

PRESS REPORT

## Perforated Brick Façade

### Extension to the Tate Modern by Herzog & de Meuron

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**A bevelled, truncated pyramid by the Basel-based architects Herzog & de Meuron adds to the huge Bankside Power Station on the South bank of the Thames which has housed the Tate Modern, one of the most important museums for modern and contemporary art in Europe, since 2000. The perforated brick skin not only connects the various new building together from the material aesthetics viewpoint but also gives plasticity to the building envelope, allowing it to shine at night from the inside.**

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The opening of the extension, the so-called *Switch House*, gives the Tate Modern 60 percent more space for performances, installations and interactive tutorials. The 64 metre high building, the shape of which recreates a truncated pyramid that intriguingly turns inward, continually opening up a series of new, interesting viewing angles, rises up from a triangular base. On a total of eleven levels, Herzog & de Meuron, who were responsible for the reconstruction of the introverted main, the *Boiler House*, bring together 9,000 square metres of exhibition space, a café and a book store in the entrance area - which is simultaneously the interface to the Turbine Hall in the *Boiler House* - event spaces and lounges for Tate members and staff, as well as a restaurant and, right the top, the observation deck with 360 degree panoramic views of London. Whilst the White Cube galleries do not need any direct sunlight, the vestibules and openings are surprisingly bright and suffused with light as a result of the precisely positioned horizontal slots in the purist brick skin. With the help of a balanced exchange of stone and opening, using the heavy material the

architects have succeeded in creating light and air-permeable external surfaces, with the careful detailing of the seams, edges and transition points creating an impressive effect.

### **Tooth pattern, double-brick tile modules**

The façade gets its special plasticity through the tooth pattern, basic square-shaped GIMA bricks, with an edge length of 215 mm and height of 69 mm. These are not laid in the conventional way but assembled into modules, each comprising two bricks held together with mortar and laid using the principle of a bracket-mounted, rear-ventilated façade. The unique structure of the façade wraps around the reinforced concrete skeleton like a veil, the characteristic feature of which is the precision manufacture and pattern of holes in the bricks: So due to the method of laying, the bricks had to be manufactured within extremely tight tolerances because, unlike brickwork which is arranged conventionally using mortar, the tolerances were able to be included in the joints.

In order to adapt the brickwork horizontally and vertically to the three-dimensionally angled shape of the building, the façade was divided into arches/frameworks and 336,000 bricks, of 212 different types, joined in blocks with the substructure using stainless steel pins and resin joints. Five different types of brick were specified for this purpose: Staggered bricks for the vertically and angled perforated façade areas, as well as for the vertically closed areas and flush-mounted bricks for the vertical and angled closed façades. In addition, individual bricks and cut standard bricks were used for the building edges and folds in order to create the space between the adjacent inclines.

The colour of the façade also didn't come about purely by chance - for this, Herzog & de Meuron were guided by the existing building and working together with the manufacturer GIMA (Girnguber GmbH) developed special ceramic

shards that do not use any engobes or other forms of artificial colouring but are instead dyed. To achieve the maximum possible uniformity of colour, the bricks were produced in batches, with a pre-defined percentage distribution of light, medium and dark. Together with the tooth-pattern arrangement of the bricks, this creates a vibrant interplay of light and shadow on the external walls of the new Tate Modern.

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### **Project data**

Project name:	Expansion of the Tate Modern, London
Client:	Tate Gallery, London
Architects:	Herzog & de Meuron, Basel
Façade planning	Ramboll UK, London; Billing Design, Dublin
Façade product	Brinks manufactured by Girnguber GmbH (GIMA) , basic format 215/215/69 mm, plus 130 other, different types of brick in various shapes and types of perforation.
Competition	2005
Start of construction:	2010
Completion:	2016



## Expansion of the Tate Modern, London

16 years after the opening of the Tate Modern, Herzog & de Meuron expands the existing museum by adding a new building which resembles a twisted pyramid. Five million visitors a year will now be able to enjoy an additional 60 percent more art and culture.

Architects: Herzog & de Meuron, Basel

Photo: Anke Müllerklein

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## Expansion of the Tate Modern, London

Whilst the effect of the brick façade is like a closed skin with narrow window slits during the day, the perforation on the purist brick skin illuminates the building at night.

Architects: Herzog & de Meuron, Basel

Photo: Anke Müllerklein



## Expansion of the Tate Modern, London

The window slits and perforated areas of the façade create bright spaces suffused with light inside the building.

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Photo: Anke Müllerklein

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## **Expansion of the Tate Modern, London**

With the brick façade, the extension to the Tate Modern absorbs the aesthetics of London's brick architecture. The Bankside Power Station, completed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in 1963, one of the largest brick buildings in England.

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## Expansion of the Tate Modern, London

336,000 clinker bricks, in 212 different types, were laid offset and in a toothed pattern design, around the three-dimensionally angled shape of the building.

Architects: Herzog & de Meuron, Basel

Photo: Anke Müllerklein

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### **Expansion of the Tate Modern, London**

The homogeneous brick skin wraps around corners and edges like a veil and simultaneously puts the 64 metre high new building into three-dimensional relief.

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Photo: Anke Müllerklein

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