

Press release

Dornbirn, November 2011

Zumtobel debuts masterpiece eL at Art Basel Miami Beach

Design is product collaboration with renowned architect Daniel Libeskind



Zumtobel is presenting an exclusive premiere for the new eL masterpiece at Art Basel Miami Beach from the 1st through the 4th of December 2011. This masterpiece, developed by Daniel Libeskind in collaboration with Zumtobel, will be unveiled to the public for the first time in the Art Collector Lounge. The Italian design studio of Sawaya & Moroni was also involved in the development of the masterpiece.

Zumtobel's extensive engagement with the issue of the importance, proper use, and effects of light in relation to art and architecture is long-standing. Zumtobel regards light not only as a source of brightness, but also as a design element and a way to convey emotions. This approach has fostered conversations among lighting experts, architects, designers and artists. The versatile ways in which light can be deployed and its diverse means of expression as a design element fascinate each of them. The ceaseless quest for innovative and original ways of using and interpreting this immaterial substance make light an exciting medium for an extremely diverse range of designs. Zumtobel is known for creating designs through partnerships with artists working in an extremely wide range of disciplines. The creative exchanges involved in creating these works produce synergies for both partners.



Jürg Zumtobel, Chairman of Zumtobel AG's Supervisory Board, says: "Lighting experiences always represent a piece of culture, a piece of art, a piece of people's way of life. This is particularly true wherever light has emancipated itself from any functionality,

leaving its mark on architecture and space as an independent work of art. We are very pleased that Daniel Libeskind has developed a new masterpiece with us and for us: eL. "And we are grateful to him for the insight that we have gained during the course of our exciting collaboration with him." Artists like Daniel Libeskind also reap benefit from such joint projects: "My collaboration with Zumtobel was an enriching, creative experience. The company's ethics and



visionary approach to cutting-edge technologies, teamed with a humanist mindset, are exemplary. I would like to express my personal and professional thanks to Zumtobel for its willingness to realise this ambitious project with me in a spirit of constructive cooperation and great openness to new ideas."

eL at Art Basel Miami Beach

Precisely just what a synergy of creativity, artistic intent, sophisticated design and lighting technology know-how is capable of achieving will be on show for the first time at Art Basel Miami Beach. With the eL Chandelier the complex meaning and function of light have been given an architectural form. "The perfect luminaire should behave like light itself" says Daniel Libeskind, describing the intent behind the development of eL.

The slender, 2.7 m tall masterpiece sports impressive special-steel surfaces polished to a mirror finish, and 1,680 specially manufactured LED modules. Each LED module has its own built-in microcontroller. This innovative feature makes it possible to meet the complex demands of controlling each LED individually. Fitting these microcontrollers gives each LED module its own intelligence, which is normally provided by a central control unit.

The interior of the masterpiece is coated in 23 carat fine gold. The precious metal is highlighted by modified series-production Zumtobel LED products in a warm white colour temperature.



The light emitted by eL mimics and reproduces the cosmic light that fills the Universe. To achieve this, Dr. Noam I Libeskind, Daniel Libeskind's son and an astrophysicist at the Leibniz Institute for Astrophysics Potsdam, developed an algorithm that is transferred onto the luminaire. They used eL's LEDs to represent the Big Bang and the Universe's expansion. The dynamic lighting illustrates the evolution of mass and structure in the Universe: each LED represents a small volume of outer space.

The idea is based on the theory that the Universe is around 14 billion years old and that its building blocks – galaxies like the Milky Way – grew larger as the Universe aged. As they grew larger, the light their stars emitted changed, visible as the eL emits different colours. State of the art simulations run on massive super-computers were used to compress a billion years into one second so that the eL's time loop plays back the history of the cosmos in 14 seconds and, in doing so, tells the story of how light came into being: how it was created and absorbed by the stars in the heavens.

Narrating the history of light are seven pre-programmed coloured lighting scenarios based on this algorithm that provide a glimpse into the interior of the masterpiece, eL's 18 sub-areas are intended to produce a visually linked sequence of lighting scenes. This posed a particular challenge to the programmers because transferring the scenes from screen to the masterpiece and the individual LED pixels demanded great technical ingenuity. Messages in text form can be inserted into the lighting scenes as required. These transform the lighting sculpture into a communication medium.

eL's sophisticated technology remains completely hidden. The masterpiece can be controlled wirelessly via an iPad using a special app – the required lighting

scenario can be called up and activated easily. The iPad is therefore an optional component of eL and its functionality.

Zumtobel. The Light

Brief profile

The Zumtobel brand is a leading international supplier of integral lighting solutions that enable people to experience the interplay of light and architecture. As a leader in innovation, the luminaire manufacturer provides a comprehensive range of high-quality luminaires and lighting management systems for the most varied application areas of professional interior lighting – including offices and educational facilities, retail and presentation, hotels and wellness, health and care, art and culture as well as industry and engineering. Zumtobel is a brand of the Zumtobel AG group with its head office in Dornbirn, Vorarlberg (Austria).

Captions:

Photo 1+2: Zumtobel masterpiece eL

Photo 3: Jürg Zumtobel, Chairman of Zumtobel AG's Supervisory Board

Photo 4: Daniel Libeskind, architect and designer (c) *Michael Klinkhamer*

Photography

Photo 5: Dr. Noam I Libeskind, Daniel Libeskind's son and an astrophysicist at the Leibniz Institute for Astrophysics Potsdam

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