

lightnews

The Zumtobel Group Employee Magazine



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LEDON OLED Lighting in Dresden

“From a certain age, you automatically become a storyteller.”

One misty morning in January, a grey VW Sprinter van pulls up outside the gates of Zumtobel Plant II. A woman gets out and strides towards the building, while three men, all around 40, haul 80-kilo cases in her wake. Followed by the inquisitive gazes of several employees, the quartet vanishes into the 600 square-metre Zumtobel Light Forum, a veritable World of Light. “Wow, what a location!” they all say at once and lower the cases to the ground. Fascinated, they walk up and down, play with the light control systems and argue over which is the most attractive spot in the room. A few minutes later they reach an agreement, open the cases and set about turning the Forum into a film studio.

It will be the best part of two hours before the crew are ready to host a 90-minute session with Jürg Zumtobel. In this agreeable setting and with the camera rolling, the son of the company founder will be talking about the milestones in the history of the Group and how he experienced them personally. His statements will form the basis for a 5-minute multimedia report to be painstakingly compiled from old films and photos. At this stage the film crew are still perfectly relaxed.

Out of the cases come batteries, cables, lenses, data storage media and camera tripods. While the cameraman samples various angles through his lens, the director scans her script one last time and the sound engineer runs a sound check. “Can we turn off the aircon?” he asks, “the fan’s too noisy.” “That’s not air-conditioning, it’s the cooling for the lights,” comes the answer. “Then switch off those lights,” he orders. The lighting technician places a white designer chair in front of the camera, eager to illuminate the scene to perfection. A few hectic moments later, cables are snaking all over the place and three brilliant lamps are making the chair look an even whiter shade of pale.

Time is getting tight – just 15 minutes until the first take. The director glances at her phone. The make-up artist should have been here ages ago. “HD technology is merciless,”

she says, “just the tiniest bit of fluff looks huge on screen.” The phone rings. It’s a security guard from the gate: “The make-up guy is on his way.” No sooner has he finished speaking than a strikingly made-up man dances across the room. In his bag of tricks, he has the envy of many a woman: over 30 make-up brushes and a full range of exquisite products. Right on time, Jürg Zumtobel strolls into the Light Forum. Relaxed and smiling he surrenders to the cares of the make-up man. “This is the bit I like the most!” he jokes. Duly combed and powdered, he wanders over to the sound engineer to be wired for sound. Not long now and he’ll be on camera. A last glance through the lens, a couple of questions to break the ice and... take one! Camera! Action!

16 minutes fit on a chip card, then they have to fit a new one. The make-up artist uses the break to adjust Jürg Zumtobel’s tie. The director compares what’s been said with what they need to hear. Not entirely happy, she tries again: “Could you just tell me again, why it was – why it is – so important for the Zumtobel Group to acquire other companies?” This time Jürg Zumtobel hits the nail on the head: “Acquisitions are important for growth. But one crucial aspect is that you have to bring know-how into the company from outside.”

In all, Jürg Zumtobel fields 33 questions. The film crew thank him for his time. “You’re welcome,” he says. “The fact is that, from a certain age, you automatically become a storyteller.” Most of all, though, he’s going to miss the make-up man. “When I stand in front of the mirror, the morning after the night before, and wonder who I’m looking at – I now know who to send for!”

One job done, one to go. The crew pack up their equipment and haul it to a meeting

room one floor up. Another two hours of preparation. Again they open the cases and run a sound check. This time they are going to be filming Fritz Zumtobel, the younger of the two brothers. As a former board member responsible for Triadonic,



his role is to lead the viewer through the world of operating, controlling and regulating light.

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