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Entwurf PETER BEHRENS Design

derive from caprice, it was stern necessity, a revolt of youth against the burden of the past laid upon it by the age of history. It is characteristic that since then the word modern has disappeared when referring to new work by the rising generation. What takes its being today naturally lives in the new, modern world the foundations of which were laid in those bygone days. And there was very good reason too that Henry van de Velde, now nearly eighty, should have been one of the leading men in the Belgian Ministry of Fine Arts. What was new yesterday and what is new today do not exclude each other as the Old and the Modern were wont to do; rather does the one condition the other; for what is decisive is common to both, namely, the will for living, present-day forms—not for single things but for the whole. The younger generation has no idea of the feeling of happiness caused by this change, nor of the passionate joy in participating in what took place at the time. A new room of Riemerschmied's was just as important as a new painting by Ludwig Hofmann or Edvard Munch. The lay-out of a book by Lechter or E. R. Weiss was just as interesting as a new building designed by Olbrich or Joseph Hoffmann. You can sense—and Ahlers Hestermann's book confirms this—that the foundation was laid by this Movement for the future life of the nation and that this is not a matter of æsthetic values tied to a certain period but is rather a matter of something timeless formed by super-personal necessity. Closer study will reveal—and this book is a welcome excuse for doing so—that from architecture to advertising art, from dwellings to cups and saucers, forms were created which developed later in lively variations, examples of a truly significant, incredibly organic tradition worthy of this name.

Translated by Flora Salmond-Volkmann



Vignette

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