



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

## **Metal mesh: multifunctional solar protection**

**To update the ageing infrastructure between the *Twin Cities* of Saint Paul and Minneapolis and bring it into line with current requirements, the State of Minnesota decided to launch the largest urban transit project in its history. The architects at AECOM selected Omega 1510 and Omega 1550 metal mesh from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG to offer protection from the sun at the West Bank Station transport hub of the new Central Corridor Light Rail Transit System (CCLRT). Through etching and the addition of stainless steel birds, the shimmering façade was transformed into an expressive work of art that reflects the eventful immigration history of the region.**

Thanks to rapid population growth, the transport infrastructure of the region known as the melting pot of nations had already begun to reach its limits in the 1970s. The new rapid transit concept, which connects the centers of the *Twin Cities* with one another, has helped ease the volume of road traffic. One aspect of this project is the particularly well-frequented West Bank Station. The architects at AECOM designed a solar protection façade from GKD metal mesh as a platform for public art. Nancy Blum, a very popular artist, critic and art lecturer in the US, then added an additional dimension to the metal mesh solar protection façade by eternalising the eventful history of the multicultural region in an artwork. An etching process was used to give the metal mesh panels an ethnic pattern that is reminiscent of the three regions where the immigrants originated from – Scandinavia, Asia and East Africa. GKD implemented this idea by using blasting media on the mesh to create the precise patterns produced by the artist. The durable patterns created using this method were instantly resistant to UV and severe weather conditions without the need for any special treatment. The interplay of the

patterns with silhouettes of migratory birds typical of the area reflects the dynamic interactions of this region that is steeped in tradition. The mesh structure also prevents the two-storey, glazed railway station from getting too hot in summer. The transparency of the textile skin creates a pleasant atmosphere flooded with natural light. The mesh can also handle the region's adverse weather conditions, such as wind, rain, snow or frost and offers protection against vandalism. Alongside the powerful functionality and high-grade aesthetics, the durability and lack of maintenance of GKD mesh were key factors for the architects.



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### **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:



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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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