



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

Woven eye-catcher

Metal fabric lends historic theatre in Singapore golden shimmer

With the objective of developing the city into a global centre of art and culture, Singapore is investing in its historical city centre with extensive renovation and modernisation work. As the most important part of this initiative, the historic Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall (VTCH) in the so-called Civic District underwent a four-year modernisation process under the leadership of W Architects in cooperation with Arup Ltd., London. Securing the latest technical standards and subtly combining old and new were the key requirements of the renovation process for the *grand dame* of the performing arts. Metal fabric from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG (GKD) in Düren allows contemporary functionality to be combined with high-grade architecture in large-scale applications here.

The Memorial Hall was erected in 1905 to honour Queen Victoria in the direct neighbourhood of the City Hall, itself built on the banks of the Singapore River in 1862. Four years later, in 1909, culture made its appearance and ultimately led to today's building complex becoming a cultural centre. The City Hall was transformed into a theatre and thereby paved the way for the early days of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, which found its new home in the former Memorial Hall at the end of the 1970s. Alongside the Symphony Orchestra, today's 13,800 square metre cultural centre is also used by numerous other groups and ranks among the city's most important theatres and concert halls.



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Sensitively combined

To honour and respect the building's historical significance, the Victorian façade was to remain fully intact during the four-year renovation period. Inside the building, however, numerous changes were needed to adapt both the theatre and concert hall to modern requirements and tastes. Two of the key objectives here were to ensure more flexible usability and upgrade the technical equipment to modern standards. To improve acoustics and stage visibility, the number of seats in the theatre was also reduced from 900 to just 614. As they were keen to retain the old charm of the cultural landmark, those in charge at W Architects and Arup placed great emphasis on integrating elements of the old theatre into the new facility's modern interior design. For example, the wooden backrests of the old theatre seats were reworked and creatively re-used as wall and ceiling cladding. Thanks to their square shape and symmetrical arrangement, the backrests, some of which still bear visible seating numbers, transform the office area on the first floor into a huge, seemingly floating Rubik's Cube when viewed from the foyer.

Golden swing

Warm shades of gold and red seating upholstery lend the theatre's interior a luxurious flair. The cladding of the technical infrastructure along the ceiling of the theatre also makes a key contribution in this regard. Here, the architects selected a three-dimensional construction created from 350 square metres of GKD's "Omega 1520" stainless steel fabric. Individually woven panels of varying length form three flowing waves from the back of the theatre toward the stage. The textile look and feel of the woven material allows all the technical equipment fitted near the ceiling to be concealed behind these large rolling waves of shimmering texture without affecting the acoustics in the room. Panels of up to 19 metres in length and 1.30 metres



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in width are arranged and attached in parallel using the Fusiomesh fitting technique developed by GKD. The coated weft wire lends the woven panels their warm golden shimmer and thereby transforms the ceiling construction into a truly eye-catching design feature.

Reliable all-rounder

When cladding the parapets, the architects also relied on the visual and functional benefits of the metal fabric from Germany both in the theatre and concert hall. A total of 48 panels of Omega 1520 provide reliable fall guard protection from the balcony, while also acting as a room-dividing element between the ground level seating areas. The weft wire, which is coated in Venezia Gold, provides a visual link to the colour of the ceiling cladding. The stainless steel fabric was also used to perform the same function in the concert hall, although without the golden colouring. Instead, the stainless steel is left in its natural state here, underlining the overall cooler ambience of this venue that is dominated by white. A total of 150 square metres of Omega 1520 metal fabric, comprising panels of approximately 1 metre in length and 1.50 metres in width, provide reliable fall protection for those guests sitting on the balcony without compromising their view of the stage. According to the architects' wishes a frame-style clamping mechanism was used to attach the individual panels in a virtually invisible fashion.

The woven texture used to encase the free-standing spiral staircase in the foyer of the Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall is a real eye-catcher that once again underlines the multifunctional versatility of this material. Some 170 square metres of "Baltic" metal fabric wrap around the spiral staircase to create an attractive fall guard protection up to the first floor. Just like the ceiling panels in the theatre, the metal fabric used to encapsulate the staircase was also attached using the Fusiomesh technique. In addition,



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11.50 metre long and 0.66 metre wide cylindrical metal fabric panels are joined together to create a seamless visual extension of the spiral staircase from the first floor to two further upper floors.

GKD metal fabrics are therefore a prominent feature that plays a key part in shaping the redesigned interior of the historic cultural landmark in three different fields of application, while also lending the Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall its dazzling new appearance.

5.851 characters with spaces

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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Picture 1: The GKD "Baltic" metal fabric wraps around the spiral staircase to create an attractive fall guard protection up to the first floor.



Picture 2: The textile look and feel of the woven material allows all the technical equipment fitted near the ceiling to be concealed behind these large rolling waves of shimmering texture.



Picture 3: The three-dimensional construction created from 350 square metres of GKD's "Omega 1520" stainless steel fabric is lending the interior its dazzling new appearance.



Picture 4: The panels were attached using the Fusiomesh technique by GKD.



Picture 5: The weft wire lends the woven panels their warm golden shimmer.

Picture 1-5 © GKD / Beton Brut

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

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