



I AM
ALL

OF
GLASS

In 2019, when the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus is being commemorated all over Germany and the world, the 7th International Marianne Brandt Contest will focus on the functional and metaphorical potential of glass as material, which has had an unrivalled formative influence on the visionary beginnings of the German school of design. Taking the theme “I am all of glass”—quoting a poem by Marianne Brandt—prizes will be awarded in the categories of design, photography and art, and there will also be several special prizes.

“I am all of glass,” wrote Marianne Brandt in 1922 in one of her poems—a year before she resolved to give up painting at the Bauhaus in Weimar and become a designer of useful things. At the Bauhaus she wanted to be everything other than appear fragile; neither “dainty”, nor soft, i.e., in no way correspond to the clichés of femininity also dominant among the Bauhaus men. She thus held her ground at the Bauhaus not only as the only woman in the tough metalworking section, but created numerous hollowware pieces in Weimar—like the tea infuser developed out of austere spherical geometry—and other objects, which are revered today as design icons.

It is not certain whether she had read the text written in 1920 by the architect Bruno Taut, whereby he challenged all new architects and designers to “become so (identified with their faith)”, that they “were almost no longer human”. They should become “brittle, reflecting, sparkling and full of radiance like glass,” Taut had demanded in his manifesto “Architekten neuer Gemeinschaft” (Architects of a New Cooperative). Similar to the Bauhaus in 1919 in its founding manifesto, he thus challenged architects to build a “crystalline symbol of new faith”, a “crystallisation of a new feeling of community” realised in buildings. For the Bauhaus, glass was not just a utopian building material, which promised open, light-flooded spaces for a new, modern feeling of life. Particularly for László Moholy-Nagy—Marianne Brandt’s most important teacher—it was also the medium of a categorically new way of designing spaces, objects and images with light.

Today we touch hardly any other material more frequently than we do hard, smooth, fragile glass. This is due to omnipresent touchscreens and the vessels we drink from. Every day, we see the world through glass: many façades are of glass, all windows and most electronic screens, eye spectacles and vehicle windscreens. The lenses of microscopes and cameras are among our most important allies in technically supported perceptions of our environment. The 7th International Marianne Brandt Contest also asks whether glass today can be linked to auspicious visions charged with utopian resonances, and what functional and metaphorical significances today’s designers, photographers and artists associate with this material.

About the International Marianne Brandt Contest

Throughout the whole world, the works of the Bauhaus member, designer and artist Marianne Brandt can be found in the leading museums and collections. But Marianne Brandt’s legacy is no longer simply a piece of design history—every three years in her home city of Chemnitz young, international designers and artists get together to show their current work in the dynamic field between the polarities of design and art. Here, the International Marianne Brandt Contest founded in 2001 and since then organised by Villa Arte e. V. Chemnitz selects not only product designs but also photography and other artistic formats.

With the motto “The Poetry of the Functional”, the prize pursues the question of where and how projects that are useful as well as inspiring thrive today in Marianne Brandt’s former fields of activity. Out of all submissions entered by the end of April 2019, an international jury nominates sixty contributions that will be on display as of autumn 2019 at the Industriemuseum Chemnitz. As part of the opening of the two-months-lasting exhibition—it always opens on or around Brandt’s birthday on 1 October—the Marianne Brandt Prize worth € 5,000 in each case will be awarded in the categories of design, photography and art. The event will also include the awarding of special prizes endowed by sponsors and supporters. A comprehensive public programme with lectures, talks and workshops runs parallel to the contest. A catalogue is being published and launched at the award ceremony.

The International Marianne Brandt Contest is supported by the Cultural Foundation of the Free State of Saxony and the City of Chemnitz.

7th International Marianne Brandt Contest 2019

Submission deadline

1 Oct 2018
— 30 Apr 2019

Categories

Design
Photography
Art

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