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Extreme repurposing: the costly conversion of the 1951 dockyard crane over the Amsterdam docks to the Faralda Hotel marks a new threshold for the adaptation of industrial monuments. The three hotel suites - *Mystic*, *Secret* and *Free Spirit* - start 35 m up and 435 € per day.

Photo: Floris van Halm

Opinion

In appreciation of Hilla Becher

Axel Föhl

It was more than twenty years ago, in 1993, when a group of daring industrial archaeology enthusiasts ventured into the widely untouched Russian Urals to have a look at the heavy industry remains there. **Hilla Becher**, nearly sixty years old at the time, was part of our group. We were all impressed by her open-minded curiosity for the kind of things there that she and husband Bernd had already explored for nearly 40 years in other parts of the world.

Hilla, born in 1934 in Prussian Potsdam, was the one in the husband-and-wife-team that actually was a properly trained photographer, whereas Bernd had studied painting in Stuttgart and Düsseldorf. From 1959, both started their unique campaign to document in their specific way Europe's and later the world's relics of the Industrial Revolution. Not taken very seriously at first, they accumulated over the years a peerless body of serialized conceptual art showing the typified buildings industry had generated, one that serves for us today as an invaluable catalogue of objects that are rapidly disappearing - the more valuable, since not many other people had developed such an early understanding for the meaning of the industrial heritage.