

The **ART** of Creating Space

The Sony Style Store on Potsdamer Platz in Berlin is part of the Sony administration complex. It was designed by the German-American architect Helmut Jahn and is Sony's first flagship store in Europe where the company displays and sells its newest, space age, high-quality products. The setting is modern and futuristic. The products are displayed in order of value from bottom to top with the most expensive items on the fourth floor. On the first floor, for example, Walkmen are laid out in oversized acrylic-glass conical cabinets, while a bright blue counter dominates the fourth floor along with an excellent view of the Sony Center inner courtyard. An airy, light and attractive space. But what's behind it?

Illuminated ceilings are the solution

"What we were presented with was a more than difficult space situation," says Rudolf A. Grabowski, head of the Munich-based "Projektbüro Grabowski", the consultancy commissioned to handle the project. "Four floors, each of about 330 square meters, lots of pillars and a ceiling height of only 3.40 meters."



On Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, Sony has built a futuristic entertainment complex with offices, shops and apartments. The 26,500 square meter center cost 750 million euro.

In order to achieve an impression of wide-open spaces, illuminated ceilings were installed on every floor. "We chose a laminated version of Schott Desag's "Opalika" white flashed opal glass for these, because it was the only glass that would do what we had in mind. However, because of the special acoustical requirements, we

In the new Sony Style Store in Berlin, Schott Desag's "Opalika" architectural glass is helping to create an interesting shopping atmosphere.

could only use a trapeze-shaped glass panel in the center of the space where our aim was to create an atrium-like atmosphere. For the outer panels of the ceiling we used ceiling vents set in glass wool", explains Grabowski.

The idea of using a slim ventilation rail to also act as the support for the whole ceiling system enabled us not only to house the electrical and data cabling as well as ventilation, sprinklers and smoke extraction, but also to achieve the necessary spacing between the glass and the dimmable fluorescent lighting tubes. In spite of the tubes being very close to the glass, the light distribution quality of "Opalika" provides evenly diffused illumination. Using this particular type of glass has made a significant contribution to creating the desired impression of space in the Sony Style Store ■

Aesthetic and functional: Illuminated ceiling with "Opalika" white flashed opal glass.

