



**Showcase**

Drapery Solutions  
Mercury  
Theatre Canvas

A new building consisting of five beautiful gallery spaces.

The new MK Gallery in Milton Keynes, designed by 6a architects in close collaboration with artists Gareth Jones and Nils Norman provides spaces for major exhibitions of contemporary and historical art, and for films, music and performances in the Sky Room – a stunning new space which looks out over the adjacent Campbell Park.

J&C Joel was approached by MK Gallery and 6a architects to explore the possibility of producing a series of perimeter drapes for the Sky Room. In addition to achieving the striking design proposed by Jones and Norman the drapes were required to have excellent acoustic, masking and blackout properties, and to be reversible to give the option of a plain backdrop.

Following a series of discussions with the Gallery, 6a, Jones and Norman to understand the brief, J&C Joel advised that the best way of achieving the desired aesthetic would be to digitally print the striped artwork and then self-line the drapes with purple Mercury fabric (MER038).

Next, J&C Joel undertook a thorough sampling process to ensure the correct print substrate was selected. After careful consideration, J&C Joel's Theatre Canvas (PTC001) was chosen by the client based on its texture and natural look.

The design of the curtains required seven very specific colours which would create the horizontal stripes on the face of the drapes. To ensure the output colour (the colour seen once printed) was as per the client's specification, a series of carefully thought out tests had to be carried out. The colour process was reverse engineered to ensure the colours were as required once the ink had been laid down and the fabric had gone through the sublimation process.

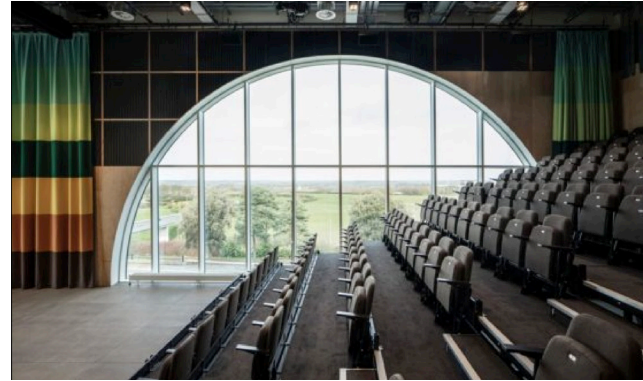
To ensure the stripes were equal, auto CAD drawings were produced which were then used for the drape artwork. The necessary allowances were also added for finishing.

In total J&C Joel produced nine drapes, each measuring 6.60m wide x 6.35m drop, sewn with 50% fullness and lined with purple Mercury (MER038). In addition, J&C Joel produced three shorter drapes designed to sit above the fire exit signs on the fire doors.

A team from J&C Joel's Specialist Drapery team installed the almost 60m of drapery over a two-day period, which included ensuring the track was levelled with the drapes in situ.

The client, designer and architect were all delighted with the end result. Commenting on the drapes, Niki Braithwaite, Creative Producer at MK Gallery noted 'The Sky Room curtains have already become a much loved feature of the new MK Gallery attracting great responses from our visitors.'

Head of UK and Specialist Drapery, Oliver Marns, commented "When I first saw the design render, I was very excited about bringing it to life. After some very intense sampling and then a lot of precision and manufacturing, the end result was a faithful recreation of the initial design. The seemingly endless stripes really do set the room and the venue apart."



**CAD drawings**      **Digitally Printed**      **60m of drapery**

