

SEAMLESS SURFACE WITH OUTSTANDING DESIGN

Suzhou No.2 Library, Jiangsu Province, China



Photo: Christian Gahl/gmp Architekten

At the end of 2019, the Suzhou No. 2 Library, the second public library of the traditional cultural city, was opened north of the historic center of Suzhou. Surrounded by a newly created park landscape, the new library building with its integrated specialized libraries, collections and exhibition rooms can also be equated with an extensive cultural center. Particularly remarkable about the library is the intelligent storage system, which can hold seven million books - the first in the country.

Suzhou No.2 Library

Jiangsu Province, China

Architect:

gmp International GmbH / Southeast University Architectural Design Institute Co., Ltd

Completion: 2019

Products:

AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Outdoor
AQUAPANEL® Accessories

Type of building:

Public Building / Library

Application area:

1.200 m² exterior ceilings

SUZHOU NO.2 LIBRARY

The 36.8-meter-high new library building owes its unique appearance to the unusual shape of the building and the façade made of elegant aluminum slats. While the floor space on the ground floor has been reduced to a minimum, the upper floors protrude outwards with a slight twist, thus offering more reading space with wonderful views of the surrounding landscape. With this design, the architects at gmp international, in collaboration with the Southeast University Architectural Design Institute, have created an exterior shape that is clearly reminiscent of a slightly offset stack of books.

The challenge was to obtain a smooth surface with no visible or open joints to create a monolithic design for the ceilings. This was particularly important to implement in the exterior ceiling, which makes up a large part of the building surface. In order to achieve this appearance without façade defects and cracks, and to be able to guarantee this also in a distant future, the choice of the right building material for the exterior ceilings played a decisive role.

These requirements finally led to the selection of a proven system solution: a drywall construction with AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Outdoor as panel material. The lightweight cement board provides a solid and dry substrate that is both weather-resistant and 100% water resistant, making it ideal for exterior applications. AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Outdoor can be bent to a radius of up to 3 m without pre-treatment at full board size, resulting in a variety of different design options.

In addition, AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Outdoor offers even more design freedom, as expansion joints need only be installed every 15 metres. This allows a continuous surface area of up to 225 m², which nevertheless tolerates expansion and shrinkage caused by weathering. By using AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Outdoor, interruptions in the appearance of the building were reduced to a minimum.

During the project, Knauf Aquapanel's technical team visited the construction site to provide the project installers with technical details and ensure that the system was installed using the correct procedures. Thanks to the fact that all AQUAPANEL® Cement Boards are part of a lightweight drywall system, installation was very quick and smooth.



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