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When I first opened my copy of Taschen's lush new book *1000 Lights: 1879 to 1959*, I was dazzled by colour. I tried to see the original appeal of the Tiffany shades, with their gaudy evocations of insects and flowers. My mum likes them. But she grew up before stained-glass style shades became *de rigueur* in out-of-town pizza restaurants and burger bars. Flipping past the upside-down dragonflies and panelled wisteria, I gorged on the spectrum used by Daum Frères and Emile Gallé. Absolutely compelling. But would I want one in my house? I flicked on through Frank Lloyd Wright, Dirk Van Erp,



René Lalique and some terrifying Tiffany peacock brackets. And, suddenly, there was a light I *wanted*.

Other designers have attempted to give their lights character by basing their shapes on all manner of creatures and styles. But the Anglepoise – so perfectly named – has always seemed to have a personality of its own, as if it might, at any second, turn its head toward you and start talking. The poet Robert Vas Dias once compared his own Anglepoise to a bird, inquisitively staring down at his desk, foraging for twigs among his words.

The Anglepoise was designed by the British automotive engineer George Carwardine (above, 1897 to 1948), who specialised in vehicle suspension systems and, in 1932, patented his “articulated task light”. It gracefully permitted an incandescent bulb to be balanced in three planes of movement. The Anglepoise’s flexible system of springs and hinges is based on the constant-tension principle of human limbs – and the light was an instant success when spring manufacturers Herbert Terry & Sons first began producing models in 1933. By 1934, the original had been slightly modified to produce the classic 1227 model (pictured).

But the light’s story doesn’t end there. In 2001, Kenneth Grange (who has overhauled other ubiquitous designs like the London taxi, Inter-City 125 train, Kenwood Chef, and Parker 25) joined Anglepoise to subtly update the lamp. In 2003 he created the Type3 which uses a “double-skin shade system” enabling the product to take up to a 100w bulb: so bright that it might have ways of making you talk. ☼

*‘1,000 Lights: 1879-1959’ is published by Taschen, priced £19.99. The Type3 lamp sells for £275, plus VAT, and is available from [www.anglepoise.co.uk](http://www.anglepoise.co.uk)*

