



TURIN, ITALY

A Gala Venue in a Sophisticated New Tower Designed by Renzo Piano in Turin

A Gala Systems electromechanical solution for flexible multipurpose halls has recently been integrated into a prestigious 44-floor office tower built as the new headquarters for the Intesa Sanpaolo banking group. World-renowned Italian architect Renzo Piano is the name behind this new urban landmark in Turin's historical centre. The building was inaugurated in April and designed in the interests of environmental sustainability and opening up to the city. The transparent tower of glass and light-coloured steel is composed of three sections. Concentrated in the middle of the tower are more than 2000 office workstations, while the upper and lower sections incorporate accessible facilities for the Turinese public. At its summit, a bioclimatic conservatory includes a restaurant, alongside a rooftop garden, exhibition spaces and a panoramic terrace, accessible by lift in about 30 seconds. At its base, the building houses a **multifunctional 'suspended' hall equipped with a Gala transformable seating system for 364 patrons**, which allows for a large variety of configurations within the allotted space. Occupying part of the fourth, fifth and sixth floors, the public hall built in cooperation with Tecnologie Industriali, can be quickly transformed from a raked seating layout to a flat floor space, making it equally suited for seminars, banqueting, presentations and entertainment functions.



NEWSLETTER: TORRE INTESA SANPAOLO

Described as a “bioclimatic building”, Renzo Piano’s skyscraper was conceived as a showcase for exemplary environmental performance. It meets the most exacting structural and environmental standards with optimal levels of recovery, control and containment of overall energy consumption, in accordance with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. Enveloped in a cladding of moveable, transparent doubleskinned glass façades that can be opened or closed as needed, the tower itself assists with temperature regulation. Furthermore, the building incorporates a wide variety of sustainable design strategies—such as a network of sensors revealing different daily and seasonal weather conditions to maximize the use of sunlight, geothermal heat, ventilated ceilings, 80% LED lighting and 1600 square metres of photovoltaic panelling—to ensure no polluting emissions in normal operating conditions. Also featuring a futuristic façade, subtly changing in light throughout the day and shimmering at night thanks to a multitude of LEDs, the 166-metre tower will definitely become a pre-eminent architectural element in the city.

In 2006, the Intesa Sanpaolo banking group, one of the largest in the Eurozone with around 100,000 staff and over 5000 branches, launched a design consultation before building its new headquarters in Turin. Six of the world’s

most qualified architectural firms were invited to meet the challenge: Hiroshi Hara of Tokyo, Carlos Lamela of Madrid, Daniel Libeskind of New York, the MVRDV design studio of Rotterdam, Dominique Perrault of Paris, and Renzo Piano Building Workshop of Genoa. The project was ultimately awarded to Italian architect Renzo Piano—well known for his museum commissions, including the Morgan Library in New York City and the Nemo Science Museum in Amsterdam—because of his firm’s innovations in environmental sustainability and the optimum integration of work spaces and those open to the public. Completed in less than five years, the high-rise project required a total investment, including design and furnishings, of about half a billion euro.

In addition to the work spaces, parts of the new tower are put to various interesting public uses, including a ‘suspended’ conference and event venue with a variable internal layout. As opposed to standard halls with an underfloor concrete pit sunk into the ground, the room is hung above ground level without vertical supports to offer an unobstructed view of the city, a solution made possible by an

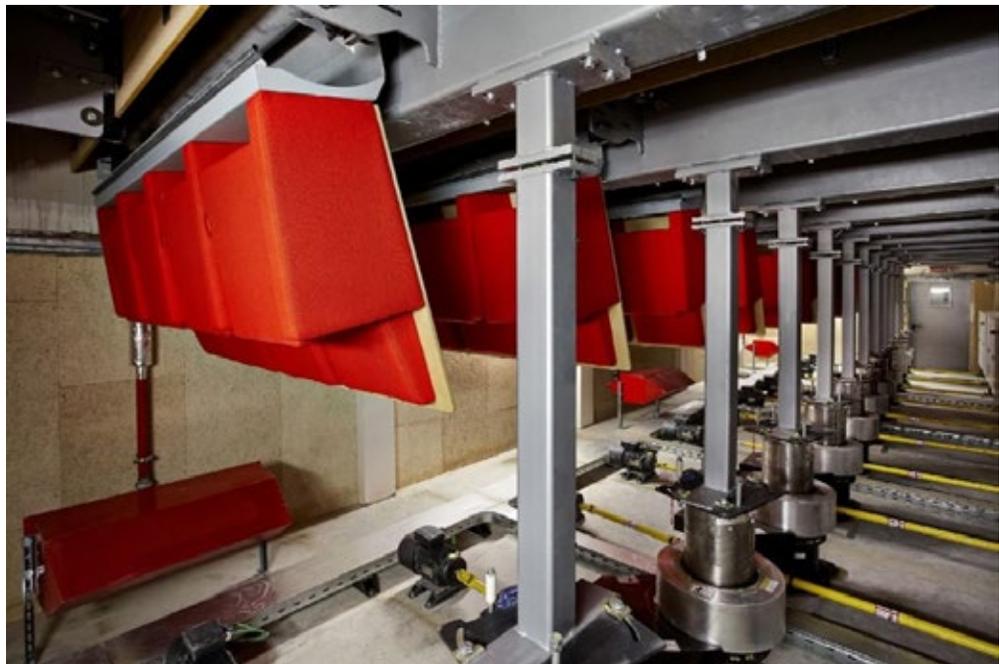
unprecedented construction concept of transfer trusses. More specifically, “six mega-columns [are] positioned around the perimeter and a double transfer beam over the auditorium. The transfer beam supports the weight of the floors above, including the auditorium floor which is suspended from the tower, and transfers it to the mega-columns which, [in turn], transfer it to the basement” (Intesa Sanpaolo banking group). Despite these exceptional architectural constraints, **every effort was made to create a state-of-the-art, multipurpose 350-squaremetre hall equipped with the latest solution in venue transformation technology. Gala Systems’ equipment—enabling seats to be deployed via an automated platform and rotation system, or stored in an inverted position under the floor when they are not required—was chosen to transform the hall quickly and automatically, without sacrificing audience accessibility or comfort.** With this respect, quality auditorium seats were supplied by Poltrona Frau out of Italy. In about 12 minutes the room can be readily converted, for example, from a multi-tiered seating configuration for a





business presentation in the morning, into a flat floor space for a noon conference luncheon, and then into a traditional audience chamber for an evening public performance. This high use of space within a single auditorium is definitely in line with Renzo Piano's environmental efficient concept of the tower.

As a mixed-use development building, providing not only office accommodation for more than 2000 people but also facilities for the general public, there is no doubt that Renzo Piano's tower will play a dynamic role in Turin: the building's innovative architectural and environmental solutions are what make it truly unique. This striking, ultramodern, bioclimatic tower has united technology, environmental sensibility and public use in a way that no other building has before!



References

Press Release Turin: The Intesa Sanpaolo Skyscraper is Ready: <http://www.group.intesasnpaolo.com/script/sir0/si09/contentData/view/content-ref?id=CNT-05-000000023EF3A>

Intesa Sanpaolo skyscraper by Renzo Piano opened in Turin, Cecilia Di Marzo, april 2015: <http://www.archilovers.com/stories/7683/intesa-sanpaolo-skyscraper-by-renzo-piano-opened-in-turin.html>

Renzo Piano Building Workshop : <http://www.rpbw.com/en/architecture/7/projects/44/ongoing-projects/>