



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

Corporate design which speaks for itself

A prominent symbol of GKD's presence on the US market

The new works complex of GKD - Gebr. Kufferath AG on the east coast of Maryland is visible from afar as a huge, eye-catchingly beautiful symbol which speaks for itself. This is French star architect Dominique Perrault's first project in the USA, and represents for him, as for GKD, the opportunity to place an impressive calling card on that continent.

The building is a self-explanatory exponent of corporate design, an optical symbol which remains open while inviting interpretation. A 50-meter-long façade of stainless steel wire mesh enshrouds the building and transforms it into a shimmering illustration of the technical and aesthetic qualities of the materials produced within it. Intentionally, no external lettering or images distracts from the visual impact of the material itself. The material is left to speak for itself in the context of its natural surroundings. On a different level of interpretation, from the point of view of the two directors, Stephan and Ingo Kufferath, GKD's new production and administration complex in the USA is a highly conspicuous symbol of the company's growing presence on the American market, which they see as the "greatest and most competitive market in the world".

Fascinating versatility of the material:

Dominique Perrault has been working with stainless steel wire mesh for quite a while

For years now, the company's US subsidiary has been enjoying a constant growth in success in North America and has long outgrown the capacity of leased premises. More than enough reason to opt for a new, representative works complex which can accommodate about 80 employees on a



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production area of 7,000 square meters. GKD entered the world market for woven metal architectural and design fabric at the beginning of the '90s along with Dominique Perrault and his spectacular use of the stainless steel wire mesh in the Bibliothèque National in Paris. In the meantime, the original partnership has matured into friendship. Perrault's inspired handling of the material and the vast experience he has accumulated with GKD in experiments in a wide range of architectural applications made him the prime candidate for the realisation of this project.

Perrault has already demonstrated his enthusiasm for the mechanically robust, textile-like and highly reflective material structure in the form of numerous renowned large-scale projects like the highly acclaimed French National Library or the Cycling Arena and Indoor Swimming Pool in Berlin. He is frequently cited for his conscious and differentiated choice of materials with technical, optical, tactile and psychological qualities. His buildings are described with such phrases as "unpretentious simplicity", "transparency", "the joy of ambiguity" and "monumental dimensions". Perrault - also gave the GKD building his own special brand of rural-art style by blending the building into its natural surroundings through an alternating "presence" and "absence" due to the reflectivity and transparency of its external mantle.

Visual recommendation of product quality

In contrast to administrative buildings, production works and industrial parks are seldom the subject of extraordinary architectural design. But things are different here. High-tech weaving technologies and technological innovative power, according to the Kufferath brothers, are key factors in



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their corporate success. The architectural concept of their building communicates this technological potential at first sight.

With this unambiguous statement about the production and distribution of innovative woven metal meshes, not only in the field of architecture but also in the domains of GKD's two other major business units - Filtration and Separation, and Process Belts – the building stands out self-confidently from the surrounding landscape, entering into an interplay with its environment and its visitors. Moveable sunscreen panels made of stainless steel mesh even conceal windows openings so that, depending on the way the light falls on it, the building appears to be either a seamlessly closed, solid block or a structure enshrouded in a transparent mantle. "No matter how you see it, it should make you want to be creative with the material, to experiment with it and see it in endlessly new variations", explains Stephan Kufferath.

Inside, too, the building is a veritable showroom for the company's products. Huge suspended ceilings made of stainless steel mesh and Tatami carpeting create a structured context for business. A gallery allows visitors to inspect more closely the details and variations of the material structures they saw from outside. It looks "so amazing, so radically different" that nobody should be able to just pass it by, according to the project architect, Jamie Snead. With these references to the mixture of beauty and practicability, of form and function, of technology and workmanship, the corporate design becomes a holistic visual recommendation of the company and its products.

Apart from GKD's works building in Maryland, other projects with façades made of stainless steel mesh are also attracting attention in the USA. One



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of them is a carpark façade at Princeton University by Enrique Norten, TEN Architectos, Mexico City. "There is a wide range of other areas in which we can further develop the aesthetic and functional applications of our products," says Stephan Kufferath, "and thus consolidate and expand our leading position in the USA as in Europe".

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 (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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1 Sunscreen wall made of Escale 7 x 1 cm in front of the glass façade



2 Façade with movable sunscreen elements made of Omega 1520



3 Façade with movable sunscreen elements made of Omega 1520



4 Conference room with ceiling elements made of mesh type Lago



5



6

5 + 6 Reception desk made of the mesh type Lamelle and floor elements of the type Tatami



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Pictures 1-6 © GKD

We will be happy to send you the desired images in printable resolution by e-mail.

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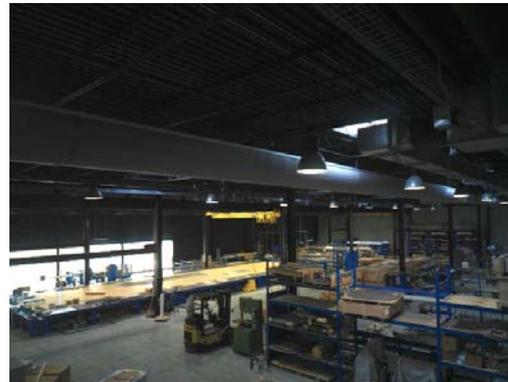
7 Floor covering made of the mesh type Tatami



8 Reception with view onto the screen wall



9 Production works (right) clad with the mesh type Capella



10 View into the workshop



11 Two floor administrative building with the prominent glass façade combined with corrugated stainless steel



14 Sunscreen wall by night



15 Sunscreen wall by night



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Pictures 7-15 © GKD

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