



## **ARCHITECTURE OF BIKINI BERLIN**

### **REVITALISATION OF A LISTED BUILDING: ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT**

Between 2010 and 2013 the listed building ensemble of BIKINI BERLIN underwent radical renovations by the Munich-based project development company Bayerische Hausbau. The historical “Zentrum am Zoo” building complex, which, based on designs by the architects Paul Schwebes and Hans Schoszberger, was constructed between 1955 and 1957, had lost a lot of its significance and appeal over the years. The master plan for the necessary renewal of BIKINI BERLIN comes from Belgian architectural office SAQ. The idea behind this design is the combination of shopping, working and relaxing, complete with a cinema and hotel in an urban setting. The Munich architects’ office Hild und K, which is specialised in construction work on pre-existing buildings and which addressed the practical issues of the design by SAQ, was entrusted with the realisation and the detailed planning.

### **MERGING THE PAST AND THE FUTURE**

The unique flair of BIKINI BERLIN is attributed to its long, eventful history and the striking architecture of the 1950s. For decades the building complex had a cityscape-defining impact in the City West. The original charm of the ensemble has been revived in the new build and combined with modern elements. The open-sided storey of the past, the former “Bikini storey”, has regained its open appearance. Large panoramic windows retain the transparency and, at the same time, allow the storey to be used by retail stores. The façades of the Bikinihaus facing the Zoological Garden and that of the hotel are, in response to the contemporary desire for more nature in the city, fully glazed and afford fascinating views of Berlin’s ‘green lung’. And the large rooftop terrace to the rear of the Bikinihaus, with its unique view into the animal enclosure of the Zoological Garden, is a true expression of contemporary urbanity. It is accessible from the street via a large flight of stairs and provides a modern space for rest and relaxation: an oasis right in the middle of the city. From the BIKINI BERLIN POOL on the ground floor of the Bikinihaus, an inviting staircase also leads directly up to the terrace.

### **THE FAÇADES - BIKINI BERLIN’S NEW AND OLD CALLING CARD**

A unique feature of BIKINI BERLIN is the design of the building’s façades: the listed front of the Bikinihaus facing Budapester Straße and that of the 25hours Hotel were reconstructed true to the original style of the fifties, taking into account today’s energy guidelines. Characteristic elements are the partially coloured projections and recesses of the façade surface with large,

horizontal glass panels in the colours sand, amber, black, marble white and stone grey. Their filigree, almost fabric-like structure is a reminder that the textile centre of West Berlin was once housed in this building. Vertically, the façade is framed with gold-coloured anodised elements. The façades of the new build parts of the cinema, the flight of stairs to the rooftop terrace, the car park and the new build between the hotel and the car park were also designed with respect for the historical substance of BIKINI BERLIN. Here, an innovative 'folding façade' was created, the elements of which overlap like scales. Building a bridge to the past, the old, no longer usable coloured glass panels of the historical façades were smashed and re-used for aesthetic purposes by affixing them to the surface with plaster. The play of light on the glass creates vibrant colour accents.

### **LIGHT-SUFFUSED INTERIOR DESIGN AND AUTHENTIC MATERIALS**

The architectonic idea of the folding façade with crushed glass particles is continued in the interior of the Bikinihaus and the BIKINI BERLIN POOL: around the large panoramic window a plaster mix of crushed coloured glass particles and Berlin paving stones was used. By using the same materials for the flooring in the POOL area, the public space and the interior of BIKINI BERLIN Concept Shopping Mall merge together harmoniously. The light-suffused steel frame construction dominating the spacious hall of the Concept Shopping Mall is another impressive feature. Like the concrete ceiling, the lighting strips and the supply pipes, it remains visible. The colour concept of the interior space, in green, is a homage to the neighbouring Zoological Garden with its many trees.

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