

**»Schönste Bücher aus aller Welt« /  
»Best Book Design from all over the World« 2016**



*The 14 Awardees 2016  
Photo: Marc Dirkmann*

Unique of its kind in the world, the annual book design competition »Best Book Design from all over the World« has been held in Leipzig since 1963. Since 1991 the Stiftung Buchkunst in Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig has been responsible for overseeing it. The international competition assesses books which have previously been judged and singled out for merit by specialist panels in their respective countries of origin. In 2016, again, an independent, international jury convened in Leipzig with the task of selecting fourteen outstandingly designed books. The highest prize is the “Goldene Letter”. Here are the 14 awarded publications from almost 600 of the best books from 32 countries: The best of the best!

## **GOLDENE LETTER**

### Netherlands and Flanders

Titus Knegt

**Other Evidence: Blindfold**

Publisher: Titus Knegt, Amsterdam

Design: Titus Knegt, Amsterdam

Printer: Drukkerij Tielen, Boxtel

ISBN: -

*The Srebrenica massacre in 1995: more than 8,000 people murdered. – The International Criminal Court: evidence of a war crime exhumed and brought to light, translated into objective data. 50,000 pages of autopsy reports written, 30,000 pieces of evidence photographed. – An artist's book: documents from the tribunal taken from the files. – The form: double codex with individual sheets of paper, bound with paper fasteners and wrap-around cardboard cover.*

*Shocking events do not simply disappear if they are forgotten. Remembrance alone does not set things to rights again. Like a monument, an artist's book can achieve something: in a visual and material setting, it can capture those things that are not understandable. In this case, the finesse of the design features will not be admired, the careful typography will not be emphasised, and the modern typeface will not be appreciated. This book will be valued and kept as an expression of shell-shocked shame – and once in a while, in moments of disbelief, it will be picked up and people will ask themselves: How could this have happened?*

## **GOLD MEDAL**

### China

Lv Chonghua

**Order - The Story of Fangyuan Bookshop**

Publisher: Guangxi Fine Arts Publishing House

Design: Li Jin

Printer: Beijing Artron Art Printing Co., Ltd.

ISBN: 978-7-5494-1043-9

*A fascinating book block: Japanese binding creates a beautifully soft bundle out of the creamy, blossom-light paper. Cover pages made of synthetic raffia in a dull, olive green protect the almost square book in portrait format. Red writings and drawings are printed on the spine and tail edge – like a summary of the content. The extra-wide rear section enables four mini-books on the left of the grey binding string that holds everything together. They flash by at your fingertips in a kind of flip book, where the caricature faces seem like characters. In the main book, the light and airy interaction between text and image is astounding. What freedom! The script is written both horizontally from left to right, and also vertically from right to left. The visual principle of script and sketch allows both of these to signify meaning in merely different states of matter. The whole page itself appears as if in a third, abstract state – with a generous top edge and gutter margin, with the controlled relationship between printed and unprinted space – and seems like a super-character. All aspects of this book – material, characters, printing, binding – are organic. The printed verso pages – still closed at the front by the fold – serve up additional content like an unopened fruit. As if the growth of such books were without intention.*

## SILVER MEDAL

### Czech Republic

Martin Hejl et. al.

**2x 100 mil. m2**

Publisher: Kolmo.eu, Prague

Designer: Mikuláš Macháček, Linda Dostálková

Printer: Indigo Print, Prague

ISBN: 978 – 80 – 260 – 6127 – 4

*There is a self-mocking air to this documentation of apartment construction and housing estates in Czechoslovakia. The illustrations catch your eye first: some are sketched like cartoons, while others are images drawn vivaciously with a tusche brush. Their pedagogical impetus differs considerably from the self-attributed greatness that is frequently emanated by architects and architecture.*

*The typography pursues an intensely contrasting black & white. A 70s-style serif typeface was chosen – an extraordinary preference in an architectural context. Two fonts and two font sizes – with particularly narrow typesetting in the extra-bold font, huge indents, left justification, and chapter headings almost in display size: these clear devices are sufficient to fill the pages of text with a tectonic, didactic structure and breathe a liveliness into them that encourages further reading.*

*The colour photos are printed entirely fearlessly on rough, yellowed book paper – making it crystal clear that the key focus here is not on shiny, dazzling effects. These unpretentious and humorous design features are to be understood as an expression of self-distance, and at the same time they underline the seriousness of the social concerns presented in the architecture. The clear, compact quality creates a handbook with personal commentary and is displayed in situations ranging from interviews with architects through to the extensive chronology of figure ground plans.*

*It is not representation, but rather the character of the works that is important in this publication, which was the Czech and Slovak contribution to the Biennale 2014 in Venice.*

## SILVER MEDAL

### Netherlands and Flanders

Jan Peter Wingender

**Brick. An Exacting Material**

Publisher: Architectura & Natura, Amsterdam

Designer: Studio Joost Grootens (Joost Grootens, Dimitri Jeannottat, Silke Koeck, Hanae Shimizu, Julie da Silva)

Printer: robstolk®

Binder: Boekbinderij Van Waarden, Zaandam

ISBN: 978 94 6140 027 7

*The structured cover itself reflects the genre: it is a handbook on the contemporary usage of brick in Dutch architecture.*

*The widely varying chapters and sections are each given their own visual logic. The book's structure is actually held together by an elaborate framework for type and images, which enables whatever is necessary. The basic double page in single-column full justification and vibrant Antiqua appears traditional yet surprises with asymmetrical left and right sides. The columns exceed the customary dimensions for very large indents. This misalignment creates space on the right of the column which can also be used for pictures; above all, it allows width dimensions for the type area in two-column texts that allow continued full justification with the same type size as the basic text – without risking gaps. The spaces are also suitable for text and image tables or for complex captions.*

*All headings are printed in spaced capital letters; only the chapter headers are placed in the centre of the page: a respectful bow to the history behind the book's material. And the very rough natural paper is naturally no obstacle to four-colour photos.*

*An ambitious subject, an ambitious design, an ambitious book.*

## BRONZE MEDAL

### Belgium

Matthias Phlips

***Daniël van Dicht***

Publisher: Lannoo

Printer: Publikum

Design: Dear Reader,; Matthias Phlips (Illustrations)

ISBN: 978-94-0141-975-8

*This endomorph pushes back the boundaries of any kind of typology. His phlegm is so pronounced that – apart from a rare flush – he is left entirely unaffected by everyday perils. He finds himself in highly practical situations that are always slightly to seriously absurd, but everything seems to essentially pass over him. Things usually revolve around dogs and food intake. Or something that is being imitated. The easy-going man finagles his way between the ducks with a gaping mouth to catch most of the food.*

*Luckily, he is only a sketch. The stout, naked man, Herr van Dicht, is the protagonist of weekly cartoons that are collected here as a flexible folio. The page structure is spacious, wonderfully composed, sparing in its use of colour, always covering the whole page, with lots of pink – and everything is drawn with clear, equally thick contours. A certain psychological expression is created by these economical graphics – mirroring van Dicht's visible greed and latent parsimony. In addition, the character has extremely reduced facial expressions. The illustrator himself does without the most important means of expression on the man's face: his eyes – which are covered by glasses.*

*The book is designed as an album dedicated to this naked little man. Now and then, from off-stage, i.e. from the edge of the picture, the plump pink hands extend into the picture, affix a cartoon with an adhesive strip, or clip their fingernails.*

## BRONZE MEDAL

### Netherlands and Flanders

De Vormforensen (Annelou van Griensven & Anne-Marie Geurink)

***Het Meest Geloofde Sprookje***

Publisher: De Vormforensen (distribution De Vrije Uitgevers)

Design: De Vormforensen & Lyanne Tonk

Printer: Drukkerij Tielen, Bostel

Binder: Boekbinderij Abbringh, Groningen

ISBN: 978-90-824196-0-3

*A little creature becomes hungry for power; it begins to paint circles and swaps them for other things. The circles grow larger and larger; the demand for them culminates in a desire for the golden, shining sun.*

*The folded pages of the hardback are closed at the top, creating pockets between the double pages which are open at the front and bottom. The insides are printed with a wide repertoire of geometric patterns – so mysterious. How does a design feature like that fit into the visual scenario of collages made from cut and torn shapes, two-colour printing, signal red and ink blue, embossed with golden foil? The circles in the writing itself also begin to take on a life of their own; the o in the semibold grotesque type leaves the baseline, shifting up or down.*

*The printing inside the pockets turns out to be taken from a security envelope: inner patterns protect the contents from prying eyes, mostly lines over the whole area which prevent passwords, account numbers or other confidential financial information from showing through...*

*At the end, the whole thing collapses: "Oh no, what now?" A children's book? A parable of supply and demand, growth optimism and the absolute value of money: the most widely believed fairy tale.*

## **BRONZE MEDAL**

### Austria

Christoph Miler

***Nowhere Men. Illegale Migranten im Strom der Globalisierung***

Publisher: Luftschacht, Wien

Design: Christoph Miler, Zürich (CH)

Printer: Druckerei Theiss, St. Stefan im Lavanttal

ISBN: 978-3-902844-53-8

*Difficult issues and beautiful books – surely not the perfect couple?*

*The highest common denominator of the three factors governing migration – original motivation, odyssey and destination – seems to be fear. Fear on all levels. What exactly do we know about illegal immigration in Europe, though?*

*Author and designer Christoph Miler seemingly needs to go beyond the daily news and prefers his own research over somebody else's experiences. He found people who have taken six different paths through life and listened to them, their stories, and the external and internal mayhem.*

*Miler has turned his discoveries into a book. He adopts two soundtracks and applies them with a steady hand. Firstly, the six protagonists have their say. The typography treats their words with the same respect as is awarded to other quality literary texts. Secondly, headlines and pictures are taken from fast-moving mass media and transposed into stable book form. These are associative pages of documentation – a light-grey background strictly separating them from the biographical accounts. It could be said that this parallel approach acts as a corrective to the contexts created in the customary, exclusive consumption of news and data. The individual findings do not necessarily have to be wrong. However, this book shows once again what tends to be missing from our palette when we paint our picture of the world: the individual person, their personal fate, their individuality, or to put it in a nutshell: their humanity.*

*It is a book worthy of consideration, an artistic snapshot in time – people from somewhere, now here.*

## **BRONZE MEDAL**

### China

Zhou Xue

***Pleasure of Learning***

Publisher: Phoenix Fine Arts Publishing Ltd.

Designer: Qu Minmin, Jiang Qian

Printer: Shanghai Artron Art Printing Co., Ltd.

ISBN: 978-7-5344-9717-9

*Like a bundle of secret documents, a soft piece of felt is wrapped around the body of this book and tied with a thread of raffia. Then calligraphic daubs of ink darken the creamy natural white of the paper, page by page until you become immersed in a new world. The strong, tough paper contains texts in filigree Chinese type, with some smears of watery ink here and there – traces of the artists' work, printing ink that has seeped through or been discarded? An illusion – the linen tester reveals screen dots. Visual gems are peeled away: folded, ultra-delicate pieces of rice paper are worked into the book's layers; printed only on one side, they bear calligraphy and tusche painting – mostly a combination of the whole sheet and a large detailed section.*

*The reader works through the book very carefully because it appears so vulnerable with its assortment of papers, the stitch binding with open spine, and the secretive beginning. You therefore handle the artistic pages with extra caution – the book, illustrations and observations blend to form a contemplative whole. This corresponds perfectly to the pedagogical motive of the whole project – in the words of Confucius: the Pleasure of Learning.*

## BRONZE MEDAL

### Norway

Ingvar Ambjørnsen, Editor: Bendik Wold og Nils-Øivind Haagenen / Flamme Forlag

**Farvel til romanen. 24 timer i grenseland**

Publisher: Flamme Forlag

Designer: Aslak Gurholt Rønsen / Yokoland

Illustration: Espen Friberg / Yokoland

Printer: Livonia Print Sia, Latvia

ISBN: 9788282880596

*It is an agreeable sight even for non-smokers: the cigarette end smouldering away by itself on the narrow spine of the book. It belongs to the long-haired profile with the hefty sideburns on the back cover. There are plants growing freely in flowerpots on the cover flaps, plus an uncorked bottle with a filled wine glass. And on the front there are bare feet – but the story continues. Beneath the feet, on the cover, you can see the ground, or at least a pattern with radially arranged cobblestones, grouted in red from the red paper. Lush vegetation entwines an unoccupied garden chair on the endpaper, activated by the same red paper. So much atmosphere – and we haven't even reached page one yet.*

*Overall, the book has a traditional form. The story is presented in a timeless serif typeface with distinct writing that is bold yet fine, typeset with the necessary line spacing for comfortable reading without becoming too large. An ample amount of whole-page illustrations with calming white space continues the visual setting from the beginning. The brushstrokes change from contours into larger areas, drawn in a single stroke – a watery blend of different grey shades. Good reading conditions are created here by the book itself.*

## HONORARY APPRECIATION

### Norway

Åsne Seierstad, Po Tidholm, Lars Forsberg, Barbara Szybinska Matusiak, Vidje Hansen, Bruno Laeng

**LIVING THE NORDIC LIGHT**

Publisher: Zumtobel AG

Designer: Snøhetta

Printer: Göteborgstryckeriet

*This bulky volume with a white cardboard cover, with the title embossed in thick Futura capitals in the centre, gives the impression of an art catalogue. A photograph is stuck to shiny paper in the debossed area on the back cover. An elderly woman gazes out of the intense black & white portrait. It is about light, Nordic light.*

*Inside the book, very different sections await the observer. Four portraits of people who are around 100 years old, with texts and photographs – two associative collections of images showing aspects of light and dark – three academic essays on the influence of polar light on a person's living circumstances.*

*Something emerges that is akin to a visual cultural history of the effect of light in Northern climes. The focus is on people and light as a life-giving dimension.*

*The last, short part of the book, however, almost goes unnoticed. Apart from a few illustrations, it is without any pictures; the unadorned, uncomplicated numeric tables are recognisably the essential parts of an annual report. Then your thoughts turn to the tiny line on the book's cover which you originally overlooked. In actual fact, this really is an annual report for a company that supplies lighting technology. The impressive, artistic presentation documents the high standards and quality of the company for which a clear benchmark exists: natural light.*

## HONORARY APPRECIATION

### Czech Republic

Anna Babanová, Jitka Hausenblasová, Jitka Kolářová, Tereza Krobová, Irena Smetáčková

#### ***Career Choice Without Prejudice***

Publisher: Gender Studies, Prague

Designer: Jan Šiller

Printer: Carter/Reproplus, Prague

ISBN: 978 – 80 – 86520 – 48 - 3

*Questioning and overcoming gender role clichés and their influence on the choice of profession later in life: that is the focus of this school textbook for project work.*

*The open spine is not only decorative, it is hardly possible to imagine a book that opens more easily – practical handling takes centre stage. After all, a textbook has to be more than just student-friendly. First and foremost, it should naturally enable teachers to find their way through the contents with 100% certainty. Pictograms and the clear page structure are good aids here. The typography is admittedly didactic, but also unorthodox, shown for example in the column variants. With considerable differences in the font sizes, with the alternative numbers and widths of columns, with fine lines that divide and allocate, the typography deals successfully with the strong editorial structure of the content.*

*The illustrations of the men and women, reminiscent of Roy Lichtenstein, are characteristic but not overly drawn. Their use of fashionable features is highly economic – a subtle design subtask with a solution that is equally striking and subtly drawn.*

*The whole result is dense yet spacious. The texts appear compact, but a lot of space still remains at the sides; both groups of readers – the learners and the educators, are spared a flood of information. Last but not least, the wonderful list of contents displays a stringent concept. It seems like an instruction manual and a summary rolled into one.*

## HONORARY APPRECIATION

### Venezuela

Paolo Gasparini, Victoria de Stefano (Text), Ana Nuño (Translation)

#### ***Del reverso de las imágenes***

Publisher: Editorial mal de ojo

Designer: Álvaro Sotillo, Juan F. Mercerón (Assistant)

Printer: Editorial Ex Libris

ISBN: 878-980-12-8253-2

*People and little groups, reflections and windows, eyes and lenses, shop windows and dummies, pavements and advertising, confused scales and distorted sizes, inside and outside, skin and plastic, day and night, style and timelessness...*

*As if one of these black & white photographs weren't enough to disturb conventional ways of viewing, they are grouped together in pairs and printed edge to edge, hardly identifiable in the book. In this way, the actual sharp juxtaposition merely becomes one more seam in the existing facets of the photographic compositions, and the pictures merge to produce a complex visual experience.*

*The book designer succeeds in intensifying this synthetic process employed by the photographer. He provides further image fractures by allowing the pictures to extend over the folded front edge – made possible by the Japanese adhesive binding. The book now embodies what could be described as a whole film, whose edits become constituent components of the images.*

*The confusion seems perfect – but one thing becomes clear: the fact that we can never be sure whether we can really recognise what we are seeing – and vice versa. Deceptive images are revealed to be real, and what is real always seems deceptive. The photographer practises the art of vision reversal, as it were. And things suddenly look you in the eye.*

## HONORARY APPRECIATION

### Germany

Authors: Photographs by François Schaer, Text by Pauline Martin

#### **Jours Blancs**

Publisher: Kehrer Verlag Heidelberg / Berlin

Designer: Nanni Goebel/ Kehrer Design Heidelberg

Printer: Saarländische Druckerei & Verlag GmbH, Saarwellingen

ISBN: 978-3-86828-521-5

At first glance, the large-format cover shows an abstract landscape, produced as if in a Zen trance using a pointed paintbrush. But don't be fooled.

At second glance, if you try a bit harder, you can recognise the photographic source of a winter landscape. The capital letters spelling out the title are imprinted in white like tracks in the snow.

The book is an extensive collection of photographs which pay homage to the skier's territory in visual minimalism. They use the white as a background provided by the days when a supernatural light saturates everything – snow-covered piste and sky – like white air.

How do you print all these many gradients of white using four colours? It is astonishing that a raster of 70 l/cm is sufficient to sustain these fine differences in tone values on the matt, absorbent board as well. Have they used higher-pigmented printing inks, perhaps?

The plates are occasionally interspersed with blank pages – with nothing on them – whenever there is a need for some breathing space. You are even tempted to spot printed tracks of weightless brightness on those pages as well.

The short legends are fortunately not positioned next to the pictures. They are added at the end on thinner paper instead, as a synopsis next to a stamp-size reproduction of each picture.

In this part, the reserved yet congenial book design uses the translucency of the thin paper; it prolongs the experience of spatial ambiguity that stages the photographs so magnificently.

## HONORARY APPRECIATION

### Netherlands and Flanders

Mariken Wessels

#### **Taking off. Henry my neighbor**

Publisher: Art Paper Editions, Gent

Printer: Die Keure, Brugge

Binder: Hexspoor, Boxtel

Designer: Mariken Wessels, Jurgen Maelfeyt

ISBN: 978 94 90 800 345

*This book tells the story of Martha and Henry. In pictures. Pictures of youth. A wedding. Then endless series of poses showing Martha undressed. Martha leaves Henry. Organic collages consisting of fragments of the nude photos. Surreal little clay figures. Animal traps in the woods.*

*Were the nude photos ever intended for the public eye? Everything seems private. The conservative setting. The model's absent-minded expression. Rarely smiling. Hanging baskets with plastic squirrel. Henry's tireless production, collection and categorisation of nude poses with bizarre listing.*

*The catalogue stages the material like an artist's legacy. The observer is left to experience Henry's enigmatic project without detachment. The photos are more reminiscent of mammograms than erotic images. The son writes a letter to his mother – a facsimile is inserted on an empty double page. The past splits into fragments. If you patiently leaf through all this madness, you reach the white, grotesque, recumbent body parts – like hermaphrodites, or torsos in antiquity. Abstract body forms are created. Independent objects, released from Henry's manic preoccupation with his fetish, his search for form. The book finishes – before the epilogue and publishing details – with a list of works for the body sculptures.*

*This publication serves as recognition of Martha's courage. And it is a late recognition of Henry's journey in pursuit of art.*



## **PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES 2016**

Australien / Australia, Belgien / Belgium, China / China, Dänemark / Denmark, Deutschland / Germany, Estland / Estonia, Finnland / Finland, Iran / Iran, Japan / Japan, Kanada / Canada, Kolumbien / Colombia, Kroatien / Croatia, Lettland / Latvia, Liechtenstein / Liechtenstein, Luxemburg / Luxemburg, Litauen / Lithuania, Neuseeland / New Zealand, Niederlande und Flandern / The Netherlands and Flanders, Norwegen / Norway, Österreich / Austria, Polen / Poland, Rumänien / Romania, Russland / Russia, Schweden / Sweden, Schweiz / Switzerland, Slowakei / Slovakia, Spanien / Spain, Taiwan / Taiwan, Tschechien / Czech Republic, Ukraine, Venezuela.

## **JURY 2016**

Zita Bereuter / Austria

Lorraine Furter / Belgium

Jan Bajtlik / Poland

Federica Ricci / Italy

Bernardo Carvalho / Portugal

HD Schellnack / Germany

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