

Press release

Hamburg, November 13, 2007

Raymond Loewy Foundation

The Raymond Loewy Foundation was set up in 1991 to promote good design worldwide and highlight the great importance that design has for the development of the economy and society. The Foundation supports young designers and acts as a network for successful and pioneering designers all over the world.

Design can no longer be reduced to pure product or graphic design. Nowadays, design is seen as a comprehensive service. A designer doesn't just design a table and chair any more, he designs complete working environments or communication strategies. He doesn't just produce posters, websites or logos, he creates information and communication packages. This all-embracing understanding of the term 'design' explains the significant influence that design now has on the economy and on society at large. As a consequence, promoting design always means promoting the economy as well. Quality design brings revolutionary momentum to the market, and can take on global importance. In the final event, this not only supports the manufacturers involved, but also the national economy.

Lucky Strike Junior Designer Award

For 15 years now, the Raymond Loewy Foundation has been supporting young designers in Germany with the annual Lucky Strike Junior Designer Award, which is endowed with prize money of 12,000 euros. With its continual work in this field, the Raymond Loewy Foundation helps increase the quality of achievement at German designer colleges, supports the transparency of design training and helps develop goal-oriented design courses. In the meantime, the Lucky Strike Junior Designer Award is a recognised entrance ticket to the design profession, and the annual awards ceremony provides young designers with a public forum where they can form their own networks.

Lucky Strike Designer Award

The Raymond Loewy Foundation has been presenting the Lucky Strike Designer Award every year since 1991: the Award publicly honours outstanding and internationally successful designers for their life work or a particular period in their career. All the prize winners have had a lasting influence on the economy and society, each in his or her individual fashion. With prize money of 50,000 euros, the Lucky Strike Designer Award is one of the world's most highly-endowed designer prizes. Previous award-winners have included Philippe Starck, Donna Karan, Peter Lindbergh und Karl Lagerfeld.

Raymond Loewy (1893 – 1986)

"Never leave well enough alone" – With this brief statement Raymond Loewy summed up the far-reaching combination that design was already making to sales promotion in the mid-20th century. Loewy, after whom the Foundation is named, was one of the mentors of modern design thinking, and was responsible for a wealth of pioneering design from the 1940's onwards. He understood at an early stage that successful design needs to do justice to the demands of the market and not just focus on attractive form. Armed with this view of his chosen profession, Raymond Loewy created such famous products as Studebaker automobiles and the Lucky Strike pack, and corporate designs like the Shell scallop emblem.

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Lucky Strike Designer Award for "Mr. Braun" **The leading European designer prize goes to Dieter Rams – Germany's most influential industrial designer**

This year's Lucky Strike Designer Award, endowed with prize money of 50,000 euros, has been awarded to one of the most influential contemporary industrial designers, Prof. Dieter Rams. "We are currently seeing the beginning of a renaissance of 'the quiet order of things' such as Dieter Rams has been pursuing for decades now in his appealing mixture of functional pragmatism, humanitarian semantics and user-focused product values" – thus the jury of the Raymond Loewy Foundation. "As trendsetting inspiration for young designers, these values are more important than ever before!"

With his personal understanding of design, Dieter Rams has had a decisive influence on our everyday culture. Radio or record player, hair dryer or electric shaver, table lighter or pocket calculator, armchair or door handle – pretty much everyone has used a product designed by Dieter Rams at some time. The single-minded aesthetics of Rams's designs sets standards of worldwide currency. His work has become an international synonym for innovative design from Germany.

Rams says: "It's a special honour for me to receive the Lucky Strike Designer Award from the Raymond Loewy Foundation. The man after whom the Foundation is named invented a design concept to which I owe a great deal: the belief that design must increase functionality. This should be the underlying idea behind all industrial design."

Dieter Rams spent 42 years, from 1955 to 1997, working for Braun, the German manufacturer of electrical appliances. In this period he designed many highly distinctive products that captivate with their clear lines and appropriate materials, and are easy to use. Rams's creed is simple: "Good design is as little design as possible". Following this principle, he produced classic designs that made their mark on the lifestyle of entire generations, and are still used as models by other designers. A success story that made designer Dieter Rams into "Mr. Braun" both at home and abroad.

In his interior designs, too, the trained joiner and architect pursued the vision of creating products that are "honest, balanced, simple, carefully made and restrained". His elegant sixties furniture, such as the shelf system "606" and the "620" range of easy chairs, remain influential on home décor to this day. The new Bundeskanzleramt (Federal Chancellery) in Berlin, for example, is furnished with "620" armchairs.

With its choice of Dieter Rams as the winner of the 2007 Lucky Strike Designer Award, the jury follows its tradition of illuminating the entire spectrum of design in terms of both form and content, and making it known to the public. The Lucky Strike Designer Award will be presented to Dieter Rams on 15th November in the "ewerk" in Berlin.

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Raymond Loewy Foundation – background

The Raymond Loewy Foundation makes a significant contribution to the promotion of design and helps emphasize the importance of good design for the development of industry and society at large. The foundation was founded in Hamburg in 1991, and supports pioneering and professional design in the spirit of the American designer Raymond Loewy (1893 – 1986).

Previous winners of the Lucky Strike Designer Award have included the Spanish star chef Ferran Adrià (2006), Philippe Starck (2004), Michael Ballhaus (2001), Donna Karan (1999), Peter Lindbergh (1996) and Karl Lagerfeld (1993).

Committee of the Raymond Loewy Foundation:

Prof. Werner Aisslinger (studio aisslinger)
Michael Ballhaus (director of photography and winner of the 2001 Lucky Strike Designer Award)
Prof. Wolfgang Laubersheimer (professor of production technology, Cologne International School of Design)
Jürgen Plüss (brand consulting, Gütersloh)
Prof. Kurt Weidemann (Karlsruhe College of Design, Centre for Art & Media Technology; Koblenz College of Corporate Management)

Die Jury der Raymond Loewy Foundation:

- Chairman:
Prof. Johann H. Tomforde (director, hymer idc Innovation & Design Center, Pforzheim)
- Jury members:
Prof. Werner Aisslinger (studio aisslinger)
Nils Jockel (Hamburg Arts & Crafts Museum)
Prof. Wolfgang Laubersheimer (professor of production technology, Cologne International School of Design)
Jürgen Plüss (brand consulting, Gütersloh)
Dr. Angela Schönberger (director, Arts & Crafts Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin)
Gabriele Strehle (creative director, Strenesse AG)
Prof. Kurt Weidemann (Karlsruhe College of Design, Centre for Art & Media Technology; Koblenz College of Corporate Management)

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Berlin / Hamburg, November 13, 2007

Lucky Strike Designer Award 2007 Prizewinner: Prof. Dr. h.c. Dieter Rams

Reasons for the jury's decision

When the jury of the Raymond Loewy Foundation presents Dieter Rams with the 2007 Lucky Strike Designer Award for his life's work as a designer, their decision is overdue – and will be accepted without protest by the public. If there is one designer who deserves to continue the list of illustrious prizewinners to date, then it's Dieter Rams.

The question "Why wasn't Dieter Rams chosen before?" can be easily answered by reflecting on Rams's influence on two to three generations of designers. His ideals – "Less, but better" or "Good design is as little design as possible" – not only guided his work as a designer for the Braun company: in the meantime they are setting the tone once more in many different sectors.

For some 20 years now, the design scene has been marked by short-lived effects. Product design has been driven by emotionally-charged lifestyle and marketing considerations: scarcely has one new design appeared when it's replaced by its successor.

But many consumers actually long for a renaissance of "the quiet order of things", such as Dieter Rams has pursued for many years now in his congenial combination of pragmatic functionality, human status-oriented semantics and product values that focus on the user.

His services to design in Germany have been recognized with many different awards, so that the jury of the Raymond Loewy Foundation became interested in aspects of his work that have not been so strongly highlighted to date.

One area that Dieter Rams has claimed for himself like hardly any other designer is that of the brand technician. With his design philosophy, Dieter Rams created the face of the Braun brand, and the products he designed established the brand's identity and its unique position.

The identity of the Braun brand consisted of an extremely homogeneous and sophisticated design that, 40 years ago, was revolutionary, functional, unobtrusive and appealing in its clarity, giving it a high recognition value. The extremely function-oriented design of the Braun products was both rational and emotional. On a rational level, it made each product considerably easier to use, while on the emotional level it sent out social signals, setting the owner aside from the masses and showing him to be a connoisseur.

Raymond Loewy Foundation

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The strong identity of the Braun brand created a unique consumer loyalty: people who had bought a Braun once bought Braun again, even if the product features or the performance or the price were not always exactly what they wanted.

This marked loyalty to the brand enabled Dieter Rams to build up an extremely wide range of products under the Braun label – household appliances, shavers, hair driers, hi-fi equipment, TVs, media furniture, wristwatches and clocks, cameras, pocket calculators. Nowadays, no-one would think that a single brand could produce quality in so many different fields. But Braun possessed this 'universal competence' thanks to the uniting factor of excellent design.

Strong brands, thus the accepted wisdom, need to polarize. They need to have fascination, a unique position and the power to generate consumer loyalty. In this polarization, however, they must also possess a certain potential to create hatred. The Braun brand with its striking design was this kind of strong brand.

The polarization was evident in social groups that were divided into Braun lovers and Braun haters. Thanks to Braun, design per se became a topic of social relevance in the 1960's and 70's. The social role that Braun design played could also be seen in many families who used the design of Braun products to dissociate themselves from their parents' generation.

In this respect, Braun design was actually quite daring: there was no attempt at a compromise between the demands of different target groups, all of whom the manufacturer was keen to reach. You either loved Braun – or you despised it. In its strict adherence to its principles, the Braun company was far ahead of its time as a brand manufacturer.

Dieter Rams also represents another dimension: he is an ambassador for German design who possesses worldwide recognition through his work. The Braun brand is one of the most important ambassadors of "Made in Germany", not only in Europe, but in America and Asia too. Thanks to Dieter Rams, the energy of the brand "Made in Germany" has been positively charged, and that benefits the entire German economy.

As a model that points the way for today's young designers, every area of his work is more important than ever before. Dieter Rams is a mentor, a philosopher and a critical voice. His belief in lasting rather than throwaway products, his call for less but better design, for function rather than decoration: these principles have influenced generations of companies, designers and indeed the public at large. In an era when the changing climate is taking on alarming proportions, Rams's beliefs deserve to be known to an even wider public, and this was another reason behind the jury's decision to present the 2007 Lucky Strike Designer Award to Dieter Rams.

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Hamburg, November 13, 2007

Raymond Loewy Foundation Hall of Fame: The winners of the Lucky Strike Designer Award

The Raymond Loewy Foundation presents the Lucky Strike Designer Award annually in recognition of the life work of outstanding, internationally successful designers. All the award-winners have had lasting and individual influence on design in industry and society. With prize money of 50,000 euros, the Lucky Strike Designer Award is one of the world's best-endowed designer awards.

2006

The Lucky Strike Designer Award went to the Spaniard Ferran Adrià. This was the first time that the Award has honoured the design achievements of a chef. The jury came to the conclusion that "With his integrated concept, Ferran Adrià lends food a new and unprecedented sensual and aesthetic dimension."

2005

The Lucky Strike Designer Award 2005 went to John Maeda, the mind behind the research programme "Simplicity" and a professor at the elite university MIT – Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Maeda's work sets new standards in design, information technology and art. With his sometimes philosophical, sometimes technology-critical thoughts, he has triggered a real boom in the idea of simplicity in our everyday lives.

2004

The Lucky Strike Designer Award 2004 was awarded to Philippe Starck, who has been successfully shaping people's lifestyles for some 25 years with product design, interior design and architecture. His products are known all over the world, e.g. the lemon squeezer "Juicy Sali" for Alessi and furniture or everyday objects for manufacturers such as Kartell, Fossil, Duravit or Cassina.

2003

In 2003 the Lucky Strike Designer Award was awarded to the Japanese industrial designer Kenji Ekuan, who has been responsible for popularizing contemporary Japanese design and its high quality all over the world. Examples of his work are the Kikkoman soya sauce bottle and the "Komachi" high-speed train run by the East Japan Railway Company.

2002

Patrick le Quément was the prize winner of the Lucky Strike Designer Award 2002. Renault's chief designer sets completely new and pathbreaking standards in car design. Successful examples of his work are the models Avantime, Vel Satis and Mégane.

2001

The 2001 Lucky Strike Designer Award was awarded to Michael Ballhaus, Berlin/Los Angeles. In the international film business he is one of Hollywood's most highly-regarded directors of photography. His trademark is the 360° camera movement, which he invented. Ballhaus has made many films with the director Martin Scorsese, e.g. "GoodFellas", and received two Oscar nominations for the movies "Broadcast News" (1987) and "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (1989).

2000

The Lucky Strike Designer Award in the year 2000 was presented to Munich designer Ingo Maurer in recognition of his many years working to produce lighting that is outstanding both technically and in terms of the atmosphere created. Examples of his work are the lamp "Lucellino", which is decorated with dove's wings, and the lighting installation in the Westfriedhof station of Munich's subway system.

1999

Donna Karan was the winner of the Lucky Strike Designer Award in 1999. She received the Award in recognition of her complex and successful design management and branding of her fashion label DKNY. DKNY was the first label to offer 'systematic fashion', where each item matches the others, from business to evening wear.

1998

The 1998 Lucky Strike Designer Award was awarded to Phoenix Product Design (Andreas Haug and Tom Schönherr) of Stuttgart. Phoenix Product Design works for such brands as Hansgrohe and Kaldewei, Viessmann, Lamy and Loewe, and they have been responsible for design classics like the bath taps "Axor Arco" for Hansgrohe and the "Accent" series of fountain and ballpoint pens for Lamy.

1997

The winner of the 1997 Lucky Strike Designer Award was Bruno Sacco, head of automobile design at Daimler-Benz. Bruno Sacco's designs always display economic importance, technical competence and innovative power, as could be seen in the Mercedes S class that was launched in 1979.

1996

With Paris-based photographer Peter Lindbergh, the Raymond Loewy Foundation honoured a man in 1996 whose striking photos from the world of fashion and advertising – e.g. of the models Claudia Schiffer, Nadja Auermann and Linda Evangelista – have won him international recognition. He works for such world-famous designer labels as Donna Karan, Calvin Klein und Giorgio Armani.

1995

The Lucky Strike Designer Award 1995 went to Professor Kurt Weidemann. As a book designer, typographer, graphic designer and consultant to major companies such as Daimler-Benz and Deutsche Bahn, Weidemann is an important intermediary between design culture and the business sector. For example, he was responsible for redesigning the Mercedes star emblem.

1994

In 1994 the Raymond Loewy Foundation honoured Dr. Rolf Fehlbaum of the furniture manufacturer Vitra (Weil am Rhein), for his commitment to "clever design management with exemplary social, economic and cultural effect". Fehlbaum plans and supports design exhibitions, and with the Vitra Design Museum he has created an effective and graphic platform for the company and for design in general.

1993

The 1993 Lucky Strike Designer Award was awarded to the well-known fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld "for his exceptional competence in design management and for his precise demonstration of the complexity of design". Lagerfeld's work for fashion houses like Chloé and Chanel makes it clear that design is not limited to product or graphic design, but is also relevant to the fashion world.

1992

The winner of the Lucky Strike Designer Award in 1992 was Richard Sapper, a German living in Milan who designed the world-famous "Tizio" lamp and other perfectly-shaped objects. Sapper has created classics of modern design for manufacturers like Alessi and Artemide.

1991

In 1991 Hartmut Esslinger was chosen as the first prize winner of the Lucky Strike Designer Award. He is the creative mind behind "frogdesign" and runs design studios in Germany, the USA and Asia. Hartmut Esslinger has enjoyed international success with designs for Lufthansa, hi-fi equipment and the early Apple computers such as the "Apple IIc".

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