Reflections

louis poulsen

No. 4

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Celebrating the Good Light

In 1958 – a historic year for design and architecture – Poul Henningsen gave the world the PH 5, PH Artichoke, and PH Snowball, redefining modern illumination and shaping the course of Louis Poulsen's history. Henningsen's iconic pendants not only symbolised the culmination of the designer's over thirty years of work to create the perfect light, but also set new standards in the aesthetics of lamp design, showcasing the ultimate union of intelligent function and breathtaking form.
To celebrate 60 years of Poul Henningsen's visionary work in shaping light, we open this issue of Reflections with a celebration of the three PH luminaires that made lighting history in 1958 and hold iconic status today, defining our spaces and inspiring a new generation of talent. We also present new perspectives on illumination with the brilliant new Flindt Wall fixture by Danish designer Christian Flindt, and a chic new version of the popular, multi-shade Enigma pendant by Japanese designer Shoichi Uchiyama.

We also go in-depth with Christian Flindt to look at his process, explore the Copenhagen outdoors by dusk, examine the remarkable impact circadian lighting can have in healthcare facilities, and connect with Shoichi Uchiyama to discuss culture and experience-defining design. Along the way, we visit a monochromatic and minimalist new Copenhagen residence, and then make way for colour in a more eclectic Danish home that shows a colourful side of "hygge".

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The Shape of Light

60 Years of Iconic Lighting

PH 5 and PH 5 Mini in Copper

Six decades after its first unveiling, Poul Henningsen's PH 5 pendant remains Louis Poulsen's bestselling design: a testament to the revolutionary nature of Henningsen's work to shape light. In celebration of one of Henningsen's most iconic designs, Louis Poulsen is releasing both the PH 5 and the PH 5 Mini in commemorative editions that pair copper and white shades. The design features Henningsen's remarkable shade system, known for producing glare-free, atmospheric lighting.

PH Artichoke in Brushed Brass

A true icon never stops reinventing itself, and the PH Artichoke has proven no exception. Originally designed for the Langelinie Pavillonen restaurant in Copenhagen, the sculptural design quickly drew attention with its unique, organic form and ambience-giving presence. Keeping the source of light hidden within its layers of leaves, the pendant creates soft, glare-free illumination. The 60th anniversary edition features a beautiful new brushed brass finish.

PH Snowball

The PH Snowball was exhibited alongside the PH 5 at the Danish Museum of Decorative Art, yet it was not until 1983 that the design gained the attention enjoyed by its counterparts and went into production. Today, the PH Snowball continues to embody sculptural, modernist elegance in classic white, in keeping with its name.

Enigma in Black

The bold Enigma pendant's original aluminium and white design now has a stunning black counterpart. While nodding to Poul Henningsen's multi-shade lamp design concept, Uchiyama's makes a unique statement of its own with its modern, minimal construction. The Enigma's new black shades create a serene interior ambience as they shapew and channel light. The bold, floating silhouette and soft, even illumination make the design mesmerising anywhere, from entryways and hallways to dining and living areas.

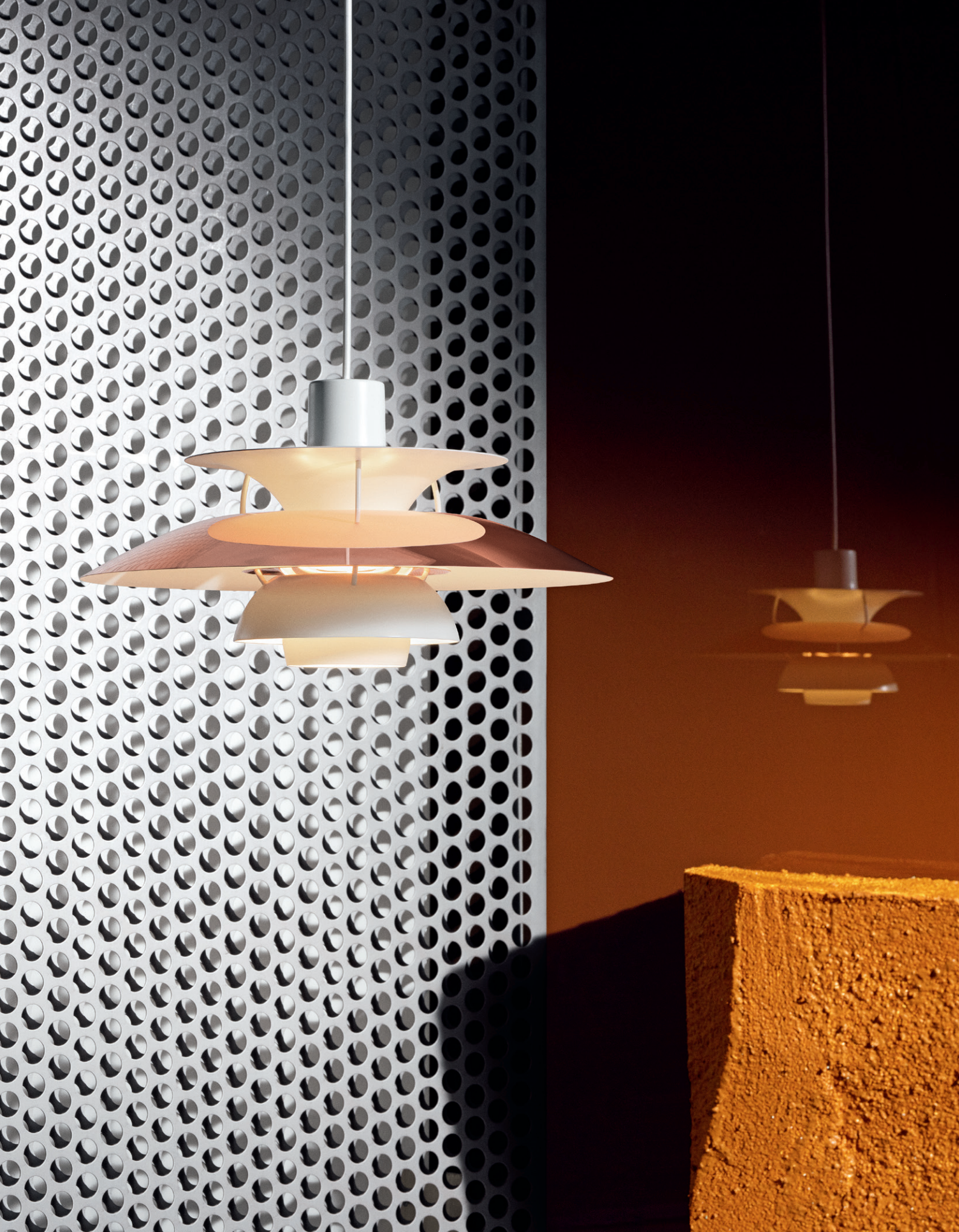
You can find a conversation with the designer on page 50.

Flindt Wall

The new Flindt Wall joins the popular Flindt Bollard to bring expressive illumination and thoughtful design both indoors and out. Based on the same carved-out concept as the cylindrical Flindt Bollard, the wall-mounted Flindt Wall continues the elegant form language in the shape of a circle. The Flindt Wall is distinguished by a light egress from an opening in the top that sends light down the front of the lamp, creating a subtle, glowing ring of reflected light on the transition between the concave and convex shapes. A portion of the light is distributed backwards, creating an indirect light component in the shape of a half- moon behind the seemingly floating form.

Learn more about Flindt's process on page 18.

Opposite page: PH 5 Copper. Design by Poul Henningsen.



This page: PH 5 in Classic White. Design by Poul Henningsen.
Opposite page: PH Snowball and PH Artichoke in copper. Design by Poul Henningsen.

This page: Enigma in black. Design by Shoichi Uchiyama.
Opposite page: Enigma in aluminium and black. Design by Shoichi Uchiyama.

This page: PH Artichoke in brass, PH 5 Copper and PH Snowball. Design by Poul Henningsen.
Opposite page: PH Artichoke in brass. Design by Poul Henningsen.

This page: Flindt Wall, corten-coloured. Design by Christian Flindt.
Opposite page: Flindt Wall, aluminium-coloured. Design by Christian Flindt.

This page: PH Snowball. Design by Poul Henningsen.
Opposite page: PH 5 Mini Copper and PH 5 Copper. Design by Poul Henningsen.

Christian Flindt

With all the complex technology that lives inside modern light sources, you don't necessarily think of a lighting designer as someone with a penchant for wood-carving. Yet this is precisely the approach that led Christian Flindt to develop a unique lighting concept of striking beauty and quiet power. Here, Flindt muses about the healthy obsession that sparked his latest lighting design idea, reflects on twelve years of working with Louis Poulsen, and imagines the myriad spaces that will become home to the Flindt Wall.

Carving out the perfect light

"In the process of creating the Flindt Bollard, I carved out nearly everything I came across," Flindt admits, conjuring up an image of a trail of objects bearing the marks of the designer's tools. "The initial idea came from a cut-out in a wooden stick. I then moved on to a bunch of long, cylindrical cardboard tubes to get the light coming out just right."

Flindt himself calls the process somewhat of an obsession. But the resulting design, which pairs a slim cylinder with an opening that channels light precisely where it's needed, serves as undeniable proof of passion's role in creativity and innovation. Unconventional efforts, as we know, can produce unexpectedly satisfying results.

From ground to wall

After the success of the Flindt Bollard, requests for a wall version poured in, sending the designer back to the drawing board. First, the work led to the creation of a wall-mounted version that Louis Poulsen now produces for custom orders. But, having begun the journey of cutting into objects of all shapes and sizes, Flindt set out to create a new wall fixture from scratch: one that clearly belonged to the same family but boldly took on a new form.

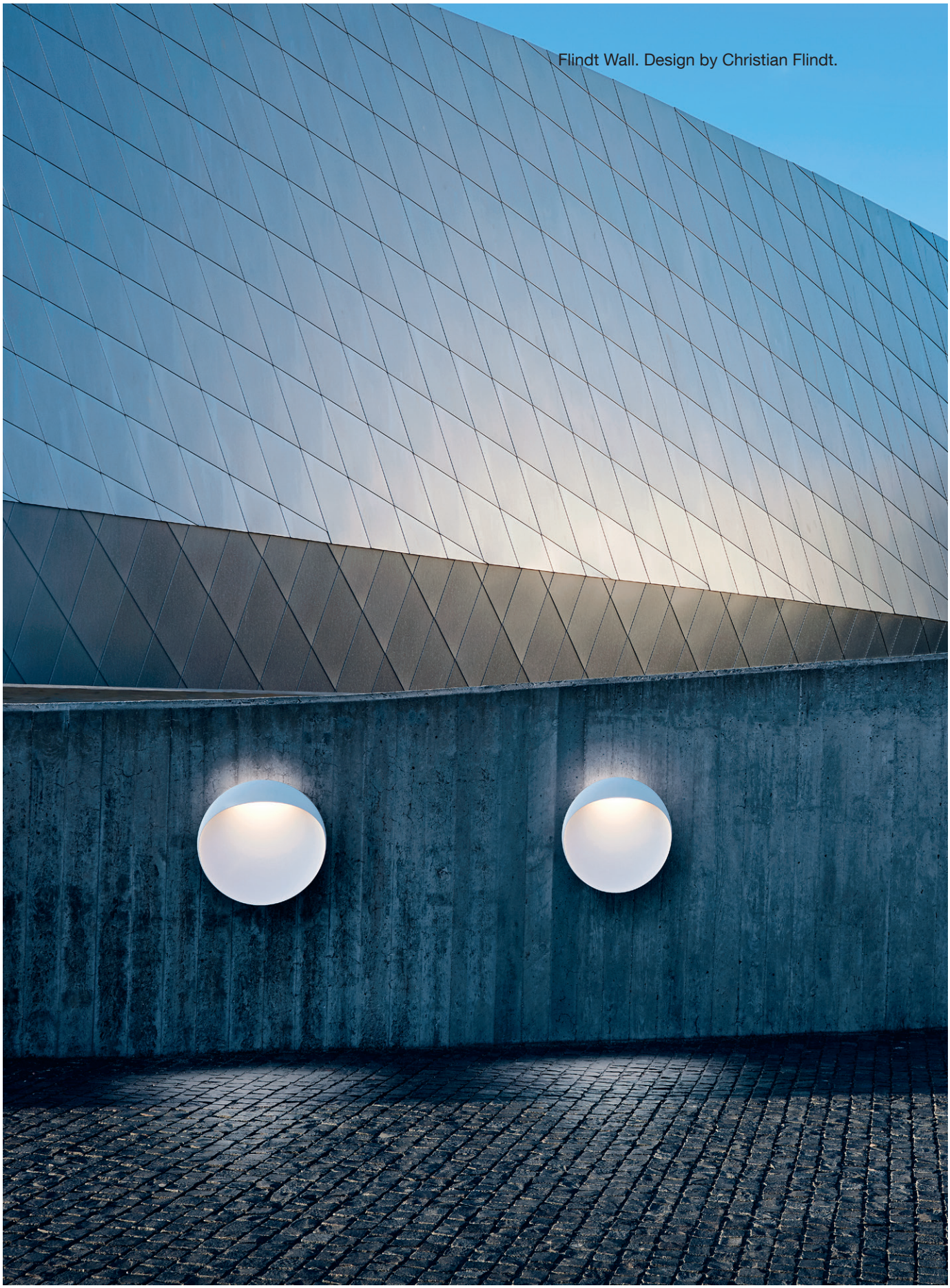
Like the Flindt Bollard, the Flindt Wall is made out of cast metal. "Many other wall fixtures in the market are made out of thin sheet metal or acrylic," says Flindt. "So the Flindt Wall fixture is very strong and able to withstand impact and, in some scenarios, even vandalism. It's also waterproof, so it can be mounted indoors and outdoors, which is not very common for a wall fixture design."

The Flindt Wall design and experience

The front of the Flindt Wall features the principal cut-out, which makes space for the main light source. This light is directed toward the ground beneath and to each side, with some of the light reflected out into the surrounding space. "The main surface works as one big reflector that angles light out into the room," Flindt explains. "And because the surface has a matt, grained powder lacquering, the fixture renders and gives the light a textural feel as it gradients from top to bottom."

As with the bollard, the Flindt Wall's main reflector surface is three-dimensional and concave. "This makes it hard to determine the depth of the cut, which, to me, makes it more interesting," says Flindt. The fixture's slightly curved edge catches light and adds a slightly glowing edge, defining the bottom part of the fixture. The top part of the wall lamp contains the light source, and a small slit in the back lets light out onto the wall behind the fixture, creating an illuminated backdrop and defining the top part of the Flindt Wall.

"I wanted the design to have a soft, calm feel – but with modern technology," Flindt says. "I live just next to the old Radio House in Copenhagen, designed by Vilhelm Lauritzen, who also created the Radiohus [Radio House] Pendant for Louis Poulsen. I could see the Flindt Wall melt into this architecture – but could also see it hanging on a wall in the



Flindt Wall. Design by Christian Flindt.

LP Xperi Post. Design by Christian Flindt.
Flindt Bollard. Design by Christian Flindt.

new DR building by Jean Nouvelle. I see it as a very kind and human light fixture and love that it can be both indoors and out, and can create a visual connection if you have several of them in the same project."

True to the designer's vision, the Flindt Wall can be mounted according to desired effect and location. Indoors, it's ideal for circulation spaces that call for gentle illumination, including lobbies, hallways, and stairwells. Outdoors, it mounts beautifully on any walls to light up parks, paths, patios, driveways – and of course walls and buildings themselves. To match any palette and space, the Flindt Wall comes in aluminium-coloured, white and corten-coloured – and in three sizes. "I see them all lined up in the same size on a long wall as far as the eye can see," says Flindt. "I see it in offices, but it could also be at the international space station to create a home-like ambience. I think it has a very calm and harmonious feel to it that will add to both classic and modern environments."

Flindt adds, "Some say that the look of the Flindt Wall reminds them of the moon, but I actually thought more of a sunset when I created the design. When the sun is going down but is still too bright to look at, if you hold your hand out to cover it, you are suddenly able to see the gradience and colour of the sky beneath the sun. The Flindt Wall is, to me, a small sunset, and you can either have it in a warm tone with the corten or a more neutral one with the grey or white version."

Like the playful design process that initiated its creation, the Flindt Wall is intended to create a new perspective – and a new experience of the spaces and objects that surround us in everyday life.

A dozen years of collaboration and innovation

Flindt began his collaboration with Louis Poulsen over twelve years ago with a series of weaved lamps that, rather than using metal shades to reflect light the way Poul Henningsen did, eliminated glare with weaving that filtered the light. He then went on to design the Flindt Bollard; the big architectural LP Grand luminaire series in surface, suspended, and wall versions; and, most recently, the LP Xperi Post top.

Louis Poulsen's solutions for shaping light outdoors are rooted in a deep knowledge of urban environments – and an understanding of the combination of design and technology that results in optimal ambience. The LP Xperi offers an efficient, visually impactful, and thoughtful solution for urban projects. The design is unquestionably modern, yet able to enter into harmonious dialogue with a wide range of settings.

As Christian Flindt hoped, the LP Xperi not only demonstrates that LED is the correct solution for outdoor lighting, but also provides atmosphere and security in darkness, and makes a positive contribution to the urban environment by day.

"To have been working with the same company for more than 12 years is really special," the designer says. "You become part of it. You get to know everybody by name. You know not only the people who give you the design brief, but also the engineers and the people in logistics, marketing and sales. My experience is that everyone at Louis Poulsen strives for the best and wants to push boundaries. The engineers know me well, so I can speak freely to them and have a very constructive design process together. It makes the Louis Poulsen headquarters in Copenhagen feel like home."

Flindt also enjoys the connection to the Poul Henningsen principles that remain at the heart of Louis Poulsen's "Design to Shape Light" philosophy. "Even though there were no LEDs when Poul Henningsen lived, and he is not walking around the Louis Poulsen headquarters at Gammel Strand, you feel that everybody still knows and feels his spirit. Everybody knows his theories about indirect lighting and glare control."

Over the years, Flindt and Louis Poulsen have evolved alongside one another, with each new Christian Flindt design serving as luminous proof of a shared interest in pushing the boundaries of lighting design and technology. "I have followed Louis Poulsen in a paradigm shift from many different light sources to one major new technology – LED. In fact, the Flindt Bollard was the first outdoor product made from scratch with LED. So, we have followed a path together and are both at a new and different place today compared to when we first met," says Flindt.

It's a place that continues to breed innovation and push the notion of "Design to Shape Light" further. In other words, a bright and exciting place to be.

Panthella Table lamp. Design by Verner Panton.

Modern Monochrome

The architects at JAC Studios recently gave a 200-square-metre apartment on Sturlasgade in Copenhagen a stunning, modern treatment. Formerly a factory complex, the freshly revived space retains its industrial feel with a primarily grey-scale palette and a landscape of functional plateaus and surfaces in a beautiful array of materials. Louis Poulsen lighting brings warm, sculptural illumination to the distinctive interiors, complementing the architectural lines and engaging with the natural light streaming in through the windows. It's a study in contrast – cool and warm, classic and modern, hard and soft, linear and organic – with opposites not just attracting but interacting to become a stunning whole.

PH Artichoke in copper. Design by Poul Henningsen.

Flindt Wall, corten coloured. Design by Christian Flindt.

Yuh Floor lamp in black. Design by GamFratesi.

AJ Eklipa. Design by Arne Jacobsen.

PH 5 Copper. Design by Poul Henningsen.

AJ Eklipa. Design by Arne Jacobsen.

Enigma in black. Design by Shoichi Uchiyama.

Copenhagen Cityscapes

In Copenhagen's historic Christianshavn and Holmen neighbourhoods, the old and the new mix freely to create an urban environment with irresistible appeal for locals and visitors alike. Any additions – from an opera house to a footbridge connecting Christianshavn to the picturesque Nyhavn – have arrived with consideration for the existing architecture and history, and with foresight into how they can best serve the city and its inhabitants. Illumination, of course, plays an essential role in this equation. Thoughtful lighting connects the classic and the modern. It reflects the city's dynamism. And, from private entryways to public streets and paths, it creates intimate, personal spaces that make a metropolis feel like home.

Nordatlantens Brygge, Copenhagen. Toldbod 290 Wall lamp. Design by Louis Poulsen.

Nordatlantens Brygge, Copenhagen. Toldbod 290 Post. Design by Jens Møller-Jensen.

The Circle Bridge, Appelbys Plads, Copenhagen.
Albertslund Mini Post. Design by Jens Møller-Jensen.

1408, Wildersgade, Copenhagen. PH Wall lamp. Design by Poul Henningsen.
LP Icon Post. Design by Mads Odgård.

Holmen, Copenhagen. Bysted Bollard. Design by Peter Bysted.
LP Icon Post. Design by Mads Odgård.

Are you ready for some colour? Scandinavian design might have earned a reputation for monochromatic minimalism – but we know there's much more to creating ambience than following straight lines. This Copenhagen apartment embraces a playful, luxurious and whimsical approach while retaining a decidedly sophisticated profile. As it breaks with convention and experiments with eclectic style, the space invites us to imagine how our own personal stories can play out in the look of the homes we create. Cosy nooks? Intimate eating spots? Bold, artsy touches that are yours alone? Create what suits you, and spotlight it with pride.

Hygge in Colour

Opposite page: PH Artichoke in brass. Design by Poul Henningsen.

This page: PH 80 Floor lamp. Design by Poul Henningsen.
Opposite page: Wohlert pendant. Design by Vilhelm Wohlert. Panthella Floor lamp. Design by Verner Panton.

This page: Panthella MINI. Design by Verner Panton.
Opposite page: PH 5 Copper. Design by Poul Henningsen.

Opposite page: VL38 Table lamp in white. Design by Vilhelm Lauritzen.

This page: VL45 Radiohus Pendant, Ø250. Design by Vilhelm Lauritzen.
Opposite page: PH 5-4½ and PH 3½-2½ Glass Table lamp in black metallised. Design by Poul Henningsen.

Q&A with Shoichi Uchiyama

Functional, simple forms. Minimalist beauty. A passion for working with and enhancing natural light. As essential as these elements are to Danish design, they are also at the root of the Japanese aesthetic tradition – and, in this case, the work of Tokyo-based designer Shoichi Uchiyama. So it's little wonder that Louis Poulsen has found a natural affinity with Uchiyama, and that the collaboration that began in 2003 with his stunning white-shade Enigma pendant continues as the design takes on a new expression in elegant black. We spoke to Uchiyama about culture, process, and vision as he continues to seek new inspiration while honouring tradition.

What does "good light" mean to you?

In my definition, good light makes us feel good and comfortable in day-to-day life. It makes people and objects look natural, creates natural spaces, and sets a beautiful atmosphere.

How would you describe the characteristics of Japanese lighting design?

Japanese lighting is known to use techniques that allow sunlight, moonlight, and any other external light to be masterfully incorporated into interior spaces. Japanese paper and other natural materials have traditionally been used to filter and convert daylight or light from artificial sources into soft light to create peaceful spaces.

It's often said that the Japanese and the Danes share similar traits and values – do you agree?

Yes, I do agree. In my opinion, Danish and Japanese people share something common in their national character. They are self-effacing and humble. Plus, their lands are surrounded by the sea, and both have rich natural environments. And when it comes to illumination, both countries prefer subdued light.

How do the Japanese use light in their interiors?

As LED has become a prevalent light source here in Japan, the use of light in residential settings has changed. The mainstream approach is shifting toward the use of linear LED lighting for base lighting, which produces soft, indirect

Enigma 825 in black. Design by Shoichi Uchiyama.

illumination of the walls and ceiling. This is in contrast to the conventional method, where the entire room is lit up by a low-profile, high-illumination light installed at the centre of the ceiling. People use lights in their interiors by tactfully combining indirect lights, small downlights, pendants, floor lamps and table lamps, although they should be careful in illuminating the entire room with evenly-installed, indirect lighting fixtures, because such an approach eliminates shadows and weakens the sense of perspective.

What are you most fascinated by or involved in at the moment?

Now, I am committed to creating beauty with unconventional and innovative designs. I am seeking new aspects of beauty in lighting, and wish to create soft light that mesmerises people and helps them experience stillness within.

What was your vision when creating the Enigma design?

Since the light source used for traditional pendants to provide diffused light would not give sufficient illumination in a down-ward direction, I decided to adopt a high-illumination light source used for spotlights. The fixture is designed to softly diffuse the rays from the high-illumination source. A completely-glare-free material is used for an ideal distribution of light, where light is given in a downward direction and reflections from the shades diffuse in upward and horizontal directions as well. With the thin wires, I succeeded in making the shades look like they are floating in the air.

How do you want the Enigma to make people feel?

I want people to feel various aspects of beauty from the floating and expressive shades, which look different depending on where and when they are used and the angle they are seen from.

How do you want the design to impact spaces?

Enigma has three size variants so that it can fit with a wide variety of applications, ranging from large spaces to residential settings. I want it to impact spaces by providing beautiful light and creating an ideal light environment, regardless of what the applications may be.

How is Enigma different from other pendants on the market?

Other pendants currently available on the market are design-oriented; in other words, they are designed to make themselves look good. The Enigma's form, on the other hand, naturally came from the shades' role in controlling illumination. The Enigma can blend in with its environment, as its seemingly floating shades enable you to look at the surrounding interior through the fixture. Enigma has a sculpture-like beauty when it is suspended and lit in the corner of a room – and it remains beautiful when unlit.

One could view the Enigma as an interpretation of Poul Henningsen's shade system. Was his view on lighting a source of inspiration for you?

Poul Henningsen sought to create the best, the most comfortable, and the most functional lighting. I had exactly the same foundation for lighting and developed my own interpretation about light in empathy with him. As a result, we created a new use of a light source and a unique way of controlling the light. The fixture has new features and a functional form of shades. The rays from the light source accurately hit each of the shades, so no glaring light is seen from any angle.

The original design launched in 2003. Has your view on the pendant changed over time?

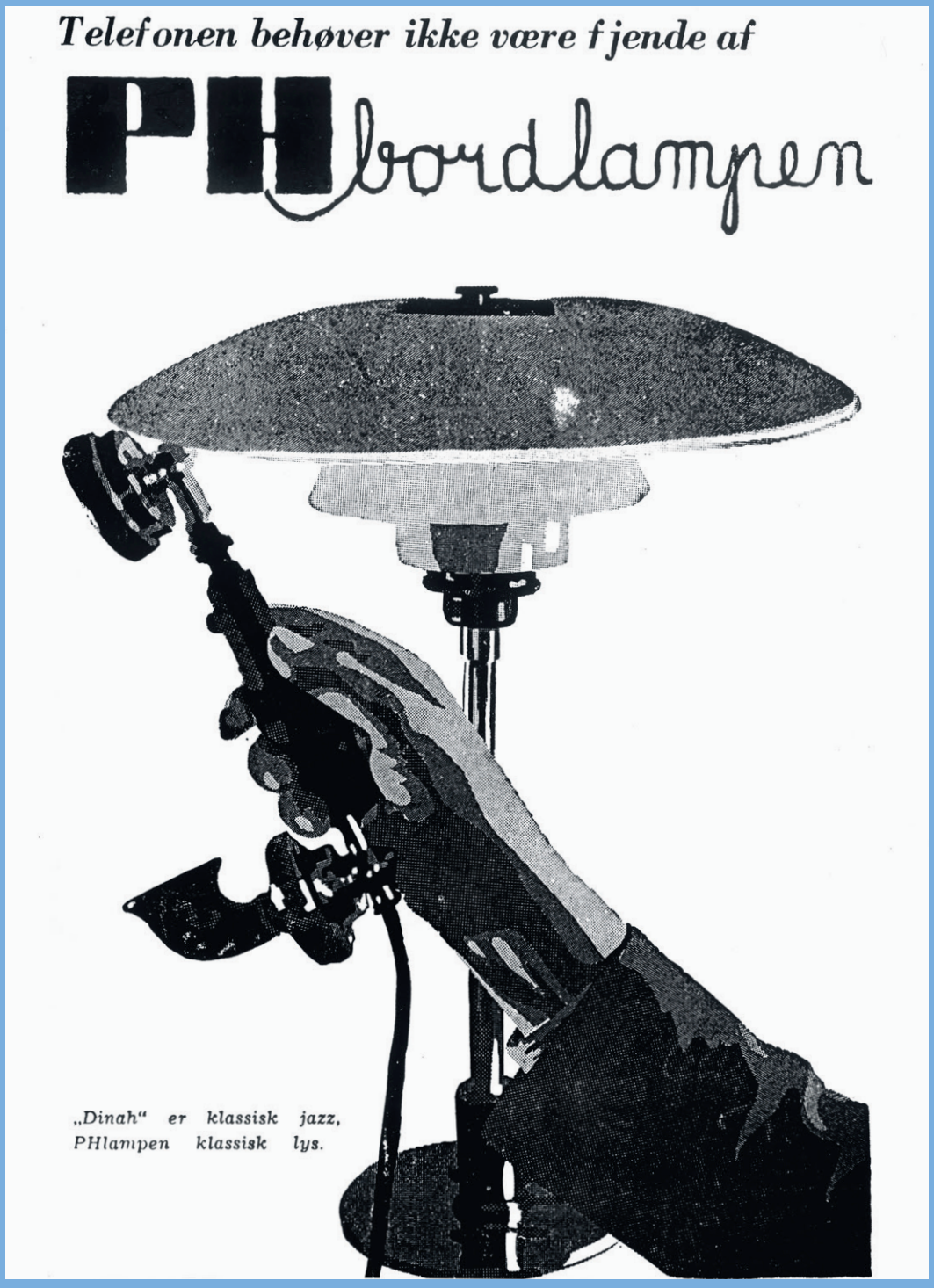
I first conceived the design of the Enigma in the form of a large, six-shade pendant in 1997, and proposed it to Louis Poulsen in 1999. After developing and refining the design, we launched the four-shade Enigma 425 in Europe in 2003 and in Japan the following year. The seven-shade Enigma 825 and five-shade Enigma 545 were developed as well, facilitating a wide variety of applications. Today, the series appears in a wide range of environments, including dining areas and corners of rooms in residential settings, as well as in restaurants, other large spaces, and foyers or atriums with high or vaulted ceilings. With such a wide range of applications and installation sites, I now realise that I can always find something new and beautiful in the Enigma.

Can you describe the experience of working with Louis Poulsen on the new black version?

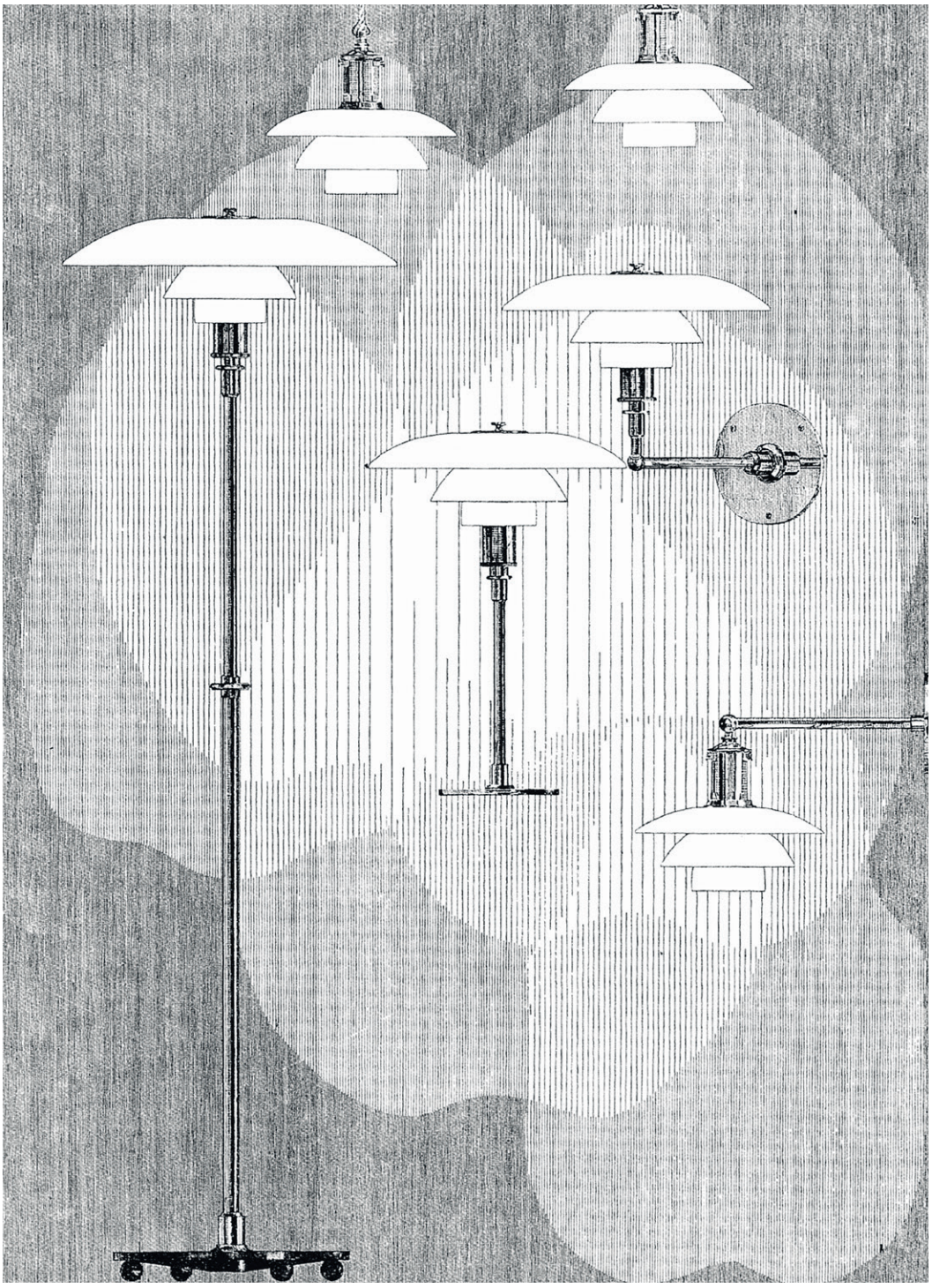
When Louis Poulsen suggested adding a new black version to the Enigma family, I felt sure of its success. Louis Poulsen has succeeded in introducing variants in its other products, and I strongly believe that the black version will fit in subdued or white interior spaces as a new item with unique appeal, different from the original, frosted version.

PH Images from the Past

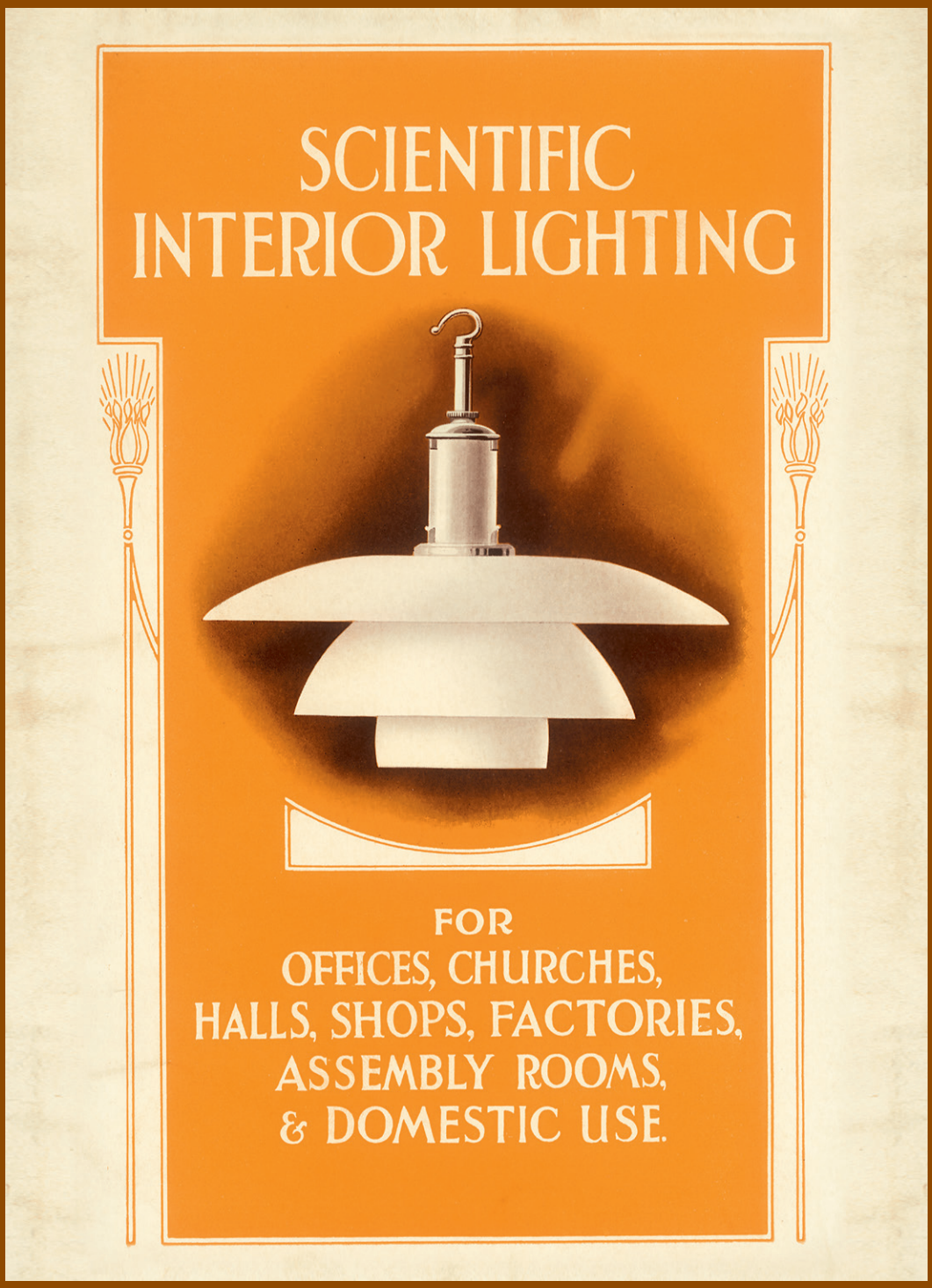
Louis Poulsen's Poul Henningsen archives are chock-full of the designer's ideas on light. They serve as a continued source of inspiration – and a reminder of the warm and fruitful partnership that propelled the Louis Poulsen brand and Henningsen's notion of "the good light" forward. In this time capsule, alongside Henningsen's drawings, lies a series of posters, ads, and catalogue covers that take us back to the designer's early days, when his three-shade system for glare-free, human light was a novelty being presented to the world for the first time. Interiors and lifestyles have since changed in countless ways, but our need for "the good light" remains, making Henningsen's unforgettable silhouettes as relevant as ever.



Newspaper ad from 1938.



Important models of the three-shade system. The light distribution is incorporated in Ib Andersen's drawing from 1927.



Cover of British catalogue from 1928.

Cover of British catalogue from 1927.

Price List No. 1. *November*, 1927.

TREPH LIGHTING

(P.H. Triple Shade Patents)

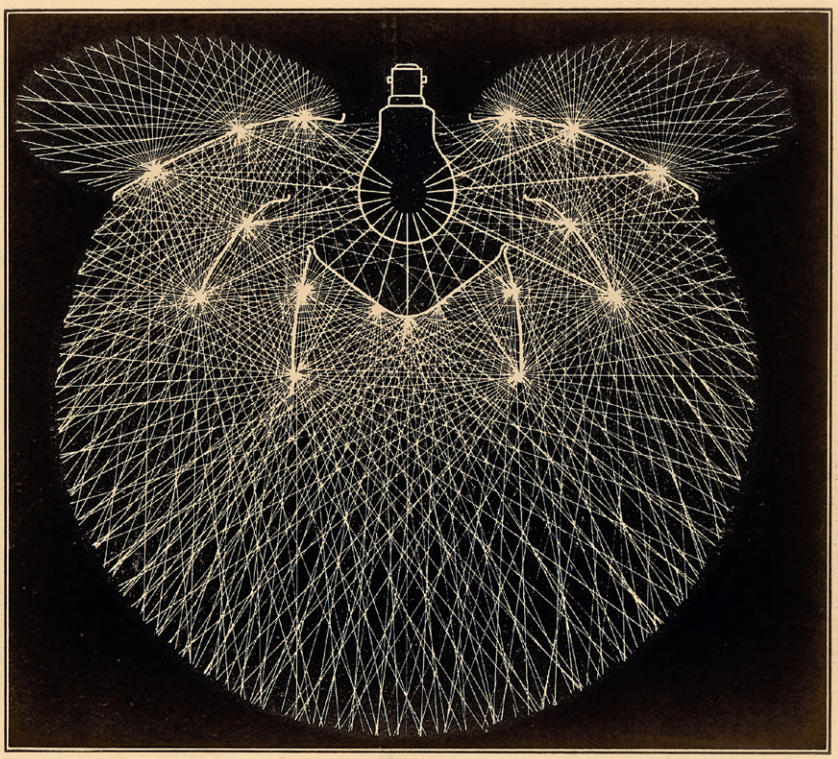


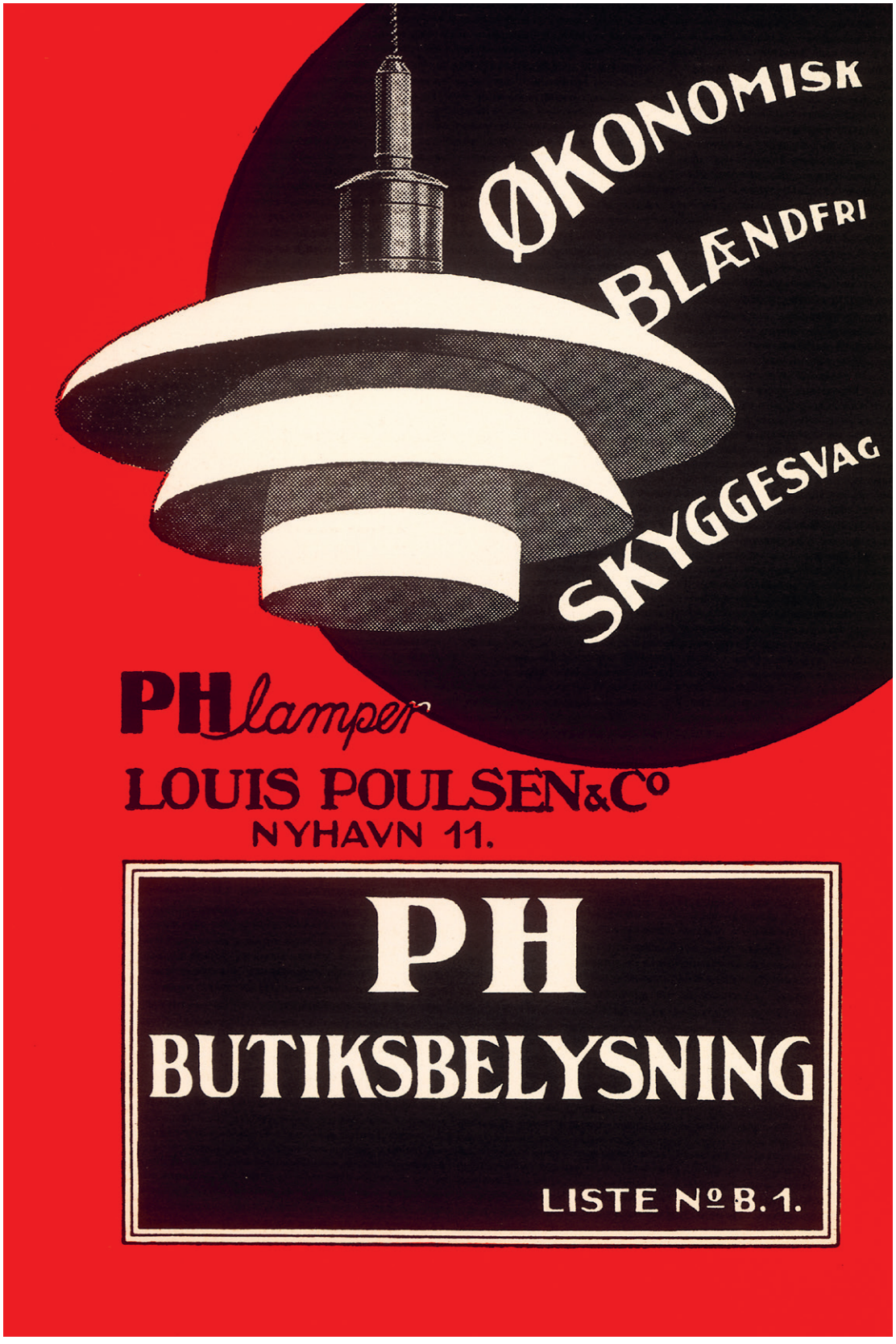
Diagram showing Light Diffusion of the Treph Lamp Fitting.

Manufacturers and Patentees,

LOUIS POULSEN & Co.

COPENHAGEN.

Cover of Danish catalogue from the 1930s.



Hand-drawn ad for German Louis Poulsen agent from the late 1920s.

Cover of German catalogue from 1928.

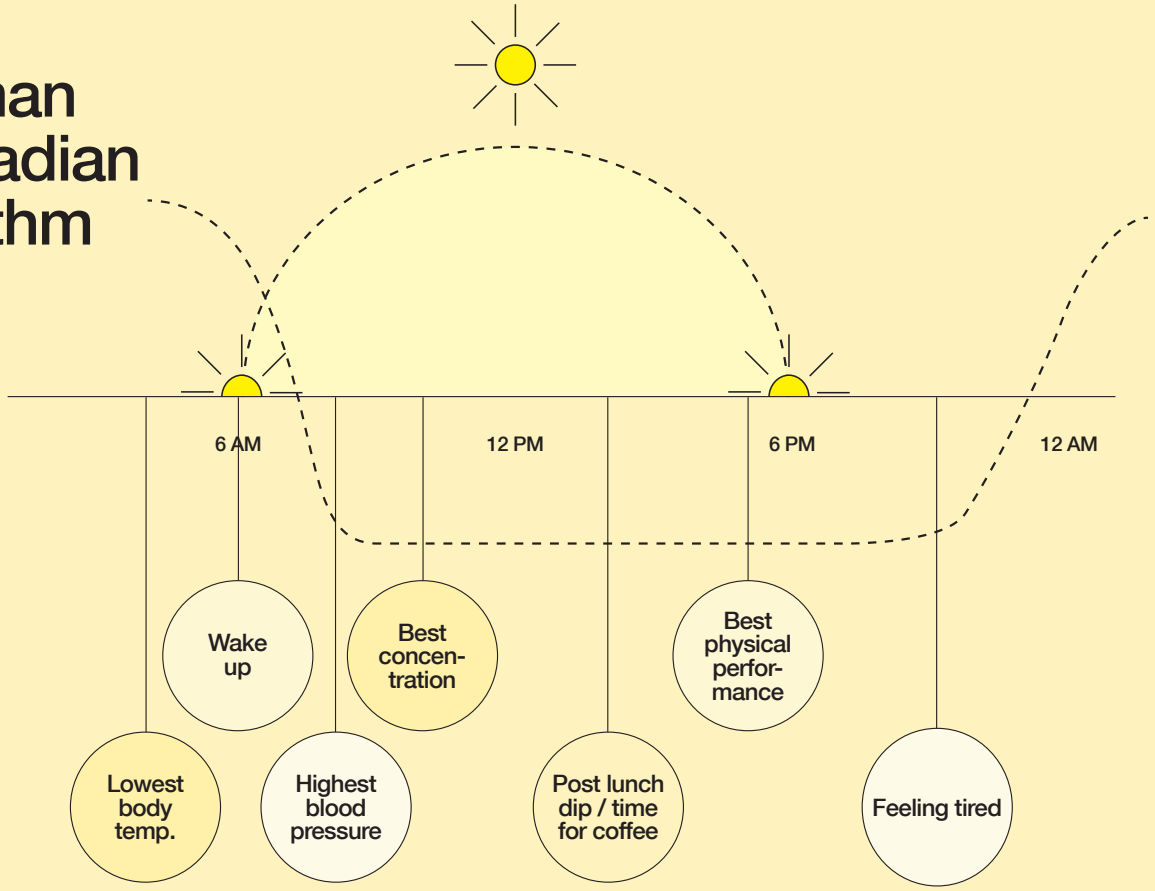
The Light Cure

In each issue of Reflections, we explore a new facet of light – and the role that "the good light," as Poul Henningsen called it, plays in our lives. Having examined light's key role in regulating circadian rhythm in our last issue, we now go deeper to look at light's impact in a healthcare setting. Specifically, we connect with Dr. Anders Sode West from the University of Copenhagen's Neurocenter to discuss his team's remarkable findings on the effects of "naturalistic lighting" on patient recovery and well-being – and consider the broader impact of his findings.

Light matters. But how much, and what do we do about it?

Thanks to decades of research on light's importance for our biological function, we know that light affects and stimulates us both physically and emotionally. But can we quantify its clinical effect on well-being? Can we make a case for lighting design that goes beyond ambience and hygge, and has a measurable impact on our mental state and even our ability to recover from illness? Medical researchers are finding that we can – and the results of a recent study give us plenty to be optimistic about. In Copenhagen, at Rigshospitalet Glostrup, Dr. Anders Sode West and his colleagues set out to evaluate the effect of naturalistic, or circadian, lighting on post-stroke patients admitted for rehabilitation: the first study of its kind to investigate the influence of systematic, sunlight-based light on recovering patients. In simple terms, "naturalistic light" is artificial light that replicates nature's own rhythm of darkness and light. It also supports our circadian rhythm: the human brain's 24-hour internal clock for cycling through sleepiness and alertness at regular intervals.

Human Circadian Rhythm



The predictability of the natural rhythm of light optimises our physiology, health and behaviour. But for the majority of us, who might spend as much as 90% of our time indoors, that natural daily rhythm can be elusive.

Getting sufficient daylight under modern living conditions is challenging enough. But take such a controlled environment as a hospital or rehabilitation centre, and maintaining a healthy circadian rhythm becomes particularly challenging, especially for long-term-stay patients.

So what can healthcare institutions do to create an environment that supports a healthy biorhythm and reduces complications? And, on a broader scale, what can all our interiors – from our homes and workplaces to our schools and public spaces – do to compensate for our severed connection to nature?

Illumination that mimics nature

To best support the human circadian rhythm, naturalistic indoor lighting copies the rhythm of sunlight, replicating natural fluctuations in darkness and light (lux), colour (kelvin), and spectrum (wavelength).

“Our brains read the light to estimate the time of the day,” explains Dr. West. “It is therefore crucial to get the right light at the right time, so the organs and the brain can speed up or slow down their activity at the right time. We know that all cells in our body are circadian-controlled – and that 10-15% of our genes are directly controlled by the master clock in the brain’s hypothalamus. And we know that a disturbed circadian rhythm is associated with endocrinological disturbances (for instance, Type 2 diabetes), cognitive impairment, sleep problems, depression, and cancer, among other things.”

A bright antidote to depression and fatigue

After a stroke, the most frequent complications include a depressive mood, decreased sleep quality, and fatigue: symptoms that can negatively impact cognitive function, functional recovery, quality of life – and, ultimately, a patient’s survival. To evaluate the effects of dynamic, naturalistic lighting, Dr. West’s team installed multi-coloured, LED-based luminaries in the intervention unit. A computer controlled continuous changes in colour, brightness and spectrum over 24 hours. At night, the light was turned off completely and, when needed, turned on with negligible blue wavelengths to minimise disturbance. The control group in the study, on the other hand, was placed in rooms with standard indoor lighting. The intervention unit of 39 patients and the control group of 32 were observed over the course of one year to include all four variances of seasonal light.

“We found that both depressive mood and fatigue were significantly lower in the intervention group at discharge compared with the control group,” says Dr. West. “Depressive mood was between 32% and 49% lower, while fatigue was, on average, 21% lower.”

At discharge, the patients exposed to naturalistic light also had significantly increased melatonin levels in their blood, and an evolved melatonin rhythmicity, which is closely tied to a healthy circadian rhythm and healthy sleeping patterns. The findings join a growing body of research on the profound effect that research-based, circadian lighting can have on wellness in the modern world – and inspire further exploration of its potential.

Research-based lighting design

As we examine the design changes sweeping over the healthcare sector, it’s worth noting that while circadian lighting may be the optimal solution, there is still much to be said for working with the decorative lighting at our disposal. After all, it’s not just the light itself that matters, but also the form in which it is delivered. For instance, the PH Wall lamps recently installed in the corridors of a hospital in Esbjerg, Denmark have lent the space a warmth that’s a welcome break from traditional, overly bright overhead lighting.

At Frederiksberg Hospital in Copenhagen, Louis Poulsen has contributed lighting to test rooms designed to help patients recover faster and to create a more pleasant environment for patients, staff and visitors. Designed by KHR Architecture, these LP Circle fixtures are Kelvin-adjustable and feature integrated ventilation. With more daylight, circadian lighting, a more patient-friendly colour scheme, and single-patient rooms, the design team hopes to enhance not only ambience, but also outcomes. In Seinäjokim, Finland, Louis Poulsen has been involved in another project where Kelvin-adjustable LP Circle fixtures have been installed in intensive care rooms to expedite patient recovery.

Other examples of patient-friendly illumination abound. A research team at Bispebjerg Hospital in Copenhagen is investigating light’s effect on depressive patients and has installed naturalistic lighting at the psychiatric department. The St. Augustinus Memory Centre in Neuss, Germany has been experimenting with human-centric lighting to help treat patients with dementia. Meanwhile, across the ocean at the Mount Sinai Health System in New York City, a clinical trial is testing whether brighter morning light in cancer patients’ rooms can reduce fatigue and depression. And in the paediatric intensive care unit of University of Minnesota Masonic Children’s Hospital, the lighting mimics daylight to reduce disturbance to the young patients’ circadian rhythm.

Dr. West’s vision that “the light of the future is going to reflect the time of day” might be closer than we realise – and not just in healthcare. If a patient can go home sooner, and in a better state, thanks to the artificial light in the hospital room, one can imagine the benefit such lighting can bring to an entire society that spends far more time indoors than nature intended. Of course, circadian light is not a cure-all. But all signs point to it being a key component not only on the road to recovery, but also in our general pursuit of happiness and wellness.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