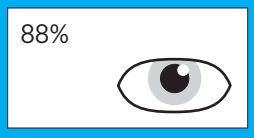
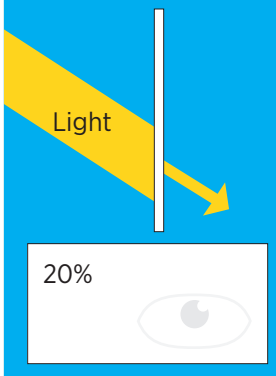
WHY DOES THE GLASS LOOK LIKE THAT?

Seeing the new building for the first time brings puzzled looks from visitors. The glass surface appears solid and opaque. Here is a comparison of glass opacity and how the Nelson walls compare.



Standard clear glass allows about 88% of light to pass through.

The channel glass walls will allow about 20% of light to pass.



INSTALLING THE GLASS

Deceptively simple, the installation of the glass on the Nelson is a precise, highly engineered task.

Cavity contains lighting and ties into heating and cooling system.

Outer glass wall

Inner glass wall

Catwalk

Stack joint: Aluminum framing, designed and engineered by Architectural Systems Inc. of Monett, Mo., holds and separates glass levels

16" wide

8 to almost 18 feet in length

SINGLE PLANK OF GLASS: Up to about 85 lbs.

1. Glass is lifted to workers.

2. Plank is positioned into a plastic insert and an aluminum track.

3. Position is checked for proper alignment.

4. Installers seal joints with silicone rods and caulking.

Inner wall

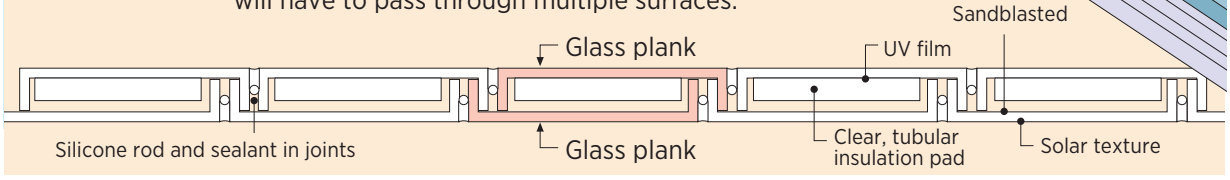
Plastic insert

Aluminum sill

Catwalk

FITTED TOGETHER

The glass planks are interconnected. This cross-section shows how the individual planks will tie together. Light will have to pass through multiple surfaces.



Source: Carter Glass Co.

DAVE EAMES/The Kansas City Star