



reddot design museum



Press release

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Time travel in product design: retrospective "Tönis Käo: 'Design as Experiment'" only until 3 April in the Red Dot Design Museum

Ultra-flat notebooks and mobile phone icons? Tönis Käo has foreseen them – and also designed the first German push-button telephone. Only until 3 April 2016, the exhibition "Tönis Käo: 'Design as Experiment', Retrospective" shows an overview of the life's work of the system design pioneer in the Red Dot Design Museum Essen in Germany.

All those, who visit the special exhibition "Tönis Käo: 'Design as Experiment', Retrospective", go on a time travel in product design – back to the roots of our modern age of communications. On show is among others the first German push-button telephone, which Tönis Käo designed together with Herbert Krämer for Deutsche Bundespost in 1970. With the desktop telephone, the designer had a formative influence on our lives until today because the milestone in industrial design replaced the formerly established rotary phone.

Another improvement of our daily quality of life achieved Tönis Käo, who also dealt with the design of household appliances, with the Siemens hair dryer 2000 in 1976. By positioning the handle diagonally, he facilitated the handling for the user. Besides the original, the also exhibited model of the hair dryer illustrates the design approach of this innovation: Käo had reduced the product to its basic geometrical forms.

Theorist and researcher, designer and visionary: The exhibition "Tönis Käo: 'Design as Experiment', Retrospective" is testament to the enormous work richness of the designer who always focused on designing the future. Besides the field of product design, it documents his activities in creating technical workspaces, in exhibition and graphic design.

"Tönis Käo: 'Design as Experiment', Retrospective" is the first joint project by the Red Dot Design Museum Essen and Folkwang University of the Arts. The exhibition was curated by the Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design in



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Tallinn in 2014. The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Energy and Industry of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Estonian Ministry of Culture and Estonian Cultural Endowment support the exhibition.

About Tõnis Kão:

Born in Saaremaa/Estonia in 1940, Tõnis Kão studied at Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen from 1962 to 1967. Just two years after graduating, he started work as an industrial designer for Siemens in Munich in 1969, taking over the design studio of Siemens AG from 1983. From 2004 to 2007, he was Academic Director of Bergisch Institute of Product Development and Innovation Management, and from 2005 to 2007 he was also Director of the Alu-Scout Innovation Award. Because of his expertise he has been a jury member of the Red Dot Design Award numerous times. Tõnis Kão lives in Munich.

**Tõnis Kão: "Design as Experiment", Retrospective
Only until 3 April 2016**

Red Dot Design Museum Essen
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Further information: www.red-dot-design-museum.org



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