

PRESS RELEASE

Eco-efficient buildings: the performance of Mermet fabrics, exported to South Africa

In just 25 years, the Sandton district in the Johannesburg suburbs has become the main business centre in South Africa, considered today the showcase of the entire country. Ideally situated right at its heart, "The Central", a new 100,000 m² site, is under development.

As the spearhead of this development, the new building 96 Rivonia Road now houses the Low-Energy Building of Werksmans and Partners, the 100-year-old law firm.

The Screen Nature Ultimet[®] fabric produced by Mermet, leader in high-tech fabric design for solar protection, was selected to provide thermal and visual comfort to its occupants. Its performance both in terms of solar reflectance and transparency has contributed to the building's low-consumption certification.

Forward-looking architecture

Designed to symbolise the history of this emblematic South African law firm, the building had to reflect both its ancestral roots and look forward into the 21st century.

"The building comprises two blocks - one in pale stone, the other in black glass - to express this transition. The five-storey mineral base, pierced by large windows, evokes the age of the company in an early 20th century style. This building forms the basis for an eleven-storey construction that is lighter and more contemporary, built entirely of glass to illustrate the present day; it overhangs the outside space to represent its projection towards the future."

For architects Boogertman & Partners, one of the founders of the Green Building Council* in South Africa, the low-consumption building certification was essential for their new creation.

In addition, given the city's average of 3,100 hours of sunshine a year, solar protection was a central issue.

This search for performance naturally led to the choice of Mermet's Screen Nature Ultimet[®] fabric, in 1307 Black Diamond colour. With its PVC-free mineral composition, excellent solar reflectance and perfect transparency, the fabric:

- meets the specific features of the programme perfectly, both environmentally and technically,
- provides excellent visual comfort by controlling the influx of natural light, with no loss of outward vision.

Using a mixture of manual and motorised roller blinds, 850 interior canvas lengths covering 3,500 m² were fitted by AC Screens & Shutters.

Screen Nature Ultimet[®] by Mermet, a fabric acclaimed throughout the world

This glass fabric, also known as "the transparent thermal shield", is of unrivalled excellence regardless of its colour. It combines:

- high solar reflectance (74%),
- excellent visible transmittance (VT ≤ 6).

Screen Nature Ultimet[®] has two faces, one of which is metal-coated and is oriented towards the glass. The fabric:

- rejects up to 88% of solar energy (gtot = 0.12/glass g = 0.32 and U = 1.1), thereby helping to control heat,
- offers a very low emissivity of 10% and acts as thermal insulation, helping to maintain comfort levels in both Summer and Winter,
- optimises light transmittance to control glare and annoying reflections, especially for users of computer screens (up to 96% of light rays filtered, comfort class 3, a "good effect", as defined by EN 14501).

Its mineral composition contains no PVC, polyester or halogens; it offers a minimum environmental impact and is fireproof and free of smoke emissions. It has a Class M0 rating (NFP 92 503), Euroclass A2-s1-d0, F0 and meets all health and safety requirements.

It is elegant and very slim, ideal for blinds fitted in constricted spaces, even for large widths. It has outstanding transparency and is available in seven colours as well as two widths of 180 and 240 cm.

Sufficiently surprising to warrant mention, Mermet was entrusted with the entirety of the manufacturing work, cutting, squaring and shipment of canvas lengths for installation 15,000 km away.

This prestigious project confirms the performance of the Screen Nature Ultimet[®] fabric and is an opportunity for the French company to showcase the extent of its knowledge through its involvement in major, complex export projects.

* *The World GBC (Green Building Council) is a global network of "green building" professional associations, in more than seventy countries. Its goals are to:*

- *make sure that all buildings are "net zero carbon" by 2050,*
- *mobilise the entire construction sector to achieve a standardised environmental quality in buildings.*