



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

Sustainable transformation: *Tour Europlaza*

CMP mesh gives entrance hall feel-good factor

Superlatives belong to La Défense like the Metro to Paris. The office district in the northwest of Paris is one of Europe's biggest and most important business districts. Some 800 banks and insurance companies alone have their headquarters here. In the heart of this vibrant, busy district, the *Tour Europlaza*, a 135 meter high office tower, sets standards for sustainable building. It is the third building in France to receive the HQE Exploitation et BREEAM In-Use "Very Good" certification, which it has now received twice. The SILENTMESH acoustic systems from GKD – Gebr. Kufferath AG have helped in this respect. As acoustically effective room dividers and decorative wall coverings, the CMP metal mesh systems provide highly effective sound absorption and bring the proverbial calm into the large entrance hall. Coupled with a very attractive appearance, they contribute significantly to the high quality of stay in this central entranceway.

La Défense is named after a statue erected here in 1870 as a symbol of the French resistance against the Prussians. While it no longer exists, the district has experienced a real boom in the last 50 years. Planned at the end of the 1950s as the new center for service companies, it was intended to underline the major importance of Paris among the European capitals. Today, more than 2,500 companies are based here on approximately 3.8 million square meters of office space. In fact, 14 of the 20 most important French firms and 13 of the world's largest corporations have their headquarters here. An ultramodern service infrastructure flanks a 250 meter wide and 1.2 kilometer long pedestrian zone. The multifaceted architecture of the numerous high-



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rise buildings which, in contrast to the center of Paris, were allowed to be built here has also made the district a tourist attraction. In 1972, La Défense saw the erection of what is now called the *Tour Europlaza*, previously known as the *Tour Septentrion*. A proud 135 meters high, it is significantly higher than the skyscrapers of the 1960s. In 1998, the building was completely renovated and purchased by its current owner, real estate company CeGeREAL. In September 2014, the tower was given another makeover and now boasts its own vast garden as well as a fully renovated entrance area. The tenants use the 3,300 square meter garden with seating and trees as a place to retreat and relax during the warmer months. Providing a soothing contrast to the adjacent skyscraper façades, the garden soon earned the building the nickname *Tour Jardin (Garden Tower)*.

Visual warmth for cool materials

The fully renovated foyer has floor-to-ceiling windows so you can appreciate this green space from the inside too. The entrance hall was designed by renowned interior designer Juan Trindade, whose other works include such famous buildings as the *Capital 8 Messine*, the former Haussmann-style headquarters of Electricité de France (EDF). Specialized in designing high-quality communal and work spaces, he also gave the foyer of the *Tour Europlaza* an ambience that is both spectacular and inviting in equal measure. The scenographic effect of the materials, colors, light and acoustics in the tubular space combines understated elegance with coziness. The CMP metal mesh cladding on the columns and partition elements from GKD contribute significantly to this effect. To give the narrow (considering its length) space width, Juan Trindade installed full-height mirror columns along the entire window front. They reflect the outside world, creating a seamless transition between inside and out. The inward-facing surfaces of the columns are clad with champagne-colored CMP mesh. These sandwich panels, made



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from a ten centimeter thick aluminum honeycomb support plate with a laminated top layer of ALU 6010, combine exceptional stability with an elegant look. Two of these panels, each three meters high and one meter wide, are fitted one over the other to form the inward-facing walls of the mirror columns. Their warm tone is subtly staged by indirect lighting from above and acquires its visual coolness from the large glass and mirror surfaces. At the entrance, four of these columns create a stylized portal that visually separates the revolving door area from the adjacent seating corners without detracting from the spacious overall impression of the hall.

Discreet places of refuge with acoustic comfort

Juan Trindade used elements clad with CMP mesh on both sides to strategically structure the long entrance hall. Their natural aluminum color, together with the gray tufted velour carpets, produces a subtle contrast to the warm champagne of the columns and the light sand color of the floors and wall covering. The partition elements are freestanding and divide the visual openness of the lobby. They create seating corners, for example, that provide places of refuge with privacy despite the size of the room. Screens fitted into the panels emphasize the modern yet inviting and relaxing nature of the design. In other places, panels made from acoustically effective CMP mesh are used to form discrete meeting areas. Furthermore, as decorative, freestanding balustrade elements, the room dividers separate the lift access areas from the open areas. With their highly effective sound absorption, the CMP elements in the lobby, which is dominated by reverberant glass and stone surfaces, make an impressive contribution towards optimizing the room acoustics. Hence they create a pleasant quality of stay, which is reinforced on a visual level by the extraordinary aesthetics of the mesh structure. The metal surfaces in the *Tour Europlaza* constantly acquire new facets through their sophisticated interplay with light and mirror reflections



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and it is these facets that give the lobby its unmistakable, exclusive design character.

5,916 characters with spaces

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For more information:

GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG
Metallweberstraße 46
D-52353 Düren
Tel.: +49 (0) 2421 / 803-0
Fax: +49 (0) 2421 / 803-227
E-mail: creativeweave@gkd.de
www.gkd.de

Please send a reprint to:

impetus.PR
Ursula Herrling-Tusch
Charlottenburger Allee 27-29
D-52068 Aachen
Tel.: +49 (0) 241 / 189 25-10
Fax: +49 (0) 241 / 189 25-29
E-mail: herrling-tusch@impetus-pr.de