



Münchner Freiheit
MUNICH, 2009

Lighting and colour concept

Ingo Maurer developed the lighting and colour concept in collaboration with Munich's municipal building administration division which was responsible for all architectural planning, project management and the realization of the remodelling work. The final result is a sophisticated blend of the lighting concept, interior, and architectural design components. „Münchner Freiheit“ is a key interchange and main thoroughfare for the city's underground public transportation system. The station is used by up to 50,000 commuters each day. „Münchner Freiheit“ provides access to Schwabing, a quarter renowned for shopping, nightlife, and the „Englischer Garten“, an idyllic setting within the city, with green expanses, walking paths, gentle streams, and beer gardens that has made it an important public gathering place. The renovation concept for „Münchner Freiheit“ utilizes several existing architectural details, in particular the pillars covered in a deep blue tile. This original detail was to be preserved according to the plans of the building division, an idea that Ingo Maurer gladly took up. Recessed blue LED downlights intensify the tile colour so that the pillars seem to glow from the inside. At first glance the material of their surface is difficult to define. Using the light in this way to accentuate these architectural elements has produced an innovative effect that presents itself in two ways. At the platform level, which is divided into varied ceiling heights, the shorter pillars become lit along their entire length. On the taller pillars, the colour fades out toward the bottom, creating dramatic effects on both lengths of pillars. Another key feature, proposed and executed by Munich's building division, is the mirror-finished stainless steel ceiling. The surface optically doubles the length of the pillars and the height of the space. The mezzanine level with its relatively low ceiling previously created an unpleasant feeling as a low underpass. The mirrored ceiling has now transformed the space into a bright and open underground mall that is revitalized by the effect of the expanded volume. „This mirroring effect adds new life to the interior of the station. This type of ceiling produces the effect of doubling the ceiling height throughout the interior, and all the way down to the platforms. The passengers experience multiple reflections of other people, the entire space, and trains from above. We were thrilled to see how these effects worked together. Along with the upgraded lighting the space forms a unique experience every time you pass through this station“, says Ingo Maurer. Another important element of the design is the wall covering behind the tracks. They have been fitted with panels lacquered in a vivid, almost fluorescent yellow that produces a spectacular effect in juxtaposition to the colour of the luminescent blue pillars. These panels also become part of the reflective ceiling creating expansive fields of this bright colour. The manufacture of the panels incorporates a horizontally articulated zigzag profile effectively elongating the space. It picks up the back and forth direction of the passing trains and is visual complement to the vertical sight lines when these elements are viewed at track level. „The combination of these complementary colours adds new life and vibrancy to the space. Therefore we

carefully chose this shade of yellow. I hope that people find themselves stimulated by the vivacity and freshness to further enjoy the use of this station. I wanted it to be a place that lifts their spirit and their mood, even if in an unconscious way“, says Ingo Maurer. Regarding the upgraded lighting the ceiling has been equipped with square light cassettes made up of fluorescent tubes, a specification made by the client. They are tilted in various directions and distributed irregularly on the ceiling based on careful planning so that all parts of the platforms are lit to remain as subtle as possible, but impart the minimum required brightness in all areas. In the taller double height sections the inside of the cassettes are lacquered in yellow, blue or silver, taking notes from the colours of the wall and the pillars. On the mezzanine level of the station, with the relatively low ceiling, all light cassettes are lacquered in silver, to avoid an overly clustered appearance.

INGO MAURER