

Biography Ingo Maurer

Born in 1932 on the island of Reichenau in Lake Constance, Germany, Ingo Maurer trained as a typographer and subsequently studied graphic design in Switzerland and in Munich. In 1960 he moved to the USA, where he worked as a designer for various clients including IBM. In 1966, having returned to Germany three years previously, he set up his own company, Design M, in Munich, to make and market his own designs, the first of which was the celebrated "Bulb", a Pop Art lamp within a lamp.

In the 1960s and 1970s Maurer made a name for himself with unusual designs and appearances at trade fairs. "Bulb" won a place in the MoMA design collection as early as 1969. The naked light bulb is a continually recurring motif: in homage to its inventor, Thomas Alva Edison, Maurer used the name Edison in several of his own products. His first commercial success came with the series of fan lamps, incorporating traditional Japanese fan designs, which he started to produce in the early 1970s, after visiting Japan several times to meet the fan-makers and watch them at work. In 1977 Maurer also began to use thin Japanese paper - a material which has continued to intrigue him and still features prominently in his collection. At the 1984 EuroLuce fair in Milan, Maurer presented the pioneering low-voltage lighting system YaYaHo. The system, which had taken some two years to develop, consisted of low-voltage cables stretched across a room, with a variety of movable halogen elements which could be positioned according to the user's preferences. At that time, the interior use of halogen bulbs, which made safe lighting with exposed cables possible, was almost unheard-of. YaYaHo was rapturously received by the interior design industry, especially in Italy and France, and has since had countless imitators.

In 1989 the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain in Jouy-en-Josas near Paris staged the exhibition *Ingo Maurer: Lumière Hasard Réflexion*, which gave the designer his first opportunity to create lighting installations of a non-commercial nature. In the same year he also had a retrospective in the city then known as Leningrad. Since then, his designs - whether one-off commissions or mass-produced lamps from his ordinary collection - have been shown all over the world in many exhibitions, including the one-man shows *Ingo Maurer: Working with Light* in the Villa Stuck in Munich (1992) and *Licht licht* at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (1993). In 2002 the Vitra Design Museum, in cooperation with Maurer, organised the travelling exhibition *Ingo Maurer - Light - Reaching for the Moon*, which was shown in several cities in Europe and Japan. Another important exhibition of Maurer's work was *Provoking Magic: Lighting of Ingo Maurer*, at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York. Recently, the Bauhaus Archiv Berlin has shown a representative selection of his works.

Maurer's best-known designs include "One From The Heart" (1989), incorporating a red plastic heart; the winged light bulb "Lucellino" (1992) and the various other

members of its feathered family; and "Porca Miseria" (1994), a pendant made of broken crockery. Since the mid-1990s Maurer has increasingly been exploiting the unique aesthetic effects of LEDs and technical components such as printed circuit boards. An example of this is "Einstein", a large pendant which combines the image of the light bulb with green circuit boards and multicoloured LEDs.

In 1990, Maurer began to devote a significant part of his energies to planning installations and lighting systems for a wide range of public and private clients, in addition to making lamps for the collection of his firm, now known as Ingo Maurer GmbH. Some examples of these special commissions are the giant aluminium lampshades for the Westfriedhof underground station in Munich (1998); an installation for a show by the Japanese fashion designer Issey Miyake (1999); the light sculptures for the interior of the Atomium in Brussels; and a large-format light object for the Rockhal in Luxembourg (2007) and the lighting and colour design for another subway station in Munich, Münchner Freiheit.

Maurer lives in Munich, where his firm, which now employs over 60 people, also is located. In 2008, he opened a 700 sqm showroom at 47 Kaiserstrasse, Munich in a former production and storage hall, which is in the same building as his office and studio space. In 2010 Ingo Maurer received the Design Award of the Federal Republic of Germany.

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