



PROJECTS

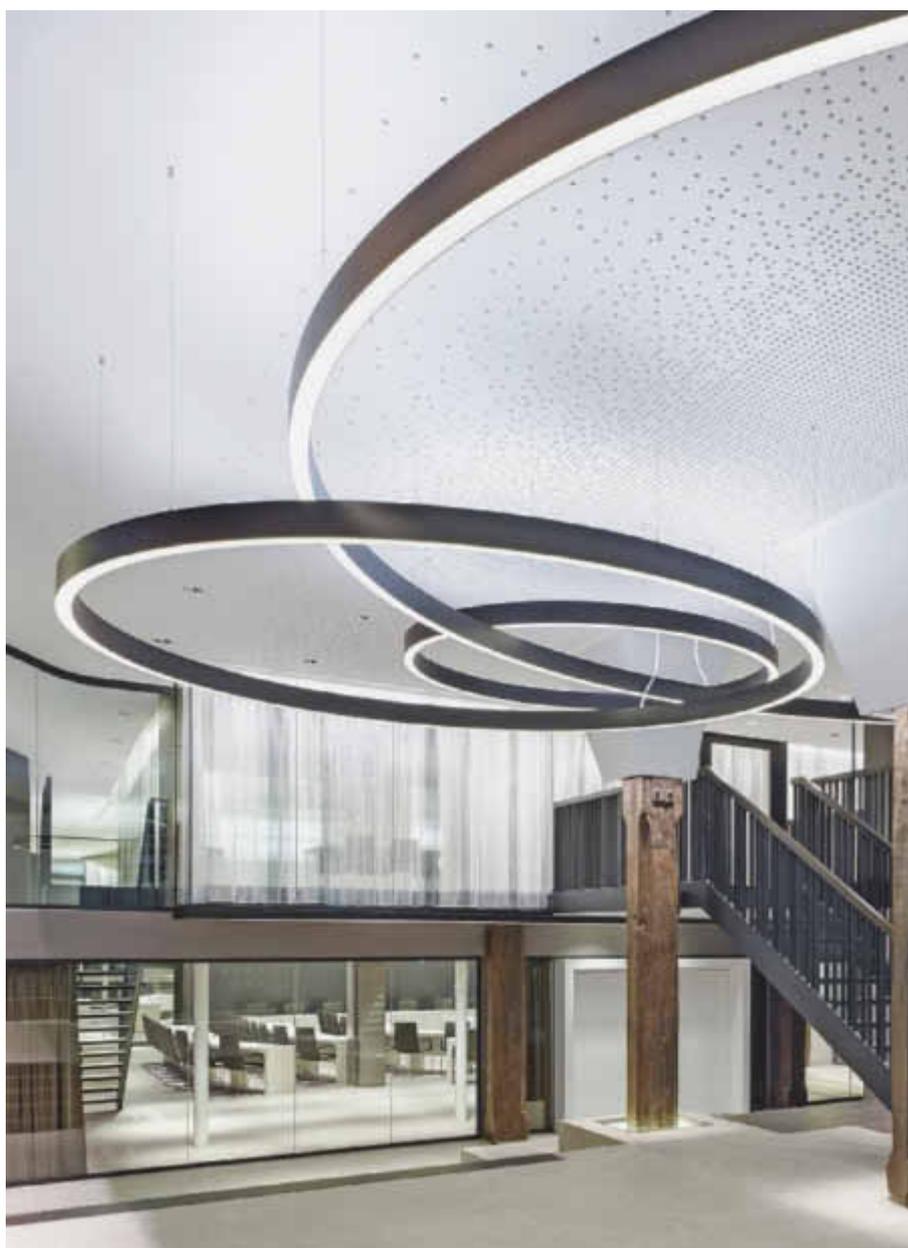
Maritime Museum of Denmark, House E/Germany,
Split House Long Island/USA

TRENDSOUT

Light is Architecture, Milano Stars

REVIEWS

Stockholm Furniture Fair, Euroshop, Ambiente



Studiobesuch bei Georg Bechter

AUS DER FLÄCHE



Dem Raum durch Licht eine Stimmung geben, so umschreibt Georg Bechter seine Vorstellung zum Sinn und Zweck von Beleuchtung. Der Designer und Architekt hat Leuchtenmodule entwickelt, die eins werden mit Wand und Decke.

E English translation on page 94

PEOPLE Georg Bechter fühlt sich handwerklicher Qualität verpflichtet. Zunächst absolvierte er eine Ausbildung zum Schreiner, bevor er im Anschluss Architektur in Stuttgart studierte. Dort betrieb er ab 2006 sein eigenes Büro, bis ihn 2010 der Start seiner Leuchtenkollektion wieder zurück nach Vorarlberg führte.

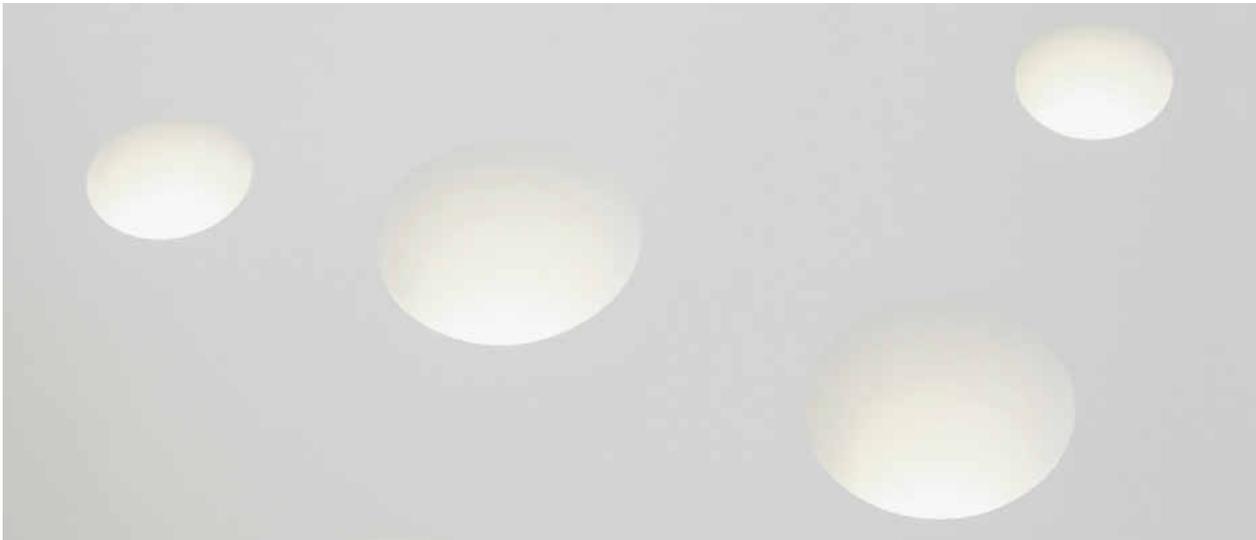
GEORG BECHTER |



Bei Georg Bechter spürt man die Leidenschaft: "Das Schöne bei meinen Leuchten ist, dass letztlich nur noch das Licht sichtbar ist", sagt der Österreicher aus dem Bregenzerwald. Licht wieder als Beleuchtung des Raums zu begreifen und Leuchten auf einfache Art, aber vollständig in die Architektur zu integrieren, das war sein Ansatz, der ihm bis zur Verwirklichung einige Hartnäckigkeit abverlangt hat. "Erfolg und Rückschläge lagen nahe beieinander", erzählt Bechter.

Mit seiner Umsetzungsidee habe er mit Leuchtenfirmen über eine Lizenzproduktion verhandelt, ohne Erfolg. "Als klar war, dass keiner einsteigen wollte, habe ich selber mit der Entwicklung und Produktion begonnen." Im Rückblick vielleicht eine gute Fügung, bis zur Marktreife waren jedoch einige technische Schwierigkeiten zu bewältigen.

Die schlichten Leuchtenmodule sollten sich nach Bechters Vorstellungen einfach in Trockenbauwände aus Gipskarton



Georg Bechter stellt Leuchtenmodule her. Bei 'Verve' scheint das Licht aus einer runden Öffnung zu fließen. Die Module werden flächenbündig verspachtelt, das eigentliche Leuchtmittel sitzt verdeckt in der Wand.



integrieren lassen. Erste Tests mit simplem Gips brachten nicht die gewünschte Festigkeit und Stabilität. "Durch zahlreiche Versuche haben wir Know-how aufgebaut", erzählt Georg Bechter. Heute wird eine hochfeste Gipsmischung, versetzt mit Glasfasern, in eine präzise Silikonform gegossen. Die erste Fertigungsstätte war eine alte Scheune, in der aktuellen Produktionshalle lassen sich auch größere Stückzahlen fertigen. Auch die lichttechnische Seite der Entwicklung war alles andere als einfach. In den ersten Prototypen kamen Halogenleuchtmittel zum Einsatz. "LEDs waren noch nicht so ausgereift", erinnert sich der Architekt. Heute finden beide Arten von Leuchtmitteln Verwendung.

Text: Jörg Zimmermann

Fotos: Baschnegger Ammann Partner, Adolf Bereuter



exposure to light. Without light even transparent surfaces, be they of glass or plastics, will remain opaque. How much light and material influence each other becomes evident not only as far as transparency is concerned. The degree of light reflection, for example, significantly determines the look of many surfaces and makes them shine in various types of light. The same material may evoke most varied impressions, depending on whether for instance a stone lying in the sun is polished or bush-hammered. New developments in the surfaces of colours or films use the phenomenon of absorption or reflection so that they warm up less even under the strong light of the sun. These functional materials do not differ visually from "normal" surfaces. But light can also "destroy" material as can be seen in bleached facades, road signs or older car paints. Artificial pigments, most of all, are problematic when exposed to extremely intense light, which becomes especially evident in the colour of red. But the destructive effect of light on materials is not only of a visual nature. In the case of textiles or membranes developed at an early stage that are exposed permanently and intensively to solar radiation, even decomposition processes may be observed. Many companies are concerned with another problem – the light spectra of modern light sources. So it may happen that suddenly the wall colour will change as soon as the old light bulbs have been replaced. The colours mutate. This example and others show that the relationship between light and material may well be called close. New developments make the borders between light and material disappear increasingly. The material as such becomes light. This is accomplished by various approaches. Thin LED ribbons, invisibly concealed in the frame, emit light sideways onto the surface. This is equipped with special diffusers that achieve the semblance of a homogeneous luminous area although the light source is located at the edge. Another approach was enabled by the ever smaller structure of the light sources, which has taken place in the past few years. In more cases than before, tiny light dots can be directly incorporated, embedded or woven

into the materials. Conductive plastics or coatings, plus wafer-thin conductor paths take care of energy supply. In the end, the current generation of OLED technology becomes lighting material as such. A fortunate side-effect of each innovation is that the limits of what is feasible when it comes to combining light and material or using material as light have as yet not been fully explored.

Text: Hannes Bäuерle

English translation from page 66

Red = Switzerland

A visit to the studio of Moritz Schmid



Moritz Schmid was commissioned to design the seats for Switzerland's presence ("Auftritt Schweiz") at the Leipzig Book Fair. The colour was the only binding guideline – serving as a reminder of all the red benches that you will find alongside the paths in Switzerland.

The wish voiced by the Swiss publishers and bookseller association was simple: "We want a red bench." So Moritz Schmid thought it was clear that the bench as a whole should be red. Signal red was to attract attention and be used not only in the seat area and the backrest but in the supporting frame as well. But the designer knows that not every object will tolerate the colour red. An object such as this had to be formally self-sufficient, and on top of that, "the bench had to look inviting in a likeable way". After all the seating furniture will be encountered in many places in Leipzig's city during the book fair. Forty specimens will be placed in front of churches, book shops and libraries, manufactured by the Swiss RöhliBerger company, which has already developed the interesting 'Etagé' container system for Moritz Schmid (md 8/2013). A big circle of benches will be staged in the Clara Zetkin park, and a goodish dozen will remain there after

the fair. The bench is to visually signal the comfort of an armchair, and the shape alone is to invite people to linger there. So Moritz Schmid asked himself: "What makes seating furniture attractive, after all?" The product designer focused on reduction and volume. Viewed from the front, the surfaces look generous. Seen sideways, the frame sections are drop-shaped. The larger frontal section of the seat area tapers off toward the back, and the back section is mounted in the opposite direction. All parts are made of ashwood, the supporting frame of solid woods, and the sections for seat and backrest of zinc-plated metal sheet to better withstand weathering and to keep production costs low. As far as colour is concerned, Moritz Schmid decided in favour of Pantone 032c, which is not the typical Swiss red but fits the design very well.

Text: Jörg Zimmermann



Moritz Schmid founded his design studio in Zurich in 2008, after having worked four years as a designer and project leader with Alfredo Häberli.

He is 37 years old and studied product design in Basel. He conceives products and exhibitions for companies like Atelier Pfister, Glassworks Edition, Kvadrat and RöhliBerger.

English translation from page 68

Out of the surface

A visit to the studio of Georg Bechter



Georg Bechter sees the intent and purpose of illumination in giving rooms and spaces a mood by the use of light. The designer and architect has developed luminaire modules that merge into walls and ceilings.

When you meet Georg Bechter, you feel his passion. The Austrian from

Bregenzerwald says: "The beautiful thing about my luminaires is that in the end all you see is the light." His approach was to perceive light once again as illumination of a room or space and to integrate lamps in a simple but complete way into architecture – a point of view that demanded a lot of stubbornness up to its realization. Bechter says that "success and setbacks were close allies". He tried to negotiate licensed production with some lighting companies to implement his idea, but without success. "When it became clear that nobody wanted to get on board, I started development and production by myself." Looking back this was perhaps a happy coincidence, but nevertheless quite some technical difficulties had to be overcome until marketability was achieved. According to Bechter's perceptions, the plain lighting modules were to be easily integrated in dry walls of plasterboard. First tests with simple plaster did not achieve the desired strength and stability. "We carried out many tests and have thus built up our know-how", says Georg Bechter. Now a high-strength glass fibre-reinforced plaster mix is poured into a precise silicone mould. The first production site was an old barn, but in the current production hall larger quantities can be turned out. The light-technology part of the development, too, was far from easy. In the first prototypes halogen light sources were used. The architect recalls: "LEDs were not yet technically mature." Today both kinds of light sources are used.

Text: Jörg Zimmermann



Georg Bechter feels committed to craftsmanship quality. He first trained to be a carpenter before studying

architecture in Stuttgart. From 2006 onwards, he managed his own office there, and in 2010 he went back to Vorarlberg to start his own luminaire collection.

English translation from page 70

Bangkok & Integrated Field

Round The World ArchitecTour Series 3



After Ljubljana and Istanbul, our architectural world tour leads to Thailand, but the motto is still the same: one year around the globe. Ambitious architects' studios in fascinating (cosmopolitan) cities open their doors to md correspondent Conny Kestel. As a temporary member of the team, she will gain an insight into their working methods, projects and backgrounds. The studios show their town to the guest from an architect's point of view.

The twelve partners of **Integrated Field** (1) met in **Bangkok** (2) while studying architecture and in 2011 decided to set up an office. Prior to that, the graduates (one of them female) got together to explore what would be feasible, and, in doing so, aimed high. For the competition for the new **Thai parliament** (3), they submitted an amazingly professional project and battled their way down to the final ten. Then it was clear that they would dare to take the plunge and become freelance, but in an innovative, even ingenious way! While some of them stay in Bangkok to hold the fort, the others swarm out to gather as much experience as possible, hone their skills, test themselves, study and work in renowned offices. Three of them are staying in Berlin at the moment. While working on the competition, they were able to learn about their strengths and develop them accordingly. By and by, the group is thus progressively covering all the fields – architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, interior design and management. They see themselves rooted in the tradition of the old polymaths. As in the case of Leonardo da Vinci, who combined comprehensive skills and knowledge in one person, **Integrated Field** is now summing up many interlocking

fields of work under one name. The credo is: "One individual is not capable of much, but many of them can do everything." So the office and the horizon expand in parallel, and those who come back from an expedition, arrive in a well-feathered nest. A small two-storey residential building in an interestingly laid-out estate of terraced houses in a southern part of Bangkok. All guests are warmly welcomed in the patio. In the adjacent conference room, I receive an introductory presentation on **Integrated Field** and my tasks there right at the beginning. The car park, the kitchen and the model store are accommodated on the ground floor. There you take off your shoes. As if you arrive at home. On the upper floors, the former living room and bedrooms, the six "local" partners and five staff members sit at DIY tables. All of them are very young, wideawake and barefooted. They meet at eye level – in a playful, but structured way. All of them are allowed to play a part, voice an opinion, question things.

At IF, that's how they call themselves, questions play a major part during project development. Even their name conceals a question – what IF? Absurd assumptions create free scope for completely new approaches! Being faced with twelve partners, a wealth of views and answers will evolve. And all of them are inspired by Nancy Willard's motto "Sometimes questions are more important than answers". New, right and individual questions govern the search for the heart of each and every project, without a sort of IF Style Guide becoming a model for decisions.

Bangkok's architectural scene spawns remarkably innovative buildings, albeit all of this is inaccessibly concealed behind high walls in the better residential areas. As is the case with the **BAAN MOOM** project (4) by IF. A home where the private rooms on the upper floors are arranged around a triangular stairwell. This makes for leeway on the public ground floor and new paths for air, light and views (5). Fortunately I get a chance to visit the **BRACE** (6) project by IF, which is almost ready for moving in. It's pure, functional, with clear lines and fantastic visual connections. The family of five is now brooding over the last cosmetic