



Structuring information with ERCO light: "No Beer without the Alster Lake" in the Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte

The venerable Hamburg Museum celebrated brewing culture in northern Germany with a special exhibition. The organisers succeeded in showing this cultural history topic in a concise, surprising and entertaining way – with a guidance system of striking graphics and pinpoint accent light from ERCO.

Project data

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| Project: | „No Beer without the Alster Lake“ exhibition in the Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte, Hamburg / Germany |
| Architecture: | Fritz Schumacher, Hamburg / Germany |
| Exhibition design: | IIID brand communication, Hamburg / Germany |
| Photography: | Sebastian Mayer, Berlin / Germany |

On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the German Purity Law, the "No Beer without the Alster Lake" exhibition focused on the culture of brewing in northern Germany. The exhibition, displayed across a compact 620sqm, ranged from the beginnings of brewing in ancient Egypt to medieval times and today and displayed around 400 diverse exhibits. To master this level of contextual and formal diversity in this small space was a major challenge for the exhibition concept. The IIID brand communication design studio in Hamburg created an attractive guidance system consisting of only two design elements for concisely structuring the content and guiding visitors through the show. Striking yellow lines marked the way across the floor and up the walls to the exhibition texts on the one hand. On the other, these "beer paths" served to structure eleven roughly chronological themes concerning the brewing process and beer culture, for example "barrel and barrel makers", "pubs and beer halls" and "Hanseatic breweries". The second essential design element was rich-contrast accent lighting achieved with just a

single luminaire range, compact Light Board spotlights from ERCO. Various precise light accents without spill light served to establish orientation, guide visitors and hierarchically classify the exhibits.

Establishing structure with six light distributions

Single exhibits and groups of objects were individually highlighted with various ERCO Spherolit lenses, ranging from narrow spot and spot to flood, oval flood and wallwash light distributions. Whilst a narrow spot illuminated filigree historical drawings on a dark wall, flood light distribution provided the perfect stage for a bright red, historic beer delivery vehicle. The spot light distribution provided uniform lighting for the exhibition texts and larger artworks. Spotlights with oval distribution on the other hand efficiently emphasised the yellow guidance lines, a form of abstract beer pipes, and framed the large-format quotes on the walls at the entrance. The wall at the end of the space was uniformly illuminated with wallwashers to ensure the

exhibition area at the back was noticed by visitors.

In accordance with the principles of perception psychology, light served to graduate the space and visually structure and hierarchically organise information using various levels of light. "The perception-orientated lighting concept is an essential part of the exhibition design," said Oliver Thomas, one of the two founders of the IIID brand communication design studio. "When creating this exhibition, we found that the spotlights with their exchangeable lenses are very practical tools for flexibly designing the rooms, and can also be adjusted during the setup process."

Optimum light for sophisticated objects

Despite the generally low level of light, sophisticated objects like still life oil paintings were brilliantly displayed with outstanding colour

rendering. The light emitted by the ERCO LED lighting tools is effectively free of UV and infrared components, thereby minimising the damaging effect of photochemical and thermodynamic processes that cause materials and colours to deteriorate. The designers specified Light Board 12W warm white spotlights to achieve pleasantly warm lighting that also protects the objects. The spotlights for especially light-sensitive works on paper that can only be exposed to 50lx, are only 4W to best display the fragile exhibits with the minimum necessary levels of accent light.

The high level of public interest in the special exhibition clearly showed that smaller cultural institutions and unusual exhibition topics can also create attention with simple means and modern concepts.

Luminaires used in the project



Light Board

Copies and links requested.

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About ERCO

The ERCO Light Factory in the German town of Lüdenscheid is a leading international specialist in architectural lighting using LED technology. The family business, founded in 1934, now operates as a global player with independent sales organisations and partners in 55 countries worldwide. Since 2015 ERCO's portfolio has been 100% LED. With this in mind, ERCO in Lüdenscheid develops, designs and produces digital luminaires with focus on photometrics, electronics and design. Work-

ing closely with architects, lighting designers and engineers, ERCO develops lighting tools used primarily for applications in the following fields: Work, Shop, Culture, Community, Hospitality, Living, Public and Contemplation. ERCO understands digital light as the fourth dimension of architecture – providing highly precise and efficient lighting solutions to support creative designers in turning their visions into reality.

