

The Museum of Modern Art

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The large translucent tent that floats over the Museum Sculpture Garden terrace was especially designed as part of an exhibition devoted to the work of the German architect Frei Otto, internationally known for his innovative and dramatic structures that roof exhibition areas, such as the German Pavilion at Expo 67 in Montreal, outdoor theaters and sports arenas. Ludwig Glaeser, Curator, Department of Architecture and Design, is director of the exhibition.

The tensile structure, originally designed as a retractable roof membrane, demonstrates the structural and formal potential of light weight systems rather than their economical advantages, which are fully effective only at a larger scale. The membrane, made of vinyl-coated Trevira^(R) High Tenacity polyester fiber, is attached to eight main suspension cables which extend radially from a main mast in the form of a 50-foot high inverted "v". Symmetrical along its major axis, the membrane has a slightly inclined dome shape with a low frontal extension and covers an area approximately 64' x 36' or 2300 square feet. At its longest point it extends over the terrace stairs as a visual link between the upper and lower levels of the Museum's sculpture garden. The entire structure can, however, be readily re-erected on a level site as these tensile systems can be adapted for different circumstances and uses.

The exhibition structure was designed by a former associate of Frei Otto, Richard Larry Medlin, Assistant Professor and Director of The Light Weight Construction Center, Washington University, St. Louis, Mo. It is sponsored by Farbwerke Hoechst, Frankfurt, the producers of Trevira, with contributions of L. Stromeier and Company, Konstanz, and of the Foreign Ministry of the Federal Republic of Germany.

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