

GPD The World's Biggest Glass Conference in Tampere Finland 2019

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For some 20 years I have participated in the GPD Glass Performance Days, the world's biggest conference on glass, always interested to learn something new, but also as a speaker and consultant in architectural issues – and I am a great fan of the event. The uniqueness of GPD is that it is the ultimate center of excellence in glass, meeting place where professionals are able to exchange their current knowledge and expand their networks, through cross disciplinary encounters, with people from glass processing and manufacturing, car industry, material and technology development, building and construction, R&D or world's best architecture practices – and establish life time friendships.

It has been very interesting to follow, how GPD has documented the progress of the industry through the years. The 90's was the era of strong growth of coated glass applications. Since then huge technological leaps have taken place. The industry has turned from a local construction material supplier to a significant provider of leading intelligent solutions for today's complex buildings. It has introduced multiple progressive solutions for the increasing environmental challenges and has enabled spectacular innovative architecture, i.e. the gorgeous Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg and Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris.

The expectation for GPD 2019 is that the branch is aware of the fact that the world faces several mega changes, from environmental and climate issues to smart technology in cities, buildings and materials, as well as globalization and cultural effects. The changes inevitably reformulate the societal operations, consequently the urban structures and buildings themselves. The industry has no time to rest on its bearings!

New technical innovations will emerge, even in surprising forms and connections. New sensor concepts and electronics will be integrated into glass. Active glass and active facade performance, media facades and touch-screen applications will appear. Products will become multifaceted and manufacturing will require the input of multiple suppliers but also deeper and wider integration of production and solutions. Different forms of alliances between industries are needed. The ever-changing society and built environment also set continuous, growing and new requirements for the work mode of industry, customer focus and customer service, on-line and remote, glass products and applications. Input is sought from sources external to the glass industry and from small start-up companies with vast unprejudiced innovation potential.

In the beginning in 1992 the GPD was a seminar with 30 enthusiastic participants. Now, after 27 years the GPD has grown into the place where all the strings lead, a conference of 800 yearly participants, all time total of 14.000 attendees, 1.300 speakers, 3.500 presentations and 11.000 pages of information. GPD has also hosted sister conferences in China and Brazil, in addition to a number of smaller conferences in places such as Havana, Cuba, Singapore and Istanbul, Turkey.

The 2019 program consists of 242 presentations. Keynote speakers are from the very top of the industry – Stefan Blach, Partner-in-Charge from Studio Libeskind, Mike Pilliod from Tesla, Sener Oktik from Sisecam. Participants are expected to come from 50 different countries.

Glass is on the strategic edge of the future. I am excited to see what the GPD 2019 brings. As an architect I am waiting to be inspired by new technological and material innovations, as much as by the great work that my colleagues will present.