

Project Profile



Creating a Shopper's Paradise

Application/Building Type:

Retail Store Environment

Project Name:

Grapevine Mills

Location:

Between Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas

Owner:

The Mills Corporation

Design Firm:

Duncan & Miller Design

Featured Products:

CURVATURA™ 3-D Ceiling System

SHEETROCK® Brand Gypsum Panels

ULTRACODE® Core Gypsum Panels



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The sixth in a series of super-regional value and entertainment-oriented super malls, Grapevine Mills located equidistant between Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas, opened to excitement and fanfare. The first megamall of its kind in Texas and the Southwest, it already has impressed thousands of shoppers with its variety of discount retailers and its “entertainment zone,” 60,000 square feet within the 1.5-million-square-foot mall of indoor space replete with restaurants, movie theaters and visual displays that could rival the best nightclubs.

In fact, to achieve such a high-energy space within the mall, Grapevine Mills’ owners, The Mills Corporation, hired a design firm that specializes in entertainment venues such as clubs and restaurants to create the most elaborate entertainment zone within a Mills mall to date.

“They wanted out-of-the-box thinking, so we looked for fresh concepts and the materials to carry them out,” said Turner Duncan of Duncan & Miller Design, the Dallas-based firm that created the look of this part of the mall, which includes a 30-screen AMC Movie Theatre and themed restaurants such as the Rainforest Café and Dick Clark’s American Bandstand Grill.

Unlike the retail area, where the surroundings should not compete with the stores for customers’ attention, the mall was created to bring the customer into a different mood and thought process within the entertainment zone. The challenge was to create a design for the ceiling, corridor and floor that would excite and thrill customers.

This effect was achieved with what could be described as a huge light-and-sound show. High-definition television monitors display continuously changing customized programming. Audio soundtracks run in sequence with the visual images that trip from one monitor to another down the corridor. Theatrical lighting, including “gobo” fixtures—lights that project images through patterned templates—and moving lights keep color and light reflecting and shifting off the floor, walls and ceilings.

“Because the mall’s flat ceiling is 24 feet high, we knew we had to bring it down to a more human scale, break it up and find a way to reflect the light show off various surfaces,” Duncan said. “The forms we used became very important, because they would be an integral part of the space and its composition. We wanted a surface that was easy to create and install and was relatively lightweight.”

Duncan & Miller looked at various ways to create that system, including the use of fiberglass, fabric and plaster forms. They liked the ways they had seen the USG’s specialty ceiling product, CURVATURA™ 3-D ceiling system, used in other applications, and decided it would meet their multiple needs.

“We found we could hang it anywhere,” Duncan continued. “It’s flexible and easily moved when the mall’s needs change. It was easily hung among the ceiling joists and light fixtures and provided a great reflective surface for the lighting system. It also provided a distinctive visual indication overhead when the mall is crowded that this is the entertainment zone.”

Duncan & Miller took advantage of the [CURVATURA 3-D ceiling system's](#) wide variety of panel materials, grid colors and three-dimensional designs, including the perforated aluminum, stainless steel mesh and translucent fiber-reinforced plastic panels and grid in orange, pink and stainless steel. The firm configured them in several ways, from flat, 12-foot-by-16-foot rectangles to 12-foot-by-18-foot waves and gently arcing curves. According to Duncan, all the materials were standard; nothing had to be custom ordered. The firm had acoustical/drywall contractor Integrated Interiors (of Forth Worth, Texas) hang the panels at various heights, mingled with other large forms such as colorfully painted boxes spheres and hooded light fixtures.

Hanging the ceiling panels was more than a notion. According to Fred Baley, senior project manager at Integrated Interiors, the complex ceiling layout was accomplished by laying out each pod on the floor and then transferring the layout to the ceiling area using a laser plumb-bob and the labor of two men. To create the effect of an unsupported ceiling system, Baley took an innovative approach and used barely visible 1/16-inch aircraft wire cable to hang the grid.

"The [CURVATURA 3-D ceiling system](#) fit the high-tech theme here with its hard surfaces and almost space-age appearance," said Duncan.

Other USG products helped support the creation of this exciting environment while keeping costs down. For instance, 3/4-inch [SHEETROCK® brand gypsum panels](#), [ULTRACODE® Core](#), were used around several electrical rooms in Grapevine Mills Mall.

"We used one layer of [ULTRACODE® Core](#) on each side versus two layers of 5/8-inch [SHEETROCK gypsum panels](#)" Baley said. "This was the first time we used it to accomplish a two-hour fire rating. We were very pleased with the results."

Perhaps when visitors aren't being wowed by the ceiling, the light show, the themed restaurants or the intricate design of the stained concrete floor beneath their feet, they may even feel the urge to dance a few steps (a la white-suited John Travolta in "Saturday Night Fever"). Actually, their dance steps may be more contemporary, considering the au courant clubs Duncan & Miller have designed or will design, at least one of which, Duncan says, may incorporate the [CURVATURA 3-D ceiling system](#) in yet another form.