



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

Between reality and fantasy

Bronze-coloured solar protection mesh unites two worlds

In the heart of St Kilda, a suburb of the southern Australian city of Melbourne, one can find one of the region's most imposing buildings in the form of the mysterious and appealing Luna Apartments. For the facade of its extravagantly formed shell, the architects chose bronze-coloured anodised solar protection mesh from the technical weaving company GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG (GKD) from Düren, Germany. The world market leader in the field of architectural and design mesh designed a sophisticated sun protection system that lends the building its functional convenience combined with an unmistakeable appearance.

With 4.1 million inhabitants, Melbourne is Australia's second-largest city – and is known as the city that never sleeps. The 140 different cultures living there make it a centre of cultural exchange. And in architectural terms, too, it embodies this diverse mix, with highly modern design meeting listed buildings. Nowhere is this contrast starker than in the port suburb of St Kilda. This fashionable suburb is known as Melbourne's most flamboyant region. However, St Kilda is full of contrasts: not only does it attract people with the widest range of cultures and interests, it is also a popular tourist destination. Endless sandy beaches, beautiful promenades, Luna Park with the world's oldest roller coaster, cafés, bars and restaurants make it an ideal place to relax and unwind.

Warm bronze colour, austere coolness

The architects Elenberg Fraser have made a name for themselves in the Australian architectural scene. Inspired by the natural environment, they aim to develop projects that perfectly suit their respective requirements, are open to interpretation and stimulate all the senses. This is why the work of the architectural duo does not comply with rules, symmetries or conventions; instead they focus on environmentally friendly design that recreates nature. Once again, the architects have set new standards with the most flamboyant object in St Kilda, the Luna Apartments. The five-story apartment block with restaurants, shops and 72 one and two-room apartments reflects the positive mood in the city – a touch of glamour, a certain holiday flair and lots of charisma. With around 7,000 square metres of floor space, the building is marked out by its extravagant design. Like a bronze arrow, the complex blends in perfectly with its surroundings. The building is lent its sense of almost floating lightness by the rounded point supported by just one pillar on the ground floor. A key characteristic of the Luna Apartments is the bronze skin wrapped around the building like a veil. Privacy and solar protection elements made of bronze-coloured anodised aluminium mesh underline the puristic impression given by the clear lines and have an almost magical effect through their interaction with light. The glass behind the mesh also shimmers in bronze.

Between reality and fantasy

For this extraordinary design, the architects were inspired by the world famous Star Wars films. They designed this futuristic building as a homage to Princess Leia. Through the interplay between fully covered curved sections and parts of the building that reveal an appealing and very feminine metallic bronze bikini look, the apartment block reflects the apartment block reflects Leia's unearthly appearance in both form and colour. This versatility



also reveals itself in the building shell: partially covered, partially open to the outside – however the residents please. This variability of intimacy and openness is made possible by moveable privacy and solar protection elements as well as special lighting technology. If the resident uses the lighting inside the room, the apartment is visible from outside. If, however, they use the exterior lighting, which illuminates the room just as brightly through the fully glazed, reflective front, passers-by see nothing more than a shining bronze facade while the resident, protected from prying eyes, can observe the street below.

Solar protection shell unites fantasy with reality

This effect is supported by the glossy sun protection facade made of ALU 6010 bronze-coloured aluminium mesh from GKD. The panels were anodised in an immersion process. 289 solar protection elements with different widths – some fixed, some manually foldable – give the building its striking appearance. In total, around 600 square metres of mesh seamlessly encase the building, providing a pleasant environment for residents and visitors and ensuring energy efficiency through selective and targeted shading while at the same time offering a high level of transparency. With an average of around nine hours of sunshine per day in January, the rooms would heat up very quickly in the southern Australian summer. However, the semi-transparent metallic mesh skin provides reliable protection from direct sunlight while allowing daylight to stream unhindered into the building. As such, costs for the energy consumption of air conditioning units and additional lighting are drastically reduced. The edges of all mesh panels were folded around the frame, thus creating a seamless, bronze veil that unites fantasy and reality.



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GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG

The owner-run technical weaver GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG is the global market leader for metal and plastic woven solutions. Under the umbrella of GKD – WORLD WIDE WEAVE the company combines four independent business units: SOLID WEAVE (industrial meshes), WEAVE IN MOTION (process belt meshes), CREATIVE WEAVE (architectural meshes) and COMPACT FILTRATION (compact filter systems). With its seven plants – including the headquarters in Germany and other facilities in the US, Great Britain, South Africa, China, India and Chile – as well as its branches in France, Spain, Dubai, Qatar and worldwide representatives, GKD is never far from its customers.

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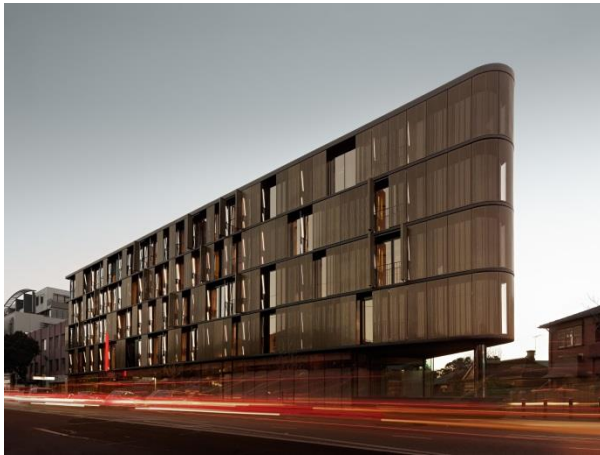
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Picture 1: The solar protection mesh from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG lends the Luna Apartments in Melbourne its functional convenience combined with an unmistakable appearance.



Picture 2: Due to its extraordinary design, the five-story apartment block has an almost magical effect through the interaction with light.



Picture 3: Glossy sun protection facade made of ALU 6010 bronze-coloured aluminium mesh from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG.



Picture 4: The variability of intimacy and openness is made possible by moveable privacy and solar protection elements from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG.

Picture 1-4 © Elenberg Fraser / Peter Clarke Photography

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