The Brandhorst Museum houses a substantial private collection of 20th- and 21st-century contemporary art. It is a simple elongated building of three interconnecting volumes. Its tall façade marks the south-eastern corner of the Munich museum quarter and links it with the adjacent neighborhood of Schwabing. The architecture of the museum has been designed to create ideal light conditions for an exhibition environment – according to the nature of the collection – in its interior. By contrast, the building’s exterior communicates the very nature of this collection – it being a place of contemporary, living art.

The design forms an unobtrusive but sophisticated backdrop for the art on display. A deliberately subtle differentiation in character between the various exhibition spaces is created through distinct daylight qualities as well as through a variation in sequence and dimensions of the rooms. The museum is arranged on three floors connected by a generous starcase. On the ground level, the universal exhibition spaces are illuminated by a daylighting system that brings in zenith light through a complex series of reflectors. The top level has continuous skylights in all its large galleries. In the basement, a large daylit “patio” forms the focal point for a suite of galleries dedicated to graphic art.

The interior is intended to direct attention to its role as a repository of lively art: the polychromic façade appears similar to a large, abstract painting. In front of a bi-colored perforated metal screen absorbing the traffic noise, 16,000 ceramic nodes, glazed in 23 colours, are hung individually. The appearance of the skin plays with the movement of the observers: the layering of horizontal and vertical lines along with the contrast and merging of colours create multiple impressions of occlusion – almost of dematerialization.

The ground floor is devoted to preparatory exhibition rooms. The first floor is dedicated to current exhibitions, the second floor to permanent collections, and the basement to graphic art.
la sostenibilità

Abbiamo sviluppato una strategia assolutamente innovativa che permette di risparmiare fino al 90% di energia termica e 26% dell’energia elettrica paragonato a edifici di simili dimensioni. Di conseguenza, le emissioni di CO₂ connesse sono ridotte a 358 tonnellate/anno.

Il raffreddamento e il riscaldamento avvengono tramite energia geotermale, riscaldando il pavimento. Sono stati introdotti tre impianti di riscaldamento geotermici, che utilizzano fonti di energia sottostanti l’edificio e la sua vicinanza. L’energia termica è trasferita ai vari piani di livello mediante un sistema di conduzioni sotterranee che si estende per circa 1 kilometer.

Grazie alla tecnologia di illuminazione adottata, la luce naturale è usata per il 50-70% durante l’anno e per il 90% durante il giorno. Questo non solo offre una notevole risparmio energetico, ma permette di realizzare risparmio dei costi di regolazione del clima.

Sustainability

We developed a completely new strategy that permits saving of 90% of thermal and 26% of electrical energy in comparison to similar buildings. Consequently, CO₂ emissions are reduced to 358 tonnes/year.

Cooling and heating are provided by geothermal energy, managed by an absorption heat pump. Effectively, the museum recycles the waste energy of its surrounding large-scale buildings, which warm the local ground water considerably. So, the museum not only exhibits the existing and free energy source, but also helps to restore the thermal equilibrium of the local groundwater. A heating and cooling system of water pipes installed below the surfaces of floors and walls creates stable climatic conditions for the art on display and at the same time lowers the need for mechanical air conditioning by almost half.

This is the first effective daylighting system, natural light is used for 50%-70% of the museum’s opening hours. This not only creates an outstanding quality of light for the artworks, but also leads to significant savings in the museum’s operating costs.