



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

Talented all-rounder in the field of airport architecture

Metallic mesh as a conveyor of design and function

As transport and passenger hubs, airports are like the business cards of cities and countries. Millions of people make their way through car parks, terminals and security gates at the world's airports on a daily basis. And with more and more people regularly using the buildings, the requirements in terms of architecture, safety, security and sustainability all increase. However, ensuring maximum functionality is not the only key focus here. Since the start of jet-powered air travel at the end of the 1950s, airports have seen rapid and pronounced change. They are no longer merely basic functional transit locations, but have instead developed into representative entertainment areas with luxury shopping facilities and event locations. This multifunctional arena requires both universal and high-performance building materials. The exceptional bandwidth of functional and aesthetic properties it offers makes metallic mesh from GKD – Gebr. Kufferath AG (GKD) an integral part of pioneering airport architecture.

In the mid 1990s, Helmut Jahn set the precedent on the international stage with the first ever GKD metallic mesh car park facade at Cologne/Bonn Airport. The multi-storey car park, which was the largest in Europe at the time, remains a shining example of how effectively the textile building material can be used in the field of traffic architecture to this day. Both flexible and robust, stainless steel mesh opens up virtually endless design interpretations for architects and planners. Whether used to provide reliable protection, as a semi-transparent facade, an illuminated highlight or a medialised eye-catcher – its aesthetic and functional versatility make



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metallic mesh one of the most multi-faceted building materials available today.

Sustainable safety and security standards

Countless multi-storey car parks have since been clad in metallic mesh from GKD. The draft-free ventilation and protection from driving rain that it offers creates a pleasant inside environment. Among other locations, the mesh has transformed multi-storey car parks at the Barcelona, London Heathrow and Brisbane airports into attractive eye-catchers. At the bus terminal of Van Nuys Flyaway Airport in Los Angeles, some 2,500 square metres of Lago mesh encapsulates the connected parking garage. Huge letters attached to the mesh are used to create the word “Flyaway”, which appears to get smaller from a dynamic perspective. The spatial effect of the lettering on the shiny stainless steel mesh makes travellers feel as though they have already started their journey when entering the car park. The aesthetics of the high-grade material go hand in hand with the modern desire for sustainability, coupled with the highest safety and security standards. Alongside its almost unlimited service life, the mesh is almost 100 per cent recyclable and also very low-maintenance. Facades made from GKD solar protection mesh today also provide significant and indispensable energy savings, as the special structure of the mesh type Licorne systematically reflects the sun's rays into the immediate surroundings and thereby reduces the need for air conditioning systems. At the same time, the high degree of daylight transmission reduces the need for additional lighting.

Shiny landmarks

The textile structure of the material creates fascinating framing of daylight and artificial lighting and provides even the largest buildings with a clear,



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structured silhouette. Facades employing GKD metallic mesh create a polished and distinctive appearance at the London Stansted, Paris Charles de Gaulle, La Réunion, Basel/Mulhouse and Madrid-Barajas airports. In London, La Réunion and Basel, the mesh provides the terminal buildings with solar protection and lends them a representative appearance. At Spain's largest airport, Madrid-Barajas, two control towers have been clad in Escale 7x1 stainless steel mesh. To upgrade the control towers both visually and functionally, the architect Richard Rogers chose 600 and 1,000 square metres of stainless steel mesh with 50 per cent open surface area. This material clads the corridors on every storey that surround the building and also offers reliable fall guard protection. The shining towers in Madrid are a new status symbol of the most important transport hub between Europe and Latin America.

Representative interior design

The sustained success enjoyed by GKD metallic mesh in the field of airport architecture can be attributed to the continual further development of the material for multifunctional applications in the field of transit. The severe stresses and strains encountered in busy airports and the strictest fire protection regulations make stainless steel mesh the material of choice here. As they are comparatively resistant to scratching, pressure and jolts – for example by luggage trolleys or heavy items of luggage – railings made of GKD mesh provide reliable fall guard protection in stairways, balustrades or security gates. The rugged material also plays to its strengths in wall and pillar claddings. When used as an elegant ceiling lining, stainless steel mesh not only provides reliable fire and noise protection, but also creates a genuine visual highlight. Depending on the lighting employed, the non-combustible material can appear completely opaque, thereby hiding technical installations from public view. A mesh with up to 70 per cent open



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

area can also be selected, which then allows sprinkler systems to be fitted. Ceiling constructions employing GKD metallic mesh are already making their mark in Dusseldorf, Zurich, Singapore, Athens and Frankfurt. Indeed, the Hilton Frankfurt Airport Hotel truly shines with a swooping ceiling construction that uses 300 square metres of Mandarin mesh. The architects from JOI-Design used this finely woven bronze mesh to create two gold wings that hover like ceilings above the reception area and underline the character of mobility.

The mesh also adds design highlights to internal areas in the form of glossy wall cladding or stylish room partitions. Airports including Paris Charles de Gaulle, Athens, Madrid-Barajas and Zurich all use the textile building material to give their terminals a high-quality look and feel. In Dubai, the facade of the Dubai International Airport Hotel inside the terminal is clad with around 400 square metres of Sambesi mesh. This semi-transparent cladding guarantees visual separation of the hotel area from the lively goings-on in Terminal 2 and 3. In Johannesburg, Africa's largest airport, the South African Airways (SAA) Lounge was completely redesigned in 2010 and is now divided into smaller, quieter areas by room partitions made of Lamelle mesh. As strolling through the Duty Free and restaurant areas at airports becomes more and more of an experience, shop designers, too, are increasingly turning to attractive applications – also when it comes to security. Shimmering roller shutters made of metallic mesh allow unimpaired views into shops even after closing time, while also providing effective protection from vandalism and theft thanks to their tough design. Areas reserved for airport personnel that are not open to the public are also reliably secured using metallic mesh gates. Roller shutters made of metallic mesh from GKD can be either electrically or manually operated and convert necessary barriers into means of architectural and stylistic expression. The



transparent **Media**mesh facades represent the latest application of metallic mesh in the field of airport architecture. As a dynamic communication platform, the patented system combines the advantages of a high-performance LED display with all the other benefits associated with the wire mesh, such as visual transparency and flexibility. Media facades allow airport terminals and waiting areas to be transformed into information and advertising platforms.

Symbolic prestige objects

The vision of airports as cities that never sleep is one of the most burning architectural debates of our time. However, one thing is certain: as gateways to the world, airports already represent symbolic prestige objects. They are the first thing that both tourists and business travellers see upon their arrival to a country. It is therefore vital to make a good first impression here. From car parks, through terminals, all the way up to the view when taking off, planners and operators of airports are keen to tap the greatest possible representative potential from their architecture. The individual design options offered by CREATIVE WEAVE stainless steel mesh are already making a successful contribution to this at airports across the globe.

8,767 characters incl. spaces

GKD – WORLD WIDE WEAVE

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



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

(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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Picture 1: Helmut Jahn set the precedent on the international stage with the first ever GKD metallic mesh car park facade at Cologne/Bonn Airport.



Picture 2: Car park facade from Lago mesh at the bus terminal of Van Nuys Flyaway Airport in Los Angeles.



Picture 3: Huge letters attached to the mesh are used to create the word "Flyaway", which appears to get smaller from a dynamic perspective.



Picture 4: At Spain's largest airport, Madrid-Barajas, two control towers have been clad in Escale 7x1 stainless steel mesh.

Picture 1, 4, 6 © GKD

Picture 2-3 © GKD/ Tim Griffith

Picture 5 © GKD/ JOI-Design

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Picture 5: The Hilton Frankfurt Airport Hotel truly shines with a swooping ceiling construction of Mandarin mesh.



Picture 6: The facade of the Dubai International Airport Hotel inside the terminal is clad with Sambesi mesh.

Picture 1, 4, 6 © GKD

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