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Art on a crane

Huber Naturstein enlarges Stone Gallery with special self-supporting crane

One of these slabs of natural stone, some looking like works of art, can weigh up to 500 kg – colourful, and with bold structures and thrilling surfaces. Antolini is a large Italian dealer in natural stones and the company Huber from Markt Schwaben near Munich its German partner. Huber has more than 800 different natural stones in stock. What seems like a normal warehouse from outside resembles a well-designed showroom inside. Carpeting on the floor, music in the air. At the top two indoor cranes – painted white, with black hoists, as dictated by the Italian company – with "Antolini Stone Gallery by HUBER" paraded proudly on the crane bridges. Here exhibits are presented in fitting style.

To make better use of the space available in its hall and to exhibit slabs in the narrow area at the back of the building as well, Huber needed a second crane. The prerequisite for a sensible enlargement was an overlap area served by both cranes as it was wanted that slabs could be transferred from the existing crane in the wider, front part of the hall to the new, narrower crane. Stahl- und Kranbau Oeder, a crane-building partner of STAHL CraneSystems based in Southern Germany, extended the existing crane runway on the full-length side of the hall wall and constructed a new 27 metre long crane runway in the narrow part, protruding 3.30 metres into the wider part of the hall. "The challenge here was that the overlapping part of the crane runway had to be a self-supporting structure so that Huber can use the area underneath for its exhibits without supports getting in the way", explains Rudolf Lang, managing director of Stahl- und Kranbau Oeder. The aisle in the overlap area simultaneously serves as connection to the adjacent hall, with rail cars being used to transport the stone slabs to it.

In designing the overlapping crane runway, Rudolf Lang's team had to consider a further aspect: the gap between the existing crane bridge and the new crane runway had to measure at least 0.5 metres. This meant the crane runway protruding into the room had to be installed at a lower height and the crane pulled up on this side accordingly – an unusual solution that Stahl- und Kranbau Oeder had already implemented in similar form

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elsewhere. Rudolf Lang says: "Since we pulled the new crane up, the existing crane can pass the new crane runway. As a result it is possible for the cranes to overlap without entering the safety gap."

Wire rope hoists from the SH series from STAHL CraneSystems serve as lifting equipment on both crane bridges. The other crane components such as control equipment and crane endcarriages also stem from the Künzelsau specialists for crane technology. The stone slabs are picked up with the help of strong grippers or – for particularly sensitive material – with slings. For Huber Naturstein, the investment was worthwhile: the new storage area obtained offers space for more than 40 additional materials, and the elegant, black-and-white crane merges seamlessly into the design of the hall as if it had always been there.

Photos (lead and detailed photos):

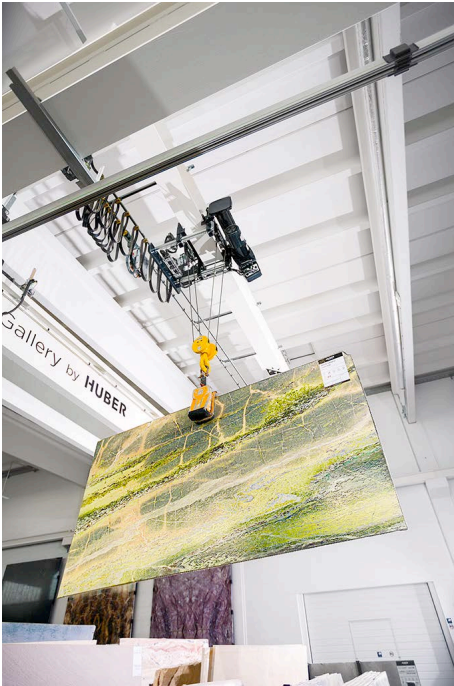


Self-supporting structure: the new crane runway protrudes more than 3 metres into the wider part of the hall. This area can be served by both cranes.

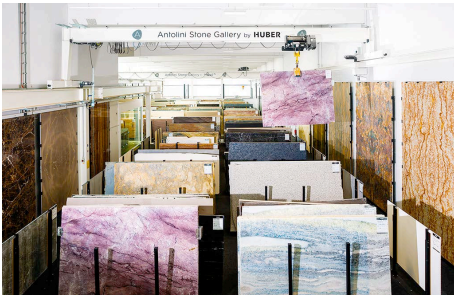


The crane bridge was pulled up on one side – a special solution by Stahl- und Kranbau Oeder.

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Valuable load: wire rope hoists from STAHL CraneSystems in Künzelsau serve as reliable lifting equipment. At the request of the customer, they were not painted – as usual – in green, but in black.



Warehouse enlarged: thanks to the new crane in the narrow, back part of the hall, Huber can now present a further 40 exclusive natural stone materials. The old crane in the front part of the hall can be used further.



A rail car is used in the overlap area to transport slabs to the adjacent hall.