

# Luminescent Landmark


By Marcy Marro



The 270-ton (243-metric ton), 118-foot- (36-m-) high Indemann Observation Tower in Inden, Germany, is a steel sculpture and observation tower that resembles a primitive robot. Built on a brown coal dump, the tower is designed to be a new industrial landmark and a symbol of the area's evolution from a coal dump to an amusement park and innovative economic area.

Located adjacent to the busiest autobahn in Europe, the A4, the sculpture serves as a visual symbol of progressive planning for the future. The Indemann extends its right arm to point out the evolving landscape and features three observation platforms from which visitors can enjoy views of the region. The robot's mouthpiece is a ticker, while organic and geometric shapes form the focal point of the media projection.

Completed in 2009, the Indemann gets its unique radiance from a semitransparent skin made of stainless-steel mesh with interwoven LED profiles called Illumesh from GKD-Gebr. Kufferath AG, Düren, Germany, and ag4 media facade GmbH, Cologne, Germany. During the day the metallic surface shimmers and reflects light, and at night, a computer-controlled light show visible for miles comes to life.

The woven, transparent stainless-steel shell uses clever reflection techniques to melt the stark, geometric silhouette of the Indemann, while allowing it to blend into the surrounding landscape. The 18,009-square-foot (1,673-m<sup>2</sup>) observation tower features 15,823 square feet (1,470 m<sup>2</sup>) of Illumesh. There are 256 LED heads positioned in front of the stainless-steel mesh that project light and color compositions onto the material at night, creating the impression of a 3-D hologram. With 40,655 LED lamps that can be controlled separately by computer, the illuminated robot symbolizes a bright future for the area. 

## Indemann Observation Tower, Inden, Germany

**Architect:** Maurer United Architects, Maastricht, Netherlands

**Stainless-steel mesh:** GKD-Gebr.

**Kufferath AG, Düren, Germany, and ag4 media façade GmbH, Cologne, Germany, [www.creativeweave.de](http://www.creativeweave.de), Circle #80**