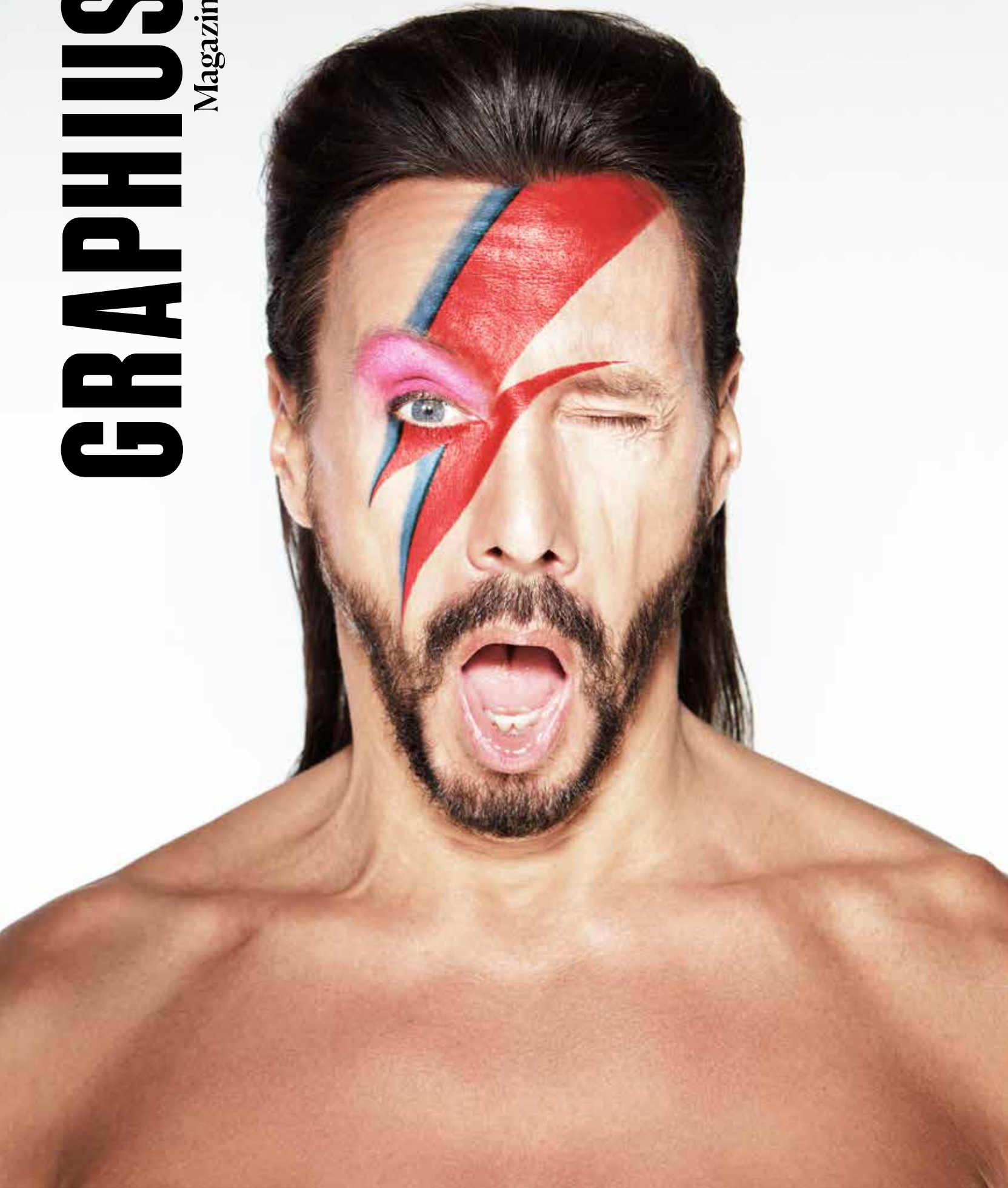


GRAPHIUS

Magazine



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Nicolas Bets is a Belgian photographer celebrated for his vibrant, retro-inspired style blending humor and glamour. Influenced by masters like Newton and Ritts, he trained in Paris and worked with renowned photographers before establishing his bold, cinematic approach. His prestigious clientele includes Louis Vuitton and Vogue.
www.nicolasbets.com

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BIETLOT:

FAMILY KNOW-HOW IN A NEW ERA



Since the printer Bietlot, located in Gilly, was established by two brothers in 1951, it has repeatedly reinvented itself to overcome the many challenges posed by the graphics sector. Thanks to its recognised know-how and a strong connection with its clients, Bietlot has continued to offer impeccable quality and personal service. The challenges of the printing market, which has become increasingly complex and more competitive, have led to the company reaching a new phase in its history. In August 2024, Bietlot became part of the Graphius Group, opening up several new perspectives. This integration is much more than a simple economic alliance: it symbolises the beginning of a new era for a company that is deeply rooted in its own history, but also resolutely focused on the future.

Family heritage that endures

The story of the Bietlot company began in 1951 in a very modest manner. Jacques and André Bietlot, two brothers with a passion for printing, decided to establish their own printing firm. Over the years, Bietlot developed to become a reference point in the sector. It built up a reputation thanks to the quality of its printing and personalised customer service. 'Bietlot is, first of all, a family company with a long tradition of excellence,' explains Éric Guillaume, the general manager of Bietlot.

This familial character and its close connection with clients have ensured the company has kept sight of its roots over all the years. At the beginning of the year 2000, the company faced its first major turning point. The two Bietlot brothers passed the torch to three of their management

members in the framework of a 'management buyout'. This procedure put the company managers in the position to take over the firm without losing the familial spirit. The change of course set the immediate beginning of a new era for the printers, with the pronounced wish to invest in advanced equipment and to diversify.

Answering the challenges of a changing market

In the print sector, the 2000s were synonymous with revolution. The digitisation and materialisation of media, the rise of the internet and more recently, the COVID-19 crisis, all served to deeply alter the landscape. The amount of printing work decreased, as did corporate marketing budgets. 'In recent years, the market has become increasingly more complex. We have needed to continuously adapt,' emphasises Éric Guillaume.

One of the greatest challenges for Bietlot was the spectacular increase in paper prices in 2022. 'The paper price doubled in just nine months. This caused a budgetary imbalance for many of our clients,' recalls Éric Guillaume. For a company specialised in the printing of brochures and catalogues, this

could easily have been a fatal blow. But Bietlot showed resilience.

The key to this resilience was in the ability to innovate. In 2016, the company invested in a LED-UV printing press, technology that accelerates the drying process while reducing energy use. 'As such, we could respond more quickly to more complex orders,' says Éric Guillaume. Furthermore, the choice complemented an environmental approach, with considerable reductions in energy use linked to the new technology. This went hand in hand with the company's ecologically responsible strategy.

A company at the forefront of ecology

Bietlot has pursued an ambitious environmental policy for a number of years. Driven by the requirements of its most important client, the Publications Office of the European Union, Bietlot has obtained the 'Imprim'Vert' label, proof of their engagement to reduce the impact of their activities on the environment.

'Obtaining this label was a real challenge for us,' says Éric Guillaume. 'But in the meantime, it's become a guideline for the entire company.'

Thanks to this certification, Bietlot has not just reduced its energy use and waste production, but also implemented various sustainable practices, such as the use of plant-based inks and recycled or FSC and PEFC papers, primarily originating in Wallonia.

This ecological engagement has also been brought into their waste management processes. 'We have mastered the recycling and management of our waste,' Éric Guillaume acknowledges. The company has also invested in photovoltaic panels that have been installed on all its buildings and updated all the lighting systems in the workplaces and offices to further reduce energy use.

These actions are far from anecdotal, but have put Bietlot in the position to strengthen ties with clientele sensitive to these issues. 'More and more of our clients are paying attention to our ecological values,' emphasises Éric Guillaume. This environmental dimension is now a strong argument for maintaining and attracting clients, particularly in the B2B sector in Wallonia, where Bietlot is a major player in the printing of catalogues and brochures.





“Our structure remains the same and we are continuing to offer our clients personal service. Nothing has changed

except that we are stronger, thanks to the support of the group.”

Joining Graphius: a strategic choice for the future

Despite the efforts relating to innovation and the environmental policy, Éric Guillaume quickly understood that it was necessary to join forces with a stronger player to guarantee the future of the printing company. This is why Bietlot became part of the Graphius Group in August 2024.

‘Integrating into Graphius Group was inevitable. It signified a real chance for us,’ explains Éric Guillaume. ‘Alone, it was becoming more and more difficult to keep innovating and fulfilling the increasing demands of our clients. By joining a group, we could maximise our production capacities while simultaneously remaining independent.’

This integration signified a strategic turning point for Bietlot. Thanks to this approach, they can now benefit from the synergies of the Graphius Group, most particularly in the areas of purchasing power and technologies. ‘We have access to larger and more efficient presses, as a result of which we can perform assignments that we previously couldn’t take on,’ explains Éric Guillaume. Furthermore, the company is now able to offer smaller series thanks to the digital presses of the group, opening up new commercial opportunities.

Keeping the Bietlot identity with the benefits of a large group

Although the integration in the Graphius Group has changed the structure of the printing office, they have not changed their identity in any way. Bietlot is continuing to operate from its location in Gilly, with a team of seventeen professionals. It remains loyal to the spirit of a family company and its local values. ‘We have been lucky to be able to keep our autonomy and profit from the power of the group at the same time,’ says Éric Guillaume. ‘This is a true added value for our company because we can respond more quickly to requests, improve our profitability and maintain local employment.’

The integration of Bietlot in Graphius Group has not led to any major changes in working methods. ‘Our structure remains the same and we are continuing to offer our clients personal service. Nothing has changed except that we are stronger, thanks to the support of the group,’ emphasises Éric Guillaume.

This fusion is therefore also a blessing for Bietlot, which is now looking at its future more comfortably. ‘Today, we are in a better position to fulfil the needs of our clients. And we can offer them a broader product range. It’s a winning formula, both for us and for them,’ Éric Guillaume confides.

A promising future for Bietlot

The future is looking good for Bietlot. Through its integration in the Graphius Group, the company has not just secured its future, but has also equipped itself with the tools necessary to keep developing in a fast-changing market. ‘In the current printing market, it’s no longer possible to stand on your own. We need to collaborate to keep innovating and offering quality services,’ says Éric Guillaume.

With their know-how, their flexibility and their exemplary environmental policy, Bietlot is now better equipped than ever to take on the challenges of tomorrow. ‘We firmly believe in the future of paper, and as long as our clients need brochures and catalogues, we will be there to fulfil their expectations,’ Éric Guillaume confirms.

By joining Graphius, Bietlot has kept its soul. It is continuing to reinvent itself while remaining loyal to its values and its past. Thanks to a strategic alliance, the company is able to continue innovating, growing and blossoming in a sector that is continuously evolving. ■

THE DETAILS MAKE THE BOOK.



A surreal journey in print

For the exhibition *Paul Delvaux en zijn Universum* at La Boverie (until 16 March 2025), we created a catalogue that is just as breathtaking as the artwork itself. This 224-page hardcover book, measuring 220 x 270 mm, combines Magno Plus Silk paper with deep-black Sirio endpapers. The

cover, which uses Wibalin Buckram White with small, light-blue capital letters, offers an elegant and tactile experience.

The firm, sewn binding emphasises durability and quality. In fact, every technical choice, from the paper to the finish, was made to bring the surrealistic world of Paul Delvaux to life. The result is a catalogue that takes the visitor on a tangible, visual adventure, perfectly suited to the masterpieces produced by this Belgian grandmaster. We proudly contribute to the celebration of 100 years of surrealism.



PAUL DELVAUX EN ZIJN UNIVERSUM

- Tempora
- Brussels
- 220 x 270 mm
- Magno Plus Silk 170 g/m²
- 224 p

Design by denisdecaluwe.be

An endless adventure in book form

The book *It Never Ends* is much more than a catalogue: it's a multi-dimensional experience. For this project, linked to the like-named exhibition for John M. Armleder in KANAL - Centre Pompidou, we

printed an impressive work that embodies creativity and collaboration. The soft cover, made of 300g/m² sulphate cardboard with a mirroring effect, is an extension of the work of the artist, who has shown a predilection for mirrored surfaces in his work. Inside, we find 246 pages of Munken Polar Rough paper that allow the beautiful artistic details to come into their own. The 21 x 26 cm format makes

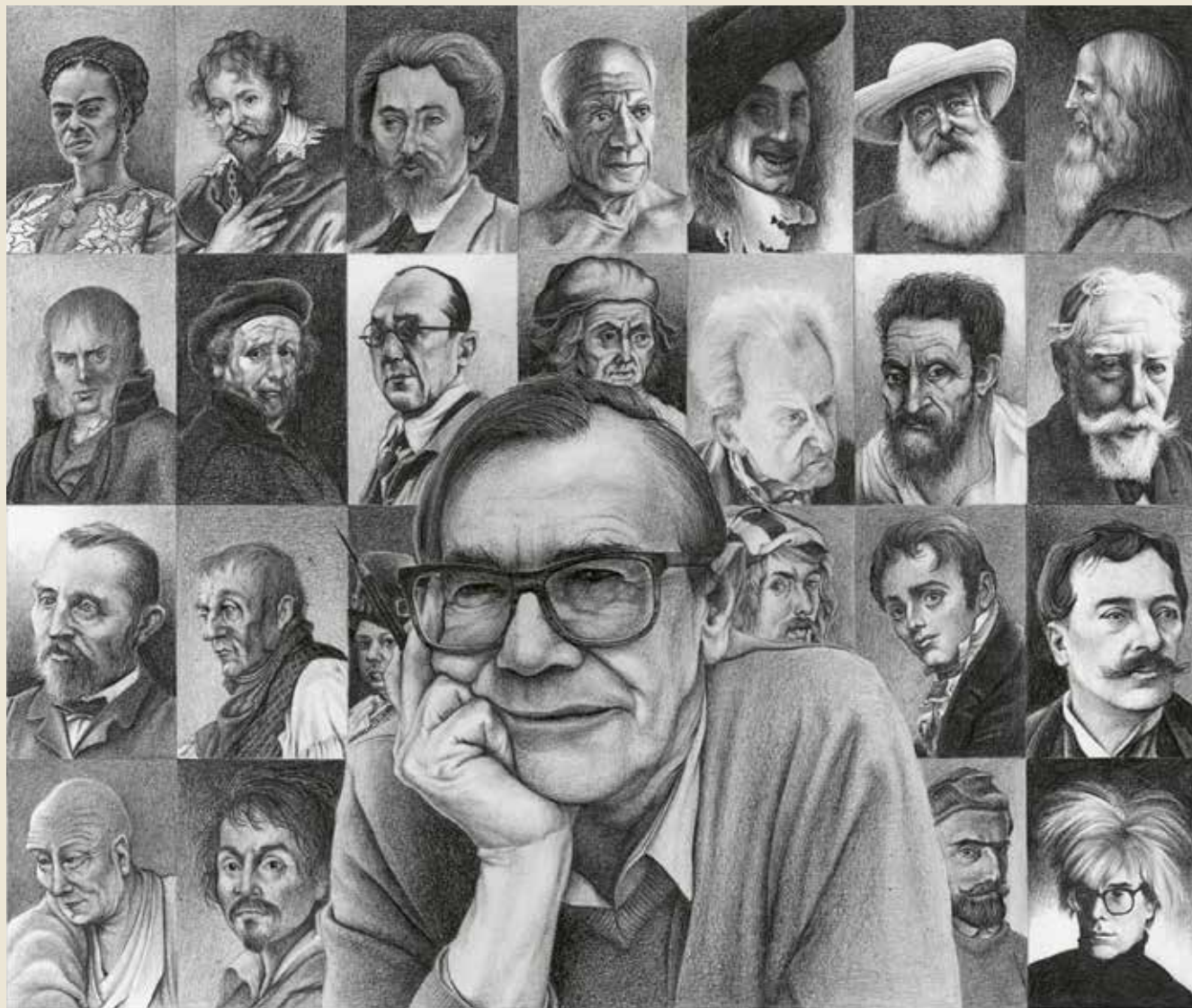
the book handy, and yet it still retains a sense of the regal. With contributions from more than one hundred artists and extensive interviews, the book offers a dive into a collective self-portrait. Just like the exhibition itself, *It Never Ends* is a lively, hybrid artwork, a permanent memory to Armleder's most ambitious project to date.



IT NEVER ENDS

- Stichting KANAL
- Brussels
- 210 x 260 mm
- Munken Polar Rough 120 g/m²
- 124 p
- Design by sunny-side-up.be.
- Available from LENZ, Milano.





‘Het Wereldkunstwerk’

The tour de force by illustrator

GIPI

Impressive ... That's the least you can say about 'Het Wereldkunstwerk'. It was created by Ghent-based artist Pierre Gillis (77), also known as GIPI. With a stunning eye for detail, Gillis has drawn pencil sketches of twenty-four icons from art history. For ten years, like a medieval monk, he dedicated himself to what you might call his magnum opus. 'Het Wereldkunstwerk' is a legacy from a gifted illustrator, and at the same time, an ode to the arts.



Koch

GPII

We meet GIPI in Gentbrugge. October has thrown off its autumnal yoke and is showing itself to be a young spring child. It's over 20°C, but we go inside, to the place where Pierre Gillis is most likely to linger: the dining table where he has been wearing out pencil after pencil for the past ten years. At least 18,000 hours of work have been poured into 'Het Wereldkunstwerk'—the title translates into English as the 'World Artwork'—but GIPI remains relatively stoic about this. 'It's the only thing I can really do well. Apart from cooking,' he laughs. 'Because that is really another passion. I've got a few hundred cookbooks standing here. Incidentally, I'm officially a chef after attending evening classes at the cooking school. It was my good friend, top-chef Guy Vancauteran, who pushed me to do it. So, I didn't have any other choice. (Laughs).'

We will have to discuss the art of cooking at a different time. Let's open a can of drawing artistry. You've been drawing your whole life?

'Absolutely! But wait, let me first offer you a coffee. Even though I don't drink the stuff. Coffee and drawing, they don't go together. Anything that might agitate your nerves, like caffeine, makes it more difficult to keep your hand steady. For example, it's almost impossible to draw a perfect circle. And you unintentionally dirty your paper, especially when you work with a pencil. I learned that very early from Franquin (Belgian comic-strip artist, known

as Guust Flater, Ed.). He showed me how you need to draw with your whole hand, just as a dancer moves gracefully. It's important to use three fingers as a support point; and it's good to train your hand, at least two hours a day. Even now, I still draw for five hours a day, no exceptions. Holidays, travel, I don't need much, just a pencil and a sheet of paper.

You call it an obsession.

It definitely is. I've been passionate about pencil drawings and sketches my whole life. The strange thing about that is that in the art world, a sketch is often undervalued. A line is definitive. Draw it and it stays there forever. Still, sketches and watercolours are the least valued artworks, while they're really the most authentic. I find that's completely incomprehensible. It all starts with one single line, and that line determines everything. It's what I value so much about drawing; it feels safe, familiar and at the same time, so pure.'

Child of the drawing

'I actually come from a very elite family,' says GIPI. 'Raised by governesses, completely removed from the outside world. I experienced it as an unhappy, lonely childhood. Everything in my life was marked by this isolation. And I found comfort in drawing. I remember quite well that during one of the first parent-teacher interviews, one of the priests at the college where I went to school said to

"It all starts with one single line, and that line determines everything. It's what I value so much about drawing; it feels safe, familiar and at the same time, so pure."

my mother: "Ma'am, if I could decide now, I would recommend he follow a different educational trajectory. He's missing two things; too little fantasy, but worse yet, he absolutely can't draw."

'I think I've rarely been as angry as I was then. Fortunately, I had a different teacher later: Harold Van der Perre, who did believe in me. First as a teacher, and now as my biggest fan. He's always motivated me. At the first lesson, he said to me, "When are you finally going to take a firm hold of your pencil?" That was the foundation of it all. But I've noticed that is unfortunately disappearing.

'During a few masterclasses I gave to teachers and artists, I discovered that we forget the most elementary things. Take, for example, the four perspectives. Most of us know what linear perspective is, but then you have colour perspective, which often goes over people's heads. If, for example, you put a bright red colour at the front of your painting and use the same red in your background, you'll make your painting look flat. It will miss depth and dimension. Then there's sharp perspective, which is an even greater challenge in drawing. This gives the impression of distance and the way in which objects in space will relate to each other. And finally, the most difficult of all: the light perspective. This is where you can recognise a genuine masterpiece by the way in which the light is presented. If you look at a good painting, you can see the finesse of the light perspective. Take a look at Caravaggio, one of the greatest artists ever. A villain, that's true, but a titan nonetheless!





Het Wereldkunstwerk: breathtaking

'The idea for 'Het Wereldkunstwerk' originated in the office of Sven Gatz, the minister for culture at the time,' explains Pierre Gillis. 'During a meeting, we tried to define what 'Art' really is. We came to the conclusion that this was impossible, but we established 24 qualities that a global masterpiece needs to fulfil, such as 'silence'. When you look at such a masterpiece, it needs to bring your brain into three to five seconds of absolute silence. The challenge was in making the artworks that embody these qualities.'

In the piece, we see twenty-five grandmasters, each in their own habitats.

'Yes, I've made portraits of the grandmasters in their own worlds. A monastic task, working for five hours every day for ten years. It demanded immense concentration, and it felt like a drug. Sometimes, I didn't speak for weeks, which was of course a challenge for my wife. Fortunately, she's supported me for years, not least with her daily gastronomic specialties. Intensive focus and dedication, that was it. On one piece of ceiling, for example, I worked for a month. The level of precision needed for these drawings is enormous. And the most beautiful thing? In those ten years, I have not used a single eraser. Every drawing needs to be perfect, and that demands patience. Starting and being sure of your piece, day in, day out.'

With drawing, everything revolves around observation, looking and seeing ... Who taught you to observe?

'My grandfather, who lived in Dendermonde, a town on the banks of the old Scheldt river, taught me to really *look*. He lived in an idyllic place, close to large areas that would be covered in water when the water level of the Scheldt was too high. He always used to ask me: "What do you see Pete?" I would answer: "Grass Grandpa. A lot of grass." But he said: "No, look more carefully. What you see are millions of grass shoots and they're all different." Then I learned to observe and compare. That's the basis of drawing.'

'Unfortunately, it's an artform that is now disappearing completely. Nowadays, there are fewer and fewer people who make pencil drawings. It's a dying art. But you need to have something extra for it and make

sacrifices. Sport? I've never done it. All I do is swim, 1500 metres every week, plus a few massages and drawing every day. It may sound crazy, but this obsession is an essential condition of becoming genuinely good. I think that I began with it too late. I'm now 77 and I received a proposal from the City of Ghent a while ago, because Ghent might become the cultural capital city of Europe in 2030. They asked me to draw the 250 most famous painters from art history in their own worlds. I had about ten days for each sketch. At this point, I've drawn almost 100 of these artists, meaning that there are still approximately 150 still to go. That's good for another three years of work. By that time, I'll be 80 years old. I wonder whether I'll still be able to do it, because it demands a lot of concentration. Before, I had no problems with it; I could work, with focus, for three to four hours in a row. But now, after two hours of drawing, I sometimes need to take a break.'



“The level of precision needed for these drawings is enormous. And the most beautiful thing? In those ten years, I have not used a single eraser.”

Vincent van Gogh

‘Vincent van Gogh, the grandmaster of interpretation. When Van Gogh died, his sister-in-law Johanna—the wife of Theo—took on the task of promoting his art. She went to Paris, to the depot where his work was in storage. She was not sure what she should do with the paintings, but she began to organise exhibitions. Slowly but surely, Van Gogh’s fame developed and that was largely thanks to her efforts.

‘The drawing shows how Place Lamartine looked in 1895, including the yellow home of Van Gogh. The home itself was bombed by the Germans in 1944 and no longer exists. It’s interesting that Van Gogh painted this house six times, seven years before it was destroyed, but without a single tree. We researched the reason for this in Amsterdam. It appears that Van Gogh never ever painted a plantain tree.

‘And then there is the story of his suicide. Van Gogh never actually committed suicide; that’s a misconception. Van Gogh was, in essence, a regular person, but in his village, he was seen as being crazy. Children bullied him, pushed his donkey over and tormented him. At a given point, he had a fit of rage. He grabbed a gun, and according to the reconstruction, it must have fired by accident. He shot himself in the stomach. The gun that he used was found eighty years later; it is now a museum piece.

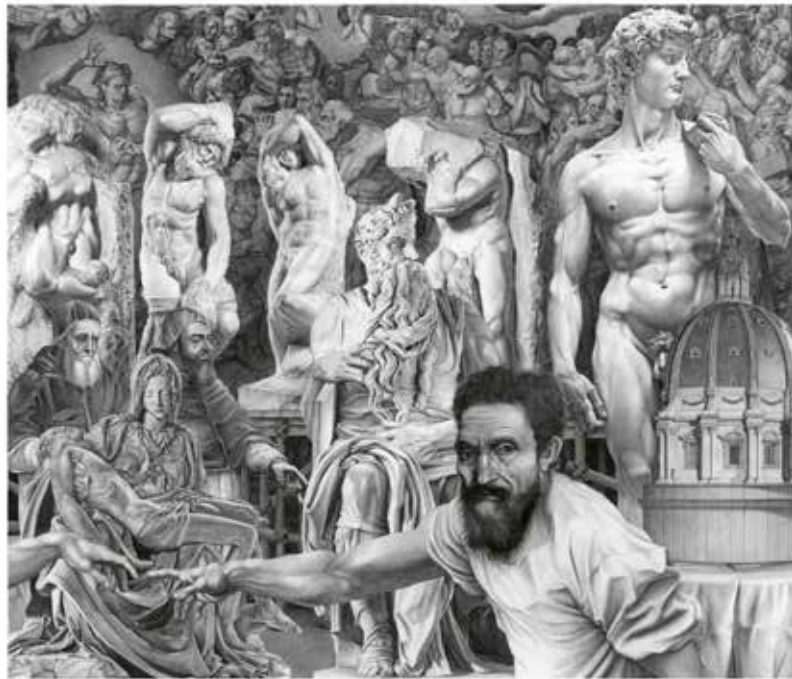
‘After the shooting incident, Van Gogh took his donkey and all his paints with him, heading to Herberg Ravoux to stay. When he arrived, the manager saw that he didn’t feel good, but Van Gogh withdrew to his room. A day and a half later, he had still not come downstairs. When they found him, he was sitting in a wicker chair with a large puddle of blood under him. There was nothing more to do.’

Michelangelo

‘No one knows exactly what Michelangelo looked like,’ says Pierre Gillis as he shows his artwork. ‘So, I’ve tried to create an image of him that reflects his spirit and his time.

‘Look: here you see Michelangelo pointing to the Sistine Chapel, the place where he put so many of his talents to good use. And there are his three iconic masterpieces: *David*, *Moses* and *Pietà*.

‘*David* is not just a statue; it’s a symbol of battle and the victory of the human spirit. *Pietà* reflects sadness and sympathy, and *The Last Judgment* is a powerful visual story that invites us to think about life and death.’



Michelangelo

Gillis



Stevens

1865

The four unfinished sculptures that are in La Galleria Dell'Accademia Di Firenze, are a powerful metaphor for the struggles of the artist. They represent the continuous battle for perfection and the relationship between an artist and their creation. Here, Michelangelo lets us see that even in incomplete work, there is a depth of meaning and emotion present.

Art is a window to the soul, and I hope that my work strengthens this connection. It's an honour to pay deference to the grandmasters of art history and their stories by presenting their stories to the next generation.'

Alfred Stevens

'As the third grandmaster, I would like to shed some light on Alfred Stevens; I find it incomprehensible that an artist of his calibre receives so little attention. More than that: when I ask people whether they know Stevens,

almost everyone appears not to know him or to have even heard of him. He's still a grandmaster, who was particularly well known in the second half of the 19th century. A somewhat unfriendly artist from Brussels, he was a phenomenal painter who first depicted unknown women from the upper middle class, in a very elegant way.

'He was also one of the first painters to introduce Japonisme into his paintings, with his work waking the interest of people like Manet, who became one of his best friends.

'Stevens relocated to Paris at a young age, renting a gigantic house with an enormous garden. He set up a studio in which he exclusively painted women, in elegant poses and lavish dresses. They were all unknown women, with one exception: Sarah Bernhardt, a much-celebrated stage diva.



'That we no longer know Stevens may be considered to be odd. You would even be able to say that impressionism received a great big push thanks to him—he introduced Manet to Paul Durand-Ruel, an art dealer who became one of the biggest promoters of impressionism.

'During his life, Stevens himself received great acclaim from his peers—there was even a retrospective dedicated to him, a rare honour in those days—but after his Parisian adventures, he returned to Brussels, destitute. A genius of an artist, but not known by the broader public today.' ■



HET WERELDKUNSTWERK

- Pierre Gillis
- Gent
- 297 x 260 mm
- Arena Natural Rough 140 g/m²

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Jack Bush: Colour pioneer with a lasting impact

The Canadian artist Jack Bush began his career with peaceful landscapes, inspired by the untouched nature of his homeland. But it was only later that he discovered his real power: abstract art. When Bush devoted himself to this approach, embracing lively colours and powerful forms, he showed that art could be much more than a reflection of reality.

His innovative style brought him international fame. Bush was one of the few Canadian artists to break through internationally during his lifetime. Partially thanks to his friendship with the influential art critic Clement Greenberg, he came into contact with big names from the New York art world, giving his career a powerful boost.

Now, the wonderful Catalogue Raisonné is bringing his work back to life. This impressive publication is not just a visual feast, but also a treasure trove of information. Clever details, like the pages presenting his paintings in colour, almost make the book a work of art in itself. Thanks to this reference work, Bush's legacy is being celebrated in all its glory at the very moment that abstract art has come back into the spotlight.

Jack Bush has proven that with colour, form and courage, you can conquer the world. His work remains inspiring and gives art lovers a fresh look at the power of abstraction.



JACK BUSH
 • Type A Print
 • Toronto
 • 292.1 x 292.1 mm
 • Matt Coated White 150 g/m²
 • 540 p



Customised surprises with Sabato

Sabato is the lifestyle magazine for newspaper De Tijd. For years, they have relied on Antilope De Bie for the creation of their exclusive surprise boxes. Every year, Sabato invents original concepts, ranging from luxury perfumes to books and bottles of liquor with matching glasses.

Our team translates these creative ideas into technically feasible designs and transforms them into beautifully finished boxes. With an eye for detail, we print the boxes, carefully assemble them and fill them with the products supplied by Sabato. We subsequently make sure they're in perfect condition, ready for sending.

The result? Gifts that consistently make an impression with the people who receive them and with our client.

SABATO

- Trustmedia, part of Mediafin
- Brussel
- 290 x 235 x 105 mm
- Heaven 42 150 g/m²



My White Cotton: soft, sustainable and stylish

The new catalogue from My White Cotton puts an emphasis on sustainable comfort. The T-shirts are made from 100% organic cotton, a natural material that breathes and feels softer than conventional cotton.

Thanks to the use of advanced production methods that do not use chemical additives or pesticides, these shirts contribute to a better environment. The material is certified organic and respects natural balance during production.

The printed catalogue also exudes this comfortable atmosphere. The high-value finish and choice of natural colours and soft textures line up perfectly with the all-new branding. It radiates simplicity, softness and quality – just like the products from My White Cotton. As a result, the story of the brand is not only told, it's also experienced.

MY WHITE COTTON

- Waregem
- 200 x 350 mm
- Arctic Volume White 170 g/m²
- 24 p



BAKKERIJ AERNOUDT

BIG IN PATISSERIE AND BREAD

Is there a baker on every street corner? Anyone who drives through Flanders notices it: the Flemish are true bread-eaters. We are sitting at the table with a player who has helped to determine that streetscape: Bakkerij Aernoudt. Originally started in Ghent, the company has grown strongly with locations in both East Flanders and West Flanders. We are sitting together in one of their many tearooms, treated to a delicious pastry and steaming coffee, as we chat to Eline Van Oostende, marketer and bread aficionado.





‘Our story is actually very simple: we want to keep traditional baking crafts alive and make the bakery as local and accessible as possible,’ she explains. ‘This means that we are always open, any time of day, and that we offer invariably fresh products. Being a baker is a challenging professional, especially if you do it alone. Our approach ensures the tradecraft remains strong and that we have locally, freshly baked products available.’

Aernoudt is an established name in the world of bakeries, with even more locations on the way. What is your goal?

‘For us, the number of stores is not a goal in itself. In East Flanders, we have become well known. There, we have almost reached the maximum number of stores we are able to service from our central production site in Gentbrugge. It was therefore important to look further afield for new possibilities that would keep our bakeries local and fresh, without denigrating our quality and service. We found this expansion opportunity in West Flanders, where we recently set up a new production site in Ruddervoorde.’

There’s a lot to be said about bread. What makes Aernoudt different to other bakeries?

“Come and taste!” would be my first answer. It might sound simple, but in

the end, it all comes down to taste and the quality of the products.

‘What makes our bakery special is that we have a large and dedicated team – from our bakers and patissiers to the storekeepers, drivers and cleaning crews – who supply fresh products to so many locations every day. The products range from breads and rolls to pastries, cakes and so much more. The fact that we get to keep doing this for each other and at such a high level of quality is, for me, always something to be proud of.

‘Craftsmanship remains central for us. We combine it with an efficient organisation that ensures we can continue to deliver fresh to very many places at the same time. It’s this combination of craftsmanship, passion and logistic power that puts us in the position to keep growing, but also guarantee consistent quality.’

Built with bread not bricks

‘Through the week, Flemish people are enormously attached to the classic sandwich, and to a delicious pastry on the weekend,’ says Eline. ‘Bread is still a major building block in our diet: it’s not just delicious, but also nutritious, healthy and easy. For a lot of people, it’s an unmissable part of the daily routine. Whether it’s for a quick lunch or a good breakfast, bread is something Flemish people rely on.’

“Bread is still a major building block in our diet: it’s not just delicious, but also nutritious, healthy and easy. For a lot of people, it’s an unmissable part of the daily routine.”



“Our patissiers love experimenting with new flavours and combinations. They regularly try different types of fruit or they replace one ingredient to see what sort of surprising new combinations it leads to.”

And how do patisserie products fit in?

‘Cake makes it a party, right (laughs)? This is an area where we’re all real connoisseurs. In our patisserie, we have a number of classics that are always welcome, such as eclairs and strawberry tarts. These traditional favourites remain eternally popular because they call up nostalgic feelings with a lot of people, and are often part of celebrations.

‘But that doesn’t mean we’re resting on our laurels. Our patissiers love experimenting with new flavours and combinations. They regularly try different types of fruit or they replace one ingredient to see what sort of surprising new combinations it leads to. Although not every new creation goes straight to the store shelves, this creative process ensures we keep innovating and keep it fun and challenging for ourselves.’

The ingredients for beautiful printing

‘We attach great importance to quality, and not only for our products. Everything to do with our brand needs to radiate that same level of quality,’ says Eline. ‘Our printed work

is no exception. Whether it’s a flyer, a poster, cake boxes or our own *Lekker Dichtbij* newspaper – you’ll find it in our stores – every piece of printed material needs to meet the high standards we have set for our brand. It’s essential for us that clients feel the same care and attention to detail in our printed materials as in the products they come to us for every day.’

What kind of look does your printed work need to have?

‘It’s our chance to bring across our identity and our values, so we want it to have the right look. We choose radiant colours that reflect our energy and passion for baking, and an attractive texture that invites people to touch and experience the printed work. This all helps us to not only draw attention, but also to make an emotional connection with our clients. Printed materials need to be informative, and to inspire, reflecting the quality of our products.’

Why do you work with Graphius?

‘We believe strongly in the power of local networks and the benefits of collaboration with like-minded companies that strive for the same

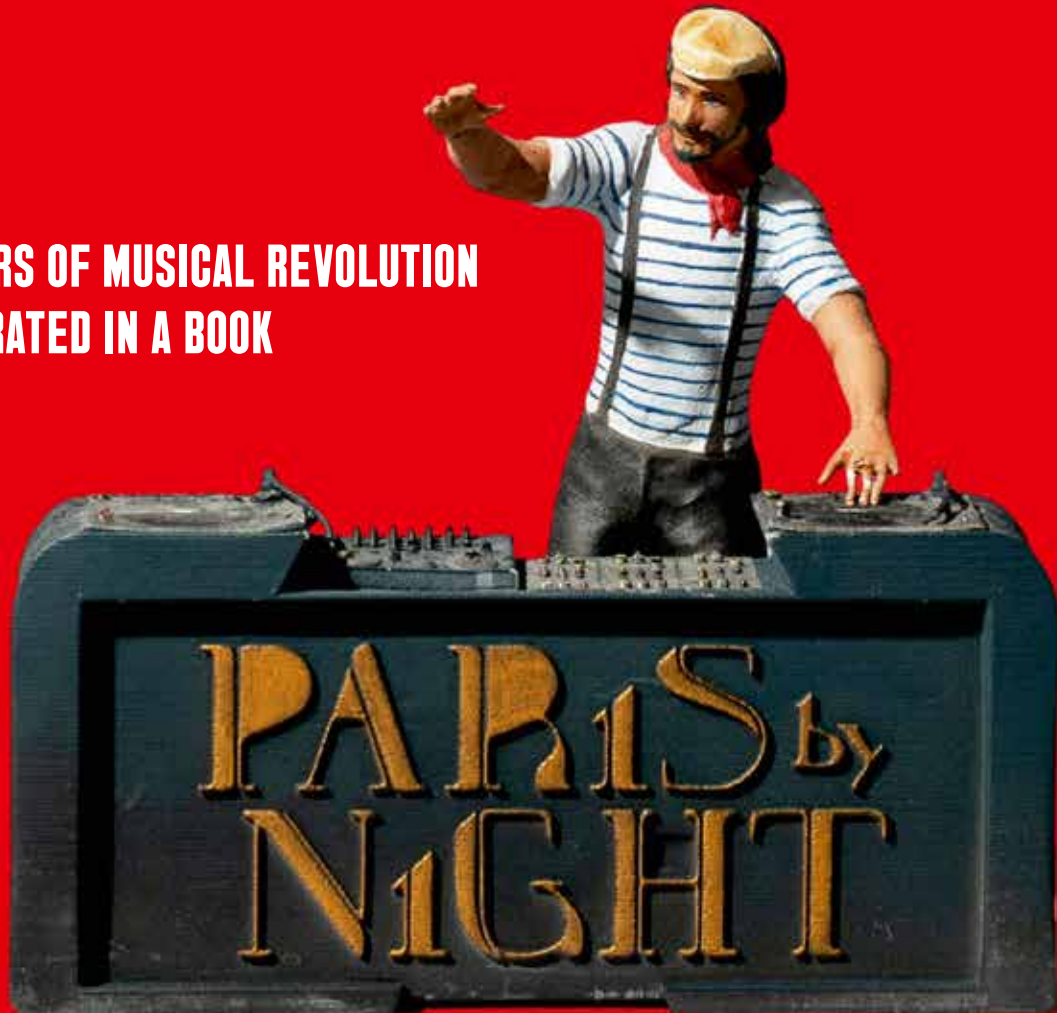
quality. At Graphius, we experience not only the shared focus on customer service, but also a deep understanding of our needs. This collaboration goes beyond just accepting services; it’s a partnership based on trust and mutual respect.

‘As well as this, we appreciate the speed and professionalism Graphius brings to our collaboration. Whether it’s printed work, advice or execution, we know we can count on them to deliver consistent high quality within tight deadlines. This reinforces our own efficiency and puts us in the position to be of better service to our clients.’ ■



BOB SINGLAR AND THE FRENCH TOUCH

30 YEARS OF MUSICAL REVOLUTION
CELEBRATED IN A BOOK



He got us all dancing on the dance floor, but who exactly is Bob Sinclar? What is this movement that he brought to the world stage, putting France on the global dance-music map? *Bob Sinclar et DJ Yellow: nos 30 ans de French Touch* (which translates into English as *Bob Sinclar and DJ Yellow: our 30 years of French Touch*) is much more than a simple look back. This book describes the thirty years of Yellow Productions, the groundbreaking label for French electronic music, and tells the story of a musical movement that changed the international scene. The French Touch is more than a musical revolution; it embodies a moment of unbridled creativity that continues to influence musical creations even today.

Through personal stories, anecdotes and fascinating tales, this book dives into the history, the backstage and the soul of a unique artistic movement. In this way, it offers a fresh look at three decades of electronic music.

A journey through the history of the French Touch

At the beginning of the 1990s, a fresh wind blew through the French music scene: the French Touch was born. This movement, which found itself at the intersection between American house and a more European aesthetic, saw artists like Daft Punk, Cassius, Air and of course, Bob Sinclar, redefining the global soundscape. With its groovy rhythms, innovative melodies and sharp feel for remixing and sampling, the French Touch scores for its originality and daring.

Bob Sinclar et DJ Yellow: nos 30 ans de French Touch returns to this crucial period when the musical experiment was at its peak. Yellow Productions, the label founded by Bob Sinclar and DJ Yellow, became an essential reference in the field, producing artists who drew international attention.

The author of the book, Bertrand Richard, is no beginner when it comes to French cultural products. He is a sharp-minded observer of the music scene and here, he analyses the rise of the French Touch with precision and passion. In doing so, he dissects the roots, influences and technological innovations that made it possible for this music to explode all around the world. He explains in minute detail how electronic music evolved from the 1990s onwards, how the French

Touch conquered the *zeitgeist* and how it grew to become a true phenomenon.

When electronica met digital ...

One of the fascinating aspects of the French Touch is the rise of new technologies that fundamentally changed the way music was produced. In the 90s, young French DJs and producers embraced instruments such as drum machines, samplers and analogue synthesisers to create completely new sounds. At the time, these machines were at the foundation of a true revolution, put in the position to expand the boundaries of traditional music and explore new areas of sound.

Technological innovations are a constant theme through the book. Bertrand Richard gives a detailed report of how new machines made the creation of hypnotising tracks possible, conquering not only the French, but also international dance floors. These cult tracks are the

With its groovy rhythms, innovative melodies and sharp feel for remixing and sampling, the French Touch scores for its originality and daring.



result of a skilled mix of technological innovation and a passion for music.

Today, in a time when the music industry has been set on its head by digital technology, the French Touch has succeeded in adapting and reinventing itself. Bob Sinclar is one of the best examples of this ability to move with the times. Since he began, he has never ceased exploring new ways of producing, sharing and distributing his music. He was always a step ahead, quick to recognise the importance of digital platforms and social networks for staying in touch with his audience and reaching a new generation of fans.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when nightclubs and festivals were forced into dormancy, Bob Sinclar took the opportunity to keep his music alive. His online DJ sets were an immediate success, drawing thousands of fans from across the world. These

performances proved that the French Touch remained a space of freedom and innovation, capable of adapting to the times while maintaining its essence.

Bob Sinclar: an artist beyond the turntables

One of the great treasures of this book is an exclusive interview in which Bob Sinclar reveals everything about himself. He talks about his career, his influences and successes, but also about his doubts and personal contemplations. Bob Sinclar only truly became an artist in 2005 when his global hit *Love Generation* reached a new dimension in the music industry. 'Prior to this, in 1995, people didn't really know what a DJ was,' he says. It was around this time, when DJs became visible figures through their vinyl releases and on the radio, that the French Touch generation began to make its mark.

His obsession was in finding 'the perfect sample'. It was about the creation of a 'sonic hypnosis', a magic that, when repeated over and over again, carries listeners away. Bob Sinclar describes himself as a 'sound assembler', following the example of the classical musician who mixed notes. For him, every sound has its own colour.

Over the course of time, Sinclar learned how you could make a track dance without ever requiring him to be the centre of attention. His goal was always broader than that: maintaining the energy and creating a musical journey. 'A much-loved track generates festive energy, but if you just play hits, people stop dancing,' he explains. According to him, a DJ set needs to navigate through different emotions – melancholy,

joy, sadness – to return to this happy energy. It is this subtle exchange between satisfaction and frustration that brings about a genuine musical experience.

Despite an ever-changing world, Bob Sinclar remains loyal to his search for sounds and emotions, creating sets that reflect the complexity of human energy.

Rich and varied testimonies

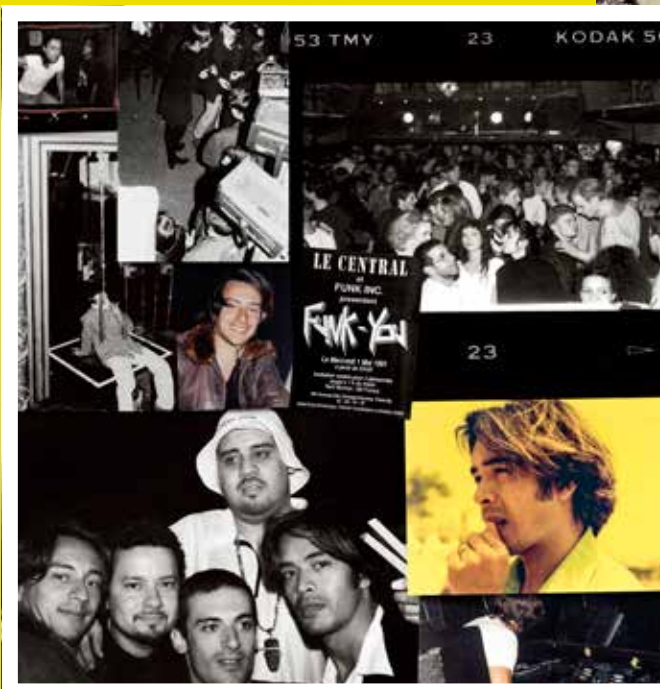
To add to this submersion in the world of the French Touch, Bertrand Richard assembled a treasure trove of testimonies from the main players in this movement. Musicians, DJs, producers, journalists and more: they all look back on a time when France was at the centre of a musical revolution. We find names like Dimitri from Paris, Pedro Winter, DJ Gregory, Karel Balas among the many others. They share their memories and their vision on what the French Touch represented in its early days.

Some tell of how the French Touch originated from the underground, when parties and improvised raves were the only way to get to hear this new music. Others emphasise the cultural and social dimension of the movement, paired with the deep changes in French society in the 1990s.

These voices help us to understand why the French Touch not only set its stamp on music, but on the society as a whole, and how it grew to be a symbol of emancipation and creative freedom.

A book-object: a visual and tactile artwork

Bob Sinclar et DJ Yellow: nos 30 ans de French Touch is not just a



book about music history. It is also a collector's item, conceived by two artistic leaders of the project, Laurent Bismuth and Jonathan Kluger, in collaboration with the publisher Brigitte Trichet. The vinyl-inspired format and the high-quality printing work make it a unique piece. Four centimetres thick and with a weight of 2.5 kilograms, the book is also a visually impressive work, designed as a tribute to the record industry that also played a role in the rise of the French Touch.

Carefully made, the illustrations offer a visual submersion in the aesthetics of the 1990s and 2000s. Every page serves as an invitation to re-experience an era in which music, art and technology were in complete transition.

Nostalgia with an eye on the future

For those who are nostalgic for the 1990s, this book will be like a Madeleine de Proust, dredging up long-lost

memories. It offers a journey back in time to a period when the dance floors shook to the sound of the first hits by Bob Sinclar. But this book doesn't just look back. It also shows how the French Touch has moved on in time and how it has adapted to new technologies and new consumer trends.

Today, music is no longer just spun on dance floors, but also played via streaming platforms and digital downloads. This transformation, from vinyl to digital, from physical parties to dematerialised consumption, is one of the most important developments that the books investigates, emphasising that the spirit of the French Touch remains intact.

Bob Sinclar et DJ Yellow: nos 30 ans de French Touch is much more than a simple book about electronic music. It takes a fascinating dive into the history of a movement that brought about a revolution in the world, while offering an intimate look at one of its greatest ambassadors,

Bob Sinclar. By means of this retrospective, readers discover not only the history of the French Touch, but also the future, considering the music continues to vibrate and influence generations after ours.

This book was produced by the Parisian publisher Hemeria, on assignment from Yellow Productions. ISBN 978-2-490952-55-7€59 INCLUDING VAT
Publication date: 18 October 2024 ■



**BOB SINCLAR
& DJ YELLOW**

- Hemeria
- Paris
- 290 x 290 mm
- Gardapat Kiara 1.3 150 g/m²
- 332 p

ELECTRIC DREAMS AND SAND DUNES

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF THE MEYERS MANX DUNE BUGGY

In the world of automotive icons, few vehicles evoke the spirit of adventure quite like the Meyers Manx dune buggy. Born from the innovative mind of Bruce Meyers in the 1960s, this playful, fiberglass-bodied buggy was so much more than a new type of car; it was the spark that ignited a lifestyle movement. The 'little dune buggy' instantly captured hearts as it conquered sand dunes and rocky trails, embodying freedom, exploration, and sandblasted rebellion.



A man with a plan: Bruce Meyers

If anyone could be called a "free spirit" in the world of automobiles, it's Bruce Meyers. With the kind of energy that borders on mythical, Meyers combined artist, engineer, and dreamer in one person. A World War II veteran and a California surfer, he looked at cars and saw not just machines but magic carpets. By the early 1960s, Meyers had set his sights on building something radical—something that could soar over sand dunes with ease and style, like a surfboard on

the waves. In a Southern California garage, he built a vehicle that would soon capture the hearts of beachgoers, off-road enthusiasts, and the kind of people who like to get their hair tousled by the wind. Enter the Meyers Manx, a fiberglass-bodied, VW-based buggy that wasn't just a mode of transportation but a ticket to adventure.

So why, of all things, a dune buggy? Why not a rocket ship or a helicopter? For Meyers, who spent plenty of time near the beaches of California, the answer lay in the thrill of the off-road, where sand, surf, and sun

blend into pure freedom. He wanted to create something light, fast, and agile, that could defy the terrain while looking like it belonged in a cartoon chase scene.

The heart of a VW, the body of a cat

It's wasn't the fact that the Meyers Manx was a buggy that rendered its revolutionary quality; it was revolutionary because of how it was made. Most cars of the era were hulking masses of metal, but Meyers dared to dream fiberglass, making the Manx lightweight, easy to produce, and a breeze to repair—perfect for a vehicle that might just take a tumble down a dune.

And why call it "Manx"? Well, like the famous cat breed from the Isle of Man, known for its lack of a tail and wild nature, Meyers' buggy had a compact, tail-less design that packed attitude.

The design itself was pure genius. Meyers created a body with high ground clearance and a short, stubby rear that made it as agile as a go-kart but with a sturdier sense of adventure. The Manx was built on the chassis of the iconic Volkswagen Beetle, but it looked like no Beetle anyone had ever seen. Its rounded fenders and swooping curves seemed to beg for a race, a climb, or at the very least, a few donuts in the sand.

Ask anyone who's had the joy of driving a Manx, and they'll tell you the same thing: it's a vehicle that laughs at roads, sneers at obstacles, and practically high-fives the driver every time it tackles a hill.

From dune to disco

From the moment it hit the sands, the Meyers Manx was already something of a celebrity. The vehicle gained instant fame in the '60s thanks to its looks, power, and unmatched ability to dance over dunes. And as quickly as it captured hearts, it went mainstream. The Manx didn't just ride; it competed. In 1967, Meyers took the Manx to the Mexican 1000 (now Baja 1000), and in a coup against traditional off-road vehicles, he clinched the win, shattering records and further

boosting the buggy's fame. Meyers' Manx was not just the coolest thing on the sand; it was the fastest.

As the years rolled on, special editions popped up. There were the disco-era glitter-painted Manxes, sparkling like Studio 54's main discoball. The Manx found itself featured in movies, magazines, and on countless postcards, splashed in sunset colors that screamed California. It even starred alongside celebrities, from Steve McQueen to Elvis. And with each cameo, each race, and each photograph, the Manx grew from a car into a cultural icon.

The Manx Club

No wonder the car quickly gathered a following. In the 1990s, that love for the dune buggy evolved into the Manx Club, a group dedicated to celebrating, preserving, and promoting the Manx spirit. Founded with the blessing of Meyers himself, the club has since grown into an international community that holds annual meets, swap parts, and shares stories of their buggy escapades.

So, a car club? A bunch of people standing around, chit-chatting about a vehicle? The Manx Club does much more than that, for instance by regarding and approaching the Manx not just as a car, but as a movement. Club members range from families looking for an adventure to hardcore mechanics who can spot a genuine Manx from a mile away. They share one unifying trait: a passion for the unique, carefree, and rebellious nature of the Meyers Manx. And it's





this network of fans that has kept the Manx rolling through the decades, long after its original production halted. In a way, the Manx Club has kept the buggy immortal, maintaining its status as a cultural symbol and, more importantly, a lifestyle.

Like any good icon, the Meyers Manx transcended mere wheels and engine. It became a brand, a vibe, a look. The Manx Club and merchandising turned the dune buggy from a four-wheeled wonder into a full-fledged lifestyle. As kids grew up with Hot Wheels Manxes in their toy chests and teens decorated their walls with posters of beach-side buggies, the Manx embedded itself even deeper into pop culture.

The merchandise transcended being a mere gimmick; it was a gateway. Each product carried a piece of that Californian dream: an invitation to go off-road, to break out of the mold, and to live with a little more thrill. Over time, the Manx merchandise became more than just a nod to the car; it was a signal to other enthusiasts, like motorbikers do when they get sight of one another, a way of saying, "I'm part of this too."

From classic to electric

Today, the Meyers Manx isn't just another historic car, nor is it simply an artifact of the '60s dune culture. It's a still-living legacy, a rallying point for adventurers, nostalgia-seekers, and those who know that driving is more than just a way to get from point A to point B.

Sixty years after Bruce Meyers unleashed his iconic dune buggy onto the sands, the Meyers Manx continues to evolve. To celebrate this milestone, the team behind the Manx unveiled

the all-new *Meyers Manx 2.0 Electric* earlier this year—a model that takes the timeless design of the original and electrifies it for a new generation. This eco-friendly twist preserves the buggy's lightweight fiberglass build and legendary agility, swapping the VW engine for a modern electric motor that's as silent as it is powerful. The Manx 2.0 keeps the spirit of the original alive with the same open-air thrill but now boasts emission-free driving, making it perfect for beach adventures in an era of climate consciousness. And so, the electric Manx ensures that Bruce Meyers' dream of adventure lives on—powered by the future, yet unmistakably a Manx.

True to the festive mood, a new book has been released that captures the buggy's rich history and cultural impact. And this book isn't just a read—it's a piece of memorabilia. Filled with rare photos, stories from the early dune-conquering days to the latest electric revival, and exclusive interviews, it's designed as much for display as it is for enjoyment. Like all Meyers Manx merchandise, this book is crafted to be treasured by fans and collectors alike, a testament to the brand's enduring spirit. ■



MEYERS MANX

- Hothouse Publishing
- Northamptonshire
- 280 x 300 mm
- 216 p
- Magno silk 170 g/m²

Stylish scented candles



with a

LUXURIOUS TWIST

Now the winter is keeping us all indoors and we are looking forward to the festive season, it's high time to add a little bit of extra cosiness to our homes. And with the winter solstice approaching, candles are a logical choice. Anyone who enjoys scents that lie outside the realm of the expected needs to take a look at the lovely range at Boogie Bougie. Boogie Bougie is the scented-candle brand created by Pieter-Jan Boucquaert and Vincent Dardenne.



'Boogie Bougie was born of our love for scent and the ritual of lighting a candle,' explains Pieter-Jan. 'That's a moment that brings atmosphere and warmth to a space. A nice candle makes a house a genuine home. With Boogie Bougie, we wanted to create something that was not only functional, but also visually attractive, offering decorative value to every interior.'

'The tender beginnings of Boogie Bougie are to be found in Mexico: when Vincent and I were travelling there some years ago, we had already fixed on the idea of doing something with scents, but the plan only really took shape when we saw people in Mexico buying different essential oils to make their own soaps at home. Very artisanal.'

'I associate that trip with the smell of roses. Not that I have anything particular about the smell of roses, but at the time, it was everywhere. We actually bought a dozen or so samples of those essential oils at the time, but we never ended up doing anything with



them. Nonetheless, the seed was planted. And today, the inspiration for the collection comes from everywhere. Whether we're travelling or just going out to eat, our 'scent senses' are always on. In this way, we have created a whole collection of fragrances with which we can complement our collection. In our book, fragrances can have something bold, be lively ... They're something you want to use every day.

'I can wax lyrical about scents because it's something that you can't specify, but that still has a huge impact on your life and your environment. In a fraction of a second, scents and smells can transport you to a memory or a moment in your life. I've often experienced that myself. I'm originally from the coast, and if I go back there, I notice the scents and smells are different than in Antwerp, where I live now. The briny saltiness, combined with the presence of iodine, gives it something special. For me, the scents I associate with the sea will always be something special. Sand, sunscreen, the saltiness ... it instantly calls up memories of a day at the beach and the whole laid-back summery atmosphere that surrounds it.'

Pure nature!

'All our products are handmade in our workshop in Antwerp. We only use natural ingredients, including 100% sustainable soy wax, that we pour by hand, so every candle is created with love and craftsmanship. It's our way of caring for nature. By resolutely choosing natural ingredients we make sure of a lasting scent experience. It also allows us to create unique combinations that respond to different moods and the seasons. Our scented candles and diffusers are an expression of the seasons and

memories, such as walks in the forest and summer days on the beach.

'We compose our scent mixes ourselves, always looking for surprising twists. The scents are rich and fill the whole space, so that every candle offers a specific scent experience you won't soon forget. With Boogie Bougie, we consciously choose to use local and natural materials. From the beginning, it was our goal to offer products that are not just beautiful, but that contribute to a healthier living environment.'

Yes, sir I can boogie

'Yeah, we get a lot of questions about the name (laughs). Playful, with a hint of luxury. In any case, it reflects how we want to situate Boogie Bougie in the world. Luxury doesn't always have to be serious or out of reach; it can be a daily enjoyment, something to enjoy in your own home.

'We chose to continue on with that line of luxury and playfulness: our candles are in stylish aluminium tins that fit any interior. Furthermore, you can reuse these cans afterwards, meaning our products are not just attractive, they're also practical and sustainable.

'The packaging itself has a particular resonance: considering the box itself is so sober – tin and aluminium with a black label – we found we could burst out of the corner with something more exuberant, colourful and lively for the packaging. When we asked our designer to work something out, they quickly came up with a number of very usable proposals. The colours of the boxes reflect the scent of the candles. Like Mimosa Darling & Leather, which refers to the flower itself, while the



orange of Black Fig & Neroli calls up an association with the warm, Mediterranean climate, with a twist of fig and orange blossom (neroli).'

Limited, and lovely!

'It's worth mentioning that we create a Limited Edition Series for every season. It plays on scents that are typical for that time of the year. For example, we have three limited editions for winter. The Silver Suede & Fireplace Haze is a scented candle with tones of cypriol, myrrh, suede, lavender, cinnamon, heliotrope, guaiacwood, moss, amber, vanilla and tonka bean. Here, the smoke cypriol, rich, hearty myrrh and a soft touch of suede as

well as an intense scent experience that makes you think of cosy evening spent around the fireplace. Lipstick Stains & Cinnamon Sins is then a very different scented candle with tones of apple, cinnamon, rhubarb,

cloves, peach, roses, brown sugar, sandalwood and vanilla. And finally, we have Caramel Leather & Incense Innuendo, with bergamot, pink pepper, caramel, ylang-ylang, incense, leather, oud, sandalwood, vanilla and musk. Piece for piece, they're scents that perfectly embody the feeling of autumn. If I couldn't make these candles myself, I'd be sure to bring them home!■

WIN THE BOOGIE BOOGIE WINTER COLLECTION!

Is there a scent that starts you dreaming? A whiff of nostalgia? Perhaps a favourite memory? Tell us! The first five readers to share their favourite fragrance or the memory of a scent will win a set of three scented candles from the exclusive Boogie Boogie Winter Collection. Email us at wedstrijd@graphius.com. Before you know it, the scents of Silver Suede & Fireplace Haze, Lipstick Stains & Cinnamon Sins, and Caramel Leather & Incense Innuendo will be bringing guaranteed warmth to your home!



Villa H²O

An architectural gem
on the coast

Where does art end and architecture begin? It's a question that leads to arguments and flaring tempers. Is the Guggenheim Museum in New York artwork or just an exceptional building? We aren't going to have that discussion here, but we do want to introduce a building that redefines the borders between art and architecture: Villa H2O, an architectural masterpiece in Oostduinkerke, is the brainchild of Stéphane Beel.



Designed by Stéphane Beel – built by the Haverals family via Martha Atelier – Villa H2O emphasises not only the beauty of the landscape, but also creates just as much of a harmonious connection with nature.

Add to that the artful pieces by renowned porcelain artist Piet Stockmans and the elegant garden designs of Wirtz International and you end up with a celebration of the elements of air and water, harmoniously interwoven into the design of two luxury villas at a unique location in the dunes.

H. Haverals: 'Each villa offers approximately 450 square metres of carefully designed living space, with a focus on comfort and aesthetics. The spacious bedrooms, modern

bathrooms and open living areas seamlessly transform into terraces with a breathtaking view of the sea. Functional, certainly, but the villas also radiate a timeless elegance, with every line and detail executed with the greatest precision. The integration of a swimming pool and smart rooms adds to the luxury of life on the coast.

'Villa H2O makes the close collaboration between architecture and landscape particularly special. The project reflects the philosophy that architecture is not only a visual experience, but an emotional connection with the place itself. Villa H2O is a unique opportunity for lovers of architecture to own a piece of the Belgian coast that is both aesthetically attractive and ecologically responsible.

'The villas are not just a home, but also a source of inspiration for everyone who values the beauty of modern architecture. The idea behind the architecture is for it to function as a "beacon of peace", forming a serene spot among the dunes.'

One villa, three names

In realising Villa H2O, Martha Atelier – specially created for this project – played a crucial role.

'The result is architecture that is not only visually attractive, but that also contributes to a higher quality of life in this region. And we dare, every now and then, to make bold choices. For Villa H2O, we arranged for ceramics artist Piet Stockmans to decorate the facade with porcelain. Innovative, for sure. A world first and





“The project reflects the philosophy that architecture is not only a visual experience, but an emotional connection with the place itself.”



nothing less. It gives the project a unique presence.'

For H. Haverals, Villa H2O means he has come full circle. 'Until I was 16, I spent my holidays on the site where Villa H2O is now situated. Villa H2O is at the end of a dead-end street, on a hill that, as a child, was the tallest dune I'd ever seen. For me, Villa H2O feels like a tribute to my grandparents, a sort of final salutation. The only goal that we had with Villa H2O was to create beauty on that hill, as a sort of monument that would always stand there. The fact the design originated with Stéphane Beel, together with Wirtz International and Stockmans, feels perfect. For me, there is great symbolism behind it. Stockmans comes from Limburg, Beel from East Flanders, and Wirtz from the province of Antwerp. Villa H2O is therefore connecting the best of Flanders. This is a special kind of collaboration, the kind my grandfather, once a general, also held in high regard. With Wirtz, I myself have a special connection, via my mother. At home, we grew up with Wirtz creations; his work was like a second form of nature for

us. We often went to the Louvre, and the gardens there were designed by Wirtz. In Villa H2O, everything combines beautifully.'

Beel's stake

'Why Beel? I've got great admiration for him,' explains H. Haverals. 'When I was still lived in Antwerp at the Singel, a building by architect Léon Stynen, I passed by Beels architecture every day. And so he came into my life. When I drove by his work for the first time, it didn't really touch me. I didn't understand it, but one day the penny dropped. That was a special moment.

'I called him one evening, quite impulsively, because I wanted to recruit a big name to the project. And as we had a number of mutual acquaintances, I had easy access. I thought Stéphane Beel was the most suitable architect because he was someone with vision, and a name, and a renowned building like Horta behind him. I wanted a name that would add something to the project and thought it was an honour he agreed. And let's be honest; there's also a touch of marketing in there (laughs).

'What exactly does the building, the villa, have to reflect for me? My only goal was to create beauty through simplicity. I wanted to work with people who are masters in their domains. For me, Beel is undoubtedly an artist. I think the way in which he works is fascinating. I've never seen anyone with a work ethic like it. He's enormously driven, almost pathological, but it's beautiful to see him at work. He's an absolute artist – an artist among artists. Being able to experience him at work is special. I'm afraid that Beel's authenticity is very rare in his profession.' ■



VILLA H²O

- Handhangers
- Gent
- 420 x 260 mm
- Munken Kristall 1.13 240 g/m²
- 56 p

CARNIVALESQUE

THE ART OF JOHN LYONS

British-Caribbean artist and poet John Lyons has contributed to the British creative scene for more than sixty years, but never received the prominence he deserves. Until now. In 2024, the Whitworth in Manchester presented John Lyons: *Carnivalesque*, his first major retrospective, putting him squarely in the spotlight. The accompanying exhibition catalogue, Lyons's first monograph, includes essays on the artist, a number of poems and images of over sixty of his paintings, presented in true-to-life vibrancy thanks to a cutting-edge, seven-colour printing technique. We spoke to exhibition curator and co-editor of the catalogue, Olivia Heron.

How was the exhibition received?

The reception has been fantastic! Many visitors have commented on the beauty and power of John's paintings, drawings and prints. John has made an incredible contribution to British art and literature, with a particularly strong footprint in Manchester, where he lived and worked for 30 years. We also had an amazing programme around the show, including new poetry commissions by regional poets. The show is touring and will be opening at The Box in Plymouth in February 2025.

What made you decide to dedicate an exhibition to his work?

The idea for a John Lyons retrospective came from Alnoor Mitha, an artist and curator and longstanding friend of John's. He pointed out that John was long overdue a major show and that the Whitworth would be the

perfect place for it given John's long connection to Manchester.

John Lyons was born and brought up in Trinidad and Tobago. He came to the UK in 1959, at the age of 25, to attend art school at Goldsmith's College in London. He then trained as a teacher in Newcastle, before settling in Manchester in 1967. Alongside teaching at local schools and colleges, he developed his practice as an artist and poet, exhibiting regularly and playing a vital role in the art scene both in Manchester and nationally. Through the exhibition and catalogue we hope to recognise and celebrate his creative impact, introducing his work to a new generation.

What were your goals for the book?

Researching the show, it struck me that John Lyons was often mentioned in articles and books alongside

other artists, but there was very little interpretation, analysis, or even description of his work. There were no books about him. It was very important for there to be something for people to refer to, to discover his work and artistic intentions. And so, the goal for the book was to start to inscribe a critical record for John. He was recently awarded funding for professional photography of his body of work. Some works were being photographed for the first time, or the first time in colour. This was all happening at the same time as the exhibition preparations. So, we have beautiful, brand-new images of John's work in the exhibition catalogue.

As for the essays ... Interpretive information about a lot of his work isn't really out there. The exhibition narrative was developed through close dialogue with John. I discovered the

spirit of his practice and the stories behind the works through conversation. It was important to us that the research and meanings that surfaced wouldn't just disappear again after the exhibition.

We wanted to ensure everyone from art students to academics, will have a basis to discover, enjoy, research and write more about John Lyons's practice and art historical significance. His legacy.

We frequently discuss the covers of books, but this one really deserves attention. What influenced your choice of image?

That piece is just amazing! As well as being a beautiful, dynamic image, it also distils who John is as an artist. It's called *Self-Portrait with Jumbie Bird and Alter Ego* (1990) and brings in key symbols from his practice. It's in the collection of Huddersfield Art Gallery, who kindly loaned it to the show. The owl, or *jumbie bird* as it is known in Trinidad and Tobago, is an important symbol for John. It's his guiding creature in a way, creatively and spiritually. There's also the *jab-jab*, a character from Trinidad carnival similar to a jester, who John sees as his alter ego. In carnival, *jab-jabs* are combative, lashing plaited whips and chanting fiercely, delivering truths. John's personal version appears playful and entertaining but nevertheless is quick-witted, tricky and wise. Here the *jab-jab* is balancing on a tightrope, while John is balancing a paint brush on the tip

of his finger, poised on one leg. This image sums up the risk and adventure John sees in being an artist and being a painter. You've got to dive in and trust in your own creative vision. And so, as a cover image, it really comes together on a number of levels.

How did he feel about having been—effectively—overlooked for so long, only to have everything now happen at once?

John's a very up-beat person, so I think he was really pleased all of this was finally happening. It's a shame it's happening so late—he's 91 now. He was very much part of the scene during the 1980s and 90s and was shown by a lot of smaller galleries and organisations, some of whom collected or commissioned his work, but many big players didn't pay due attention to him. This has a knock-on effect on how well-known his practice is to subsequent generations of curators, artists and academics.

But he has had his loyal supporters along the way and is finally getting the wider recognition he ought to have, which is wonderful.

Did covering such a long period—sixty years—pose challenges?

It did for the earlier works. John has been creating art since he was a child. In Trinidad, he was involved in the Trinidad Art Society, exhibiting watercolour landscapes and portraits. He moved to London in 1959 to study art at Goldsmiths College. Nothing survives from that era; he moved



That piece is just amazing! As well as being a beautiful, dynamic image, it also distils who John is as an artist.



abroad, and when you're in London on a shoestring, moving around between flats... It would be lucky and quite surprising if he still had that material more than sixty years later.

The exhibition begins with pieces from 1964, after Lyons's arrival at art school in London, a pivotal moment for him, marking his transition away from representation, towards abstraction and expression.

The exhibition centres on the core themes of Lyons's practice: carnival, and the folklore and legends of Trinidad and Tobago. The works in these rooms date from 1985 to the present. Another room traces the development of his artistic style and symbolism from the 1960s to the 2000s. Narrowing down the overall selection was hard as John has produced so much incredible work over the years. For space reasons we had to whittle it down a lot. There are still over eighty works in the show. Overall I feel it conveys a relatively complete narrative of his work.

Are there any artworks that have undergone a change in meaning over all this time?

Looking through his work, I might comment, 'This makes me think about X or I see this shape in it.' And he'll say, 'You know, I hadn't thought about that, but now you mention it ...' One really interesting part of the project has been the dialogue with John, and his idea of creative continuum, in which he sees the meaning of his work constantly evolving, for both himself and others. It relates to his intuitive approach to painting, tapping into his unconscious. He leaves clues for the viewer so they might find ways in.

The way people respond depends on their personal experiences. In a lot of Lyons's work, he's delving into his psyche, dreams and memories, personal and collective cultural experiences and stories.

“He leaves clues for the viewer so they might find ways in. The way people respond depends on their personal experiences.”

The imagery he uses can be quite ambiguous. Sometimes you have to search inside yourself to find meaning or interpret it. It always holds multiple possibilities.

Did John Lyons enjoy revisiting these pieces from the past?

I think he's found it very fruitful to revisit work he hasn't seen in twenty or thirty years, remembering elements he had forgotten and seeing new things in old work. It's given him fresh ideas and new zest for what he wants to make next.

He's creatively unstoppable. He wrote three new poems for the exhibition. We didn't ask. He just said, 'I'm going to write a poem about this.' We included them in the show. And the book too.

Speaking about the book... Graphius used a special seven-colour printing technique that uses the four standard CMYK colours, plus orange, green and blue. What were your impressions of this?

The colours were stunning. We had a full run done in seven-colour and one in four-colour as a comparison. Poppy and I went through them. In almost every case we chose the seven-colour printing because they looked so vibrant and true to the paintings. They're beautifully intense.

In some cases we chose the four-colour printing. The seven-colour intensifies the appearance of the image on the page, which is perfect for John's vivid colour palette. But for a few older, monochrome works on paper, it intensified the yellowing of the paper. And that was fascinating, but obviously not what we wanted! We would definitely use the seven-colour again. It means the book we created is the beautiful book John and his artwork deserve. ■

John Lyons: Carnavalesque was at the Whitworth, The University of Manchester from 10 May to 25 August 2024. It tours to The Box, Plymouth from 8 February to 5 May 2025.



JOHN LYONS: CARNIVALESQUE

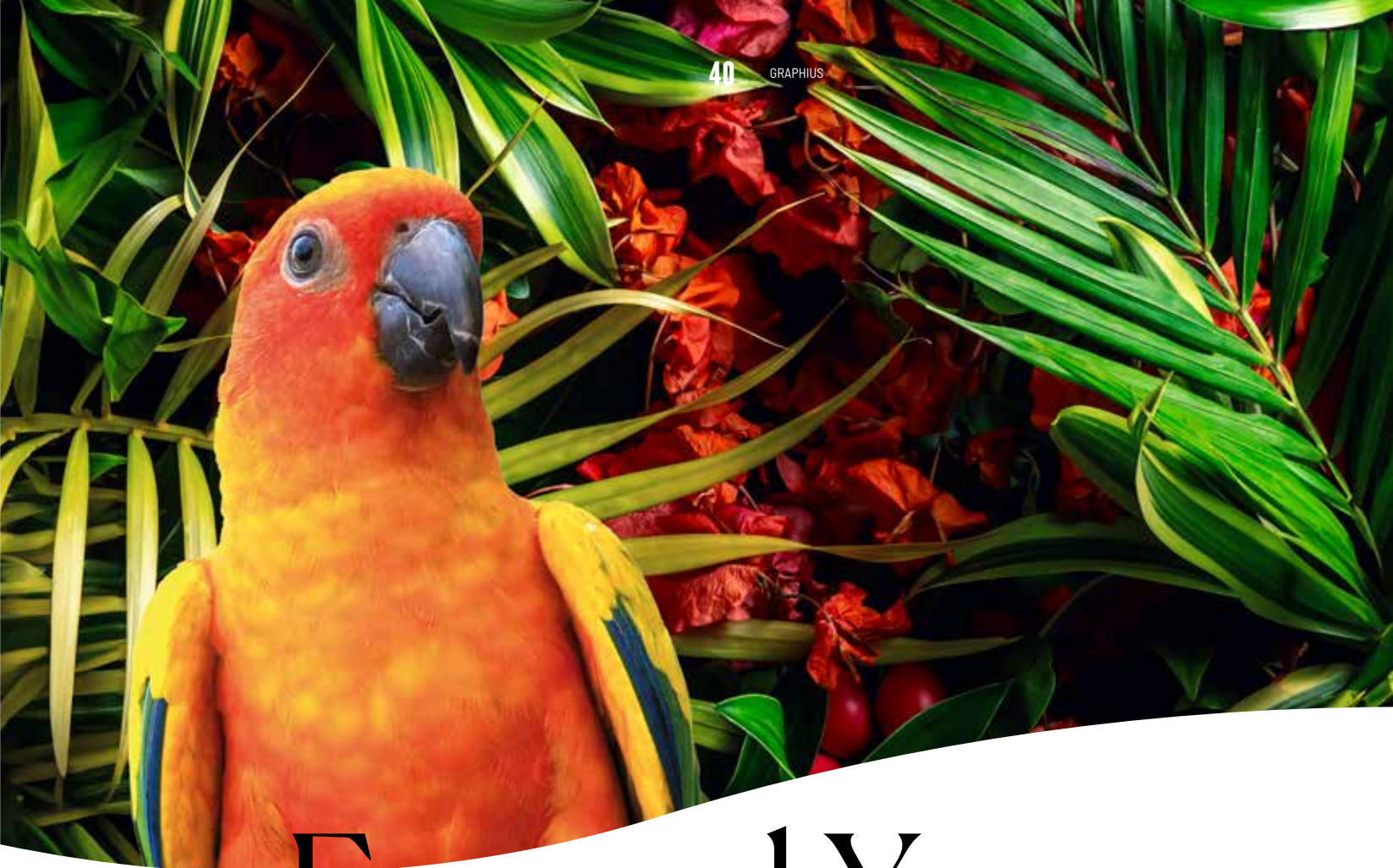
- Alan Ward
- London
- 245 x 280 mm
- 144 p
- Magno Mat 170 g/m²











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Graphius Group is renowned as one of the leading printing companies in Europe, with a strong focus on innovation and customer service. In a fast-changing world, where digital tools and efficiency are becoming increasingly important, Graphius invests in solutions that do not just respond to the needs of the modern day, but that keep the future in mind. Thanks to two powerful online platforms – iQuest and Belprinto – Graphius offers its clients a user-friendly and flexible way to manage and order printed work.



We spoke with Lauren, responsible for both platforms, about the unique benefits and possibilities these tools offer.

Innovation at Graphius Group

Lauren starts off straight away: 'What makes Graphius so innovative is that we continuously renew our machinery and installations with the latest technologies. Automation is crucial here, and we invest strongly

in AI to further optimise processes. Our online tools play a key role in this.' The urge to innovate shines throughout the entire organisation, from the production floor to the online customer service. 'We always listen to our clients. Their feedback is unmissable for improving our tools and to better meet expectations. We actively ask for feedback through automatic emails sent after every delivery and regular newsletters. It keeps us sharply attuned to the wishes of our clients.'

iQuest: Tailor-made for the client

According to Lauren, the iQuest platform is a perfect illustration of

how Graphius implements innovations to improve the customer experience. 'iQuest is a portal that is completely tailored to the client,' she explains. 'The platform makes it possible for companies to manage and order all their marketing materials in one place, whether it's business cards, brochures or posters. Everything is designed to work quickly and efficiently.'

What makes iQuest unique is the extent of personalisation offered. 'A good example is how we offer some clients business cards in a fixed template. The client simply enters the necessary information, such as name and email address, and immediately sees a preview of the card in their company's house style. No more messing around with graphic designers for every little adjustment.' This saves time and effort for the client, and the result is a more consistent brand experience.

Lauren adds that the system is also suitable for companies ordering larger print runs. 'A lot of companies want, for example, brochures printed in bulk and delivered on demand. This is easily and automatically arranged via iQuest. The system makes sure everything is delivered flawlessly, exactly as the client wants it.'

The power of iQuest is not just in this efficiency, but also in how precisely it is tuned to the needs of each individual client. 'For every iQuest platform, we sit down with the client to discuss and understand their specific needs. We adjust the platform so it's as simple as possible for them to manage and order their printed materials.'

Belprinto: User-friendly webshop

While iQuest offers tailored work for major companies, Belprinto is aimed at a broader market. 'Belprinto is an online platform that offers B2B and B2C clients the possibility of ordering printed materials independently,' explains Lauren. 'The major difference with iQuest is that Belprinto doesn't require customisation. It's an intuitive webshop where clients can configure their products and order when it suits them.'

The customer journey at Belprinto is simple and transparent. They choose their products, such as flyers, posters or even hardcover books, and upload their print-ready files. They can then select the delivery time and any finishes. The entire process is aimed at giving customers and clients as much control as possible.'

Lauren emphasises that Belprinto is particularly attractive for smaller entrepreneurs, as well as private individuals, who need high-quality printed work quickly. 'Because everything is automated, we offer sharp prices and fast delivery times, without any compromise to quality. The platform is designed so even people without any printing experience can place their orders easily.'

Another important benefit of the online platforms is the automation of the ordering process. 'At Belprinto, the client doesn't need to wait on price quotes or confirmations,' explains Lauren. 'Everything happens in real-time: from choosing specifications to the receipt of

track-and-trace data for the delivery. This ensures customers and clients always know exactly when their order is arriving.'

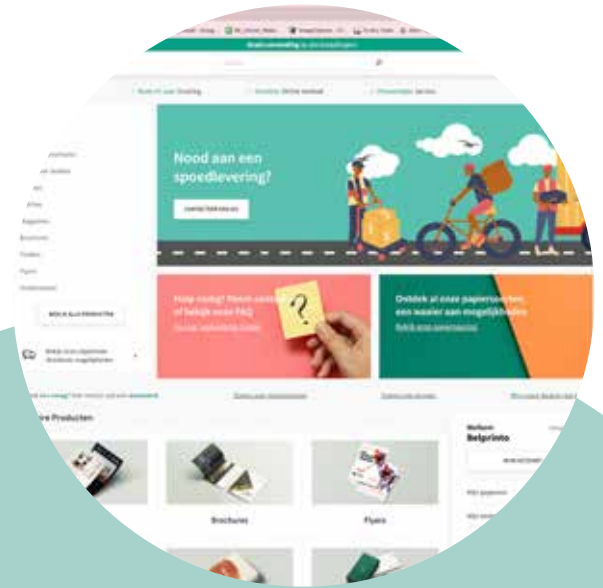
Belprinto offers just as many opportunities for customisation. 'We have recently added an option for having printed work cut to size, so customers and clients are no longer limited to the standard formats. In the future, we want to add more options, such as urgent delivery and a personalised portal for returning clients.'

Digital printing solutions for everyone

In a world where speed and efficiency are becoming increasingly important, Graphius is offering exactly what modern companies need via iQuest and Belprinto: smart, digital solutions that simplify the ordering process for printed work.

With iQuest, companies have a tailor-made platform through which the management of their printed work becomes not only more efficient, but also more consistent. For anyone looking for user-friendliness without customisation, Belprinto offers a simple webshop where everything – from configuration to order – is completely automated.

Whether you're an independent entrepreneur or representing a large company, you don't need to wait on price quotes or confirmations when using these platforms. Everything is aimed at speed and efficiency so you always get the printed work you need exactly when you need it. ■





Graphius Group
strengthens its
presence in the UK with
a second acquisition

News is finally out that Park Communications, part of Graphius Group, has acquired the London-based printer Geoff Neal Litho. This strategic move further solidifies our footprint in the United Kingdom – our third-largest market.

“A perfect match”

Founded in 1976 and based in Feltham near Heathrow, Geoff Neal Litho is a well-established name in the UK printing industry. Under the leadership of Sam Neal, the company has built a strong reputation for high-quality printing and direct mail services. With an annual turnover of £11 million and a team of 45 employees, Geoff Neal Litho will continue operating independently, supported by its experienced management team.

Heath Mason, CEO of Park Communications, expressed his enthusiasm: “Geoff Neal Litho, with its strong reputation for quality and reliability, is a perfect match for Park Communications. We are thrilled to join forces with Sam Neal and his team to shape the company’s future together.”

Sam Neal, CEO of Geoff Neal Litho, echoed this sentiment: “The shared

culture between Graphius, Park, and Geoff Neal – built on genuine care for stakeholders – gives me great confidence in what’s ahead. I’m excited to grow Geoff Neal within the Graphius family.”

Unlocking new opportunities

This acquisition not only strengthens Graphius’s position in the UK but also unlocks exciting synergy opportunities. By combining Geoff Neal Litho’s expertise with the state-of-the-art production facilities of Park Communications in Beckton, London, we can offer our clients an even broader range of services and greater efficiencies.

As always, we remain committed to delivering the excellence you’ve come to expect from Graphius. And with Geoff Neal Litho now part of the family, the future looks brighter than ever. ■



Heath Mason, Sam Neal and Alison Branch

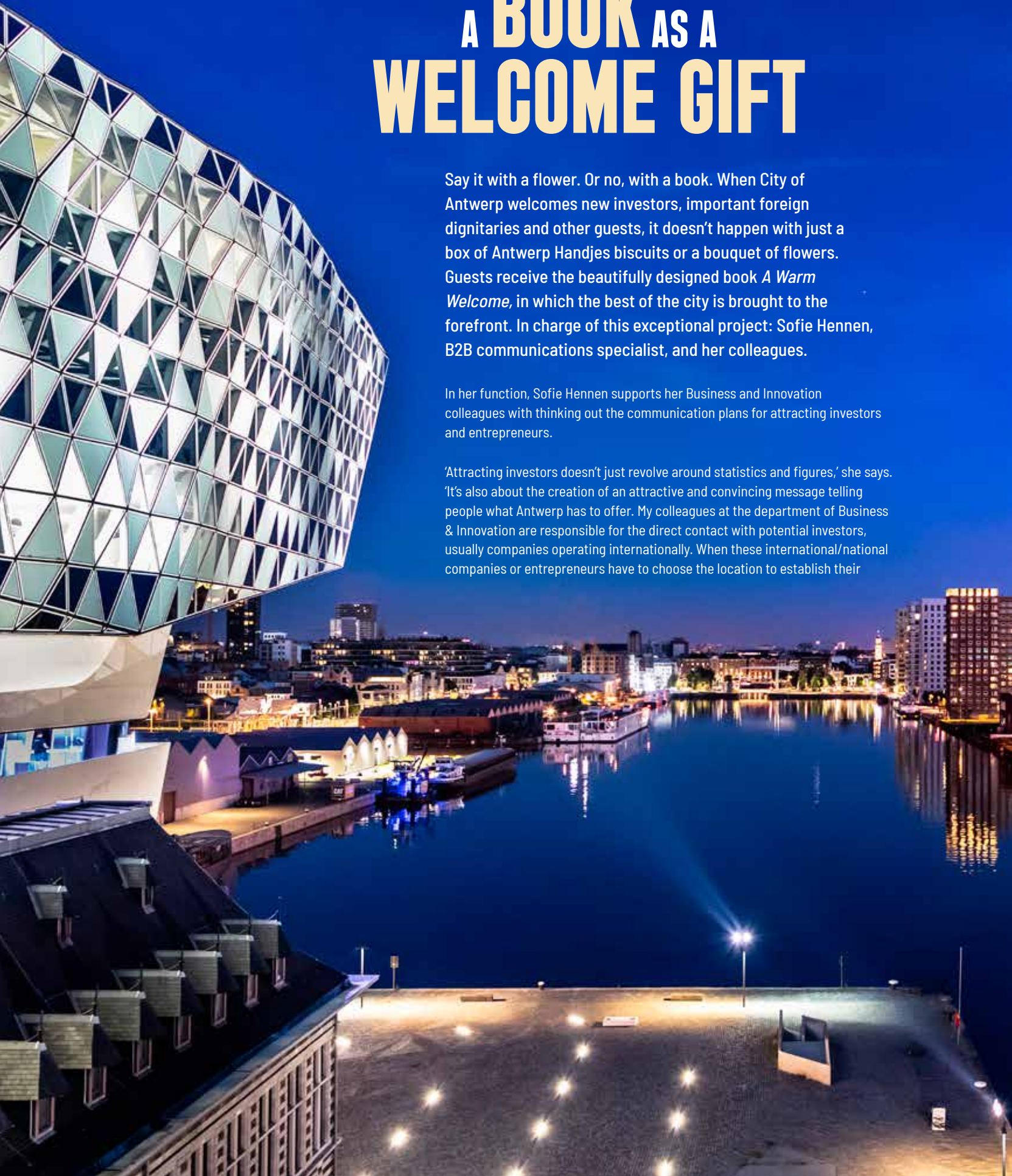


A BOOK AS A WELCOME GIFT

Say it with a flower. Or no, with a book. When City of Antwerp welcomes new investors, important foreign dignitaries and other guests, it doesn't happen with just a box of Antwerp Handjes biscuits or a bouquet of flowers. Guests receive the beautifully designed book *A Warm Welcome*, in which the best of the city is brought to the forefront. In charge of this exceptional project: Sofie Hennen, B2B communications specialist, and her colleagues.

In her function, Sofie Hennen supports her Business and Innovation colleagues with thinking out the communication plans for attracting investors and entrepreneurs.

'Attracting investors doesn't just revolve around statistics and figures,' she says. 'It's also about the creation of an attractive and convincing message telling people what Antwerp has to offer. My colleagues at the department of Business & Innovation are responsible for the direct contact with potential investors, usually companies operating internationally. When these international/national companies or entrepreneurs have to choose the location to establish their



companies, it's our task to convince them to come to Antwerp instead of any other city.

'This is why my colleagues at Business & Innovation work on files in which the strengths of the city are presented, supported by relevant statistics and details. For example, it's about emphasising the best of Antwerp: after Houston, Antwerp is the second largest chemical cluster in the world and the largest in Europe, the Port of Antwerp-Bruges is the second largest in Europe, and Antwerp has its diamond, health and fashion sectors, etc.'

The countless strengths of the city

'We use very diverse communication channels to position Antwerp and to inform entrepreneurs about

the city,' she says. 'LinkedIn, the English-language website Business in Antwerp, and our Instagram (#ondernemeninantwerpen) and Facebook channels (OndernemeninAntwerpen) all play a central role in our strategy. These are the platforms *par excellence* with which we can position the city as an attractive place for business investments. As well as this, we can call on the informative website, Ondernemen in Antwerpen, where we educate entrepreneurs about subsidies and financial support measures.

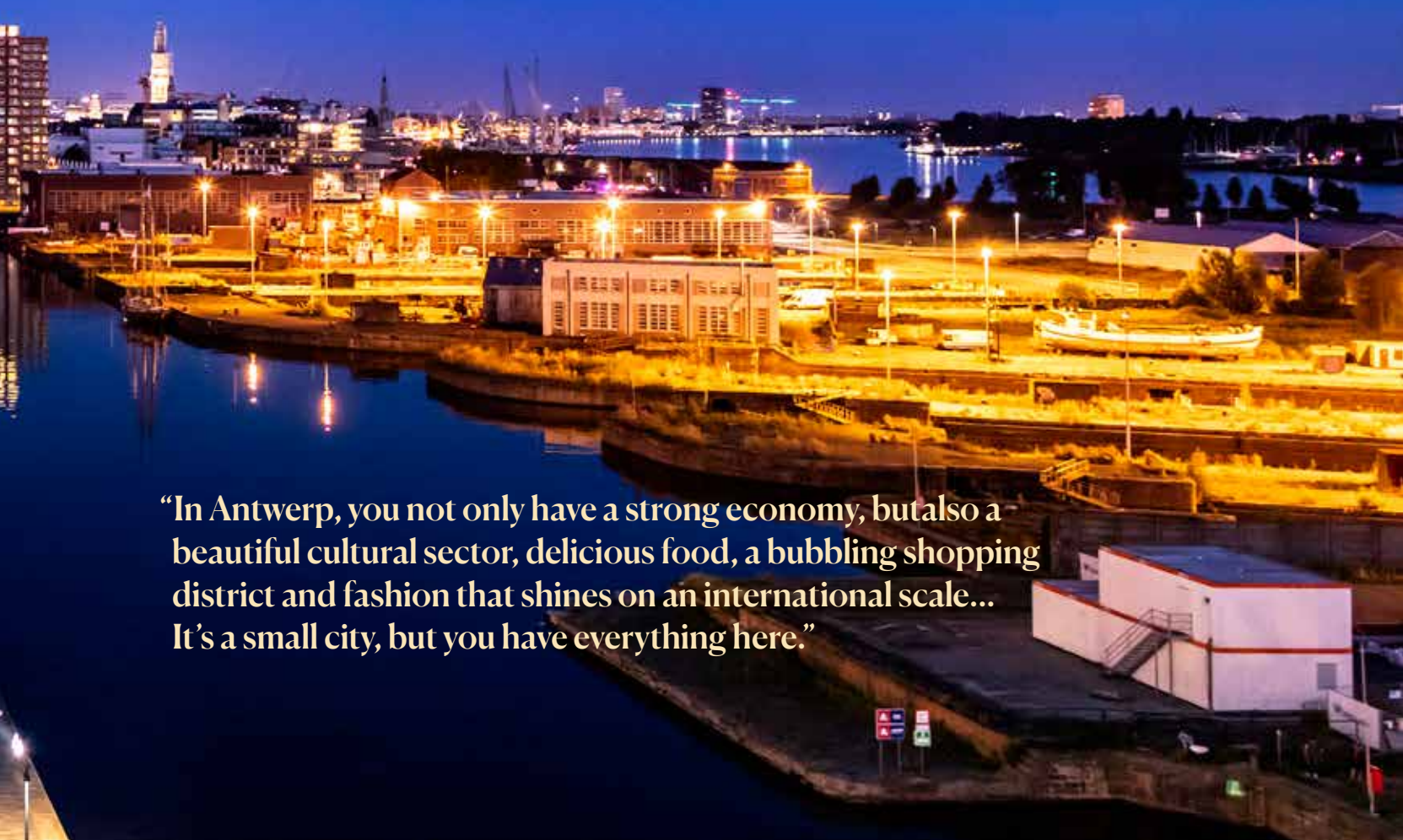
'I think it's a lovely challenge to "sell" Antwerp on the basis of the unique qualities it has to offer. And I get a lot of satisfaction from the collaboration with internal "clients".'

Welcome to Antwerp

'We consider the welcome book to be our corporate brochure, serving as a first familiarising introduction to the city,' says Sofie. 'We used to tell too much from the perspective of the city itself. Now, we're convinced that it's stronger to let our story be told by third parties. They're the real ambassadors for our city. This is why it's the entrepreneurs who speak, giving their reasons for investing or doing business here. Why do they stay here? What makes it interesting here?'

'To answer these questions, we allowed expats to talk at the start of the brochure, to welcome the reader and explain why they're living and working here. On the other side of things, we let one entrepreneur per chapter share their vision

"In Antwerp, you not only have a strong economy, but also a beautiful cultural sector, delicious food, a bubbling shopping district and fashion that shines on an international scale... It's a small city, but you have everything here."





about doing business in Antwerp and why they specifically chose our city. For example, for the chapter 'Port', the entrepreneur is Jacques Vandermeiren, while for the 'Food & Culture' chapter, it's Sofie Van de Velde from Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, and so forth...

'These personal insights and the advice that comes to the fore in the stories offer a practical and inspiring look at living and doing business here. This way, the reader also has an idea of the quality of life you find here. In Antwerp, you not only have a strong economy, but also a beautiful cultural sector, delicious food, a bubbling shopping district and fashion that shines on an international scale ... It's a small city, but you have everything here. *A Warm Welcome* is a versatile package in which we describe Antwerp as a "pocket-sized metropolis."

Soft- and hardcover

The welcome book is produced in soft- and hardcover versions. 'It was on the request of External Relations,' explains Sofie. 'They regularly receive official guests, such as ambassadors, and give them a bit of special attention. *A Warm Welcome* is meant as an introductory meeting with our city. If it's an important player, we give them a hardcover copy. It's a very chic

publication of which we only printed about a hundred copies. We really have to take care of them.

'For the book, we worked together with the content agency Propaganda. We started from the "Antwerp welcomes you" idea. Everyone has a story to tell, including entrepreneurs, organisations, etc. It gives the people behind a function or an organisation a human face. And as stories can call up good feelings in readers, or can set something loose, the choice was very quickly made. It had to be personal. And you also see that reflected in the photography: fewer photos of just the city and more of the people themselves, in their work environments or in the city. The idea of putting the front cover in the red of the city with Intaglio printing also came from them. For the softcover, we added a triangle to the back so we could put some extras in there.'

What are the responses? 'Extraordinarily positive,' says Sofie enthusiastically. 'We have noted that the book is used frequently, which convinced us to reprint it. It's great to see our colleagues actively use the book and are happy to give it to visitors. The responses from outsiders, such as visitors and other stakeholders, are especially good.

For us, it's been exceptionally valuable, because it confirms that all the work we did for this project has borne fruit.'

As for the choice of Antilope De Bie: we have already been collaborating with each other for years. It's a collaboration we are absolutely happy with. And it works – not everyone can deliver the technical qualities we need. The printing process is complex and requires special finishes like the specific binding we used for this book. Antilope De Bie has done exceptionally; the whole process ran very smoothly. ■



A WARM WELCOME

- Stad Antwerpen
- Antwerpen
- 180 x 240 mm
- Magno Natural 120 g/m²
- 104 p

Piet De Moor

Gebinte van een buiging: An ode to stillness

In a world that appears to go faster every day, a visit to Piet de Moor's place in Ghent is a welcome stop. De Moor has recently brought out the beautiful travel story *Gebinte van een buiging*, complete with illustrations, after a five-week trip to Japan. What's exceptional is that for those five weeks, De Moor was partly closed off from the world. He didn't bring a telephone with him, disconnected from online life, and travelled with nothing more complex than a travel alarm clock.



De Moor is what you call 'detached'. In a world run by technological progress and digitisation, he chooses to live with only what he really needs. At his home in Ghent, you'll find no excess luxuries, just a lot of books. A car, bike, washing machine, dryer, TV, dishwasher and refrigerator ... He doesn't have any of them. And a few years ago he also got rid of his bed. 'It took a while to get used to it, but I now sleep better than ever and have less trouble from my back,' he says. 'To an outsider, it sounds strange that there is no bed or a fridge. I live in the centre of Ghent. Five minutes away, I'll find cold products in countless stores. It works perfectly for me that way.'

When I entered, the first thing I noticed was the row with – I suspected – travel books. Is *Gebinte van een buiging* likely to have a follow-up?

'You might be able to consider *Gebinte van een buiging* – the title could be translated into English as *A framework of bowing* – to be a prelude to a larger work. It's my intention to start with all stories and sketches that I've collected over time. And there are lot of them. It's just a case of waiting until my pension and then I'll be able to start on it.

'I've been drawing, writing and observing since I was 18. And the constant theme in all that is wonder. If I look around me, I don't always understand the world. What is all this? What am I doing here? By writing, I might get more of a grip on these questions, although they'll always linger. But that's exactly what's fascinating: that constant search.'

Searching in a digital world

His work as a teacher at the Kunsthumaniora Sint-Lucas school in Ghent feeds his creativity even further. 'What I learn and experience myself, I pass on to my students. And the beauty is that they, just like me, are searching. They want to collect, develop, secure their own experiences. Together, we are following the same process of discovery and creation. I think the interaction is wonderfully valuable.

'It's great my students don't just want to make something, but want to work from their own experience. They want to taste life, art, what it means to create something tangible. And that touches me, because it's what drives me too. The process of observing, learning, exchanging and growing keeps us all sharp.'

***Gebinte van een buiging* obliges the reader to slow down.**

'It can all be a little less; less loud and especially less rushed. *Gebinte van een buiging* began as a month-long trip to Japan, but it eventually became much more than that. As I do on every journey, I had my sketchbook with me. I drew and wrote in it every day. Without actually realising it, I created a sort of visual diary. After a month, I looked back and thought: Wow! This is what you can do if you give yourself the time and space to really observe and create. I realised that I've now been looking, writing and sketching for forty years, without ever consciously stopping; it's always been a part of my life.

'What is particularly fascinating for me is how we always try to capture

and hold on to the passing of time. In principle, I'm doing that by writing and drawing too: grabbing the moment, setting it down in a form that stays, even when memories fade or distort.

'If I look back at what I wrote twenty or thirty years ago, it sometimes surprises me and I become a stranger to myself. You're no longer the person who you were then, yet a lot of that old self still comes through in the current day. I think that's a fascinating process.

'The speed with which we live – always on the go, always rushing – makes us forget how valuable it is to stand still for a moment. Instead of racing with the bike, we should walk more. And instead of constantly texting, we should actually talk to people. That's what I want to show with this book. Not because I want to prove something, but because I have the feeling that this is the right time to share the insights I've arrived at.'

You travelled through Japan without a smartphone, computer or anything of the sort. In a highly technological society like Japan's, you must have stood out.

'I only had a battery-powered alarm to catch the train on time (laughs). And if I had a problem somewhere, I always found someone who helped me. In a technologically advanced country like Japan, it felt liberating to go without all those resources. I became happy doing this; I've always had an aversion to the unstoppable technological evolution. I had never thought it would have such an impact on our daily lives. Travelling, I could consciously step away and trust

the people around me. I learned that in Japan too: if someone says something to you, trust it. Of course, I had my doubts as well, and moments where I thought I knew better, but eventually you experience a deep faith in others. It feels like you've finally broken free from the Western way of thinking. After three weeks of travelling, I felt removed from my roots. The last two weeks were really a jewel; I felt so free. The whole period is etched in me, like something valuable that no one can ever take away from me.

'What's more, even though I didn't speak the language, I developed a sort of joyful connection. A deep trust in the life and the people around me. We are all asking the same questions: who am I, where do I come from, where am I going? And Japan showed me that, even with the constant threat of natural disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis, people there don't panic. They're prepared and accept that life goes on, even if everything gets broken. That's a very big contrast with how we look at life. In the West, we sometimes behave like drama queens. We make big problems out of everything, while the Japanese see setbacks or calamities more as a part of life. They begin again, without any kind of song and dance.

'The beauty of the nature and culture in Japan touched me deeply. The patient handling of the ten thousand things, together with the history of the country, with the impact of the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; it's all given a different perspective to war and human interaction. My experiences have

made me realise that actual wealth isn't in material possessions, but in the connection between myself and others.'

It might be an obvious question, but why Japan?

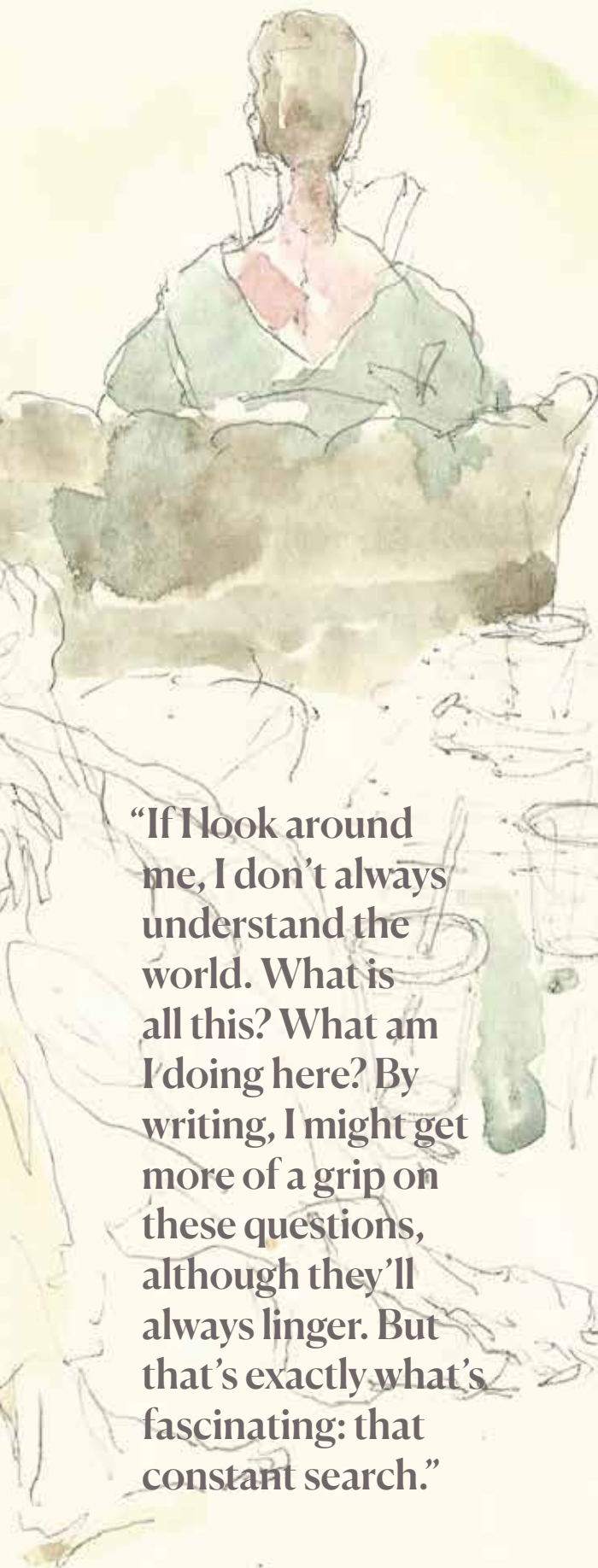
'I've been travelling for twenty years. After my divorce, I discovered the value of travel. First it was shorter trips, to Poland, Romania, Bulgaria ... Later, there were longer trips to Peru, Nepal, India. And then came Japan. I've been reading Japanese literature for years and the art has fascinated me for a long time. It's a culture that is so unbelievably rich, so deeply rooted in traditions and natural subtleties.

'The green archipelago of islands, the clear water of the surrounding ocean ... The climate, that fine, soft rain that makes the plants gleam. It almost looks unworlly. And then there's that maniacal perfectionism of the Japanese, that patience and control. Unbelievable. But there's another side to it. The work ethos for example. The idea that you don't go home before the boss leaves - that would never work here. You see it in little things, like a woman who spent the whole day meticulously cleaning the same rubber track on an escalator. Proud of it. Impressive, but also extreme.'

You said it: Japan was not your first solo journey. Why did you choose to travel there alone?

'Because I like to do it so much (laughs). No, all joking aside, travelling alone has changed me as a person. When you travel with someone else, the dynamic is different. What I discovered in





“If I look around me, I don’t always understand the world. What is all this? What am I doing here? By writing, I might get more of a grip on these questions, although they’ll always linger. But that’s exactly what’s fascinating: that constant search.”

Japan was that loneliness invites self-reflection. If I was with someone else, I would not have been able to experience this connection with myself. I’d recommend it to everyone, especially young people. How nice would it be to oblige all young people to go travelling alone for at least one week before they begin their studies? Maybe a year? I’m convinced this would considerably help fight the fear and mistrust in our society. And exploring other cultures helps us to better understand who we are. ■



GEBINTE VAN EEN BUIGING
 • Piet De Moor
 • Gent
 • 210 x 297 mm
 • Munken Lynx Wit 120 g/m²
 • 376 p

SKRIBIS

Publishing supervisor Rafaël Adriaen: ‘You could describe SKRIBIS as being something between a classic and an online publisher. With a classic publisher, it’s not the author who makes the investment, but the publisher. For the past few years, not all classic publishers have been covering all the costs by themselves.

The big difference is that with SKRIBIS, the rights and decisions are all entirely with the author. Authors are therefore responsible for the initial investment, but that gives them more freedom. People who come to us want to publicise their work their way, but with the guidance you expect from a classic publisher. Collaborating with SKRIBIS means the author maintains all rights and—in principle—all income from the sales. Plus, they’re not letting their publication get taken out of their hands, but remaining involved with every decision; we only move forward when we receive approval from the author.

‘We remove worries and concerns, from the first contact to the moment the books are delivered to the door. That’s the basic service. If the author needs a writing coach, editor or a designer for the interior work and the cover, we offer these services in collaboration with professional freelancers.

‘SKRIBIS is here for everyone. It goes without saying that we do quality control—manuscripts need to be easy to read and cannot incite discrimination, hate, etc.—but we are less strict than a classic publisher. SKRIBIS is a publisher that wants to guide people professionally and personally. And that begins with the submission of a manuscript and ends with the delivery of the books to the door and sales via the webshop, with countless options in between.’

There's much beauty to be found in chance

'Birth, school, work, death' is not the title of an obscure book printed at Graphius, but it is the title of a song by the alt-rock band The Godfathers. An ironic wink at how our life is built of four major moments. Is it true? Of course not, but sometimes it appears we are leading our lives from one of these major moment to the next. From working, we move to a well-deserved pension. And then? Stop the machine. Hans Pauwels and Reinhilde Gielen show that life consists of more than a chain of major moments in their exceptional and impressive photo-storybook *Aesthetic Nomads*.





'Every year, we leave Belgium behind for a few months to live and work in a different country as nomads,' explains Hans. 'We dive deep into the stories behind the everyday world and give ourselves the time to discover, to photograph and to write. Every time, it feels as if we are unlocking a hidden world. And every time, we travel to authentic places where life is really lived and meet exceptional people who inspire us. We have recorded all this in *Aesthetic Nomads*, a chronicle of twenty years of unique experiences.'

'What has always fascinated me is how by accentuating one detail of something, light can transform something very normal into something beautiful,' says Reinhilde. 'For me, beauty is to be found in the way light brings a particular shape, a colour or a material to life. I consider light to be the first impetus to bringing beauty to life. From my work in the fashion world – where I'm always searching for new shapes and details – I've learnt to see beauty or to try to discover it in the unexpected.'

'I can become truly lyrical about light (laughs). If we are somewhere, I'll always strive not to let us be led too much by the direct route to this or that destination. I'll let myself be led by the light. I want to let myself be led by the light. And then we find ourselves in a very different place to what we first had in mind. But it always brings us to surprising, beautiful discoveries.'

Hans: 'A very nice example of such a place is the Scottish Isle of Bute. A great island with a very special, dramatic atmosphere, especially in darker weather. Then you see how the clouds change the landscape and submerge it in a very different romantic glow. It's these changing skies that make the landscape so much more interesting than regular sunlight does. For us, these sorts of

moments, where the light and the environment come together to create something special, are the essence of beauty.'

Reinhilde: 'It gives such enormous energy when the light is right and when you catch that exact moment. We wanted to share that feeling with this book, without it ever being the intention to be commercial or perfect. It's just a reflection of our way of looking at the world.'

Who looks sees beauty

'It's always a challenge to set an image you have in your head into a photo,' continues Reinhilde. 'Reality isn't always easy to register. A photo is always an approximation of it ... And the light of the computer and the printing techniques sometimes mean reality lies far from what I've experienced. There are so many steps in the process – from the shoot to the printing – that all have their own impact.'

While you would think that with the technology in our hands today would have to be able to capture reality.

Hans: 'I think that in this day and age, with hyper-perfected cameras, the 'soul' of photos is sometimes lost. The technical progress has countless benefits, but it appears as if the emotion and the poetry is removed from the image. In some of the older images, taken with less advanced equipment, you still feel the poetry and the depth. I often miss that.'

Reinhilde: 'What I miss is the delay that was inherently connected with the medium of photography. You need to take your time to look. The modern viewer is different. With the hastiness of images on social media – where people literally go through their feed with a swipe – it's difficult to bring across a feeling of poetry and meaning. A good example needs time



to be understood and valued, both in its creation and in its reception.'

Would you consider *Aesthetic Nomads* – both the project and the book – to be an exercise in slowing down?

Reinhilde: 'I think so. I have the impression that we are going too quickly nowadays. We consume more, but enjoy less. The now-now-now dictates the order of the day. Taking time, looking, valuing what you see ... I think that slowing down benefits our creative process. And that it puts us in the position to develop a deeper understanding of the world around us.'

Let's quickly discuss your annual 'nomadism'. You leave Belgium for a few months every year, searching all around the world for special houses in which to live.

Reinhilde: 'That's right, and in this search, it's important for us that it's not just a regular vacation residence. We want a real dwelling where we feel at home. For example, when we went to Buenos Aires for a longer period, we looked not just for a place to sleep, but for an environment in which we could completely immerse ourselves. The idea is to live among the local population, to feel like we are a part of the community. That makes the experience so much more authentic.'

Hans: 'Exactly! We really want the feeling of integration. It's not that we are only there to relax and enjoy. We work during our time away. This is why it's crucial for the place to be comfortable and feel inviting. It always begins with finding that one home where we can settle down for a longer time. If that foundation isn't there, it becomes difficult to truly discover the environment.'

Reinhilde: 'For example, Mérida, Mexico. When we arrived there,



“A very nice example of such a place is the Scottish Isle of Bute. A great island with a very special, dramatic atmosphere, especially in darker weather. Then you see how the clouds change the landscape and submerge it in a very different romantic glow. It's these changing skies that make the landscape so much more interesting than regular sunlight does.”

the first impression wasn't exactly positive. The city didn't look attractive in the first instant. But after a few days, we began to see the charm of the place. We discovered hidden jewels and unique places. Those sorts of experiences make travelling so special.'

Hans: 'Especially in the United States, it's challenging to find something that has character. It often happens you'll come into a house and think: this is not a house, it's a showroom. There's

simply nothing personal. We always strive to live in a space that tells us something, a place with character. We don't want to stay in an impersonal apartment per se, but a place with a story, where we can find something of the local culture. It's the connection with the environment that makes our travels truly meaningful. The desire for authenticity drives us. That's the challenge and the joy of travel. One of the nicest places we ever went was in Cape Cod. It was truly unique. We stayed in a sort of beach



shack. There was no heating, and it was made entirely of wood, but in a very modern and atmospheric way.'

Reinhilde: 'Very modernistic. Basic, but perfect for what it needed to be. We really enjoyed it there and it was just unique. It felt good and that's what we're looking for.'

Hans: 'It's also nice that places only reveal themselves by actually being there. Take the East Coast of America. Although we didn't have many reasons

for returning, we did see interesting things, like our house in Lakeland. A gem from 1956 with a completely original kitchen. Very modernistic, but with that old charm. Very interesting environment, because it was close by the college designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.'

You breathe the joy of life. It seems like your mission is to collect beauty, or in a certain sense, to try to keep it from deteriorating. For example, the place you live is the home of a former-painter. Even here, the light falls very beautifully inside.

Reinhilde: 'That's the reason why we bought this place. Well, we could talk endlessly about architecture, and then about how architectural heritage is treated. What happens nowadays is often catastrophic. Today, we see a lot of people who only want open spaces, completely white, with straight lines, without character. I think that's very unfortunate. Because the soul disappears. It's very sad that we're losing so much authentic architecture. It would be great if we could find a way to keep the unique elements of a house and combine them with modernity and sustainability. But what's happening now? New owners of old houses are leaving the facade as it is, tearing everything out and building something new. Away with the soul, away with the feeling.'

Hello text: I'm image

What immediately stands out in *Aesthetic Nomads* is that the text and the images appear to be separate to each other. Texts are not descriptive, but give depth to the image.

Hans: 'I call them vignettes, in a sort of serialised style. They're anecdotes, slices of life. Conversations I recorded, thoughts on a place. With a touch of humour and a little absurdity here and there. Easy to digest too. A textual soundtrack to the image Reinhilde made.'

Reinhilde: 'Hans's texts give added depth to the images or imbue them with a different prestige. They're very welcome too, because I absolutely cannot think in words. I compose the story with the images in my head. I let myself be led by an intuitive feeling. If I'm confused during photo selection or want to make a collage of images, I give the images freedom: I've noticed that one image asks for another, with colours and forms strengthening each other.'

If you could choose to instantly return to a place, what would it be?

Reinhilde: 'For me, the choice is often influenced by the weather. Look: it's raining, and that makes me think of the style and beauty of England.'

Hans: 'Sometimes I think about Uruguay. It never felt nostalgic to



“What has always fascinated me is how by accentuating one detail of something, light can transform something very normal into something beautiful.”

me, but more like the ideal of a relaxed life, surrounded by nature. For example, the people attach a great deal of value to family and community. And on the beach, you saw children playing without being glued to their telephones. They made camps, played with each other and were just real kids. Those sorts of authentic experiences are of inestimable value to me. And then you also have the breathtaking ocean.’

Hans: ‘If you asked where I would want to go, that would very likely be Manhattan. It’s a place where there’s always something to do. And you can very easily get to the sea. Long Island is close by. But the idea of packing up everything and moving to New York feels a little bit surreal right now. The costs of life there, especially healthcare, are just unpayable. If we were younger, we would go there without any hesitation.’

Reinhilde: ‘Yes, that’s the beauty of travel and discovery. It brings us back to the essence of who we are. It’s really the world in a nutshell, and what we get from that is irreplaceable.’ ■



AESTHETIC NOMADS

- Beta-Plus
- London
- 255 x 297 mm
- Gardapat Bianca 135 g/m²
- 528 p



THE ROAR OF AN ANGEL

Is this a book entirely focused on the history and development of one single car? Or is it a story of passion, commitment and possibly even obsession? Graphius Magazine talked to Adam Waddell to learn more about *LFA: Roar of an Angel*, the Lexus LFA and how to market to various niche target groups.

How did you become involved with *LFA: Roar of an Angel*?

My background is linked with the print and automotive worlds. I started my career in magazine publishing. My first job out of university was with Haymarket magazines, working on the iconic *Autosport*. I was part of the launch team for *Top Gear* magazine for BBC in 1993. I published that magazine for many, many years. Now, I'm mostly

consulting on *The Road Rat*, a high-end collectable luxury automotive magazine. *LFA: Roar of an Angel* is not a *Road Rat* branded book; its publishers are based in Japan, and it came to us through a mutual acquaintance. Our role is really just for the production and distribution. But my background put me in the perfect position to appreciate the book, the target readers and the LFA itself.

It might be best to start by explaining why the story of the Lexus LFA warrants having an entire book devoted to it.

There's a story behind the Lexus LFA. Its development extended over a period of nine years, fuelled by a desire to make a car that was as close to perfection as you could get. How many development projects are there in industry these days



that are *not* driven by margin and schedule? As readers of the book will discover, those were not the prime considerations. Instead – and it comes across really strongly in the book – the designers were driven by passion. And almost an obsession. I'm not going to claim that they created the perfect car, but when it finally launched in 2012, Jeremy Clarkson from *Top Gear* drove the LFA and said: 'It's the best car I've ever driven.' It's quite an accolade.

The book itself was written by Tanahashi Haruhiko, the chief engineer. The expert who created the car, created the masterworks, and who is now telling *his* story. There will never be another book about this car that is quite so detailed or quite so authentic. And if you read the book, it's clear that the LFA was a labour of love for him. It was never a car that

was going to make a lot of money for Lexus. In fact, I think every car effectively sold at a loss. But there was still that obsessive desire to create the ultimate car.

What would you say the goal was in creating the book?

I think the publishers in Japan felt it was a book that *should* exist. They wanted it as a record of what had been accomplished and how Tanahashi-san had accomplished it. This book is so definitive, so detailed, and so authentic in its storytelling, it's really content for a very niche group of people. It's not designed to be on the bestseller lists. No one is really expecting it to sell hundreds of thousands of copies.

It's interesting, because the book originated in Japan and was originally written in Japanese. But it was then

translated into English, and I expect their desire to print in English and distribute from Europe was partly to satisfy a global fanbase.

Despite being global, it's still a niche audience. There are subsections within that niche too. If you own a Lexus LFA – and there are only 500 LFAs in the world – you want at least one copy. For a subset of car enthusiasts with a particular passion for Japanese cars – this is the ultimate Japanese car – it's a must. And then you've got the broader motoring fans. This book is 272 pages of very, very detailed car info. How could they say no?

How did the goals and the different target groups influence your approach when publishing the book?

It would have been very easy to have created a £200 book. If you own

“ A lot has been made of the title. *LFA: Roar of an Angel...* It’s an evocative phrase that makes a point about the car and the emotions you feel when driving it. ”

a million-dollar super-car, you’re going to pay whatever for the book. We probably could have gone into fabric-covered slip cases and so on. But that’s not what this book is about. I believe Tanahashi-san was keen to share this story. And I think the publishers in Japan were very keen that it wasn’t exclusive or restricted, but that it was a story people – anyone – could access and enjoy. As such, we kept the pricing at £50. And that guided the production process.

We knew Park Communications UK, part of the Graphius Group, is a company with great attention to detail. It wasn’t a case of handing over the files and waiting a few weeks for a copy to land on the doorstep. It was much, much more involved than that. Peter Appleton from Park was extremely attentive. Nothing was ever too much trouble. During the production process, he was on the

phone and emailing constantly. That in itself instilled a great deal of confidence. When you’re producing a book, particularly for a third party, you want to know that it’s going to be perfect and I felt utterly confident that it would be. It is.

We knew it had to be a beautiful book, to reflect the car and the story behind it. We wanted it to be large format so the images of the car would have proper impact. We didn’t skimp on the paper quality, we went for matching head and tail bands and so forth. We didn’t go for any novelty packaging techniques, but chose the basic fundamentals that make it a magnificent collectable book.

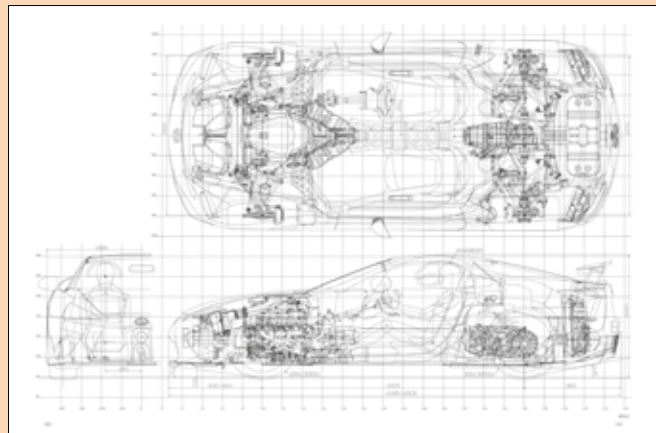
That’s something Peter was brilliant at: coming up with the details that make it a beautiful book. Ideas for finishes, for packaging and so forth. A very specific example of something

that wouldn’t have occurred to me in a million years is the anti-scuff finish on the dust jacket. You see, the rear of the dust jacket is almost entirely black, which means marks show up really easily from just sliding the book into a bookshelf. The anti-scuff finish wasn’t a lot of money, but it’s one of those things you immediately agree on. If people are going to be paying £50 plus shipping for a book, you want to make it as high quality as possible.

How are you marketing the book?

For a niche audience, spread around the globe, with lots of sub-groups, the best way to reach out is through social media. It doesn’t take a lot of work to find out there are dedicated Facebook groups. They’re not big, but you connect with them and then they connect with the other people in their group and off you go.

Word travels very, very quickly without you really having to actively try to





market it. In those communities on social media, all it takes is for one of them to go 'Wow! Someone's made a great book on our car!' (It's how they think about it too: 'Our car!') If you feel passionate about something, you feel a connection. And through that passion, that connection, word spread very quickly and naturally. There's been a pretty wide mix of territories – Europe, Japan and the US – in terms of the sales to date.

Production on the LFA actually stopped in 2012. Why produce a book on it now?

It takes a while for cars to become truly iconic. Particularly when they're not in production any more. In the newspapers, you read about cars that weren't worth anything five years ago, but that have suddenly become iconic and skyrocketed in value.

This car, obviously, has always been worth a bit. It was, I believe, about £340,000 new. There aren't that many for sale at the moment, but they're all between £750,000 and £1,000,000. It's a car that's gradually built in its collectability and its iconic status – its mythology – and for that reason people will want to read about it. They want to know the details and the story behind the car.

Is there anything in the book that particularly stands out for you?

A lot has been made of the title.

LFA: Roar of an Angel... It's an evocative

“ It's a car that's gradually built in its collectability and its iconic status – its mythology – and for that reason people will want to read about it. ”

phrase that makes a point about the car and the emotions you feel when driving it.

My favourite part of the book is a section at the back, where they list – this is the detail the book goes into – the colour, specifications, registration date and export country for each of the 500 LFAs. It's a brilliant inclusion.

There's also killer images of the car, at speed, beautiful and sharp across a double-page spreads in this large format book, printed on beautiful quality gloss paper. That's always going to have a large impact.

At the same time, there are also a few images that look as though they've been taken on camera phones. There's a place for those kind of images in this kind of reporting and to their credit, they realised it when they made the book. It's very authentic. It captures a moment,

whether it's a moment in the factory, or a moment in the design studio or a moment in the pits of a race track. Sometimes, the fact that it's a snapshot and you know it was taken quickly rather than being deliberately set up by a professional photographer is quite charming and even more powerful.

The cover shot has beautiful simplicity. There's no distractions, just a piece of tarmac and a nice clear background of trees. The car looks great from the rear three-quarters with the wing up. It's just a very pure, clear image that communicates what the car is all about. You look at that and you know what the LFA is. ■

LFA: ROAR OF AN ANGEL

- Tanahashi Haruhiko
- London
- 328 x 249 x 25 mm
- 272 p
- Magno Art Gloss 150 g/m²



Illuxtron

a clear view of things



Want to make it comfy and cosy at home? Start by choosing the right lighting. Mood lamp here, warm light there and fairy lights in the garden. There are many lighting manufacturers in Europe, but there is only one Illuxtron. Since its founding in 2009, the Dutch company has developed into one of the leading international producers of lighting, with a strong sales base throughout Europe.

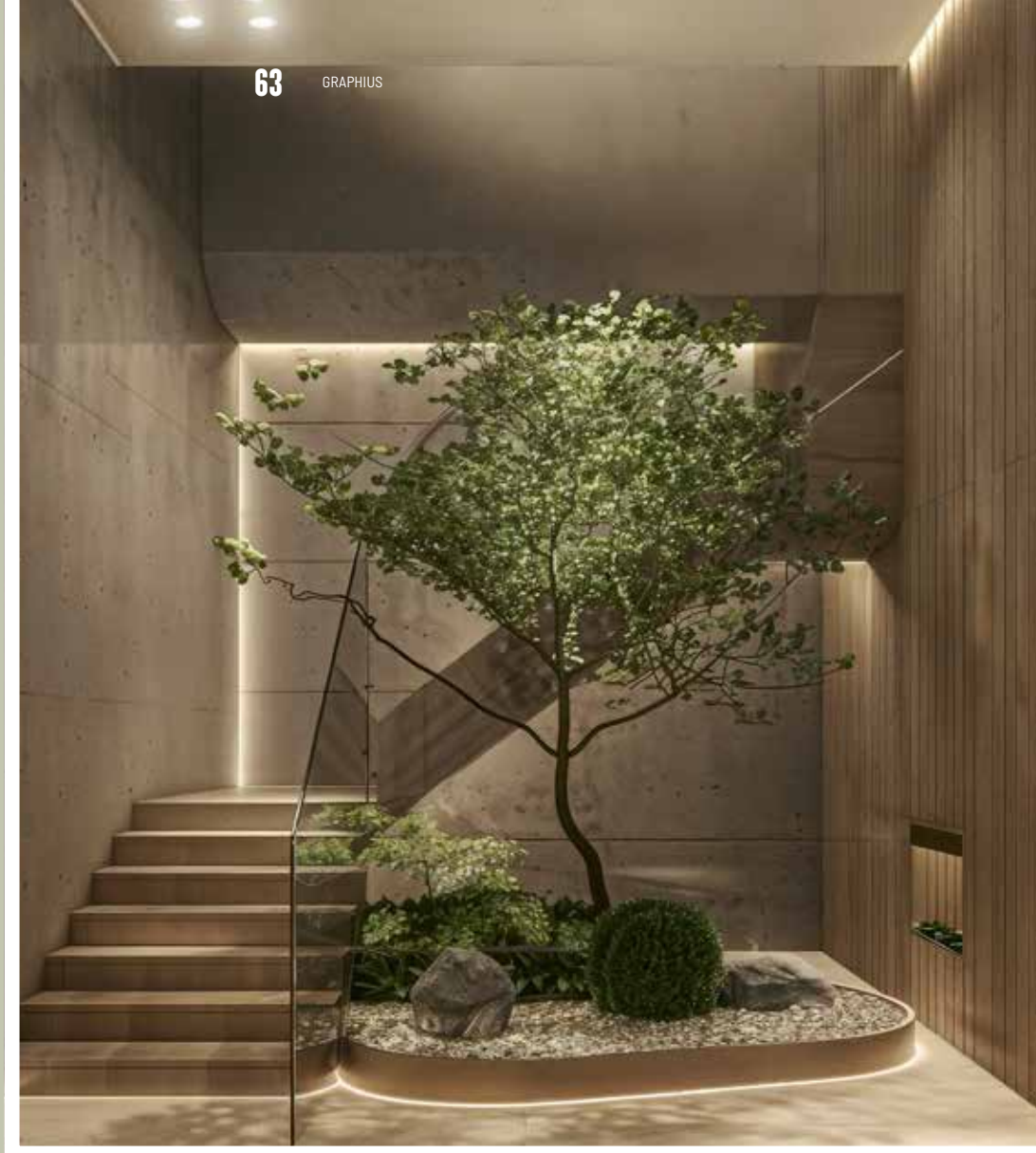


'We began with a clear vision of offering innovative lighting solutions that meet the needs of professional lighting advisors and wholesalers. Our goal was to respond quickly to technological developments in the LED market,' says Quinten van de Vrie, general manager of Illuxtron.

'We have to travel fifty years back in time to revisit these fragile beginnings,' explains Quinten. 'It's where this passion originated, as a family company. In 2024, we have grown into a prominent supplier of high-quality LED lighting. Thanks to our in-house R&D department, we know our products through and through. We continuously challenge ourselves to improve them. But it doesn't stop there. If clients are unable to find what they're looking for in our collection, we go with them in search of tailor-made solutions. Whether this means making subtle adjustments or creating entirely new LED fixtures, clients will find everything they need here.'

The illuminating path to innovation

In the past few decades, the lighting industry has undergone a true transformation, moving from traditional lighting to halogen and then to LED. 'The changes in the lighting world have indeed been unprecedented,' confirms Quinten. 'And as a leading company, we have a responsibility to follow the evolution and invest in innovative products. We do this by working closely with a network of manufacturers who are at the forefront of this technology. Our involvement



with international fairs and our close contact with clients puts us in the position to continuously learn and improve our range.'

We rarely think about the size of the role that light plays in our daily lives. Yet it's always there- we only notice it when it doesn't work. Or if a city sets up a real light festival, where artists

amaze the public with special light sculptures. That's light too.

'That's right,' says Quinten. 'And although light plays a crucial role in our lives, there's often insufficient knowledge about the different sorts of light and their impact on our health. Even with our dealers, there's often a lack of awareness about these

“ We rarely think about the size of the role that light plays in our daily lives. Yet it's always there- we only notice it when it doesn't work. ”



aspects. We see it as our task to spread this knowledge. We keep our clients informed via newsletters and our sales department. It's an essential branch of our business operations, especially in a time when the right lighting is not only functional, but can also be life-changing.'

Seeing the light

One of the most exciting projects Illuxtron is working on is a new type of recessed downlight. 'We are assembling our products with the help of robots. This makes it possible to stay competitive in the lower-price class, especially in relation to the Chinese market,' explains Quinten. 'We embrace innovation, but it can't come

at the cost of quality. We are very clear about this: we want to deliver quality at an affordable price.

'It goes without saying that we want to be visible in the competitive market. No pun intended (laughs). This is why we are paying so much attention to our printed materials. It has to be finished, with a professional and accessible look. Like our catalogue; if you put it on the table, you immediately make a statement. It reflects our investment in quality and attention to detail. We consciously chose to have a completely black finish with colour on the cut. The foil printing and the black design represent not only our quality, but are also crucial parts of our brand identity.'

The guarantee of quality

'A seven-year guarantee: that's what clients get. It's not nothing,

and definitely not a marketing trick. It's a promise to clients that we have faith in the quality of what we supply. Together with an affordable price, quality is the cornerstone of our product range. These efforts emphasise not only the value that Illuxtron attaches to customer satisfaction, but also our dedication to supplying reliable and sustainable lighting solutions.' ■



ILLUXTRON

- Illuxtron International
- Vlissingen
- 220 x 340mm
- Condat Mat 150 g/m²
- 192 p

“Together with an affordable price, quality is the cornerstone of our product range.”



Antilope De Bie AND Burocad **JOIN FORCES**



Antilope De Bie, an established name in the graphics sector and partner of the Graphius Group, is proud to announce their collaboration with Burocad, specialists in digital and large-format printing. As a part of this collaboration, Antilope De Bie has taken on a minority interest in Burocad, leaving both companies better positioned to serve clients with an expanded set of services.



Since it was founded in 1997, Burocad has proven to be an expert in the area of digital printing, offering a broad assortment of printed products, such as trade-fair stands, POS displays, interior decoration and large-format print work. Thanks to the new collaboration with Antilope De Bie, Burocad will be the expertise centre for large-format printing within the Graphius Group. Clients will have access to greater know-how and high-value solutions for large-format printing.

Mieke Neven will continue to lead Burocad. She explains: 'With us, the client is always the focus. Our team of designers and printing professionals makes our clients' ideas tangible, from concept to end-product. There's a reason our motto is "imagine it. print it."'

According to Neven, the collaboration will result in benefits for clients in particular: 'By joining forces with Antilope De Bie and Graphius Group, we can offer a broader range of printing possibilities. This makes us stronger, not only in Limburg, but across the whole of Belgium.'

Burocad and its team of thirty employees will continue to operate independently in Peer. In the meantime, Antilope De Bie, founded in 1922 and a specialist in high-quality tailored printing, will now be able to produce large-format print work in-house for the first time.

This is also a big step forward in relation to service: clients from Limburg will now have a local point of contact, making communication and services run more quickly and smoothly. ■

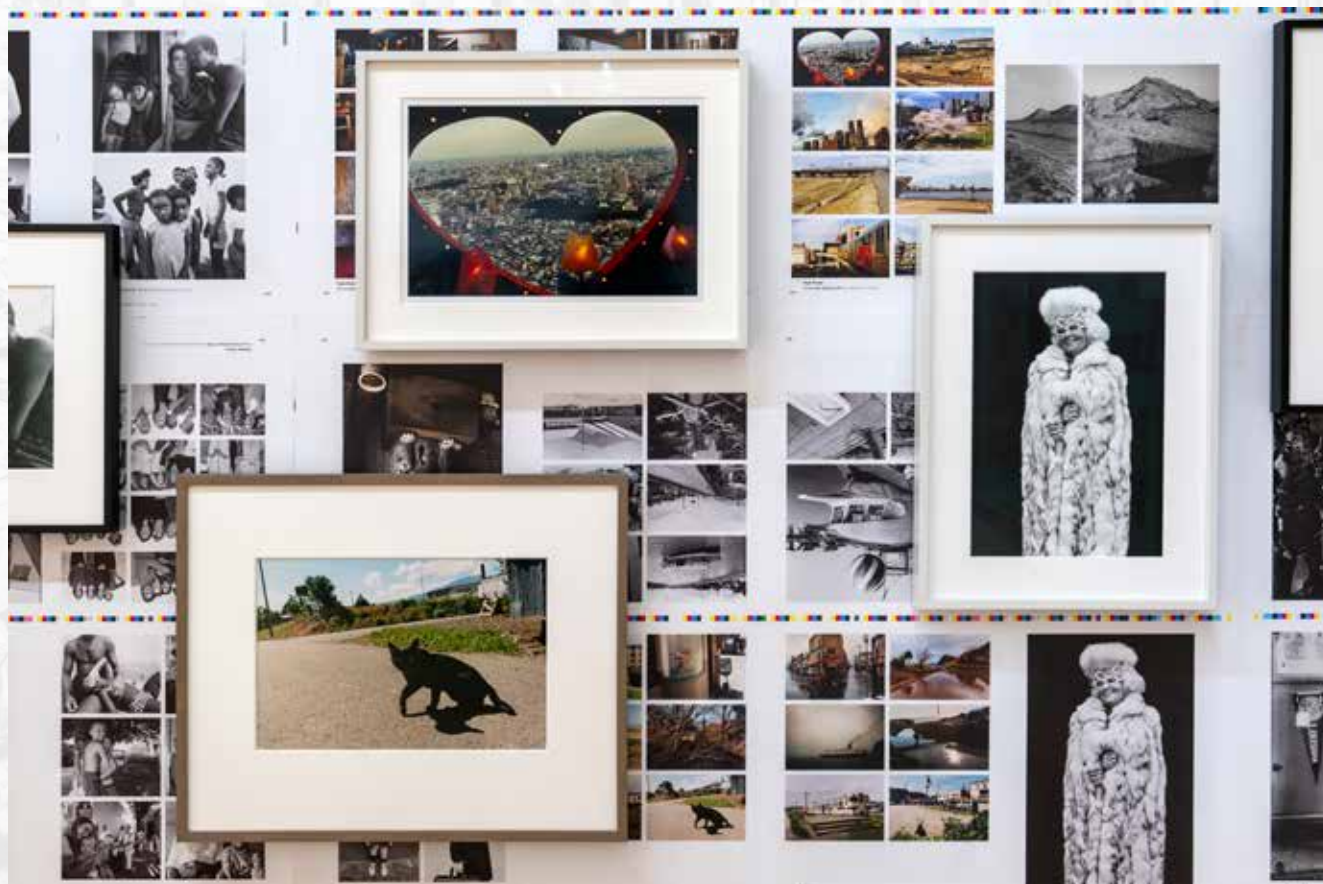
“With us, the client is always the focus. Our team of designers and printing professionals makes our clients’ ideas tangible, from concept to end-product. There’s a reason our motto is ‘imagine it. print it’”



An even closer look



SAGA: A Photographic Journey from Lewis Baltz to Tarrah Krajnak was published in July. With no fewer than 1800 images from more than 100 photographers, this impressive collection takes the reader on a fascinating journey through self-reflective and conceptual documentary photography from the 20th century. It also offers an excellent introduction to the photo collection that Astrid Ullens De Schooten Whettnall wants you to discover at various exhibitions presented at the A Foundation institution. In doing so, she classifies herself more as a donor than a collector. She tells us extensively about the origins of this compilation and the reasons for setting up the foundation...



Originally from an aristocratic family, the 86-year-old Astrid Ullens would have had you declared crazy if, sixty years ago, you had told her she would become one of the most respected figures in the world of photography. She has never followed a single photography course... 'It's all because I have a sharp eye!' declares the art-lover, before telling us how it all began.

From contemporary art to photography

'In 1976, at the Salon van Keulen, I was literally grabbed by contemporary art. Because I appreciated everything that raised questions, I decided to follow lessons to explore the subject more deeply. It was only at the beginning of the 1980s that I began to accumulate my first modern works of art. But I was more interested in the intellectual approach than in the financial aspect. And so, I became a little tired of this form of art. There was something that changed, thirty years ago, when I saw a photo at the Kunsthalle Basel,

made by the Romanian photographer Brancusi. I suddenly found myself in territory I knew nothing about – even though it is quite easy to move from minimal and conceptual art to photography. Between the various photographic trends, I succumbed to the charms of documentary photography. This form almost always has a unique philosophical message, usually revolving around important subjects such as "What kind of heritage are we going to leave to our children?" By means of photography, I wanted to keep track of things that will not always exist.'

A unique collection

'These first photos very quickly led to more... Over the course of all these years, I've built up a collection of more than 5500 photos by hundreds of contemporary photographers such as Lewis Baltz, Walker Evans, Robert Adams, and many other greats from the world of American photography. They are there to be admired in the

A Foundation or during the various exhibitions I participate in, all across the world, such as the famous Rencontres d'Arles.'

Astrid attributes this fame primarily to the unique character of her collection. 'My collection stands out for the fact that it consists of sets. I'm the only collector who has purchased such large sets of photos; dozens or even hundreds by the same artist. Like those by Lewis Baltz, for example. Previously, that was financially feasible, but nowadays, it's no longer possible because prices have evolved. I didn't do it consciously; it was really on the basis of intuition and taste. To make the work of an artist understood, and to advocate for them.'

People don't look any more...

As well as these large sets, Astrid's collection stands out for the preference shown to smaller formats. 'We currently live in a time that people don't really look anymore. In museums,



“In museums, they take photos of what’s in front of them, but they don’t “look”. They take selfies, then continue on. Afterwards, they very rarely actually look at their photos. The small formats force you to come closer to the photos and really look at them”

they take photos of what’s in front of them, but they don’t “look”. They take selfies, then continue on. Afterwards, they very rarely actually look at their photos. The small formats force you to come closer to the photos and really look at them. This is even more the case for black-and-white photos. In my opinion, a colour photo loses something of the intensity of the work of the artist.’

The battle against obscurity

Being altruistic and benevolent, Astrid wanted to let others enjoy her unique collection. This is why, in October 2012, she set up the A Foundation (the A is for Astrid). ‘In the early 1970s, while in Afghanistan for personal travel, I became aware of the obscurantism, the ignorance and the injustice in which certain populations live. To make my contribution in battling this plague, I set up the foundation. Its goal is to support the creation, awareness and preservation of the photographic image.’

Training the gaze of the young

The A Foundation is located in the lowest part of Forest, a municipality

of Brussels, an area previously characterised by industry. It gradually transformed into a residential area with a lot of places being dedicated to artistic creation. It was the intention, as a cultural player, to participate in the life in this neighbourhood and to involve young people in particular.

‘As well as exhibiting high-quality pieces and popularising photographic art, I wanted to expand young people’s horizons. I wanted to train their gaze and compel them to “look”, to give their imaginative powers free reign and allow them to express themselves. This is a nice way in which to teach them to take ownership of reality, question it and denounce inequality. To teach them a different spirit of openness to the world.’

Valorising talent

The A Foundation uses this spirit of openness to give young, fledgling photographers a chance, offering them visibility, helping them to set up their first exhibitions and opening doors to valorising their talent. ‘And that works! Schools come to visit our exhibitions. For example, the students at one school visited our

recent exhibition ‘Contacts’ in a rather formless and expositional way. Until the curator of the exhibition—Anne Lacost, who leads the Institut pour la Photographie in Lille—talked to them about the support for young people at the institute. Then I saw the faces of these young people begin to shine. That’s the direction we want to go in: accompanying young people and helping them to express their talents to the point that, who knows, one day, they might even be able to live off them...’ says Astrid Ullens. ■



- SAGA
- Ludion
- Brussel
- 240 x 300 mm
- Magno Volume 150 g/m²
- 576 p

GAZET VAN 'T BUDGET

In Flanders, there are hundreds of organisations dedicated to making the world a better place. One collects food donations, the next breathes new life into old household appliances. There are others that do everything possible to give people with disabilities easier access to our broader society and the labour market. This last category includes the non-profit organisation absoluut vzw. Absoluut provides services that support people who receive a Personal Civic Integration Budget (PVB). This is financial support paid by the Flemish Agency for Persons with Disabilities (VAPH). We spoke with communication officer Catharina Larsen.



'Absoluut vzw gives people helpful information and advice on care and support options, on how they're able to spend their budget and how to neatly justify everything,' explains Catharina Larsen. 'At the Flemish Agency for Persons with Disabilities (VAPH), people with a disability can request a budget with which to arrange their care and support. For adults, this is called a Personal Civic Integration Budget (PVB). Using it, you can arrange a travel service, get household help, or pay for a personal assistant who helps you with things like getting dressed, doing the shopping, or cooking.'

'Together with their networks (parents, brothers, sisters, etc.) people with a disability look at which form of support will make their daily lives easier and increase their capacities.'

'For children with a disability, there is a similar system; the Personal Assistance Budget (PAB). Here too, we look to see what specific support is needed within the family.'

'As an assistance provider, we want our members to be well-informed and comfortable making their own choices. Concretely, this means we inform them about the possibilities and regulations for the budget. We support them in making choices on care and support and help with the practicalities, such as the administration, related to the budget.'

'On top of this, we work to represent the interests of people with a disability with policymakers. By investing in improvements in the system of financing personal civic integration and the promotion of inclusion, we try to contribute to a society in which everyone can participate fully.'

In recent years, there has been a lot made over the lack of resources in the care industry. Can you arrange all of that as a non-profit organisation?

'Our organisation is recognised by the VAPH and we also get subsidies for the services we provide. Our services themselves are also partially paid; people pay using their Personal Civic Integration or Personal Assistance budgets.'

'But it's correct that there are still too many needs in the care sector. We see this in areas such as the long waitlists for these budgets. People with disabilities do get confirmation that they have the right to a budget, or to an extra budget, but they're often stuck on the waiting list for these budgets due to limited resources. Unfortunately, some people have been waiting for their budgets for more than twenty years, unable to move on with their lives without this (extra) support. There are people with a disability who want to work, but need support. Without the budget, they can't pay for it, so they're forced to keep living at home with their parents. As well as this, having a budget doesn't guarantee they'll find support. It's sometimes a very long search for a suitable place or an assistant, especially for people with very specific or multiple needs.'

'At absoluut vzw, we're actively involved with policy work because we believe everyone has the right to a full life.'



“As an assistance provider, we want our members to be well-informed and comfortable making their own choices.”



“By investing in improvements in the system of financing personal civic integration and the promotion of inclusion, we try to contribute to a society in which everyone can participate fully.”

How does the *Gazet van 't Budget* fit in your work?

‘The *Gazet van 't Budget* is our member magazine, with which we want to inspire and inform our members. We share stories of other members and informative articles about the Personal Civic Integration and Personal Assistance budgets.

‘Some of our members receive coaching from my colleagues. This means they regularly have appointments with one of my colleagues and together, they examine and evaluate their current support, and run over the administration of the budget together. But we also have a lot of members who do their administration themselves, and therefore don't have any coaching. These members also want to be sufficiently informed, through methods such as the *Gazet van 't Budget*, as well as our website, flyers, brochures and webinars. They can also call our info line. This way, we hope to offer an answer to all our members' questions.’

What subjects are covered?

‘We choose a relevant theme for each edition. For example, the most

recent edition, which was published in November, focuses on the importance of good local policy. In every magazine we have fixed articles that are then filled in according to the major theme. In the latest edition, we had an interview with a father who, together with the municipal council, set up a residence for people with disabilities, and an interview with one of our members who was elected during the latest election. Plus, there is an article where our content coordinator, who does a lot of policy work, offers a peek into what happens in the area of policy, and an article where we further explain one of the VAPH guidelines. Finally, we share news and answer a frequently asked question.’

What is your task within the organisation?

‘As a communication office, I am responsible for communicating with our members. I make sure our website and social media pages are up to date, and work on the development of brochures and flyers. As well as this, I write the member letters and support the preparations for webinars and info sessions. And of course, I devote a lot of time and attention

to our *Gazet van 't Budget*. From interviewing members and writing articles to maintaining contact with the photographer and designer. Although I'm the only communication officer at *absoluut vzw*, I work a lot with my colleagues. It makes my job really wonderful! ■



GAZET VAN 'T BUDGET

- absoluut vzw
- Antwerpen
- 210 x 280 mm
- Condat Matt Perigord 115 g/m²
- 20 p

DISCOVER THE VERSATILITY OF WIRE-O BINDING WITH Antilope De Bie **AND** Stockmans Kalenders

Antilope De Bie and Stockmans Kalenders, both part of the Graphius Group, are renowned for their high-quality finishes and innovative solutions. One of the most versatile and practical binding techniques they offer is Wire-O binding. This method is ideal for projects requiring a sustainable and functional finish. Thanks to their advanced technology, Antilope De Bie will happily take care of the entire production in-house: from printing to finishing.

What is Wire-O binding?

Wire-O binding is a binding technique where double metal rings are fed through holes in the pages. This technique offers diverse benefits, such as the supple turning of pages and the possibility of lying the document down completely flat or even turning it 360 degree. This makes Wire-O binding particularly user-friendly and suitable for a broad range of applications.





Why choose Wire-O binding?

1. Production completely in house

Antilope De Bie and Stockmans Kalenders keep the entire production process – from the printing to the binding – under one roof. This approach gives them complete control over every step of the process, guaranteeing constant, consistent quality. Furthermore, they respond flexibly to specific needs and unique desires, as well as strict client deadlines.

2. Professional look

Wire-O binding gives documents a sleek, neat look, ideal for business applications such as presentations, reports and calendars. The metal rings are available in diverse colours and sizes, allowing every project to be produced in the exact look desired.

3. Flexibility and custom work

Whether it's for small print-runs or large business orders, Antilope De Bie is set up to take on any assignment. Their specialised calendar department at Stockmans, with more than 150 years of experience, makes them the ideal partner for tailor-made Wire-O calendars and other projects. They offer flexible solutions tuned to the specific demands of any and every client.

4. Sustainable and reliable

Wire-O binding is a primarily sustainable binding method, ideal for documents that are used intensively, such as manuals, calendars and diaries. The metal rings are hard-wearing and have a long lifespan, even with daily use.

5. Efficiency and cost-saving

By managing the entire production in-house, Antilope De Bie and Stockmans Kalenders work efficiently and offer cost-effective solutions without making any concession to quality. This leads to shorter processing times and a higher level of flexibility.

A reliable partner for Wire-O projects

Antilope De Bie and Stockmans Kalenders stand out for their extensive experience and advanced technology. They offer a complete solution for Wire-O binding, whether it's for small, customised assignments or major B2B projects. Their expertise and technological know-how, supported by the Graphius Group, make them one of the few printers in Belgium capable of providing Wire-O binding completely in-house on such broad scales.

For companies looking for sustainable, efficient, high-quality solutions, Wire-O binding offers the perfect mix of functionality and aesthetics. ■





New machines at Park increase productivity and sustainability

At Park Communications, a division of Graphius Group, we continuously invest in new technologies to support our growth. We have recently purchased the latest generation Heidelberg Speedmaster XL 10-colour press, together with two new Stahl folding machines (the TP-82P and Ti-52), as well as a Primera E140 sewing machine with six stations and a cover feeder.

These purchases not only improve productivity and quality, they also deliver an energy saving of 50% on what would otherwise be required for the same output. This move towards sustainability is an important step in our mission to work in an ever more environmentally conscious manner.

Thanks to reduced make-ready times and higher speeds, we can also deliver small print runs in a profitable manner. Above all, the new press has an advanced level of colour accuracy with it, thanks to AI technology and complex algorithms that minimise the demand for manual adjustments. This helps us to offer our clients an even higher level of quality for products such as art brochures, annual reports, magazines and catalogues.

New Autobond FL106 laminating machine in Ghent



At Graphius Ghent, we have recently put the Autobond FL106 into service. This advanced laminating machine has already proven its value at PPO Graphius in Paris. It delivers not only high speeds, but also better quality than earlier systems and models we have worked with. This way, we are improving our efficiency and raising the quality of our printed work to a higher level.



Interns from Don Bosco St-Denijs at work

We recently welcomed interns from Don Bosco St-Denijs to Graphius with great enthusiasm! During their first days, they were given an extensive tour through our different departments and introduced to our various machines, as well as the people who will serve as their mentors.

Now they have dived deep into production: from practical experience with our machines to working, under supervision, on real assignments. We look forward to guiding their growth and development in the graphic sector.

Paper wraps for postage: a sustainable solution

Very recently, Graphius began offering the possibility of sending magazines with paper wrappings. Plastic foil is forbidden in some regions and not all ecological alternatives are feasible. Great reasons for introducing this sustainable and stylish solution.

With a paper wrap, your magazines are packed in an environmentally friendly manner to ensure they meet even the strictest regulations. Get in touch with your account manager for more information about this new option.





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