

**Jean-Michel Othoniel**

**THE OORT CLOUD FOUNTAIN**

A permanent sculpture fountain for the city of Franeker

**Netherlands, 2017**

Jean-Michel Othoniel

## THE OORT CLOUD FOUNTAIN

A permanent sculpture fountain for the city of Franeker

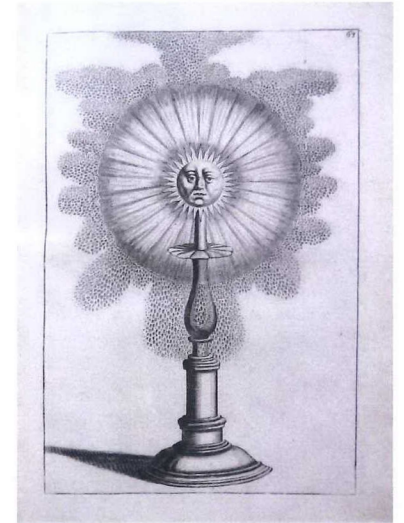
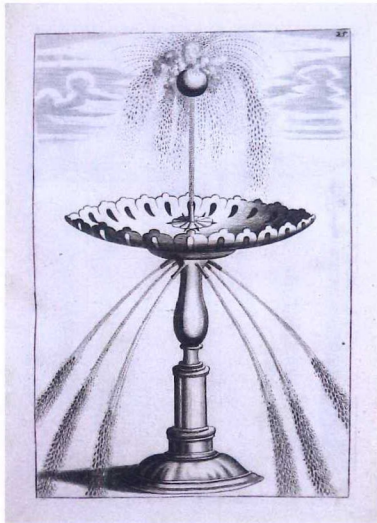
*The Oort Cloud Fountain* in Franeker is entirely inspired by the spirit of the city and its inhabitants. When I first discovered this region, I was deeply touched by the purity of the Friesland landscape, the vastness of the sky and the city's beautifully preserved state.

The town's stylistic coherence, its unique medieval style and its human scale invite visitors to stroll around the university, Tsjukelan stadium and the marketplace near the church. Franeker, a city of knowledge that has welcomed many prominent men, is also the birthplace of one of the twentieth century's most important astronomers.

My design for this fountain pays homage to the cloud described by Jan Hendrik Oort that bears his name. I wanted the fountain to exist on a scale that evokes wonderful fountains from the Middle Ages, fountains of youth and immortality that once adorned the central squares of towns and villages. Conceived as a series of waterfalls pouring down from a large basin, the fountain rushes down onto a large, vertical necklace of black beads, the colour of night. Two large beads stand out among them: one in silver, the colour of the moon, and the other gilded, the colour of the sun.

The Oort cloud is fashioned from a mesh of golden tubes that conduct water. Enveloping the sun, the mesh produces a gaseous rain shower of very fine droplets falling into the large, hammered-bottom basin. This highly delicate artwork will find its proper place at the heart of a small garden to be specially created at the foot of the Martini church. Surrounded by benches, it will become a meeting place, outside time, surrounded by unique flowers that recall the millefleur tapestries from the Middle Ages.

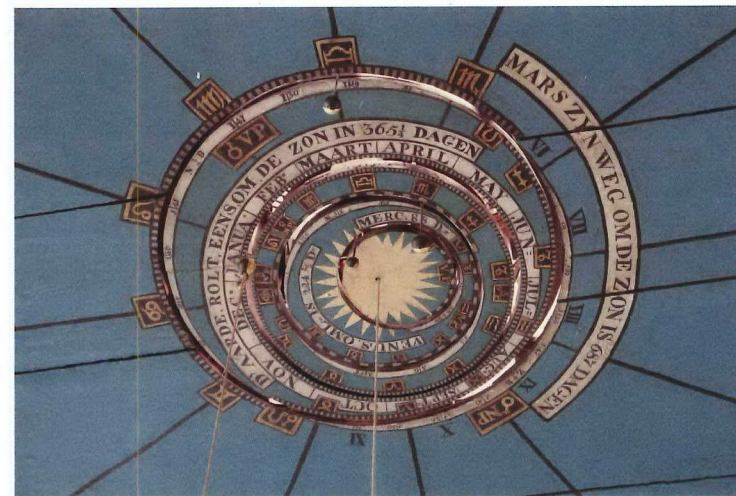
Jean-Michel Othoniel, *January 2017*







Detail of the orrery in The Royal Eise Eisinga Planetarium, Franeker.



Detail of the orrery in The Royal Eise Eisinga Planetarium, Franeker.



Commemorative plate at the house where Jan Hendrik Oort was born, Franeker.



*The Oort Cloud Fountain*, 2016. Watercolor on paper, 31 x 23 cm.

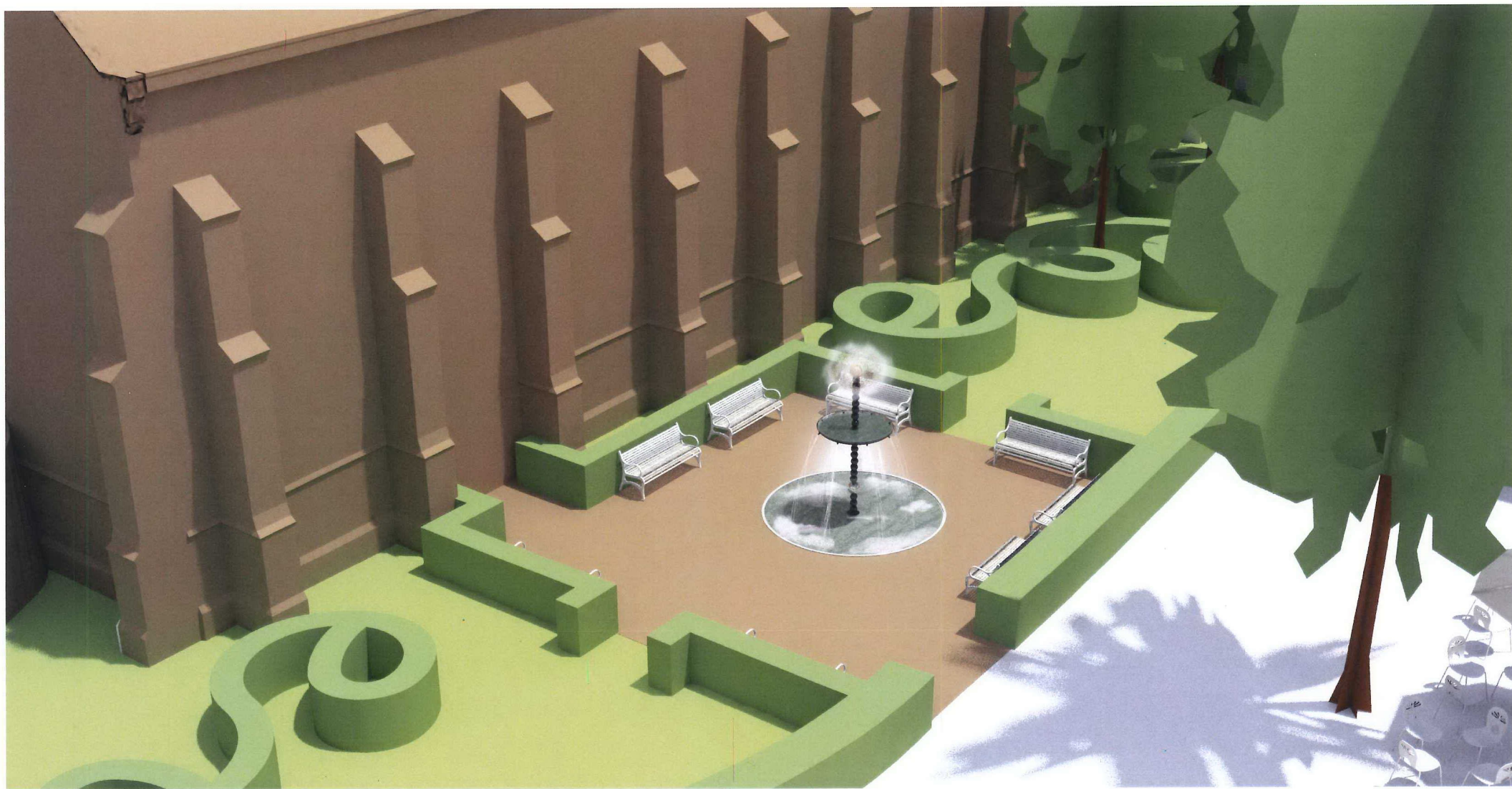




Two large beads stand out among the black beads symbolizing the night: one in silver, the colour of the moon, and the other gilded, the colour of the sun.

*The Oort Cloud Fountain*, 2017. Stainless steel beads, black, golden and silver coating, polished & hammered stainless steel. 355 x 150 x 150 cm.





The artwork will find its proper place at the heart of a small garden to be specially created at the foot of the Martini church.





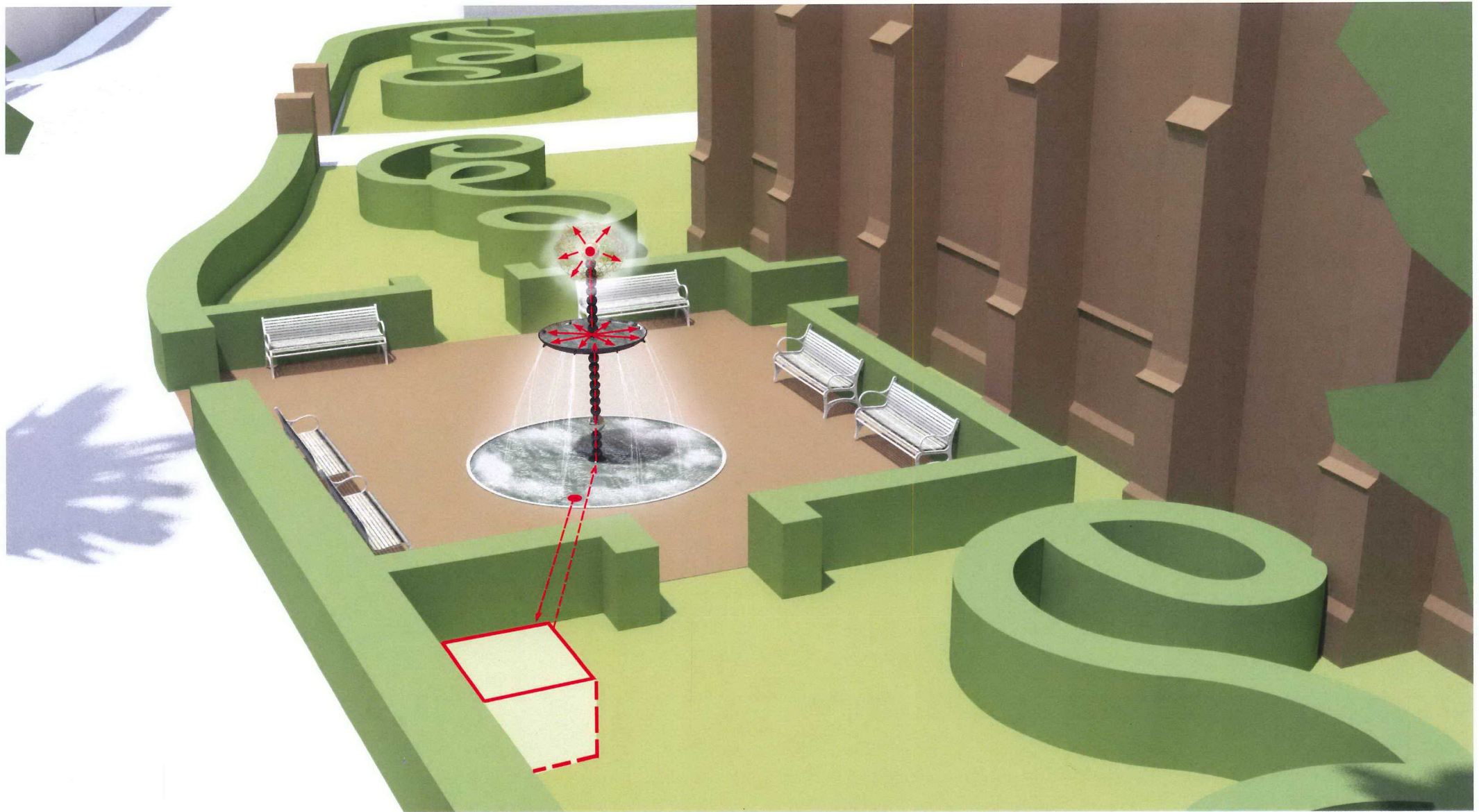
The Oort cloud is fashioned from a mesh of golden tubes that conduct water.  
Enveloping the sun, the mesh produces a gaseous rain shower of very fine droplets falling into the hammered-bottom basin.





8 water jets escape from the hammered-bottom basin and fall down into the large pond on the ground.





A small technical room has to be buried to host the pumps and filters of the fountain (1,5 x 1,5 x 1,5 m).

This room has to be near the sculpture fountain to easily connect the buried circulation pipes and allow the water supply of *The Oort Cloud Fountain*.





*The Oort Cloud Fountain*, 2017. Stainless steel beads, black, golden and silver coating, polished & hammered stainless steel. 355 x 150 x 150 cm.



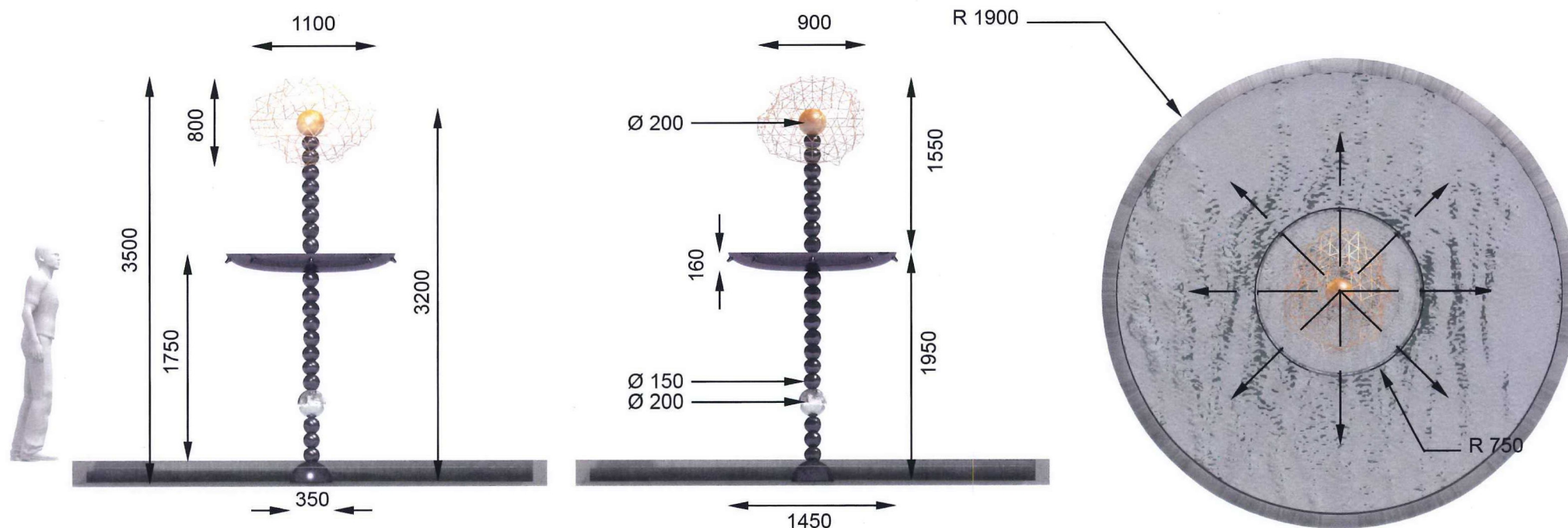


*The Oort Cloud Fountain*, 2017. Model of the sculpture fountain, 30 x 30 x 30 cm.



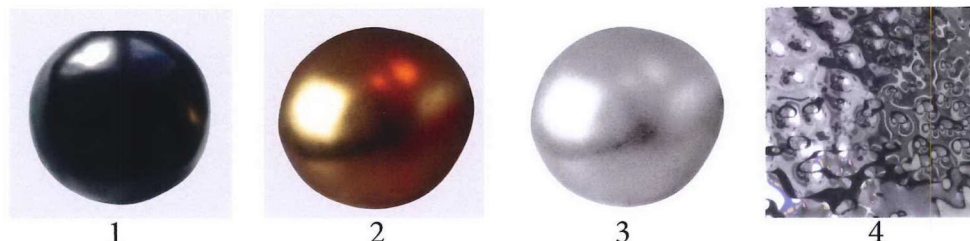
*The Oort Cloud Fountain*, 2017. Model of the sculpture fountain, detail of the mesh of golden tubes conducting water.





units of measure: mm

#### Material samples:



1 to 3 - Stainless steel beads, black, golden and silver coating.  
4 - Hammered and polished stainless steel for the bottom of the upper basin.

#### Othoniel Studio production schedule:

- 1 month studies
- 4 months of production (pre-assembling of the fountain included)

Unveiling: May 2018



## Map of Franeker



Tsjukelan stadium

The market place

The Oort Cloud Fountain,  
near the Martini Church



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