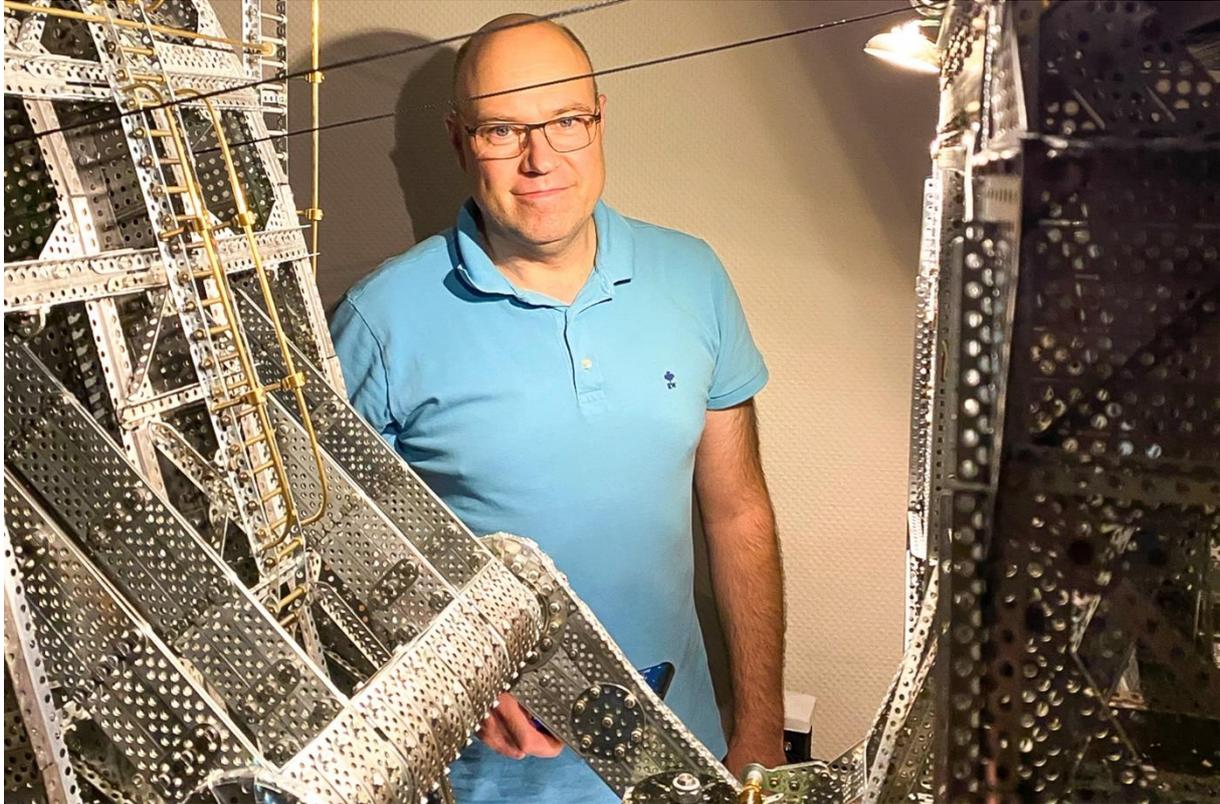


The following article by Dirk Allewelt (a former employee of the Dutch Shipyard Gusto in Schiedam) is published on the website of "Schiedam 24 Altijd nieuws" in Dutch

[https://schiedam24.nl/nl/nieuws/nieuws/039the-beast039-het-kleine-broertje-van/18703?fbclid=IwAR3ai\\_EoWjUbWNxkKHlecT1Yj0OY6Nd8vcxYJpiK0gVU7lQeQ7KoCW2zRcA](https://schiedam24.nl/nl/nieuws/nieuws/039the-beast039-het-kleine-broertje-van/18703?fbclid=IwAR3ai_EoWjUbWNxkKHlecT1Yj0OY6Nd8vcxYJpiK0gVU7lQeQ7KoCW2zRcA)

but translated by Google (so sorry in advance for the occasional misspellings).

Picture of builder Geert Vanhove



REPORTED - Dirk Allewelt reported on the voyage of the floating crane 716 from Manchester to Newcastle in the summer. As driving force behind the \*Erfgoed Werf Gusto foundation, he was pleased that the 'Gusto crane' was given a new future. Can you imagine Allewelt's surprise and joy when he learned that there turned out to be a little brother to the '716'. Manufactured by a Belgian Meccano builder...

"We have kept you informed of the journey of an old floating crane, which was built in 1937 by Werf Gusto for the Manchester Ship Canal. The crane was ordered by the English to operate in the many narrow English canals and ditto narrow locks covered with equally narrow bridges in the Manchester area, occasionally removing the lock gates weighing up to six hundred tons for maintenance. The crane did this until the late nineties, it was taken out of service in 2002. The crane with build number 716 was fortunately purchased by an English family business in 2011. This year they decided to tow the crane from its long-standing berth in the Runcorndocks (Manchester) to Newcastle upon Tyne, where the crane will most likely be converted into a museum and will, when ready, be opened to the general public.

This Newcastle crane has a smaller brother in Antwerp since this week, affectionately referred to as 'The Beast' by the owners. He got that name from the chairman of one of the four Meccano clubs in the city of London. When visiting the builder G.E. Vanhove he noticed the large contours of the crane

for the first time in 2017. He immediately knew that it would be a 'beast' of a construction. The crane was officially christened on 14-10-2021 at a German meeting of the 'Freundeskreis Metallbaukasten' in hotel Sonnenblick in the German town of Bebra near Kassel. 'The Beast' is a model, made by Geert G.E. Vanhove, born and raised in the province of Antwerp, currently living in Schoten, Belgium, a suburb of the city of Antwerp.

The crane is made on a scale of 1 to 12! The real crane has a length and a width of respectively: 44.8 meters and 13.40 meters. That means on a scale of 1 to 12: a length of 3.75 meters by a width of 1.20 meters. Vanhove has scaled the sizes somewhat smaller at a length of 3.30 meters and a width of 1.10 meters. That is considerable for a model, especially since the maximum height of the crane is at least two meters and when the crane is in its most forward position, the length of the model is even five meters.

Vanhove has opted for a very daring approach when building the model. The pontoon is made of birch plywood and the crane is built from parts of the old Trix. It is a name less well known than Meccano for many of us, less 'initiated' in the technique. Trix was known as a building material for people who wanted to build, but didn't have the money to buy Meccano, which was much more expensive. Trix was sold from 1920 to 1990. Meccano, which was first put up for sale in 1901, still exists to this day. For both it applies that it is 'Technique with a touch of nostalgia'. The special thing is that much less material from Trix was in circulation and that it has become much more difficult to obtain this material since the sale was discontinued in 1990. So so many Trix parts in one design, such as the Vanhove crane, is in itself a small miracle. Geert has been building for five years. Planning and designing started as early as 2016.

In March 2017 he contacted the \*Erfgoed Werf Gusto Foundation and asked for construction drawings. Unfortunately we don't have that in our possession. Through English contacts he came into possession of a floor plan the size of a carpet. He started construction on that basis. The article that we sent him from the monthly magazine 'De Ingenieur' from 1937 gave him more insight into the smaller details of the various parts and movements of the crane. When we visited him in early September 2021, he confided in us. The fact that Geert has a good and practiced eye for detail is apparent from the fact that during the viewing we saw parts that we had not seen at all before. An example of this is that we saw for the first time that the boom can turn left and right on the pontoon at a small angle.

The crane can be operated completely electrically. Various electrical modules have been built into the model for lifting, turning the boom and lighting. To make the whole thing even more lifelike, he has created in collaboration with his wife and other family members imitated a real floodgate. The lock gate hangs in the hoists and can thus show how it worked. Geert has built a model that is accurate to perfection. It is really a great achievement to make such a rigid model

\*Heritage preservation organisation