

press

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Light + Building
The world's leading trade fair for lighting
and building-services technology
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a factor of success_e

Light + Building 2018: Digital, reductionist, refined – lighting for the modern world

The changeover to LEDs over the past few years marks one of the biggest ever shifts in the history of lighting design. Because of the gradual introduction of the ban on tungsten lamps, manufacturers and designers have been forced, in a comparatively short time, to adapt their lighting concepts, not only in terms of the technology, but in terms of form, too. After a few years of 'transition', LEDs have become a well-established standard; and creative new approaches are now emerging from this new perspective on light and lighting that would have been unthinkable up until a few years ago. As a result, designers and manufacturers are no longer focusing so much on the luminaire itself in the design process, but rather, in a smart, experimental and modern way, on what is most important: the light itself.

Light over luminaire

'Form follows function' – this historical design maxim is gaining new significance in the face of today's technical possibilities, combined with currents in modern society and design. Whilst, until a few years ago, lighting design was still concerned with devising the most decorative models possible to create sculptural accents in the home, luminaires can now be seen to be receding into the background. Lamps have, in the main, become minimalistic in form and severely reductionist in design, with colour and materials adapted to the credo of restraint. Lighting itself, on the other hand, has achieved more powerful effects than ever – through colour, directional streams and reflections or the creation of artistic shadows. This continues a trend in which the light is no longer directed in streams or from a visible source, but appears as rays at the edges of objects or bathes the lamp itself in various colour sequences. The body of the lamp, be it in the form of a delicate tube, of reflective surfaces built up in a modular fashion or made of transparent glass, serves principally as a 'housing' for the technical essentials, as well as a physical component across which light becomes visible in a huge diversity of facets.

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Interplay of opposites: organic or geometrical

The visualisation of light is a trend which will undoubtedly continue in the coming years. Nevertheless, lamps remain, as they have always been, decorative objects, too, and their design a reflection of the times. Rather as in the field of furnishings, lighting design concerns itself with the interplay of opposites: natural materials such as wood, bronze, glass or paper are paired with the latest lighting technology, which is often hidden in a variety of archetypal lamp shapes and types. Quality, naturalness and a pleasant lighting effect are at the forefront of concerns. In what is, actually, only an apparent contrast to this, the trend for formally severe geometry continues. In times, when straight lines and comfort are no longer contradictory, but are combined as a matter of course, reductionist, geometrically shaped lamps create modern, restrained accents in living spaces.

Always with an additional functionality: digital and flexible

The digital society of the future will make new demands on light and lighting: flexibility, individuality and digital control are equally relevant to lamp design. As a result, there are already a large number of lamp types that are integrated into the building-automation system or can be controlled via an app. Whether they are digitally networked or a stand-alone solution: their design, that key factor for success, is increasingly determined by additional functionality. There are hardly any lamps now that do not offer some unique 'benefit': some are digitally networked, others provide coloured light; some are sophisticated constructions with weights that keep the lamp balanced; there are those with touch sensitivity or a charging function; others offer a high degree of flexibility through individually movable modules; and there are handy little rechargeable lamps, that provide spontaneous lighting anywhere.

An exciting future

This modern use of the interplay of light, its reflections and the shadows it casts, and the use of translucent materials and experimental lighting are still all just in their infancy. Designers and technicians are increasingly involved in the development of organic lighting diodes (abbreviated to OLED) and also in the use of light as a medium for digital applications and data transmission. The society of the future will depend increasingly on a digital lifestyle and, as is already the case with the smartphone today, the technical complexity in lamp design will become increasing invisible. What matters first and foremost are functionality, the impact of the lighting and self-explanatory individuality in use. We have, therefore, an exciting time ahead of us – for in the process of this development, the role of design will, increasingly, be to respond appropriately to people's emotional need for comfort, creativity and aesthetics.

And Light + Building 2018, too, will be focussing on presenting the latest design trends in the lighting market. The spectrum of products at the world's leading trade fair in its field covers, amongst other things, designer lamps in a whole range of styles, technical luminaires and lamps of all sorts and kinds and for all applications, together with a large selection of technical lighting components and accessories, and including outside and street lighting. They are all to be found in halls one

(Trendspot Design) to six and ten, as well as in the Forum. The exhibitors' design excellence and expertise will be on display in Frankfurt am Main from 18 to 23 March 2018.

Background information on Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. With over 2,300 employees at some 30 locations, the company generates annual sales of around €647 million. Thanks to its far-reaching ties with the relevant sectors and to its international sales network, the Group looks after the business interests of its customers effectively. A comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services. With its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

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