

Press Release

Fagus Factory in Alfeld is a World Heritage Site
Bauhaus Archive in Berlin presents an exhibition of photographs
featuring this first example of modernist architecture – Albert Renger-
Patzsch was a photographic pioneer of New Objectivity

Berlin, 29 June 2011. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee announced the inscription of the Fagus Factory on the World Heritage List late Saturday evening at its 35th session in Paris. In the exhibition “Focusing the Modern: The Fagus Factory photographed by Albert Renger-Patzsch”, which runs until 29 August 2011, the Bauhaus Archive in Berlin is showing two photographic series of the Fagus Factory, which was designed by Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer in 1911. The photo series were taken in 1928 and 1952 by Albert Renger-Patzsch, one of the most prominent protagonists of New Objective photography. The Bauhaus Archive is also offering a day excursion from Berlin to the Fagus Factory in Alfeld/Leine on 14 August 2011.

“We are very pleased about the inscription of the Fagus Factory on the World Heritage List. This affirms the architectural significance of this pioneering early work by Gropius and Meyer. Our current exhibition of photographic series by Renger-Patzsch, a protagonist of New Objectivity, offers a unique perspective of the architecture and widens the view to include products that were manufactured at the Fagus Factory,” says Dr. Annemarie Jaeggi, Director of the Bauhaus Archive.

An excursion to the Fagus Factory on 14 August 2011, organised by the Bauhaus Archive Berlin, will include a guided tour by Dr. Annemarie Jaeggi of the Fagus Factory and the Fagus-Gropius exhibition. Price: 30 Euro for members; 40 Euro for non-members. Information and registration at: fuehrungen@bauhaus.de.

The Fagus Factory and its nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

The Fagus Factory, which was founded in 1911 by the entrepreneur Carl Benscheidt Sr. (1858-1947) in Alfeld an der Leine, is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2011. For the past century, the company has manufactured orthopaedic shoe lasts for mass production. Since 1974, the company has expanded its industrial activities in this living monument to the sectors of fire safety, metrology systems and wood processing machinery. The factory building was designed by the architects Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer. With its expansive glazed façades and unsupported corners, the main building of the Fagus Factory is regarded as a progenitor of modernism and is represented in almost every architectural encyclopaedia. The factory building, which has been protected as a historical monument since 1946, was painstakingly restored beginning in 1982. In February 2010, the Standing Conference of the German Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs nominated the Fagus Factory for inscription on the 2011 World Heritage List. The list previously encompassed a total of 911 properties in 151 states, including 704 cultural, 180 natural and 27 mixed properties designated as outstanding sites of cultural and natural heritage. Of these, 33 were located in Germany.

Albert Renger-Patzsch, photographic pioneer of New Objectivity
“Focusing the Modern: The Fagus Factory photographed by Albert Renger-Patzsch”

Albert Renger-Patzsch (born 1897 in Würzburg, died 1966 in Wamel) is regarded as a protagonist of New Objective photography, together with August Sander and Karl Blossfeldt. *Die Welt ist schön (The World is Beautiful)*, a book of photographs by Renger-Patzsch published in 1928, features shots of natural objects and landscapes as well as industrial products and machine parts. Due to its visual language and the choice of motifs, the appearance of the book provoked debate about the aesthetic aims of photography. The New Objective photographs by Renger-Patzsch put a clear focus on the object within a precisely arranged composition: the cropping, linear arrangement and perspective shortening of pictorial elements determine the compositional structure in many of his photos.

At the core of the Bauhaus Archive exhibition are two photographic series of the Fagus Factory taken in 1928 and 1952, which are presented in their entirety for the first time. Comprising roughly 90 images, they include views of architecture, industrial products and the manufacturing process as well as portraits of the company's owners. The Fagus series are complemented by approximately forty photographs of both healthy and deformed foot skeletons as well as good and bad footwear, which were commissioned from Renger-Patzsch for the orthopaedic specialist Dr. August Weinert. These unusual images demonstrate the importance of the Fagus Works as a reformist company within the shoe industry. The thematic spectrum of photographs in the exhibition is further augmented by roughly fifty prints from the private collection of Karl Benscheidt Jr., the son of the company's owner. These pictures of natural objects and landscapes bear witness to Benscheidt Jr.'s role as an important patron of the photographer.

The Bauhaus Archive / Museum of Design

The Bauhaus Archive/Museum of Design in Berlin is devoted to the research and presentation of the history and influence of the Bauhaus (1919-1933), the most important school of architecture, design and art in the twentieth century. The building on the banks of the Landwehrkanal, which was designed by Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius, provides public access to the world's largest collection of objects documenting the history and manifold activities of the school. In addition to Bauhaus-related topics, the Bauhaus Archive also devotes attention to current discussions on contemporary architecture and design, positioning itself in Berlin's museum landscape as the Museum of Design.

If you have further questions or require photographic images, our press and PR office would be pleased to provide assistance.

Press Contact:

Bauhaus Archive / Museum of Design
Press Office and Public Relations
Klingelhöferstr. 14
10785 Berlin
E-Mail: presse@bauhaus.de

Ulrich Weigand
Communications Director
Tel. (+49) 030 – 25 400 245

Dina Blauhorn
Press Aide
Tel. (+49) 030 – 25 400 247
