



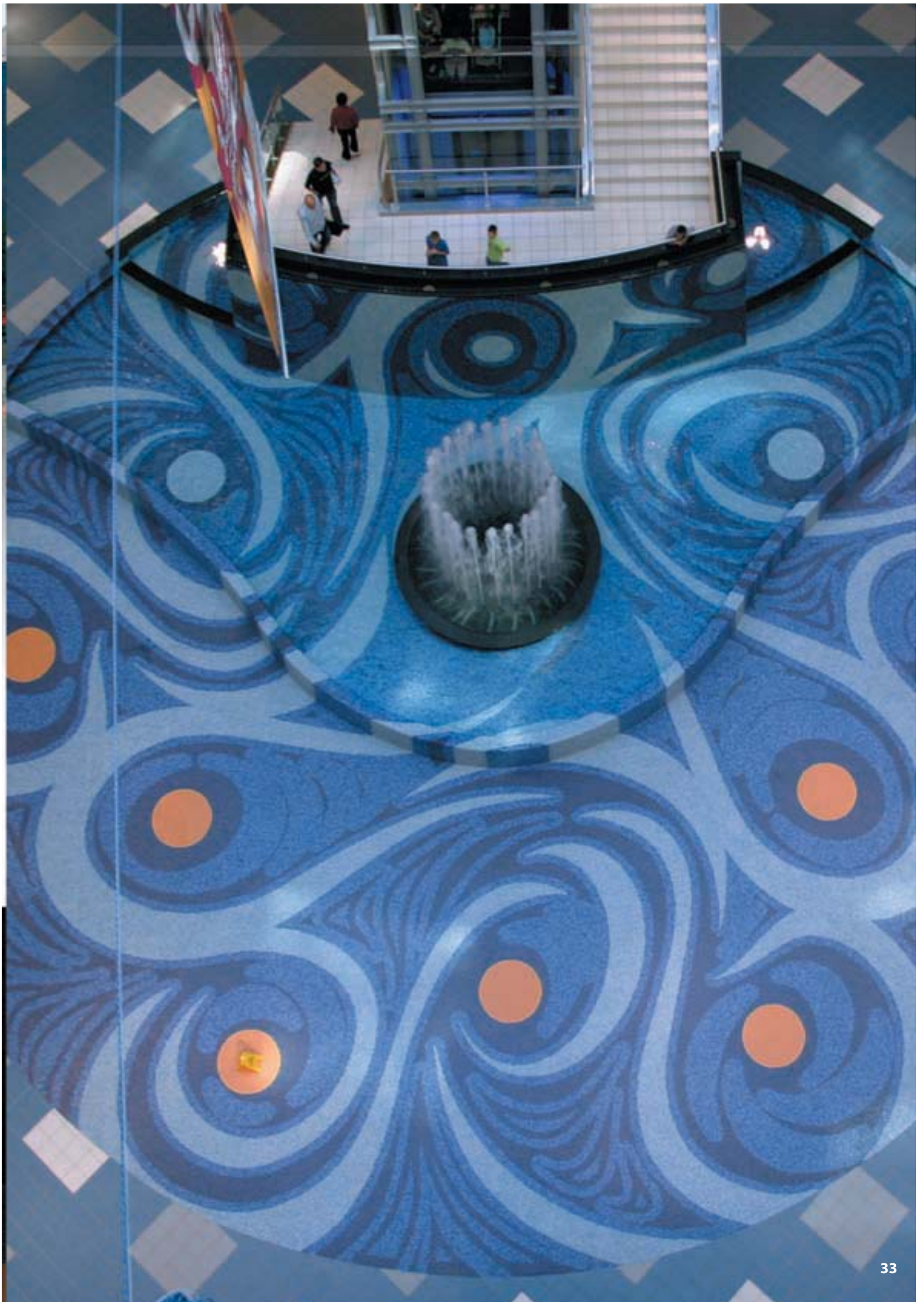
Shopping in the blue giant

Since March 2004 the architecture of Warsaw boasts a new record: on this date the Blue City, the largest shopping and entertainment centre in Poland and in Europe itself, was officially opened. The building is named after its main colour, blue in all its shades which ensure a strong aesthetic impact both inside and outside. This effect is enhanced by the light reaching the interior through the glass roofs and dome.

Beside its strong aesthetic appeal, the Blue City also performs a number of practical functions: it hosts a shopping centre (including around 200 retail outlets), entertainment facilities, a three-star hotel, a business centre, a medical centre, several restaurants, cafés and bars, a multiplex cinema, a night club for top-level concerts and performances, offices and family and children entertainment areas. These facilities are accommodated on five levels on a total surface area of 186,000 m². Moreover, the visitors to Blue City have free access to an underground heated car park for nearly 3,000 cars.

The Blue City has a very interesting and stormy history. The project was initially launched on a grand scale by a Turkish investor. Due to financial problems, the site was later sold to two Dutch companies (belonging to American investors) who preserved the outer shell of the site but completely modified its interior. The gigantic effort of finishing each level, which started in May 2002, involved six contractors. The initial selection of building products did not include Mapei systems but rather solutions belonging to the ranges from other firms (such as Sopro, PCI, Henkel, Schönox and Mira). That is just what pushed Mapei to take up the challenge: with detailed presentations and practical demonstrations on the building site their experts managed to convince the contractors of the reliability and competitive advantages of Mapei products. For instance, they repeatedly pointed out that Mapei's working methods and solutions would maximise the speed and the efficiency of the commissioned works.







For installing ceramic tiles on the floors, the investor initially opted for self-filling tile adhesives with semi-liquid consistency.

Mapei experts instead suggested the use of NOVOPLAN 21* fast hardening self-levelling smoothing compound and ADESILEX P4* high performance, rapid setting, full contact, cementitious adhesive. This combined solution proved to be especially suitable to environments, like those of a shopping centre, daily subjected daily to heavy loads, and was chosen for floor surfaces which required prior levelling. As for the remaining floors, it was initially suggested to perform two-sided applications where the adhesive was spread on the substrate and the tile. This method significantly prolonged working time and increased adhesive consumption. In order to solve this problem, Mapei recommended the use of ADESILEX P9* high performance cementitious adhesive with no vertical slip and extended open time, which was directly spread with a gauging trowel on the tile. Once the superiority of Mapei products was shown on the building site, the contractors decided to use them to finish the 80% of all works to be carried out, namely the installation of around 20.000 m² of coverings.

Mapei was able to meet the contractors' requirements even as for the completion of the Blue City's architectural climax: a fountain, featuring a 26 metre-high jet stream (the tallest

fountain stream in Poland), whose base and walls were fully clad with Bisazza blue glass mosaic tiles. The Bisazza glass mosaic was cut manually at the site and every small piece was carefully selected to match the design. The requirements for the finishing and sealing of the fountain were clearly set: impeccable waterproofing with white flexible adhesive with an extended open time. Mapei supplied an ideal solution: the combination of KERABOND* adhesive with ISOLASTIC* flexible latex additive, a mix which proved to be especially suitable for setting tiles on rounded areas. The joints of the surfaces of the fountain were grouted with KERAPOXY* two-component epoxy grout.

The area surrounding the fountain was also laid with mosaic tiles in different shades of blue. MAPELASTIC* two-component, flexible, cementitious mortar was applied for waterproofing the whole of the fountain area. The use of the above-mentioned products ensured perfect waterproofing and high mechanical strength of the final surface, in addition to a smooth appearance without noticeable shrinkage. Mapei solutions contributed in speeding-up the building works which finished in March 2004. The opening ceremony of this huge shopping centre took place at the end of the same month and paralysed the traffic in the Polish capital. Since then on, thousands of Varsovians enjoy the numerous attractions offered by the Blue City.





In the previous page, photos above: installing ceramic tiles on an internal floor (left) and bonding Bisazza glass mosaic tiles on the surfaces of the fountain (right).

Remaining photos: some areas in the Blue City after completion of the works.

***Mapei Products:** the products referred to in this article belong to the "Products for Ceramic Tiles and Stone Materials" range. The technical data sheets are available on the "Mapei Global Infonet" CD/DVD and from the web site: www.mapei.com.

Mapei adhesives and grouts conform to EN 12004 and EN 13888 standards.

Adesilex P4 (C2F): high-performance, rapid setting, full contact, cementitious adhesive for ceramic tiles and stone material.

Adesilex P9 (C2TE): high-performance cementitious adhesive with no vertical slip and extended open time for ceramic tiles.

Isolastic: flexible latex additive to be mixed with Kerabond, Kerafloor and Adesilex P10.

Kerabond (C1, mixed with Isolastic it satisfies class C2): cementitious adhesive for ceramic tiles.

Kerapoxy (R2T): two-component acid-resistant epoxy grout (available in 26 colours) for joints of at least 3 mm.

Mapelastix: two-component flexible cementitious mortar for waterproofing concrete, balconies, terraces, bathrooms and swimming pools.

Novoplan 21: fast hardening self-levelling smoothing compound for thicknesses from 1 to 5 mm.



TECNICAL DATA

Blue City Shopping and Entertainment Centre,
Warsaw (Poland)

Work: installation of ceramic tiles on the floors and of glass mosaic coverings on the surfaces of the fountain

Years: May 2002 - March 2004

Customers: Singspiel Investerings B.V. (Netherlands) and Anandrous B.V. (Netherlands)

Project: APA Wojciechowski Sp. z o.o.

Work Management: Yoran Reshef

Main Contractor: Warbud S.A.

Installation Companies: Iniect-System S.C. and Roger Preston Polka Sp. z o.o.

Materials: ceramic tiles and glass mosaics (Bisazza)

Mapei Co-ordinators:

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