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Re-edition: Midgard's Machine Lamp to be Produced Again

The renaissance of a milestone in classic lamp design: first produced in the 1920s under the Midgard brand by Ronneberger & Fischer, the Machine Lamp was one of classic modernism's first adjustable lamp designs. Marking the relaunch of the Midgard brand in January 2017, the work lamp designed by the brand's founder Curt Fischer is being produced again: an extremely versatile light source, thanks to its modular construction and configurability. As part of the PASSAGEN programme during imm cologne, the Machine Lamp will be presented in different versions including a table, wall, ceiling and floor design.

A special feature of the Machine Lamp are its maintenance-free joints. Curt Fischer had found a solution to ensure that the screws of the lamp's adjustable arm would not loosen and hence would need no re-tightening, even when the arm was subjected to frequent movement. Lighting experts David Einsiedler and Joke Rasch were thrilled by this design and, when they acquired the original tools in 2015, were extremely lucky to also receive many of Fischer's hand-drawn plans. "We build in keeping with the historical context", state Einsiedler and Rasch when talking about the Midgard revival, thus highlighting a forgotten part of design history. The founders of the Hamburg-based PLY company recently acquired all rights to the Midgard brand, including the archive and the tools for the three classic Midgard lamp ranges. The Machine Lamp is the first range of lamps from the Midgard portfolio that is now being produced again. Re-editions of Fischer's Adjustable Lamps and Spring-Balanced Lamps will follow in the course of 2017.

As in the past, the Midgard lamps are defined by superior functionality, superb workmanship and inventiveness. Available immediately, the Midgard Machine Lamp is still being built in the spirit of its inventor, as a modular and configurable design and comes as a table, wall, ceiling or floor lamp. Customers can choose between different arm lengths and between various types of shades and colours, according to individual requirements. The lamps and all their parts are produced in Germany, using the original tools and techniques: the die-cast aluminium joints and the hand-cast shades are assembled in Hamburg.

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The Origin: Necessity as the Mother of Invention

Curt Fischer, who founded the Midgard brand in 1919 in the Thuringian town of Auma, was the owner of a factory where machines for the production of industrial porcelain were built. Unhappy with the lighting situation in his factory, where the overhead light cast the shadow of the workers' bodies, obscuring the pieces they were working on, he developed a solution to this problem: adjustable lamps. Initially, the Machine Lamp was directly mounted to the tools and facilities, but, throughout the decades, many different designs were developed for various applications: the adjustable and configurable lighting system was later used in doctor's surgeries, on architects' desks and at home.

The design of the Machine Lamp is based on the well-known No. 113 and No. 114 Adjustable Lamps, with which, among others, the metal workshop at the Bauhaus was fitted. When taken under state control in the former GDR, the company (which had been renamed) continued to produce the Machine Lamp, but due to the poor supply of raw materials, the quality did not live up to its former incarnation. Only after the reunification of Germany was Curt's son, Wolfgang Fischer, able to produce the Machine Lamp again according to his father's design. And this is also the design on which David Einsiedler and Joke Rasch's re-edition of the Machine Lamp is based.

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