



- 1 Sachfotografie, Laufschiene einer Seilbahn, um 1928, Fotografie: Albert Renger-Patzsch. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK
- 2 Naturfotografie, Natterkopf, 1925–28, Fotografie: Albert Renger-Patzsch. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

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With his photo book *Die Welt ist schön* (The World Is Beautiful), which he originally wanted to call *Die Dinge* (Things), Albert Renger-Patzsch (1897–1966) achieved international recognition. The cofounder of the New Photography movement aimed for nothing less than to capture the essence of objects—whether they originated in nature or were products of technology.

From the beginning of his career, the professional photographer Albert Renger-Patzsch focused his attention on the form and structure of machines, the tantalizing surface of a snake's skin, or the sensitivity of a potter's hands. With his life's work, he encouraged viewers to see everyday objects in a new light—or to take notice of them in the first place. In this regard, he saw himself as a craftsman and technician rather than an artist. He was convinced that it was both necessary and possible to appreciate any object in an objective manner, inspired by the essence of the object itself. In what sounded like circular reasoning, he believed that an image is beautiful because the object it depicts is beautiful. With this realistic approach, he also meant that we should see the thing itself and not the picture of the thing. Ideally, therefore, the photographic

image itself should be “invisible”—meaning that its creator would also be invisible. Meanwhile, this way of working, without a conscious personal style, quickly became a style in itself that others could seize upon. In his early years, Renger-Patzsch worked primarily under contract. The photograph *Riemenscheiben* (Belt Pulleys) was taken in a factory owned by Siemens Elektrowärme GmbH, which produced clothes irons and other electrically heated appliances. No other images are known to have been taken at this location. *Die Welt ist schön* displayed one hundred photographs selected on their own merits, independently of the context of the original commissions. In the same way, Renger-Patzsch preferred to present the individual objects in close-up, free of any spatial, social, or even historical context. (Andres Janser)

Sachfotografie, Riemenscheiben, um 1928
Fotografie: Albert Renger-Patzsch
Auftrag: Siemens Elektrowärme GmbH, Neu-Sörnnewitz, DE
Material/Technik: Barytpapier, s/w-Fotografie
17.2 × 23 cm
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/riemenscheiben/>