



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

## **MahaNakhon:**

Car park façade made of GKD metallic mesh provides a visual counterpart

**The German architect Ole Scheeren created Bangkok's new landmark in the form of the MahaNakhon. The 1030-foot-high, grid-like reflective façade is characterized by glass balconies and terraces arranged in a staggered manner. These lend the colossus the air of an unfinished, vertically winding tower made of building blocks. The MahaNakhon is complemented by a seven-story shopping mall and a fully automated parking garage. When selecting the cladding for this garage, the decision was taken to go with PC-Sambesi stainless steel mesh from GKD – Gebr. Kufferath AG (GKD). As a visual counterpart to the mirror finish of the skyscraper's grid-like façade, the metal mesh also impresses with its many functional features, including low-maintenance solar protection, reliable fall guard protection, protection from driving rain, as well as provision of natural lighting and ventilation.**

With its nine million inhabitants, Bangkok's special charm comes from its contrasting mix of the traditional and the modern. Over 400 temples interact with cubism-influenced prestige buildings such as the *Robot Building*, *Nation Tower* or *Elephant Building*. Buildings in the colonial style create a complex mix with the splendor of the Grand Palace and dull tin huts. The objective with the MahaNakhon was to create a focal point and at the same time a distinctive architectural landmark for the metropolis in its rather chaotic skyline. Alongside this emblematic function, the developers were also tasked



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with creating a new urban center, following the worldwide trend in moving away from soulless concrete tower blocks.

This is also reflected by the name *MahaNakhon*, which means *big city*. Luxury apartments, hotel rooms, businesses, restaurants, as well as a spectacular skybar perched at a height of almost 1000 feet fill the concept with life. With total floor area of 1.4 million square feet, Ole Scheeren created a three-part building complex, comprising the actual tower with 77 stories, the *Cube* shopping mall and a parking garage tower for almost 900 cars featuring automated parking. To adapt the parking garage to the luxury overall feel of the MahaNakhon's grid-like mirror-glass façade, it was given a grid-like skin made of 22,600 square feet of shimmering stainless steel mesh. A total of 464 framed panels, each measuring 9.5 feet high and up to 5.9 feet wide, soften the dominant appearance of the generously dimensioned garage. These panels use subtle reflection of the surrounding area to fit in with the shiny main tower. At the same time, they offer reliable fall guard protection for the vehicles on all stories. As effective solar protection in Bangkok's tropical climate, the textile skin prevents the parking garage tower and the cars it holds from heating up. The open mesh structure guarantees natural air ventilation and at the same time reduces the costs for electrical lighting by allowing natural daylight to enter the structure unhindered. It also protects the cars from driving rain during monsoons. With minimal maintenance requirements and almost complete recyclability at the end of its useful life, the GKD mesh supports the overall concept of the MahaNakhon complex, which was designed to achieve sustainability certification. The complex in the heart of Bangkok was opened in August 2016 following an eight-year planning and construction phase. As the country's tallest building, the MahaNakhon sets the standard for urban



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cohabitation far beyond the city limits of the metropolis and thereby stands for architecture that is truly forward-looking in all respects.



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As a privately owned technical weaver, GKD - Gebr. Kufferath AG is the world market leader in metal, synthetic and spiral mesh solutions. Four independent business divisions bundle their expertise under one roof: Industrial Mesh (woven metal mesh and filter solutions), Process Belts (belts made of mesh and spirals), Architectural meshes (façades, safety and interior design made of metal fabrics) and Mediamesh® (Transparent media façades). With its headquarter in Germany and five other facilities in the US, South Africa, China, India and Chile – as well as its branches in France, Spain, Dubai and worldwide representatives, GKD is close to markets anywhere in the world.

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