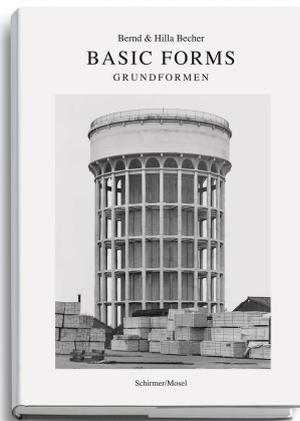


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PRESS RELEASE

On the occasion of Hilla Becher's 80th birthday

BERND & HILLA BECHER

Basic Forms / Grundformen

A representative outline of the Bechers' entire range of subjects.

Basic Forms is a brief, handy, visual introduction to the encyclopedic formal canon of industrial buildings in the Western world – and the Bechers devoted their life's work to documenting it.

The book brings together, as its title implies, *basic forms* of all kinds of industrial structures in a representative selection of 61 photographs. The different forms of the most frequent types of structure are presented like the letters of an alphabet. The Bechers' repertoire of topics encompasses the following key categories:

- large-scale containers such as water towers, grain silos, coal bunkers, gas tanks, etc.;
- building-shaped large plants of the coal and steel industry including furnaces, winding and cooling towers, lime kilns, crushers, processing plants, etc.;
- details of individual units in the factory halls themselves.

Taken with extreme objectivity and technical precision, as well as the famous shadow-less "Becher light", the photos reveal the hidden poetry and aesthetic beauty of the architecture of these functional and utility buildings of our industrial culture.

For a long time this strand in human cultural heritage was excluded from the cultural awareness of our society. We have the Bechers to thank for opening our eyes to it – with their marvelous photographs. They did this on their own, with no public commission or external funding. The Bechers' selfless contribution to the photographic historiography of our age cannot be valued and esteemed highly enough.

Bernd & Hilla Becher
Basic Forms / Grundformen
Bilingual Edition English/German
Foreword by Gunilla Knape
With an essay by Susanne Lange
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Hilla Becher, photographed by
Laurenz Berges, May 2007

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