

Below: Artist Michael Parekowhai's work *Currency of Colour* forms a five-storey internal wall at the Deutsche Bank's new Sydney premises.



REM KOOLHAAS
See why he's so cool on the Wikipedia site.

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Most companies sold the chairman's collection of fine oil paintings long ago. But the walls are not empty in all offices. At Deutsche Bank, they are the new canvas. The bank, which recently moved into the new Norman Foster building in Sydney, commissioned artists to create a series of permanent art installations for its floors.

New Zealand artist Michael Parekowhai covered one five-storey wall of an internal staircase with giant brightly-coloured rectangles that look as if they were inspired by the children's mathematical counting device, cuisenaire rods. Local artist Nike Savvas's work *Cascade* decorates the five-storey internal wall with thousands of shiny blue-and-silver circles, creating a waterfall image as workers descend the stairs.

Other works at the bank's headquarters include a huge back-lit photograph by Rosemary Laing of a bride hanging mid-air over a landscape, integrated into the wall of the reception area. Another wall is lined with hand-blown glass balls. Privacy screens in meeting rooms have playful photographic images embedded.

Art consultant Virginia Wilson, who worked with the architect Blich Voller Nield and Deutsche Bank, says the concept emerged because nothing could be hung on the walls, which are mostly of glass or metal Alcobond. "I think it is amazing that an investment bank has invested in art which can't be sold," she says. Deutsche Bank says it has the world's biggest corporate art collection, with about 50,000 works of art displayed in about 1000 branches and exhibitions.