



Obituary for Günter Beltzig

We remember our companion Günter Beltzig

It is with deep sadness that we learned that Günter Beltzig, who was closely associated with the Richter Spielgeräte company – he was to us an important designer and a much-appreciated source of ideas -, recently passed away.

Günter Beltzig, born in Wuppertal on 25 July 1941, died near Ingolstadt on 26 December 2022. Starting out as an industrial designer, he initially designed pieces of plastic furniture, which are considered classics today and can be found in the New York Museum of Modern Art, among other places. He began advising the company Richter Spielgeräte GmbH in 1977, developing for them adventure rather than standard playgrounds that have fascinated young and old alike. Beltzig was one of the few playground equipment designers who also dealt with the conception of playgrounds suitable for children with disabilities.

Günter Beltzig's book on playground design has been translated into several languages. He also wrote numerous publications on the subject of barrier-free play and children's aesthetics, was involved in the development of playground equipment standards, and held teaching positions at two universities of applied sciences. The exciting play areas he designed, which can also be found in sensitive nature and heritage conservation areas throughout Europe, are characterised by high design standards, many opportunities to play and great experience and learning effects.

For Günter Beltzig, play was essential. He understood this to be "activities that individuals undertake to adapt to their environment", in other words, play, according to Beltzig, is the opportunity to try out all possibilities, to test the limits, gather experience, learn – and is not just for children. Artists, researchers, and many creative people play. According to Beltzig, there is no such thing as a definable „play value“ but rather lots of independent play functions: climbing, balancing, coordinating, training social behaviour, asserting oneself in a group, but also experiencing wind, rain and sun. While they can overlap and act as a complement to each other, they can also counteract the other, prevent play or lead to overly aggressive behaviour. That's why it is important to be aware of the individual play functions of play equipment in playgrounds and make conscious decisions when selecting and implementing them. Accordingly, the playground can be considered a highly complex, social functional space.

Günter Beltzig designed, among other things, our Red Carousel, our Archimedes Screw, and our Pyramid Towers, which can be found in playgrounds around the world.

We are very grateful that we were able to benefit from Günter Beltzig's creativity and were so closely associated with him personally. And we are happy that his designs will live on in countless playgrounds around the world.

Richter Spielgeräte GmbH

Das Original, seit über 50 Jahren

