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Koningin Elisabethzaal: Metal fabric for fantastic acoustics

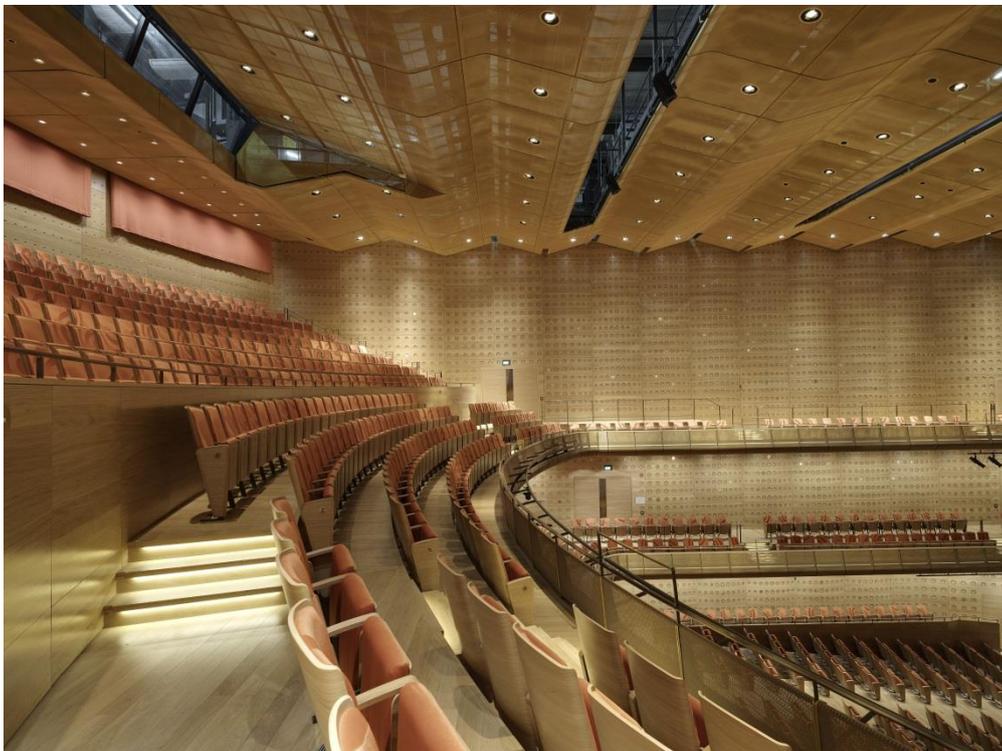
During the redesign and renovation of the Koningin Elisabethzaal in Antwerp, the joint venture team of SimpsonHaugh Architects (London) and Kirkegaard Associates (Chicago) chose to use metal fabric from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG. Providing extensive coverage of the ceiling, the rear wall of the stage and the balustrades, the golden texture underlines the unique atmospheric experience of the concert hall.

The Koningin Elisabethzaal is the centerpiece of the new Elizabeth Center – an ultra modern conference center over an area of 25,000 square meters – offering space for 2,000 guests. The acoustics of the concert hall are based on its shoe box shape, which guarantees a premium sound experience. Thanks to large reflectors on the rear wall of the stage and mobile ceiling coverings made of metal fabric, the sound can spread throughout the entire hall. In addition, the semi-transparent fabric membranes conceal the bare ceiling and all the technology positioned above it. For the ceiling, 1,600 square meters of the golden, powder-coated Alu 6010 fabric were fitted over 204 frames, some of which are wave-shaped. GKD used thin stainless steel wires to fasten four-meter long and 2.50-meter wide fabric panels to the frames provided by the customer, at intervals of ten centimeters. The cutouts for the lights were also incorporated exactly according to the specifications. The entire construction consisting of frames and fabric was then coated in the desired shade of gold. The planners opted to cover the balustrades in the Koningin Elisabethzaal with GKD Omega 1520 metal fabric with golden coated weft wires. Over 400 square meters, the woven texture, with its slightly conical panel cut, fits flexibly to the shape of the bidirectional curved



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corners of the balustrade, while tensioning makes it resistant to impact. Acoustic neutrality coupled with an exclusive look make metal fabric the material of choice. Before selecting the material, Kirkegaard Associates had carried out extensive tests on the fabric to achieve this sound and space experience, which with a score of 9.3 out of 10 on the acoustic evaluation scale, is almost perfect.



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