

TLL

A magazine by TECNOLUMEN®





The metal version of the "Bauhaus lamp" designed by Wilhelm Wagenfeld in 1924 and manufactured at the Weimar State Bauhaus.

- ⁴ The Bauhaus Idea
- ⁶ The TECNOLUMEN History
- ⁸ Interview with Walter Schnepel
- ¹² Everything Handmade
- ¹⁴ Design Icon in the Light of Art
- ¹⁶ "Young Designers"

Dear Readers,

In 2019, Germany is celebrating 100 years of Bauhaus. And we are celebrating nearly four decades of TECNOLUMEN. 140 years of tradition – brimming with stories we would like to share with you. And one of these stories starts in Weimar in 1919. Walter Gropius founded the "Staatliche Bauhaus" school, where art and craft are uniquely combined. Interdisciplinary, cosmopolitan and eager to try out new things, regardless of whether in architecture, furniture, photography or silverware – both Bauhaus masters and students created numerous classics.



There can be no doubt that the Wagenfeld lamp is one of these timeless design icons. And it certainly has been our most famous workpiece for almost 40 years.

This is our history.

How did TECNOLUMEN become an authorised manufacturer of this lamp, and who was the founder of the Bremen-based company? Apart from this lamp, which other designer lamps and classics are found in our portfolio, and which philosophy does TECNOLUMEN pursue? We would like to divulge all of the above in the following pages of our magazine. The future needs both the past and the present, and there is no present without the past. We are very pleased to announce the first edition of our TECNOLUMEN magazine TL1 and wish you interesting and informative reading.

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Hin Bredendieck

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Farkas Molnár

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Heinrich Pëus

Hans Przyrembel

Lilly Reich

Margaretha Reichardt

Karl Peter Röhl

Hinnerk Scheper

Oskar Schlemmer

Carl Schneiders

Lotte Stam-Beese

Gunta Stözl

Elsa Thiemann

Wolfgang Tümpel

Wilhelm Wagenfeld

Fritz Winter

“Such resonance can neither be achieved by organisation, nor by propaganda. Only an idea possesses the power to disseminate itself to such an extent.”

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Walter Gropius (1883–1969)



tpk / Kunstbibliothek, SMA, Photothek Willy Romer / Willy Romer

Hannes Meyer (1889–1954)



tpk / Kunstbibliothek, SMA, Photothek Willy Romer / Willy Romer

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969)



tpk / Kunstbibliothek, SMA, Photothek Willy Romer / Willy Romer

As short as its existence might have been, its concept was highly versatile. The Bauhaus school, founded in 1919, was not merely an experimental school with a wide range of educational opportunities in the fields of arts and crafts. The idea also had an impact on the social and cultural spheres of life in that it united a multitude of different voices and transformed itself into something new with each of its directors.



The Bauhaus logo, 1922 designed by Oskar Schlemmer

Bauhaus. A manifesto. The philosophy, which was originally formulated by Walter Gropius, first and foremost encompassed the human being as a whole: artistic, scientific and technical questions were combined with new forms of life and art-pedagogical concepts. The school was intended to enable nothing less than training a new generation of designers. The work done in the workshops and the handling of different materials, guided and shaped by well-known artists such as Gerhard Marcks, Paul Klee and Oskar Schlemmer, remain an educational concept in design and architecture schools to this very day.

The Swiss architect and advocate of functionalism, Hannes Meyer, already head of “Baulehre” (architectural theory) at the Bauhaus school in 1927, opposed the teamwork concept with the “Gesamtkunstwerk” (synthesis of the arts). Instead of “art and technology”, it was now “people’s needs instead of luxury”.

Plywood, steel and aluminium were introduced and practicality was at the heart of everything: chairs had to be collapsible, and cupboards had to be mobile.

After a mere two years, the third and final director, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, followed. His focus was on the function of the school. The production department, built in accordance with Henry van de Velde’s designs, was abandoned, the preliminary course cancelled, and the focus shifted to architecture.

However, it was not Gropius alone who shaped what we today refer to as being “typical Bauhaus”. His successors’ legacy is also found in the clear design vocabulary, the guiding principle of “form follows function”, as adopted by the American architect, Louis Sullivan, and the combination of industrial production processes with creativity in craftsmanship and design.

The essence of the Bauhaus idea was found in the comprehensive education of a new generation of proficient and committed designers. This was done with the objective of revolutionising everyday life and creating a new and better world.

In order to achieve this, Walter Gropius developed the Bauhaus teachings. The traditional form of academic teaching was abolished and replaced by a pluralistic educational concept that promoted the individual development of creative talents and methods. The academic prerequisites for admission were abolished: every gifted young person was to be afforded the opportunity to study at the Bauhaus school – regardless of the school leaving certificate, nationality or gender. Bauhaus workshops were at the heart of the design training, and here the areas of teaching and practice were not considered separately.



Under the direction of László Moholy-Nagy, the “Laboratorium für Design” (Laboratory for Design) produced designs such as the Bauhaus lamp by Wilhelm Wagenfeld and the tea pot by Marianne Brandt, which are still iconic items of everyday use today.

The Bauhaus school was and is so multi-faceted and heterogeneous that deriving a uniform style is impossible. And this is what makes it so interesting and topical to this very day. The democratic idea, the demonstrative forthrightness and modernity, as well as the timeless topicality of the “Bauhaus classics”: all serve to illustrate the social self-understanding. Thus, Gropius’ guiding idea of synthesis of the arts through the collaboration of art and craftsmanship has once again come to the fore. Today, workpieces such as the Bauhaus lamp represent a symbol of the cosmopolitanism and diversity that made the Bauhaus school in Weimar the starting point of an epoch in 1919.

Group picture in the metal workshop at the Bauhaus school in Weimar, around 1924.
Front: Gerhard Vallentin, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Wilhelm Wagenfeld and Otto Rittweger
Back: Marianne Brandt, Christian Dell, Josef Knau, Max Krajewski and the arms of Hans Przyrembel

The studio building of Bauhaus Weimar built in accordance with Henry van de Velde’s designs.



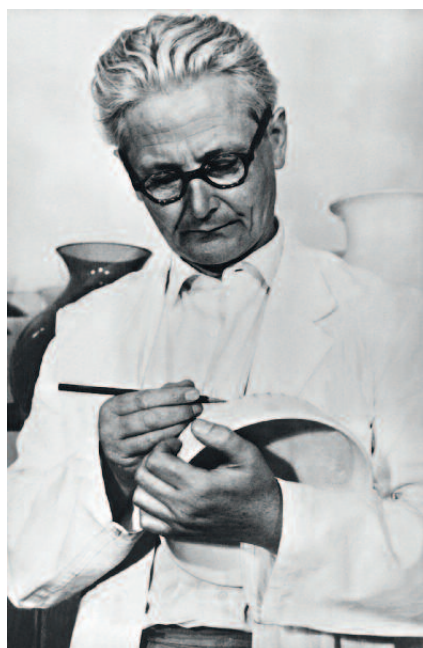
The company moved to Dessau in 1925.



tpk / Kunstbibliothek, SMA, Photothek Willy Romer / Willy Romer

"It's this symbolic character of the Wagenfeld lamp that fascinates me most."

Walter Schnepel



Whether it's about lights, silverware, door fittings or rotary switches; the focus is always on high quality. Manufactured in Germany from high-quality materials and with diligent craftsmanship, it is true to the original and made with the same dedication and enthusiasm as nearly 40 years ago.

WA 24 is a table lamp that was designed in 1920. Its captivation lies in its reduction to its basic elements, making it elegant, functional, uncomplicated and also timeless. And undisputedly, it is one of the most famous Bauhaus objects today.

Walter Schnepel discovered it during one of his many visits to Wilhelm Wagenfeld's studio. It was simply standing there, gathering dust, and it had no manufacturer. "Why had he never had it produced," Schnepel asked. Wagenfeld replied: "Why don't you do it?" And this is exactly what Walter Schnepel did.

This was by no means an easy task, since the production of lamps had never been a part of his portfolio until then. However, he did know everything about asserting himself. Although suppliers were unreliable and furniture stores were not interested – nothing could deter the art collector from selling the lamp. Some technical changes had to be made and cables and sockets have been changed over the decades.

a) Opalglas schirm
mit
Metallhalterung
zu
3 Ankerschrauben
für Formungs-
einfüge nach unten
eingesenkt
Formung oben $\phi 38$

Ring für Schirmhalter
außen $\phi 168$
innen $\phi 164$
Schirm $\phi 162$
Basis

Schirmglas
Vordring
ist unter Innenseite
gebohrt
Sitzanlage
Schirmglas Wandhalter
mindestens 2 bis
höchst 2,75 ist gut

2-25
90°
10°
19°
168
164
162

Wahrscheinlich ist für Isolierkollum-Ring
ein Größe ϕ von 170 erforderlich
zur Befestigung der vertikalen Abschliff-Vollkanten am Rand des Schirms

Some things in life happen unexpectedly. And sometimes something that is supposedly unimportant goes on to become something really big. When Walter Schnepel came across early woodcuts by the artist Wilhelm Wagenfeld in 1976, he knew nothing about a lamp that would lay the foundation for his company TECNOLUMEN.

Details had to be adjusted, and each change first had to be approved by Wilhelm Wagenfeld. Eventually, 250 pieces were produced. And nobody showed any interest.

He placed advertisements in the art magazine ART and in SCHÖNER WOHNEN. Within only three weeks, the lamp was sold out. This is what one calls a promising start. In 1980 Walter Schnepel founded TECNOLUMEN and started serial production.

Today TECNOLUMEN is one of the best-known manufacturers of original Bauhaus models. The first edition of WA 24 was followed by various versions, in addition to co-operations with other Bauhaus artists. Establishing contact was not always easy. With Marianne Brandt, for example, only an indirect

form of exchange was possible, as her home was in Eastern Germany. Despite all this, Walter Schnepel secured the rights to her works – and as a token of his gratitude, he sent the Wilhelm Wagenfeld lamp to GDR museums in individual parts, which were cleared by customs without being unnoticed. Her and others workpieces, such as the BST 23 floor lamp by the Hungarian, Gyula Pap, or the HP 28 ceiling lamp by Hans Przyrembel have meantime become collector's items. And this was not limited to the lamps alone. Founded in 2002, the sister company TECHNOLINE offers door and window fittings, switches and supplementary accessories – designed by Wilhelm Wagenfeld, Walter Gropius and other Bauhaus designers.



This variant of the metal table lamp, created in the same year, has a glass base and a glass rod in which a nickel-plated 10 mm tube leads the supply line. An old drawing and an original lamp were available for construction. This way, with the new production, the exact dimensions and proportions could be kept.



Whether it's about lights, silverware, door fittings or rotary switches; the focus is always on high quality. Manufactured in Germany from high-quality materials and with diligent craftsmanship, it is true to the original and made with the same dedication and enthusiasm as nearly 40 years ago.

“Finally, when everything was ready, the German furniture stores didn’t want to sell the lamp – and so we had to market and distribute it ourselves, which actually wasn’t part of our original plan.”

Walter Schnepel

“I could not live without art.
I must have it around me.
I cannot explain it.”

Walter Schnepel

Walter Schnepel founded the Bremen lamp manufacturing company TECNOLUMEN in 1980. In an interview, he speaks about the Bauhaus idea, a spontaneous visit to Wilhelm Wagenfeld, and the appeal found in designing things yourself.

You came to Bauhaus through art. As an art collector, you initially started with Classical Modernism paintings and subsequently went on to purchase mainly Fluxus works – what parallels do you see between Bauhaus and Fluxus?

That is difficult. I would say delete the question, because it's not possible to explain everything. In general, we only ever know this geometric Bauhaus school style, but that's not the whole story, because Bauhaus also had its expressionists. Take Paul Klee, for example. In which category would you sort him? We always measure the school by the results in architecture and design. However, in combination with art you have to take on a different perspective. You will find artists who have worked quite differently, expressionistically, with almost surreal works. Even Gyula Pap's work was expressionist later on. The visual artists at the Bauhaus school are not only abstract or "hard edge", as the English call it. Only Kandinski and Moholy consistently painted abstractly. I recently discovered Paul Klee and Hans Arp in a Swiss exhibition on surrealism. There are amazing connections. Bauhaus and Fluxus share the common idea of moving away from decoration. If you are searching for a concrete connection, intellectual spirituality could be mentioned as one. At the beginning of the Bauhaus school, the parallel DADA movement, as found in Zurich, existed, and it naturally also had its influence on Bauhaus artists. Fluxus, on the other hand, has its roots in DADA art. It emerged from both concrete and abstract poetry. Fluxus is still not a descendent of the Bauhaus school, but just as widespread, because there are expressionistic and, in part literary, works. Kurt Schwitters and, if you wish, even Christian Morgenstern and Bauhaus; everything is so closely interlinked that it's basically impossible to answer the question unequivocally. And yet you can find a small reference to the connections, an artist who always carried the whole thing from the 1920s up to Fluxus: Marcel Duchamp. He made a great deal of concrete, but also surrealist art. In this respect, I consider Bauhaus and Fluxus not to be so far apart from one another.

You once said: "Art, design and music are media for communication, not a language that can be logically learnt or even translated". Does the idea of the Bauhaus school, with its credo of "form follows function" oppose this? Does it in fact promote this intellectual confrontation?

Yes and no. Even those designers who were formative for Bauhaus, appreciated artefacts by unknown craftsmen, such as everyday objects found in rural culture. These objects also satisfy the credo of "form follows function", yet without any intellectual aspiration. For me, art is a means of communication that cannot be translated. You have to imbibe art holistically, with emotional intelligence. When I was a little younger, I worked for TECNOLUMEN out in the field. Whenever I was shown a plagiarism, I said: "Put our lamp next to it." If the customer sees and understands it, he will buy our lamp. If he doesn't see it, we hope he will become happy with his plagiarism. That worked. It cannot be explained. It's about proportions, about something abstract – you have to feel it. You don't even have to know what's right or wrong with the object. Insignificant designs are also found among the Bauhaus work-pieces, although they supposedly follow the rules. It becomes particularly clear in those small goldsmith's works. For me, Marianne Brandt is a great artist in this field. She has designed things that I consider to be highly emotional. Of course, there are explanations about the pieces, the material used and the form, but these explanations were certainly provided afterwards.

Bauhaus was a school and conveyed not only the creative aspects but also a certain idea of looking at the world. Do you see Bauhaus as a kind of philosophy of life, the spirit of which can still be conveyed today?

In some ways, yes. It is difficult to say, because they are grey areas. Many appreciate the Bauhaus design, own a Wagenfeld lamp and have furnished their home accordingly. When I walk through antique shops in Budapest, every square cupboard there is assigned to Bauhaus, although the "square" alone says nothing at all. And yet, very few people know that Bauhaus was a school. There are excellent buildings designed by Hungarian Bauhaus architects, an entire street in Budapest, the napraforgó utca (Sunflower Street). This, for example, arose slightly later than Bauhaus, in the early 1940s. However, the way in which these buildings were renovated, does not correspond to the Bauhaus spirit. Today, Bauhaus serves as a role model for many. You don't have to do things the same way, but you can learn from it. You can't learn it schematically; you have to feel it. There never were any real rules anyway. Dieter Rams, for example, did not learn at the Bauhaus school, he nevertheless captured its spirit. His designs came from the Bauhaus idea.

Can Bauhaus be found in your company?

Hard to say. Some employees have understood what our work-pieces are all about, and it's definitely visible through the furnishings and products. You can feel Bauhaus if you want to. With "Young Designers", it is our gut feeling that decides whether or not we want to include their designs in our programme. We always have the entire collection in mind. This way, the new designs harmoniously fit into the existing collection.

It was not Bauhaus, but woodcuts that drew your attention to Wilhelm Wagenfeld in 1976. What inspired you about these pictures at that time?

I discovered these expressionistic woodcuts by chance in an archive in Worpswede. At first I was surprised, because I only knew Wilhelm Wagenfeld's later works and his designs for Lindner. I then spontaneously visited him in Stuttgart and we talked for a long time, whereby he dismissed the early woodcuts as a "youthful indiscretion". I can only remark: an adroit "youthful indiscretion". He had a few more, too. Some I eventually bought, because I believe they belong to the complete works of Wilhelm Wagenfeld.

The initial production and distribution of Wa24 was not easy. Material broke or couldn't be used, and no furniture store was interested in this cool design. Nevertheless, you sold the already produced 250 pieces within three weeks. Were you always convinced of the success?

Yes. An anecdote: In a telephone conversation with my wife, who was still living in Sweden at the time, I asked for the address of the Arts and Crafts Museum in Gothenburg in order to send a publicity flyer there. I was convinced that this museum would buy a lamp. And, after a few days, I received the order for a lamp from the Röhsska Museum in Gothenburg. Naturally, such a project is based on the conviction that it will be a success.

Copies and counterfeits are an issue that has accompanied you since the late 1980s. Is it still a nuisance?

The situation has not improved and has become even more complex owing to the possibilities provided by the Internet. Putting a stop to this is hard. In other countries, different legal frameworks apply. One can only hope that people will be able to distinguish between the original and a plagiarism.

There have been changes in the technical field: the good old incandescent lamp has been replaced by more efficient LED light sources. What has changed for the lamps as a result?

Nothing has changed in the Bauhaus lamp's design. In new designs, the current technical possibilities are integrated into the design.

Speaking of changes: With a view to the current design and furnishing style, does the Wagenfeld lamp fit into today's living rooms?

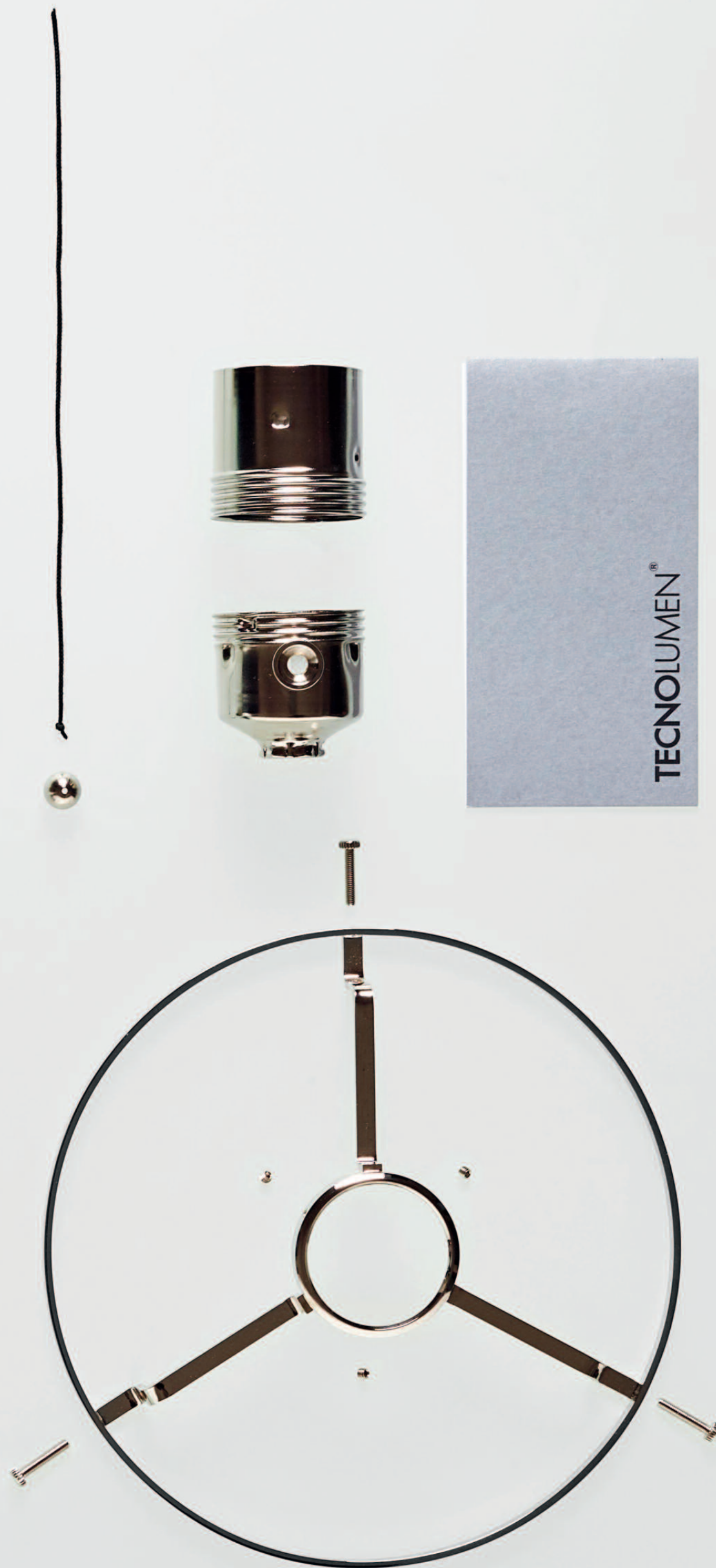
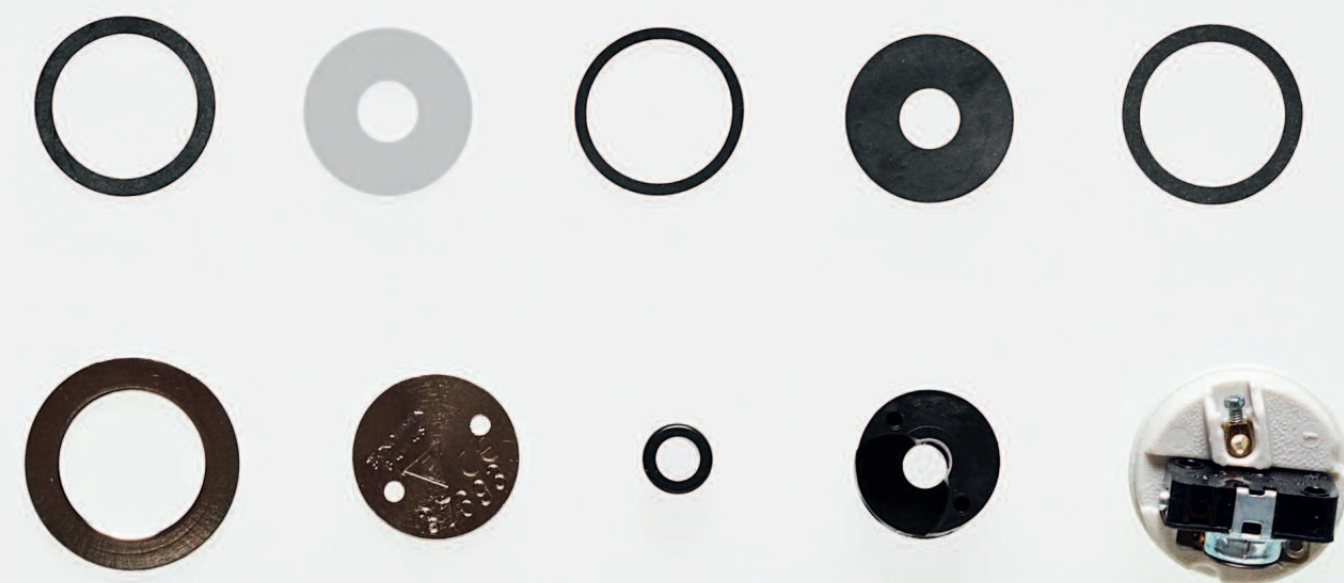
It always fits in well-furnished homes, even though I think that furnishing trends are artificially produced today. Presently, it has to be expensive, yet look shabby – absurd. It's the same with contemporary art. Many things are very strained. One thing I observe with great regret is that we have fewer and fewer furniture stores. Meanwhile, people are buying on the Internet.

With your company TECNOLUMEN, you don't only sell the famous Wilhelm-Wagenfeld lamp, you have also designed lamps yourself – what attracts you, personally, to design your own objects?

There was something missing in our collection at that time, and we wanted to extend our offer. Hence, we designed the lamps with fabric shades. Of course we could have commissioned someone. But by designing it ourselves, we were able to use what was already there. Some designers have no idea of the technology and therefore do not know what is possible. In addition, the idea of applying what I had learnt through my intensive involvement with Bauhaus designs and to create something of my own appealed to me. Design has something to do with emotions. And if you use the golden ratio, nothing can go wrong.



Walter Schnepel, founder of TECNOLUMEN.



What Wilhelm Wagenfeld may have perceived as a painful contradiction is today an expression of highest quality and longevity. The basic materials are glass and metal, as was the case back then, and in the re-edition published by TECNOLUMEN in 1980, only minimal changes were made to the original design. In coordination with Wilhelm Wagenfeld, these changes were due to popular taste preferences on the one hand and, on the other, a result of constantly changing technology. The radius of the base and the plate thickness was reduced and the glass dome was placed slightly higher.

This allowed the implementation of Walter Gropius' basic idea: mass production, while complying with design principles. Of course, the Bauhaus lamp is still not a mass product. It cannot be, because as a manufacturer, TECNOLUMEN places highest value on reliable quality and sustainability. The individual parts are produced mainly in Europe and especially in Germany. The lamps are assembled with great diligence in Bremen. The company avoids globalised structures – nevertheless, it is internationally renowned.



TECNOLUMEN's understanding of sustainability has developed naturally and pragmatically. Short transport distances on the one hand, outstanding quality of the individual parts received from manufacturers with whom the company has been working for many years, and the careful assembly of the finished lamp on the other, stand for substance and perfection. "All our designer lights are numbered and VDE-certified. This guarantees the authenticity and safety of our durable products," says Carsten Hotzan, managing director of TECNOLUMEN. And he continues: "In addition, unlike other lighting suppliers, we can guarantee our customers availability of precisely-fitting spare parts for decades."

When Wilhelm Wagenfeld designed his table lamp in the Bauhaus workshop following a task issued by Moholy-Nagy, the requirement was clear: the result should be an industrial product, i.e. one that could be mass-produced by a machine. And the material and design vocabulary actually correspond to the idea of the machine age. Only, manufacturing reality was different. WA 24 was produced as a mini-series for the 1924 Leipzig Autumn Fair in handmade concentrated and elaborate craftsmanship. And this is still the case today.



However, it goes without saying that traditional, handcrafted production does not mean standstill. The company reacts very sensitively and attentively to technical innovations in the lighting market. And this is always done with the purpose of making our own design lamps shine in the best possible light.

“You can’t make them better,”
 Dieter Roth established when Walter Schnepel
 handed him a WA 24,
 “but you can always use a lamp.”
 That was in 1995.

So what was the thought behind everything that Walter Schnepel had when he gave Wa 24 to Dieter Roth and to 31 other artists in the course of the following few years? As Peter Frieze makes clear, it's

neither about “re-examining the proximity, or even the congruence of art and design,” – and one might almost want to add: “unnecessary” – nor about a ranking list. No, it's about something else. It's about the design icon as an “object of artistic interest,” about “opening up and debating a field of experimentation”. It's about “using the means of art to raise an outstanding design

product to another level of aesthetic reflection that is traditionally reserved for art”. In other words: Walter Schnepel delivered a Wa 24 to 31 artists and received one work of art from each of them in return.



Jochen Fischer, o.T., 1998

31 individual confrontations with an object. Revised, commented, reinterpreted, alienated, sometimes ironic, sometimes appreciative, and sometimes grotesque. Within twenty years, a diverse collection of works was created,

starting from a work that was considered ideal-typical and unsurpassed in its perfection of form. Jochen Fischer, for example, completely covers the lamp with wicker, thus seemingly making the icon disappear fully – yet not without making it reappear through a sensual play of light. Fritz



Fritz Schwegler, o.T., 2000

Schwegler humorously puts a fool's cap on the Wagenfeld lamp. And Susanne Windelen fills the perfect smoothness of the lamp with white plastic resin, mixes the mass with fluorinating particles – and in her way places the lamp's luminosity at the centre. Aldo Mondino performs an art-historical rearrangement, hanging two Bauhaus lamps with ballpoint pens and calling his work “Jugend-stilo”. Daniel Spörri, on the other hand, removes the lampshades and reinterprets the glass covers in his black-and-white photography – an object of pleasure instead of a luxury item. This way, especially workpieces that tran-



Susanne Windelen, o.T., 1998

scend boundaries and taboos were created. Workpieces that question the regularities of beauty and function and juxtapose static objects with a dynamic element – an idea that is also inherent especially to the Fluxus movement. And Dieter Roth? Eventually, he placed his

Wa 24 on BAR no.1, put a beret on it and poured red paint over it. In his work, which is subject to constant change, he thus sets a counterpoint to the timeless quality of the Bauhaus lamp. Change and

rebelliousness instead of equality and perfection. Above all, however, as a result of all its interventions, in all of its transformations, the Bauhaus lamp acquires a symbolic meaning, thereby extending its function and beauty, and becoming an “object plus y”.

The collection has already been shown in:

Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen
 Kunstverein, Plön
 Kiszelli Museum, Budapest

From June 2019
 In the „Centrul de Interes“
 cluj- napoca, Klausenburg, Romania

Contemporary lamps by “Young Designers” also find their place at TECNOLUMEN. They have always complemented the company’s collection of lamps. Carefully selected, these works fit into the product portfolio, which is still characterised by the Bauhaus design spirit today.



Oliver Niewiadomski
Floor lamp “Bulo XL”

well thought out, refined and always functional – Oliver Niewiadomski translates mathematical concepts into a trenchant design vocabulary. The same applies to the “Bulo XL” floor lamp, which can be rotated on its base according to individual taste and needs; functionality with an aesthetic effect. The industrial designer and professor of constructive geometry designs lamps but also furniture and entire room concepts with a minimalist look and feel.



Joachim Manz
pendant lamp “Trabant 1”

Surprising, precise and almost alive – with his luminaires, Joachim Manz creates intense plays of light that dissolve the boundaries between form and space. The free-lance sculptor uses fine concrete to cast luminaires such as “Trabant 1”, which seems to look down, seemingly curiously, from above. The Bremen artist places sculptures in public domains, builds architectural miniatures and designs objects for use.



Lena Schlumbohm
Desk lamp "Jella"

Straight-lined, modern and highly flexible – her desk lamp "Jella" did not only appeal to TECNOLUMEN. With her reminiscence of EB27, designed by Eduard-Wilfrid Buquet in 1927, Lena Schlumbohm has won several design prizes, including the "interior innovation award 2014". The process and product designer from North Rhine-Westphalia studied in Regensburg and Aachen.



Christian Schmidt
Pendant lamp "Theia"

Contemporary, dynamic and always open for something new – Christian Schmidt finds his inspiration in many places. It's not without reason that his pendant lamp "Theia", for example, is reminiscent of pebbles, when viewed from the side. But even though many important influences, such as functionalism, Art Deco or the Memphis Group, are found in design craft, the designer always remains committed to the Bauhaus spirit with his company zenolicht GmbH.



Mathias Schifferdecker
Light object "Cubelight"

Clear, reduced and playful at the same time – the "cubelight" is more of a light object than it is a luminaire. Mathias Schifferdecker's designs are based on Bauhaus architecture and, like Bauhaus, they are puristic and timeless. The combination of technical and playful aspects is an important characteristic of the engineer and designer's objects, which with his cubes made of the classic materials glass and stainless steel invites to individual design.



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TECHNOLINE®



In 1928 Wilhelm Wagenfeld designed the WD28 door handle based on an original hand sample TECHNOLINE (then TECNOLUMEN), together with Prof Wagenfeld, resumed production of the model in 1982.