



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

GKD: A little closer to heaven

Golden metal mesh used as ceiling in the EUMETSAT canteen

Commissioned by 30 member states of the European Union, the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT) monitors the climate and weather. In light of climate change, the data it collects using complex satellite systems is becoming increasingly important. The growth of the organization associated with this is reflected in the continuous expansion of its HQ in Darmstadt. The construction of a new six-floor office building also includes a canteen for all employees working at the location. This canteen gets its unmistakable face from a lamella-style suspended ceiling made of golden PC-ALU 6010 aluminum mesh from GKD – Gebr. Kufferath AG.

Modern weather forecasts today have little in common with traditional country weather lore. Satellites make it possible to monitor the climate and weather on a global scale. The data collected is then used to keep authorities, citizens and companies up-to-date with the latest developments at all times. In Europe, EUMETSAT monitors the atmosphere, oceans and earth's surface around the clock and then transmits the data to the participating EU member states. Established in 1986, the organization opened its headquarters in Darmstadt in 1991. However, ever increasing requirements and staff numbers meant that the operation quickly outgrew its original space. A six-floor office building with 160 workplaces represents the final phase of a whole range of extensions and new buildings. Following a construction period of just 18 months, around 100 employees were able to move out of their temporary container offices and into the new building



costing around €10 million, while a further 60 new employees are set to follow. The shape of the new building, designed by Pielok Marquardt Architects from Offenbach, is a mirror image of an existing building. Beside excellent energy efficiency and multifunctionality, the new building is characterized by transparency and modern design. Four office levels offer versatile space with transparent partition walls for any desired arrangement – whether open space, combination offices or classic cubicles.

Functional division – exceptional aesthetics

The ground level comprises two separate functional units that can be accessed via separate entrances. Beside a control center for a new satellite program, this is also home to the campus kitchen with connected canteen for the workforce at the location, which has now grown to include around 600 employees. The kitchen has been designed to provide 410 meals a day and the canteen offers 250 seats. The mullion-transom facade also ensures that the room is flooded with light. Carefully chosen furnishings divide its area into various acoustically optimized zones. The white of the desks and chairs is picked up by strips in the glossy flooring and the cladding of the food counter, pillars and supports. In the central zone, bright red benches with high, sound-absorbing backrests offer a vibrant contrast. The color scheme is rounded off by the warm brown of the stone floor and the wooden acoustic cladding. However, the striking element in the room is the suspended ceiling, made from 400 square meters of golden aluminum mesh. Its 120 elements with a blade-type design mimic the appearance of sunshine in the canteen with their discreet shimmer. LED lighting strips further underline this impression. At the same time, the mesh conceals the ventilation technology with incoming air outlets on the element frames. As a result, the accessibility of the woven ceiling elements was among the key requirements for GKD. The planners opted for a particularly open mesh design in the form of the



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PC-ALU 6010 mesh with various warp and weft wire thicknesses. The function and aesthetics of the ceiling mesh thereby provide the desired high level of comfort in the canteen, while also making the room a unique feast for the eyes.

3.977 characters incl. spaces

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The owner-run technical weaver GKD – Gebr. Kufferath AG is the global market leader for metal and plastic woven solutions as well as spiral fabrics. Four independent business divisions bundle their expertise under one roof: Industrial Mesh (woven metal mesh and filter solutions), Process Belts (belts made of mesh and spirals), Metalfabrics (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, Great Britain, Spain, Dubai, Qatar and worldwide representatives, GKD is close to markets anywhere in the world.

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