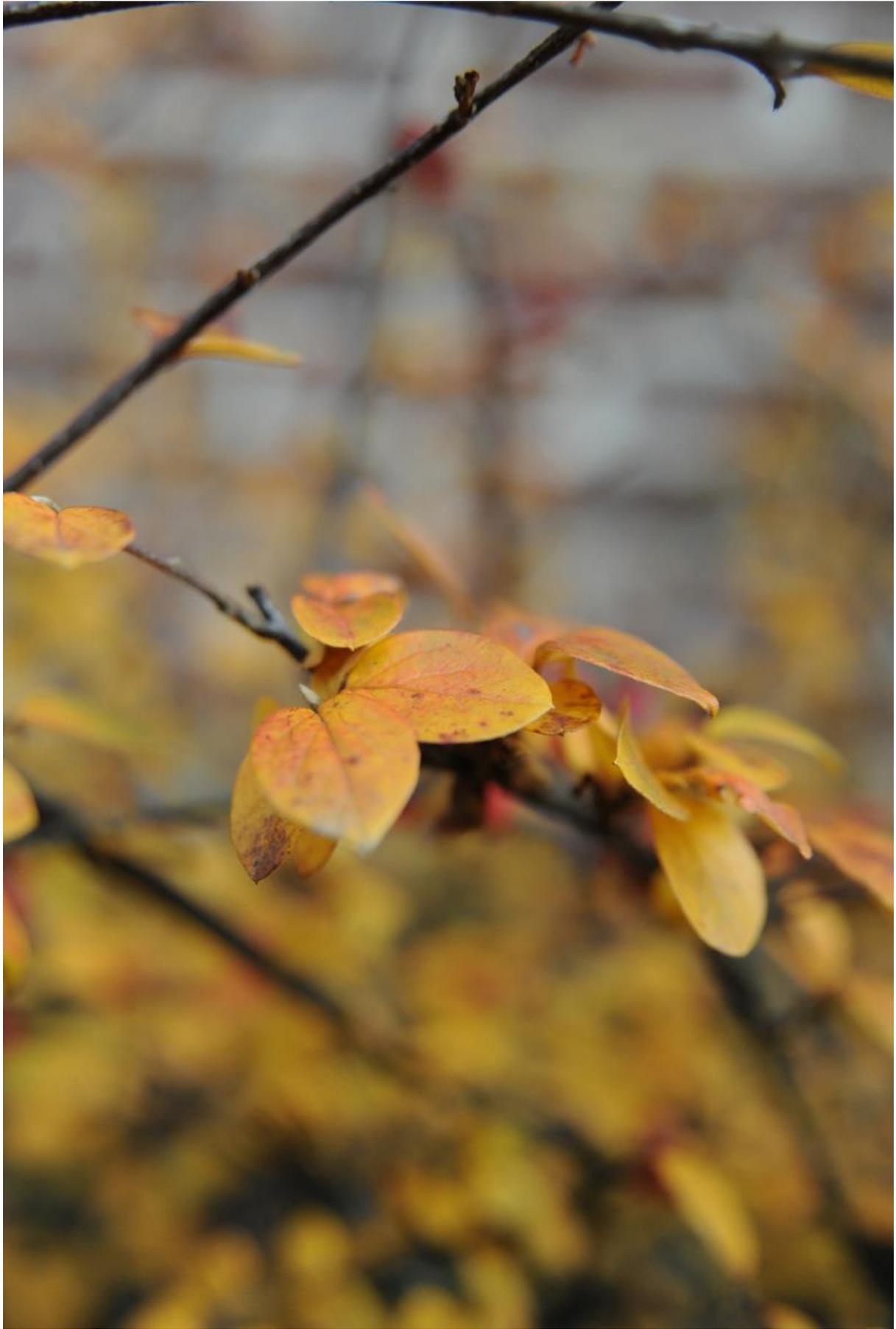
We took turns to stand on a step, to peer through a gap in a hedge, to look at the church from the same spot that Van Gogh painted it. I caught a glimpse of more modern buildings. '*Don't cross the road,*' said Nigel, our tour guide, as I crossed the road.









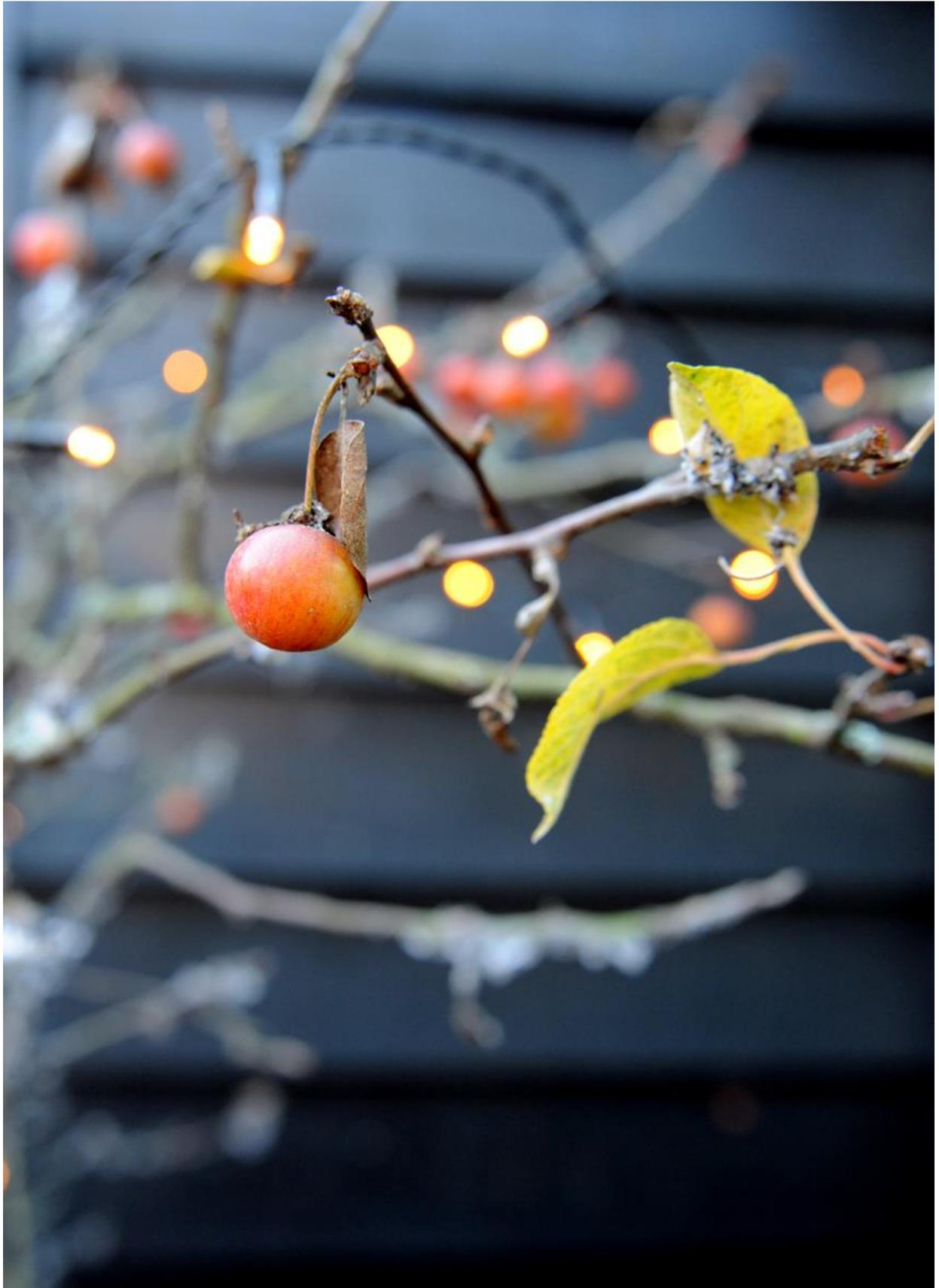


I was interested to see the things that weren't related to Van Gogh. For such a small town, with such prominent association, I wanted to see the things that weren't luring the tourists. Such modernist suburban delight. The lamp posts were beautiful, simple designs and good paint colours, in front of modern, pale toned houses with dormer roofs. Someone had a Vauxhall Cavalier.

We ate lunch at the [Opwetten Watermill](#), situated on the Kleine Dommel river. Van Gogh painted a lot here, I ate croquettes. We are both artists in our own right.





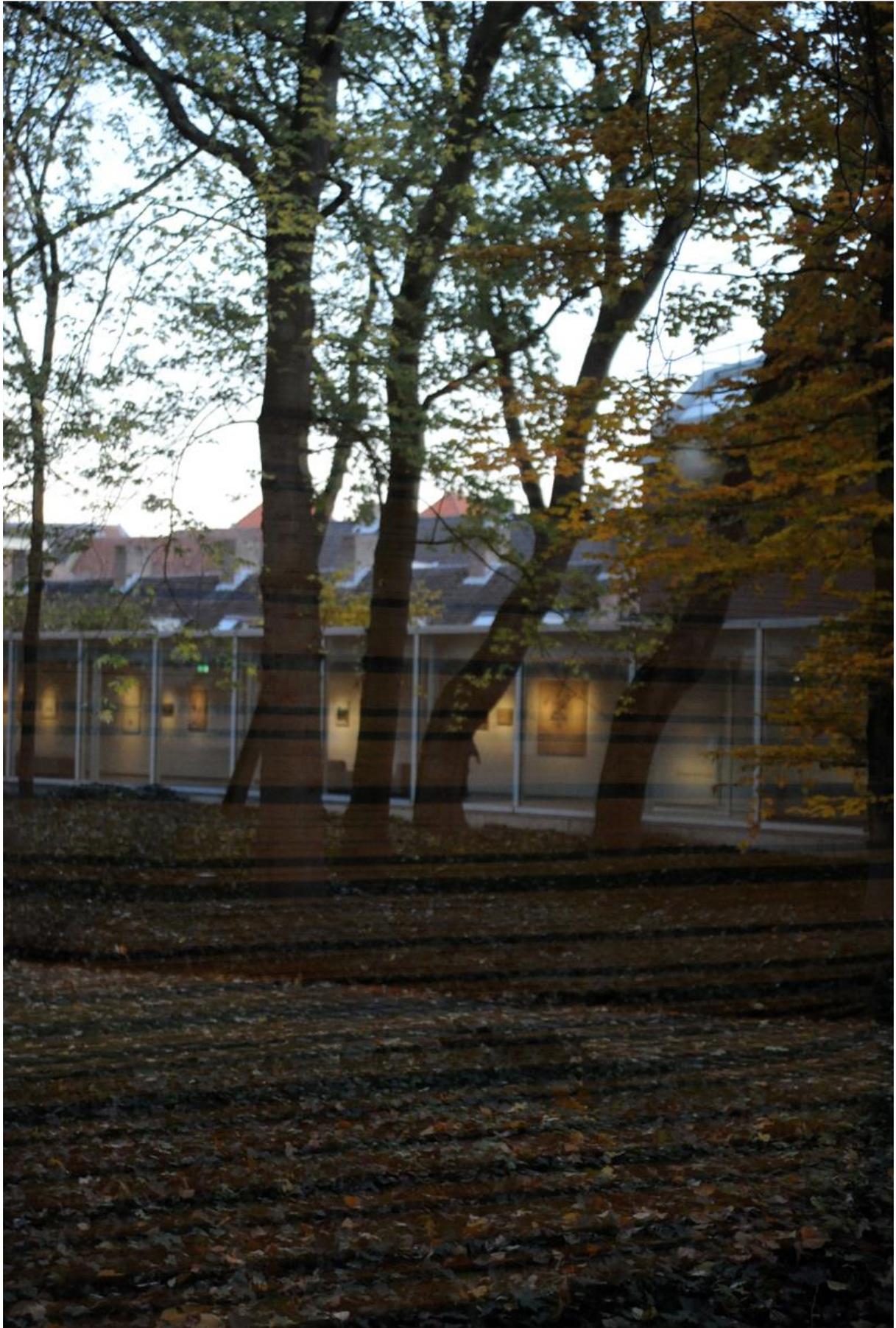


Continuing on to Den Bosch, at the [Het Noordbrabants Museum](#) we were each welcomed with an oversized Bossche Bol. A sweet treat worth travelling for. So good I'm sure they even chose the decor to complement its beauty.

We saw [Van Gogh paintings](#) – portraits of workers, in dark greens, blues, greys – he found beauty in everyday people. We saw the exhibition devoted to the film '[Loving Vincent](#)', a unique glimpse behind the scenes of the making of the painted animation, the first film of its kind in the world (65000 paintings, 12 canvases per second, 94 minutes long – *all* painted by hand!).

And then we saw, with mouths open and eyes bulging in awe, [Tim Walker's 'The Garden of Earthly Delights'](#). The exhibition space was vast, but the images perfectly scaled, dark in tone and larger than life. [Shona Heath's](#) magical props displayed with plenty of space to enjoy, but close enough to be able to inspect the details. Everything was perfect.





That evening we dined in Den Bosch's most famous street, [Korte Putstraat](#) – restaurant hopping from starter, to main course, to dessert (served in a lightbulb!). [LUX](#), [Zoetelief](#), then [Breton](#) – all different, all delicious, all complimentary to each other.

I slept so well that night. Dreams filled with magical puddings and ethereal figures. The thoughts of the candlelit breakfast to come. The desire to wake up early and photograph the carpets passed me by as I fell deep into slumber. Cool air, heavy duvet. Shout out to [Huize Bergen](#) for the comfiest bed, and for controllable room temperatures. Boo ya!



[DFDS](#) operates services from Dover to Dunkirk and Dover to Calais. All Dover-France ships feature a Premium Lounge, which can be booked for an additional £12 per person each way.

[Vane Skybar](#) Vestdijk 5, 5611 CA Eindhoven

[Kazerne](#) Paradijslaan 2-8, 5611 KN Eindhoven

[Intel hotel Art Eindhoven](#) Mathildelaan 1 (GPS), 5611 BJ Eindhoven

[Vincentre](#) Berg 29, 5671 CA Nuenen

[Opwetten Watermill](#) Opwettenseweg 203, 5674 AC Nuenen

[Het Noordbrabants Museum](#) Verwersstraat 41, 's-Hertogenbosch

[Korte Putstraat](#) Korte Putstraat, 5211 KP, 's-Hertogenbosch

[Huize Bergen](#) Glorieuxlaan 1, 5261 SG Vught

With the greatest thanks to the wonderful people of [Visit Holland](#) and [Visit Flanders](#) for inviting me to join them on such an excellent adventure.