

ZUMTOBEL Group

75 YEARS OF ZUMTOBEL

ANNIVERSARY YEAR WITH MULTIFACETED LIGHT PERSPECTIVES

Press Release
Dornbirn, 22 May 2025

Dornbirn, Austria – 75 years of Zumtobel – 75 years of passion for light, technology and design. On the occasion of the anniversary, Zumtobel gives space to a wide range of light perspectives at a temporary exhibition at the Dornbirn Light Forum. Since mid-May, fascinating light art installations from artists like Brigitte Kowanz, François Morellet, Miriam Prantl and Sofia Hagen have been on display, as well as expressive photo portraits of employees and a Future Lab installation from the collaboration with three international universities. In parallel with the opening of the exhibition, Zumtobel launched TECTON II, the second generation of its successful continuous-row luminaire system.



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*“What we all share within the Zumtobel Group is a passion for light. There is hardly a more beautiful product than light: highly emotional and sophisticated”, says **Alfred Felder, CEO of the Zumtobel Group**, and adds, “The mix of different talents and also the interaction between different cultures is what we stand for and what keeps us flexible. Our innovative culture reflects curiosity and open-mindedness.”*

Karin Zumtobel, Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board of the Zumtobel Group, says: *“We pass on the essence of what Zumtobel is about. With our profound knowledge, committed employees and partners and the high demands we place on ourselves. We want people to get together at our company in order to create new things and contribute our share to a positive future.”*

Dornbirn Light Forum – expertise and meeting point at the original site

Zumtobel is celebrating at the place where the success story of today's lighting group began in 1950. 15 years later, another production facility with 4,000 square metres of space was commissioned at the original site in Dornbirn's Höchsterstrasse. Today, this former factory hall is home to the Zumtobel Group's Light Forum: a light space, where the strong brands – Zumtobel, Thorn and Tridonic – showcase their expertise in lighting as well as the latest technologies. A space to experience light, designed in cooperation with the Innsbruck studio of the Norwegian architectural firm Snøhetta.

Patrick Lüth, Snøhetta partner and Managing Director of the Innsbruck studio, extends congratulations on the anniversary: *“I am pleased that the Zumtobel Group's Light Forum plays a special role in the celebrations of the company anniversary. At the very place where Dr. Walter Zumtobel founded his company in Dornbirn, Snøhetta worked with Zumtobel to design a space for co-creation, presentations and an exchange around the topic of light, which is also open to the public. Now as then, the building represents the company's identity and innovative strength and optimally embodies the corporate culture.”*

Inspiring personalities

The opening of the exhibition was accompanied by a round table talk with very personal insights from Jürg and Fritz Zumtobel – both of whom stepped down in 2020 after decades at the helm of the company – and Karin Zumtobel, Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board. Renato Turri, CEO World-Architects, hosted this talk as well as the two days and the round table on the launch of TECTON II with Zumtobel and the guests of partner Pininfarina, the Italian design studio and engineering group.

The audience was inspired by the keynotes of London artist Dominic Harris on “Colour, Light and Technology: A Holy Trinity”, of Vitra Design Museum Director Mateo Kries, who talked about “Out of the Box – Shaping Futures with a Museum”, and the representatives of the Future Lab contributions from different universities: Anett-Maud Joppien, TU Darmstadt, Adrian Allen, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, and Cherine Saroufim, Académie Libanaise des Beaux Arts (Alba), Lebanon. Contributions by Vorarlberg artist Miriam Prantl on “Light – the Essence of Perception” and London-based Vorarlberg designer and architect Sofia Hagen on “Robotic Reincarnation: Crystalline” were equally inspiring. Both artists are currently showing their light art installations at the Zumtobel Group Light Forum in Dornbirn.

Light art – pacemaker for technological development

For more than seven decades, Zumtobel has helped shape the lighting industry: through state-of-the-art technology, its own design aspirations and light solutions which have always aligned with the needs of people and the environment. Time and again, the collaboration with artists and architects was a pacemaker for technological development. The “Light Art Path” on the occasion of the 75-year anniversary at the Light Forum in Dornbirn symbolically shows a cross-section of light art objects/installations and Zumtobel Masterpieces, including works by Sam Durant, Ólafur Eliásson, Zaha Hadid, Brigitte Kowanz, Daniel Libeskind, François Morellet, Miriam Prantl, James Turrell and Ben Vautier.

Karin Zumtobel: *“Light artists and architects challenge us extremely: They seek perfection. They want to create an impact. This is how unique pieces or special products made in small numbers are created.”* **Alfred Felder** adds: *“We often have to balance architectural desires and technical feasibility. But it is exactly these challenges that motivate us again and again to make the seemingly impossible possible.”*

New light installation from the artistic cooperation with Miriam Prantl

A new light sculpture has been created during the anniversary year in a long-standing cooperation of Zumtobel and Vorarlberg painter and light, video and sound artist Miriam Prantl: the SPHERES. Currently on display in front of the Light Forum, it embodies the interaction of shape, light, colour and movement. Four intertwined steel rings – like large, interwoven wheels of light – form a single sphere. Changing light sequences and shimmering colours flow in pulsating kinetics through and along the light sculpture. To create an impression of floating, which is important to Miriam Prantl, the points of light from the LED lines move along the ring structures in opposite directions. Collisions and harmonies of light alternate within the programming.

“[...] At night, the surface shimmering by day recedes into the background, and the play of light in Spheres comes to life. The sculpture pulses, creating circuits and networks of light, colour and motion. Its sphere expands into the surrounding space, enveloping the environment. An immersive and spatial field of influence emerges,” **Miriam Prantl** describes the installation.

PHOTOS

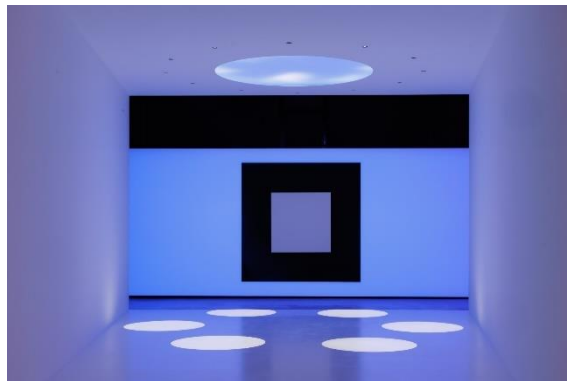


First row: Part of the temporary 75-year-anniversary exhibition at the Light Forum in Dornbirn, with a view of the new generation of the Zumtobel continuous-row luminaire system TECTON II, portraits of employees and the Future Lab from outside. Second row, left: Inside the Future-Lab with future contributions on the topic of light by the Technical University of Darmstadt, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, and the Académie Libanaise des Beaux Arts (Alba), Lebanon. Second row, right: Employee portraits of the exhibition. Photos: © Nina Bröll

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Left: The “Light Art Path” at the Light Forum includes two installations by Brigitte Kowanz (1957–2022): in the foreground, “Sichtbares trifft auf Verborgenes – Augenblick auf Dauer” and “Lichtwechsel”, both 2002. Right: Detail of “Sichtbares trifft auf Verborgenes – Augenblick auf Dauer”. The installation consists of fluorescent lamps in acrylic glass sleeves, which are mounted in series on stainless steel. Round and oblong openings can be seen on the front, representing the short and long pulses of the Morse code. They visualise the titular text. The stark contrast of black and brightly lit lines blends with the metallic reflections to create three-dimensional shapes. Photos: © Nina Bröll



Left: Lamentable by François Morellet, 2005. Light art installation, Zumtobel collection. This work consists of a grid of neon tubes arranged in a geometric pattern that creates a sense of depth and movement. Viewed from different angles, the shifting perspectives allow the viewer to experience changing patterns of light. The title refers to the fact that Morellet considered the use of neon tubes in art to be a regrettable (lamentable) waste of energy, yet at the same time, he recognised the beauty of their luminosity and the possibilities they offer for artistic expression. Right: Light experience space Light Forum Dornbirn. Photos: © Nina Bröll

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Left: Light sculpture Spheres, Miriam Prantl with Zumtobel, 2025, in front of the Zumtobel Group Light Forum. At night, the shimmering surface of the steel rings (diameter 3 metres) recedes into the background, and the play of light in Spheres comes to life. The sphere of the light sculpture expands into the surrounding space, enveloping the environment. Like large, interwoven wheels of light, the sculpture pulses, creating circuits and networks of light. Right: Detail of the LED colour gradients at night. Photos: © Nina Bröll



Links: Originally designed for the "Lichtstadt Feldkirch 2024" festival, Sofia Hagen's light installation Crystalline is temporarily on display at the Zumtobel Group Light Forum. Inspired by its original site at the Churer Tor, an epicentre of salt trade in Vorarlberg, "Crystalline" features a 2.7 m tall, illuminated salt crystal, accompanied by smaller crystals, all of which are crafted from recycled medical plastic waste using advanced 3D printing technology. Born in Vorarlberg, the artist, designer and architect combines sustainable materials, innovative technology and artistic expression (light: Zumtobel). Right: Through the shapes and the translucent crystalline material, the individual elements play with light by day and night. Photos: © Nina Bröll

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Left: London digital artist Dominic Harris, known for his immersive combinations of art, technology and nature, titled his keynote speech “Colour, Light and Technology: A Holy Trinity”. Right: Mateo Kries, Director Vitra Design Museum, inspired with his keynote speech at the Light Forum on “Out of the Box – Shaping Futures with a Museum”. Photos: © Nina Bröll



Left: A conversation with Jürg Zumtobel (right), Supervisory Board Chairwoman Karin Zumtobel, Fritz Zumtobel and host Renato Turri (left) offered personal insights into the family company history. Right: For the development of TECTON II, the next generation of its successful continuous-row luminaire, Zumtobel partnered with the Italian design studio and Engineering company Pininfarina. At a round table talk at the Light Forum on the occasion of the product launch, Pininfarina CEO Silvio Angori (left), Fabio Calorio, SVP Brand & Collaboration Pininfarina (second from right), as well as Andreas Fussenegger, Senior Director Product & Application Management at Zumtobel (right), reported on the successful collaboration. The conversation was hosted by Renato Turri, CEO World-Architects. Photos: © Nina Bröll

ABOUT

#75YEARSZUMTOBEL

75 years of Zumtobel – another milestone in the successful history of the company, which initially started as a family business. Founded as “Elektrogeräte und Kunstharpreswerk W. Zumtobel KG” by Dr. Walter Zumtobel in Dornbirn in 1950, the company started producing ballasts for the newly introduced fluorescent light fitting technology. Back then, the replacement of incandescent lamps by fluorescent lamps marked the beginning of a new era in lighting technology and prompted Dr. Walter Zumtobel to start producing luminaires only two years later. In the early 1960s, Zumtobel commissioned the first light laboratory. Like innovation, sustainability has also been part of the company’s strategy from the very beginning. Listed on the stock exchange since 2006, the lighting group bundles its strong brands – Zumtobel, Thorn and Tridonic – and operates globally today. The headquarters is still firmly anchored in Dornbirn.

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Zumtobel Group AG

The Zumtobel Group aims to create wellbeing and improve people's quality of life through light – as a group, and through all its individual brands, Thorn, Tridonic and Zumtobel. As a leading supplier of innovative lighting solutions, the Group offers its customers around the world a comprehensive portfolio, where the focus is invariably on people and their needs. The company's know-how about the effects of light on people, acquired over decades, forms the basis for sustainable and future-oriented lighting solutions that are increasingly energy- and resource-efficient while providing the best possible quality of light. The Group is listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange (ATX Prime) and currently holds a workforce of around 5,300 employees. In the 2023/24 financial year, the company posted revenues of EUR 1,127.0 million. The Zumtobel Group is based in Dornbirn in the Vorarlberg region of Austria. For further information, please visit [z.lighting](#)

Zumtobel. The light.

Our passion is to create quality lighting solutions that deliver total perfection. We are driven by a conviction that the right kind of light can create the right atmosphere in a building at any time of day or night. When tailored to people's individual needs, light becomes something of an experience. We are always exploring new ways to come up with inimitable and timeless designs and are inspired by a unique creative ambition. When working on the lighting of tomorrow, we are driven by our innovative corporate philosophy of continuously improving the aesthetics of light. With passion, a sense of beauty and a forward-looking approach, we are constantly seeking to use light to help improve people's quality of life. The Zumtobel brand is part of Zumtobel Group AG, based in Dornbirn in the Vorarlberg region of Austria.

INFORMATION

This press release and the accompanying high-resolution images are available for [download](#).

From family company to lighting group: We are celebrating 75 years of Zumtobel (incl. historic photos)
[Press Release of 12 March 2025](#)

TECTON II: Zumtobel launches the second generation of its successful continuous-row lighting systems
[Press Release of 15 May 2025](#)

Zumtobel Group Light Talks podcast with Sofia Hagen and Miriam Prantl
[Making Light an Experience in Art: from 27 May 2025, Episode 25](#)

The milestones of [company history](#).

75-year exhibition at the Light Forum in Dornbirn from mid-May 2025:
Please register by [e-mail](#).

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