

MINI Rooftop NYC

HWKN Architecture & Concept Design

Technology Transfer: From Marine to Architecture



In cities like New York, where backyard space is scarce and comes at a premium, roof-decks can be the perfect spot for an outdoor bar, park, or pool. Yet these structures can quickly become dangerous if they are not built with the proper materials.

Architects from New York-based firm HWKN faced many of the challenges common to roof-deck construction when they set out to design the MINI Rooftop, a marketing experiment for the German car brand MINI. Envisioned by MINI to lure urban consumers with round the clock activities, this “pop up” event space required a water-resistant flooring light enough to meet the building’s strict weight-bearing requirements, yet strong enough to support heavy foot traffic and large objects.

In search of the right solution, HWKN visited Material ConneXion’s Library, where they discovered Kay-Cel, a rigid, high-density composite polyurethane for marine applications that is impervious to water. An added bonus? The material’s UV protective finish kept the floor’s dark color from fading in the summer sun. Cut into square panels and overlaid with LED lights, Kay-Cel proved to be an attractive and structurally sound addition to this innovative urban oasis. ■

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