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## Press Release

The Wave, Wien

21.04.2010

Premium Property

See, the best things are always right under your nose...

Raiffeisen International Bank Holding AG in Vienna was on the lookout for a new site for an expansion, and it ended up being right next door. The architect, Prof. Hans Hollein,



was the one to enlighten the client. The result is an office space with an elegant, curved glass façade designed by glass specialists Petschenig glastec.



Plenty of imagination was actually needed to seize the opportunities offered by the site. The location is excellent: right in the centre of Vienna, at the eastern edge of the city park through which the river that gave the city the name flows, barely 800 metres from St. Stephen's Cathedral and well connected in terms of traffic. Beforehand, the site was actually

merely the triangular-shaped remainder between the façade of a 62 m-high, 19-floor hotel built in 1972 and a Raiffeisen Zentralbank Österreich (RZB) administration building characterised primarily by a ramp leading to the underground car park – and no more than that. But the renowned architect from Vienna, Prof. Hans Hollein, recognised the potential of the site. The first drafts already outlined the curved shape – and the name of the building was born: "The Wave".

### Substantial specifications

At this point, the construction task framework was extremely challenging: disruption to the hotel operation had to be avoided, the multi-lane *Bundesstraße 1* street leading past the site was not to be affected and the operation of the public underground car park underneath the site was to be fully maintained. UNESCO also had a say in the matter, as the building project lay in the so-called 'buffer zone' of the Historic Centre of Vienna World Heritage Site.

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The result is a “floating” 8-floor building, whose S-shape façade follows the course of the street perfectly. The new build is completely elevated – by means of a six metre-high table construction over the top level of the ground. The building loads are carried by the foundations by means of supporting pillars which are, in some parts, fed through the two levels of the underground

car park. Of the vertical construction components, only two extend to the ground floor. The largest of these serves as a prestigious reception hall, measuring around 200 m<sup>2</sup>. From the first floor, a grid which is independent from the substructure has been constructed which can be modified and allows different rooms sizes and room layouts. From the first and second floors, the size of the structure increases considerably, moving towards the hotel, in order to include conference and archive rooms. In the third and sixth floors, the new build is connected to the existing RZB building using glass bridges.



### “3D” mirror

The double-shelled façade facing the city park is a highlight of glass design. The outer shell is designed like a multi-dimensional mirror. So as to not disrupt the effect, vertical glass profiles are missing. The high-level glass panels rest in retaining sections on the top and bottom edges. So as to prevent excessive movement from the

wind, the panels are fixed at breast-height by a small point fitting. The glass panels of this pure-glass façade, made from UNIGLAS® | SAFE VSG TVG, perform several functions: they shield the office from noise from the street whilst serving as protection from the intense afternoon sun at the same time. They also provide a wonderful, almost unrestricted mirror panorama in which the sky and the trees in the park are reflected. The building does not disappear into the darkness at night either: Through the loss of the mirror effect, the façade gains spatial depth. In addition, the yellow LED lighting strips – matching the colours of RZB – in the horizontal glass panels accentuate the three-dimensional shape of The Wave and break up the dimensions.

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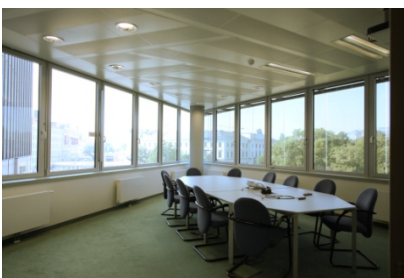
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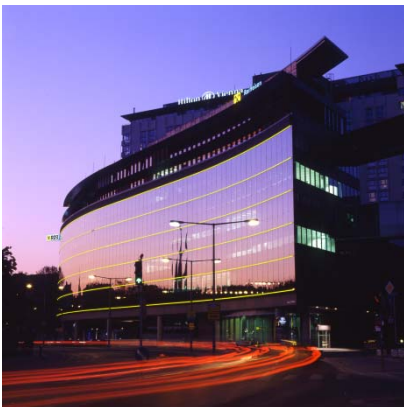
This glasswork mastery is the responsibility of Petschenig glastec, a company based not far from Vienna which is always asked when glasswork specialities and perfect solutions are required. Of course, the glass refiners also provided all remaining façade glass, all-glass units and enamelled glass which all show of their special effects inside the building. Petschnig glastec belongs to the UNIGLAS® cooperation, which produces standard glazing of all types, but also mainly specialist glass solutions, in partnership with 23 companies.



To complete the mirror façade and to define the height of the building, the two highest floors are set back and structured horizontally through overhanging “shed roofs” – finely shaped like the blade of a knife.



Nowadays, office work is more or less always carried out in front of a computer. The workplaces in The Wave building which face towards the city park are in high demand, as they allow a relaxing view of the greenery. The Wave building in Vienna is an urbanistic gem – it conceals old styles architecture which hardly anyone admires anymore and gives the well-kept city park a new visual border which, through the mirror effect, is transmitted onwards.



The Wave building demonstrates in a surprising way the diversity of design possibilities with glass and the fruit of imaginative architecture, all how they can be implemented professionally and perfectly by a specialist such as Petschenig glastec.

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