

November, 19th, 2008

**>>> Fire, water, earth, air and love
The Scheufelen Wall Calendar 2009**

It's rare for printed material designed originally for advertising purposes to become a cult object. In the past, Scheufelen wall calendars have won many design prizes from around the world, thereby gaining recognition from the graphic design industry. For 2009, the designers came up with an exciting new idea – they designed and printed 2009 unique calendars, each with 12 different calendar sheets.

The story of how this new design object came about is also unusual. The future of the calendar was called into question when Papierfabrik Scheufelen filed for insolvency in July 2008. However, the project went ahead thanks to the outstanding commitment of a number of Scheufelen's long-term partners. The Stuttgart-based design agency Strichpunkt, the Immenstadt printshop Graphische Betriebe Eberl, Mainz-based publishers Hermann Schmidt Mainz and printshop Universitätsdruckerei H. Schmidt all joined forces to design, print and market the calendar. The campaign pays homage to the innovative papers from Scheufelen, to Germany as a centre of industry and to the appreciation of a long-standing family-run business. The partners' commitment also reflects their close personal ties with the company.

The calendar's appeal can be attributed to its unusual artwork and print design. The concept is based on the production of paper, which is characterised by four main elements. The element earth refers to the raw materials in paper production – kaolin and chalk. Water accounts for 98% of paper production, making it the most important

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>>> resource in the process. Heat – symbolized by the element fire – is needed to dry the paper web. Air is needed to grow wood, and is therefore an essential part of the elementary raw material cellulose. All four elements combine to enable the production of paper. However, a fifth element is required in the manufacture of innovative papers, such as stylish premium papers. And that element is love. It demands passion and love for paper, the material that forms the basis for communication and culture. It is the material and tactile properties of paper that make it a vehicle of sensory experience.

The designers go one step further. They use the four elements to describe life itself and show how it is the fifth element that adds meaning to life. They assign a clear characteristic to each element in the design: earth is represented with typographical variations, fire is defined with pictograms, air is reflected through the lightness of the illustrations and water through a playful undulating form. The fifth element – love – refers to the commitment of the partners. It was their passion and love for design, paper and printing that made this calendar possible in the first place. Love as the fifth element is manifested in various heart shapes and a range of finishing techniques. Hot-foil stamping, UV, relief and Iriodin coatings and blind embossing – both raised and recessed – round off the illustrative design.

The design selection process was based on countless hours of creative thought, because the idea was to create 2009 unique calendars. This meant that, for the first time, motifs were not designed, but really “developed”. For the five elements, a total of 60 motifs were chosen from scores of basic motifs and superimposed

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>>> virtually and systematically on a computer in countless variations. The results were reworked until an exciting, structurally balanced design was created for every possible combination. The designers worked through and corrected thousands of combinations before simulating a virtual printout. It was only after this stage that the motifs could be clearly defined and released for printing.

It was a real challenge to put these motifs into print. The idea was to combine an original work of art (run of 1) with the art of printing. Thus, the printing process was not just about reproducing copies but also about creating a unique product. Each day, everyone experiences a unique combination of these 4 elements and love. Similarly, each calendar is made up of these elements in its own unique way, thus giving the owner his or her own personal calendar experience – month after month, sheet after sheet.

Implementing the ambitious goal of creating 2009 unique calendars presented Graphische Betriebe Eberl with a real challenge that combined mental work with manual input. In fact, it took a monumental mathematical effort. There are 12 different motifs for each of the five elements.

Every individual calendar sheet was made unique by combining the five printing and finishing processes and continually reorganising the paper sheets. Mathematically speaking, the five elements – each with 12 motifs and 12 calendar sheets – result in 12^6 , i.e. 2,985,984 possible combinations. Of this number, 57,600 variations were printed and 24,108 sheets selected for the 2009 calendars. In addition to 80 hours for printing, 160 hours of sorting were required,

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>>> with the paper sheets being sorted/restacked manually. What's more, the print work was rounded off with 48 spot colours. The printshop's efforts seem not only to have culminated in a unique product, but also a truly record-breaking one. The impossible was made possible and offset printing made highly personalised thanks to a combination of reason, heart, logic and love.

Taking all this work into account, the price tag of 100 euros seems a snip for these originals, each of which is signed personally by Dr. Ulrich Scheufelen. They can be ordered from the publisher Hermann Schmidt Mainz (website: www.typografie.de), whose involvement in this project reaffirms its credentials as an expert in high-quality typography and design projects.

The proceeds from the calendar sales will be returned to the graphical design industry. Creativity and skill are the basis for the creation of unique objects. That's why the partners in this joint project are committed to the promotion of young talent. Anyone who buys a wall calendar receives a voucher entitling the bearer to free entry to a training symposium at Papierfabrik Scheufelen on May 8, 2009.

The 21st wall calendar is just the latest in a series of exquisite designer calendars from Scheufelen and represents an outstanding example of partnership, innovative spirit and passion. In fact, the project partners have succeeded in redefining the very concept of calendar design.

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