

Media release

Duebendorf, St. Gall, Thun, 17 September 2013

Transparent, sound-absorbing curtains

High five for award-winning designer

The textile designer Annette Douglas has received another award for her transparent, sound-absorbing curtains, which have been developed in collaboration with Empa. She received the award, her fifth within a very short space of time, from the EU in late July.

The textile designer Annette Douglas was awarded the «EESC European Award 2013» for her sound absorbing curtains, an award which is conferred by the «European Economic and Social Committee» for design excellence and sustainability. With the help of Empa acousticians and the textiles company Weisbrod-Zürcher, she developed lightweight, translucent, fire-resistant and sound absorbing curtains. The British-Swiss dual national has now received five awards for this product; in 2011 she received one of the «Swiss Design Awards» and in 2012 she was awarded the «Red Dot Award – Best of the Best». These were followed by further awards from Los Angeles and Cologne. For the young entrepreneur, the EESC award is a very special honour. «I am very pleased to have received an EU award for a Swiss project,» comments Douglas. Out of a total of 90 projects, five were singled out, including «Silent Space Collection» from Annette Douglas Textiles ACOUSTICS®.

Available in 70 countries

The latest award means recognition for many years of research and development work. The development started as a CTI project in cooperation with Empa. In areas in which people work, talk to each other or want to relax, noise reducing curtains are a necessity. The problem was that until recently only heavy curtains, such as those made of velvet, were available. Annette Douglas recognised this gap in the market and, with the help of new weaving technology findings, developed transparent curtains that absorb five times more sound than conventional curtains. As demonstrated by the great demand and keen interest shown, the idea has been well received by customers. The company sells the curtains worldwide and is represented with a local presence in 70 countries around the world. The production machines run around the clock to manufacture the transparent, acoustic materials. Further collections are being planned and will be completed by the end of the year. Empa acoustician and contributor to the project Kurt Eggenschwiler comments proudly, «Design is usually primarily about how an item is seen, but the products of Annette Douglas also appeal to other

senses. Textile design with a focus on hearing was an exciting challenge for us acousticians. And of course we are thrilled about the awards.»

Text: Dominique Bitschnau

Further information

Annette Douglas, Annette Douglas Textiles, Tel. +41 56 427 33 70, acoustics@douglas-textiles.ch

Kurt Eggenschwiler, Empa, Acoustics/Noise Control, Tel. +41 58 765 41 77, kurt.eggenschwiler@empa.ch

Editor / Media contact

Dr. Michael Hagmann, Communication, Phone +41 58 765 45 92, redaktion@empa.ch



Some of the awards won by Annette Douglas Textiles ACOUSTICS® with the «Silent Space Collection».



Acoustic tests using the sound-absorbing curtain were conducted in a typical meeting room at Empa: the reverberation time was measured using a loudspeaker and a microphone.