



Report

Firma London, Berlin

FIRMA LONDON, Flosan GmbH, Berlin / Germany

Photographer: Sebastian Mayer, Berlin / Germany

Place: Berlin

A small but exquisite store for stylish vintage design seeks suitable shop lighting. The challenge: constantly changing product presentations, with many polished and reflective surfaces. Modern LED luminaires with ERCO Spherolit technology enable a flexible lighting solution that is well received by the client.

Manager Florian von Holstein and co-owner Sandra Tietje deal in high-quality vintage design furniture. While much of their business, as elsewhere in the sector, is conducted over the Internet, they insist on operating a traditional store. Direct contact with their customers is important to them. And they know that his furniture, lighting and other design objects at times present a more convincing case "in the flesh" than pictured on their website. Leasing typical shop premises in 2008, therefore, von Holstein opened "Firma London" in Berlin – the name reminiscent of the city in which he had previously lived for years. In an old building on Bleibtreustraße, right in the historic centre of Berlin-West, he found what he was looking for: one and a half rooms of around 70 square metres, with ceilings as high as four

metres, and a shop window large enough to allow a full view of the store. This space serves von Holstein and Tietje both as a showroom and an office, in which they present a selection of carefully arranged items from their collection in a constantly changing display. Focus is given to mid-century design. But you will also find classics from the Bauhaus era here, next to outstanding postmodern pieces that have enjoyed an increase in popularity in recent years. A prominent part at Firma London is played by magnificent, often room-filling chandeliers made of glass in the style especially of Italian designers in the 1950s and 1960s.

Brilliant in every respect, these objects though soon revealed a particular problem to von Holstein and Tietje, requiring them to spend much time looking, in vain, for a convincing solution: suitable lighting for the salesrooms, where they present a variety of different luminaires, furniture and other home décor objects in a small space.

Seeking fresh light...

"I wanted clear, fresh and modern light that would emphasise my items but also create a warm and pleasant atmosphere," von Holstein explains, adding a further requirement: "The shop lighting obviously needed to remain unobtrusive in the background – I did not want it to upstage my vintage lamps in any way."

Through word of mouth, he heard about ERCO and got in contact. The problem: von Holstein's store was illuminated by halogen lamps, with light that was not intense enough and too diffuse. It also failed to render the colours accurately. With the Light Board and Logotec spotlights, both in 12W warm white version, ERCO was able to offer Firma London a customised solution that delivered quality, flexibility and efficiency. The relighting completed, the display areas are now illuminated in a light that is almost analytically clear, giving the room a spacious and airy effect while staging the individual exhibits brilliantly in the light. The most evident improvement, however, concerns the opulent glass chandeliers, which as a result reveal their true brilliance and surface textures strikingly in the ERCO LED light. Excellent glare control of the spotlights ensures that the patrons in the shop are not disturbed by the diversity of light and brilliance effects.

...and flexibility

Voicing his preference of a flexible lighting solution, von Holstein explains: "My stock of armchairs, glass chandeliers, shelves and tables constantly changes, meaning that the lighting frequently needs to be adapted to new shapes, sizes and materials." Thanks to the interchangeable Spherolit lenses developed by ERCO, the light can now be adapted effortlessly to the changing requirements. A variety of different beam diameters accentuates objects of any size and

shape, whereas an oval pattern illuminates a long shelf at the wall uniformly as an eye-catching feature. Next to this flexibility, von Holstein is delighted with the energy efficiency of the new LED luminaires: "I obviously use a lot of light in the store. Now when I look at my electricity bills, I can see that my investment will soon pay for itself – even with the lighting left on overnight."



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