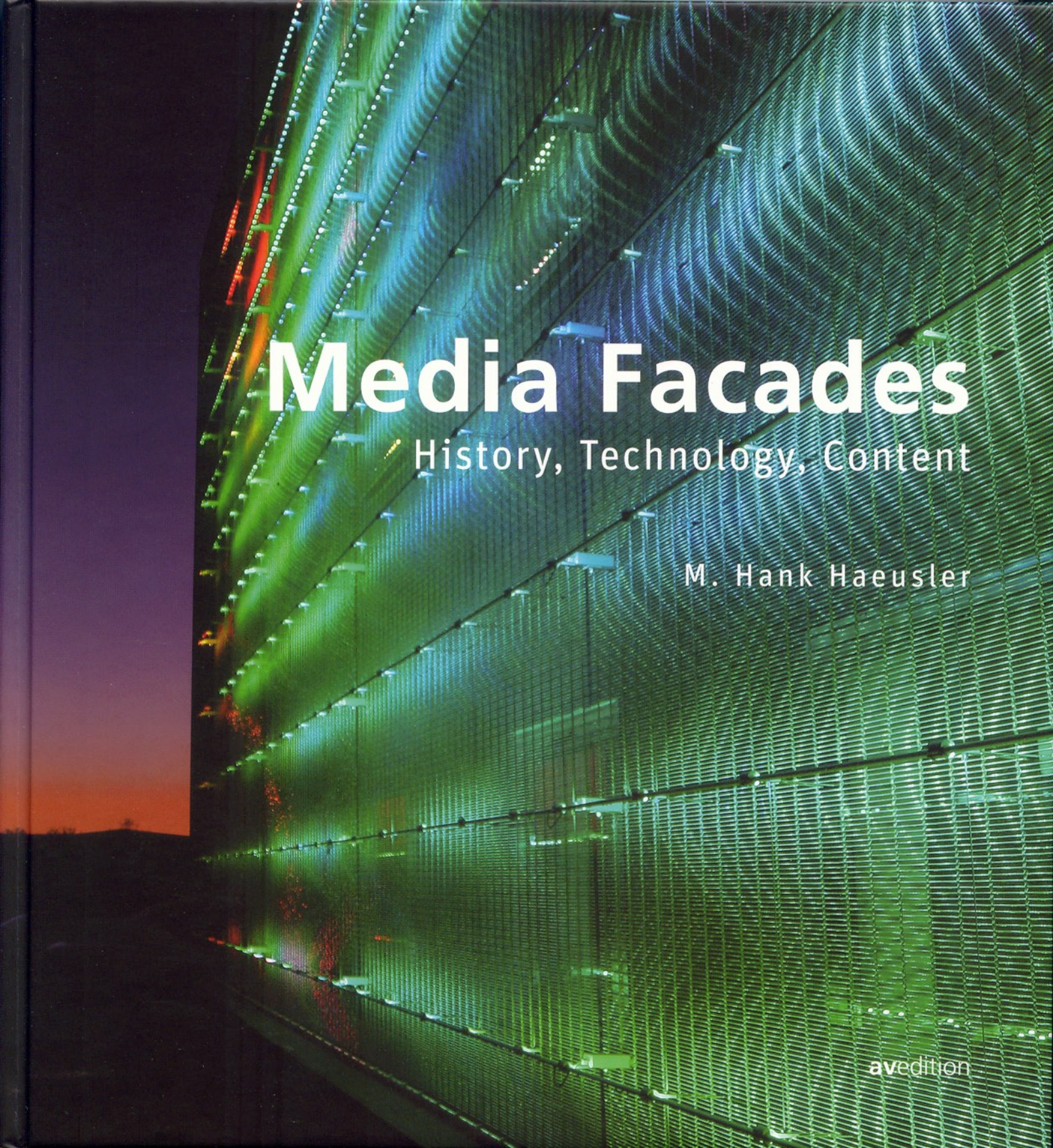
Media Facades
History, Technology, Content
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History, Technology, Content

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with a Foreword by Tom Barker

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Dexia Tower, Brussels

Brussels, Belgium
2006
Philippe Samyn & Partners, M & J.M. Jaspers - J. Eyers & Partners
Barbara Hediger
LAb[au], Laboratory for Architecture and Urbanism
spacecannon VH
spacecannon VH
spacecannon VH

By including RGB LED bars to the Brussels' Dexia Tower, a classic high rise building facade is able to transform into a giant media facade. The RGB LEDs were located at the 4,200 windows on all 39 floors of the building. All the LEDs were grouped per window, allowing greater control over isolating or merging colours on each floor, because the designers perceived the media facade not merely as a flat screen, but used the architectural characteristics of the building as parameters to set up spatial, temporal and luminous concepts realised through different contents.

Based on this concept, it was possible to realise media content projects tailor made for the building. To give an idea of the how the appearance of a media facade can be changed by altering the content, two of the many media content projects realised have been presented here: "Who's afraid of Red, Blue and Green" (2007) and "Touch" (2006).

The concept "Who's afraid of Red, Blue and Green" was based on the idea of the cybernetic tower using the three primary colours: red, blue and green. The first artwork series established a graphical time construct and the second series forecast the next day's weather for Brussels.

The other concept, "Touch" allowed the public to interact directly with the media facade via an interface installed at the bottom of the tower. Using a touch panel, participants were able to alter the colour of the tower and mix elementary graphical elements such as points, lines and surfaces combined with physical behaviours such as growth or weight.

The media facade has transformed the Dexia tower into an interactive landmark. The tower can now present digital art to the city via a number of tailor-made contents, in some cases with public participation.

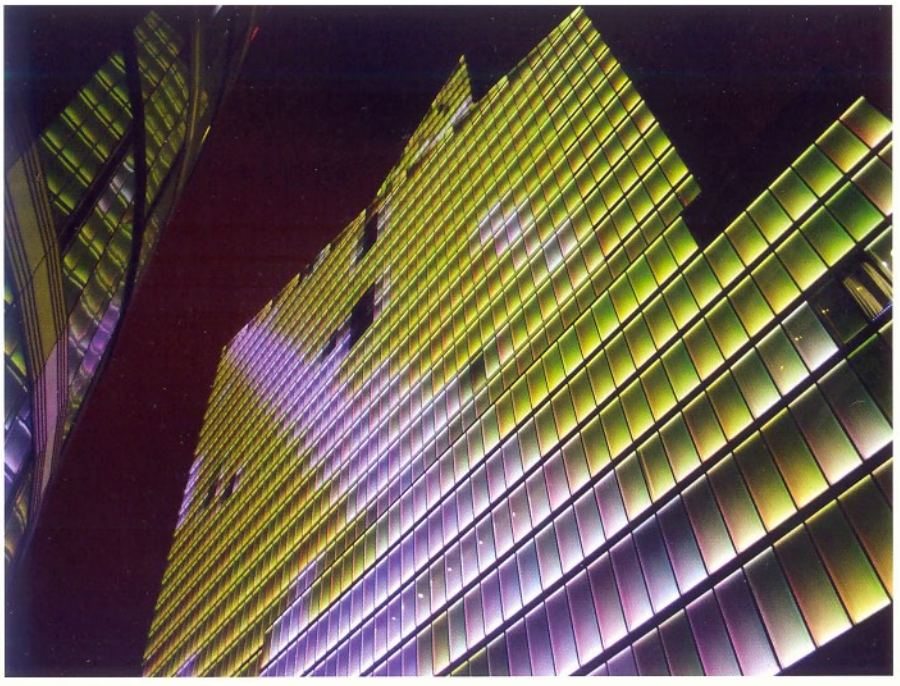

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Fig. 2: Vista of building with "Touch" media content
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Fig. 3: Interactive control panel for "Touch" media content
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Fig. 4: Vista media content "Who's afraid of RGB" media content displaying time 23:00:47
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Fig. 5: Urban surroundings of media facade with "Who's afraid of RGB" media content displaying time 03:45:28
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Fig. 6: Colour code for "Who's afraid of RGB" media content
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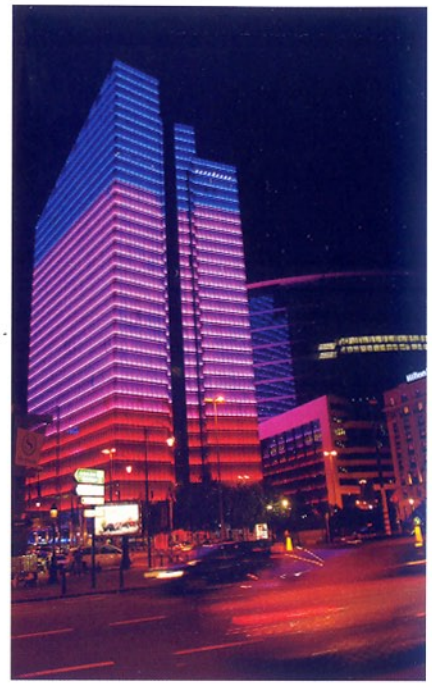

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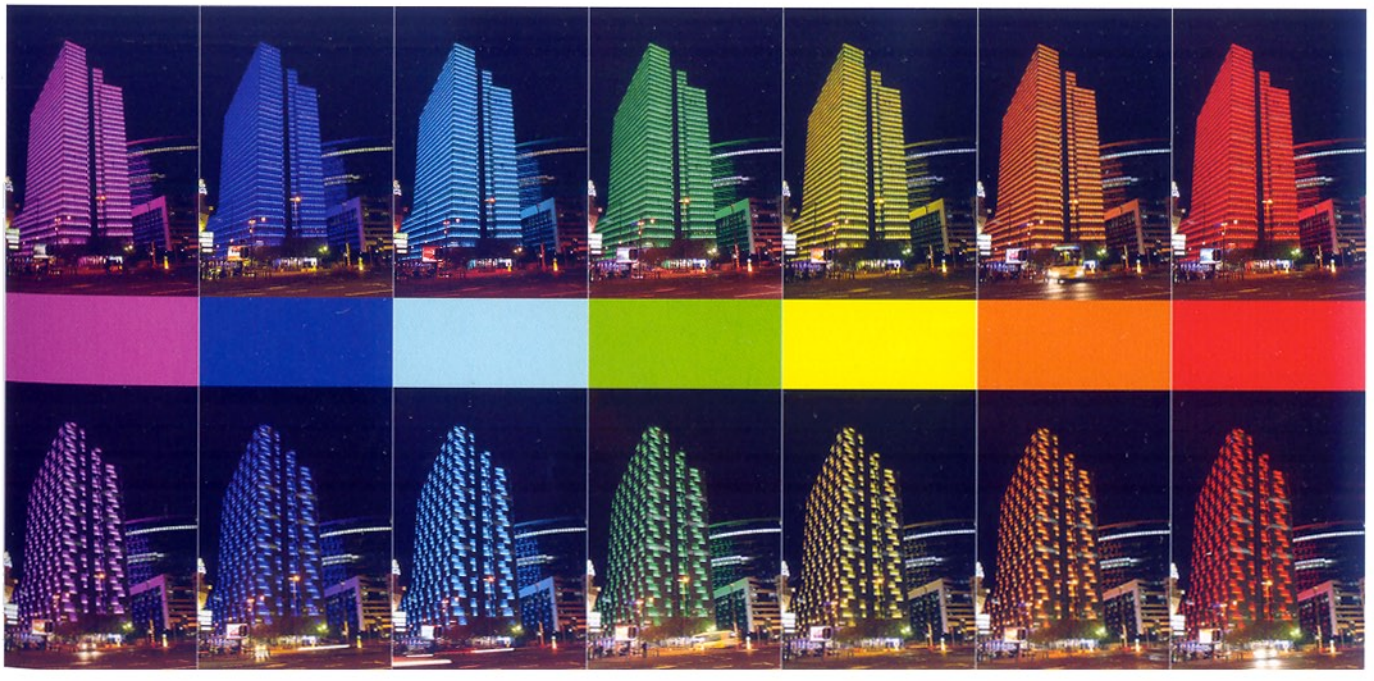

"An ideal introduction for architects and designers to creating dynamic or interactive media facades."

Tom Barker, Professor at the Royal College of Art in London and University of Technology Sydney

The book introduces a canon of media architectural terminology and traces the history of media facades from early examples of embedding media in architecture, like Times Square, New York, and Centre Pompidou, Paris, through to the present day.

State-of-the-art developments are documented by presenting 36 international projects of contemporary media architecture, classified in seven distinct technical categories:

- mechanical facades
- projection facades
- rear projection facades
- illuminated facades
- window raster animation
- display facades
- voxel facades

Each of these seven categories is introduced by explaining the technology on which it is based and describing built examples. Each example is presented in a series of striking photos together with a brief description of the project and the technology used to realise it. An introduction of possible forms of media content based on an analysis of the representational characteristics of media facades rounds off the book.

M. Hank Haeusler, Dr. / Dipl.-Ing. (FH), studied architecture in Japan, the Netherlands, Germany and finished his PhD at the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory (SIAL) / RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, in 2007. From 2008, he is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

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