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MahaNakhon: Parking garage cladding made of metal mesh

Bangkok's landmark – the MahaNakhon – was designed by German architect Ole Scheeren. The three-part complex consists of the tower itself, a seven-story shopping temple Cube, and a fully automated parking garage. For the cladding of the parking garage, the planners opted for PC-SAMBESI metal fabric from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG. This decision was based on the fabric's unusual aesthetics and functional properties.

The name MahaNakhon means *Big City*. The highlight of the 314-meter-high tower is a 3,500 square meter sky bar. Situated at a height of 300 meters, it provides a previously unseen panoramic view over Bangkok. However, what lends the MahaNakhon its status as a new icon is the staggered arrangement of glass balconies and terraces that give the building a pixelated appearance with some pixels missing. Their arrangement gives the building a vertical twist reminiscent of a helix. This allegory for the process of permanent development and change was specifically chosen to visualize both the intricacy and dynamism of the urban structure. The pixel structure's interplay of heights and depths also conveys to the viewer the feeling of looking into the interior of the building. In order to match the adjacent parking garage optically with the luxurious overall ambiance, the architect selected GKD stainless steel mesh. A total of 464 framed mesh panels – each 2.9 meters high and up to 1.8 meters wide – subtly take up the visual appearance of the louvred glass façade of the MahaNakhon and reflect the surroundings and the frequently changing sky that is a feature of the country over a surface of 2,100 square meters. The easy maintenance of the system as well as its function as reliable fall guard protection for the vehicles parked



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in the 10,400 square meter parking garage tower both worked in its favor. Both transparent and air-permeable, the woven skin allows natural air ventilation while providing effective solar protection. The fabric also protects the parked cars from driving rain during monsoons. The stainless steel, which is almost 100 percent recyclable at the end of its service life, also improves the ecological footprint of the building, supporting the environmentally friendly overall concept of the MahaNakhon.



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