

Dieter Kretschmann Florian Pfeffer intervento a x media conference

:output

Good afternoon and welcome to our presentation, we are Dieter Kretschmann and Florian Pfeffer from the design studio Jung und Pfeffer in Germany.

We would like to thank Mirko Tattarini for being so generous and inviting us to Florence and giving us the chance to present our studio and our publishing project :output to you.

To give you a quick overlook about who we are and what we do:

Our professional background is graphic design. My partner Eckhard Jung and me are both involved in teaching. Eckhard Jung is a professor in graphic design at the university at the arts in Bremen and I have been teaching design in Lebanon and at the Minneapolis College of art and design in the Usa.

Dieter Kretschmann has been working as a deputy-managing director at the German Design Council in Frankfurt and joined our studio 2 months ago as a managing director.

In our studio work 8 to 12 people from 3 different countries.

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Projects at Jung und Pfeffer are both client based and also personality motivated. Actually it makes no difference to us if somebody from outside of the studio is asking us to do something or if we ask our self. The process and the approach is always pretty much the same.

Today we will show you how we have been awarded the first price in the highly renowned design competition for the "kieier woche" - the worlds biggest sailing regatta. We will also show you how we finality managed to lose the commission for this project before it even started.

The second project will be software we designed which transforms written poetry into forms and colour. This software creates posters for us so that we can have more leisure time.

The third part of our presentation - and that is the reason why we have been invited to this conference - will be the self initiated project ":output" - a book which presents student projects from all over the world.

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All these projects have a common denominator - a kind of strategy we always try to follow when we do things. A map of thoughts, which helps us to survive in the jungle of graphic design. A conceptional first aid kit for hopeless cases.

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"If something 5 boring after 2 minutes

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Try it for 4

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If still boring, then 8

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Then 16

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Then 32

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Eventually one discovers that it is not boring at all.“

This is a quote by John Cage who mastered the art of repetition and how to get a huge world of sensations out of a minimalist environment.

The Kieler Woche Sailing regatta exists since more than 50 years. Each summer thousands of huge, big, middle-sized, small and tiny sailing boats find their way to Kiel a city on the northern coast of Germany to be joined in a huge parade of ships.

The design competition for this event has an equally long tradition and the list of designers who have been invited for this reads like the who is who of graphic design. There is Takaaki Bando from Japan,

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Siegfried Odermatt from Switzerland  
Ben Bos from the Netherlands

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And Hans Hillman from Switzerland, to name just a few.

But there is something else which makes this design competition special and that is the number of posters with a triangle as a central element of the design. I don't know who started this tradition but there are triangles on most of the winning posters. We counted between 1948 and 1997 32 out of 50 posters with triangles. It seemed to be a secret rule that there has to be at least 1 triangle on the poster so that it wins.

When we have been invited in 1998 to take part we felt very honoured and we had the plan that we would break the tradition of triangles and create a concept in which blurred and moved typography would be the core of the design.

But then we remembered John Cage and we were thinking "maybe there are not too many posters with triangles but not enough? ... maybe our predecessors just didn't take the idea of the triangle far enough?"

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"... maybe we should have as many triangles on the poster as possible?"

Needless to say that this poster has been awarded the first prize.

It also incorporates the logo of the city of Kiel: a square divided diagonally into two triangles. Unfortunately it was the year when the city of Kiel planned to change its identity and had already decided for a new logo - without triangles. That was the end of our poster.

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Then, a couple of projects later...

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This is a poster for an electronic concert for an international poetry festival

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A record show in Minneapolis

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An exhibition for the designlabor

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A website and the identity for netzspannung, an internet platform for media art

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font design for netzspannung

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a calendar for the zanders paper manufacturer

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Stamps for the German post

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A signage system for car drivers in Bremen

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And after we did silly things with puppets for a public TV station in Germany

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We tried it again.

Poetry on the road is an international poetry festival, which takes place every year in Bremen. Up to 20 poets from different countries and cultures come to Bremen for poetry readings. It is not a slam poetry festival but the guests are all renowned and highly respected writers in their countries such as Mexico, Lebanon, Indonesia, Netherlands, Great Britain and so on.

This festival made poetry so popular in Bremen that the venues where the authors give their lectures are packed with 100s and sometimes 1000s of people who listen to poetry in languages, which they don't even understand.

Since kiel didn't want the poster with the triangles we thought that it was time to give the visual concept a second trial. Again we wanted to create patterns by using thousands of coloured geometrical forms. The conceptual approach however was different this time. Together with our friend Boris Muller we wanted to design software, which transforms written text into images.

So, what you can see here is not designed by us, it is designed by a computer. Or better: by a computer programme. It is the visual representation of 1 poem from each of the poets who will be guest at the festival. The programme creates different patterns for different languages.

There is also an online version of this software so that people can go into the Internet and enter their own poems and transform them into images.

(program vorführen)

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"Make trouble"

Tibor Kalman once said that he felt disappointed about graphic design because graphic design for him rather seems to be a language and not content. And that was the reason why he wanted to do the Colors magazine for Benetton because he wanted to create messages.

Design competitions have disadvantages and advantages. One of the disadvantages is that the designer and the client have no common process. One receives a brief, works and delivers an - sometimes anonymous - proposal.

The advantage is that the designer is free of responsibility on which solution he thinks should be pursued.

If one has a commission, the pressure to come up with a solution also the client would accept is much higher, because of the money one gets paid and also because of the confidence and the trust people put into the designer.

A competition gives us the chance to develop something that is really done the way we like it and leave it up to the client to decide for or against it, but not changing it or asking for another solution.

When we have been invited to the competition for a stamp on occasion of the 50th anniversary of television in Germany we thought that this would provide us with a chance to use the postage stamp not only as a medium for a nice image but much more to convey a message on the stamp.

Stamps - like TV - are a mass medium. There are printed 10s of millions of copies and everybody in the country can see it. The way stamps are designed can tell a lot about the culture of a country and it can even create culture. Each time we designed a stamp we got phone calls from all different parts of Germany either complaining about or praising the stamp and the design.

We think that the possibilities on making use of stamps as a medium for communication are not used consequent enough. What are the common denominators of the people in Germany, what themes people think are important for them?

Stamps could provoke controversy discussions or make comments about public issues. And: especially in Germany a more humorous and relaxed way of looking at oneself would be a big leap forward. To make it short: stamps could be more subjective and maybe everybody should have a chance to make a contribution to it.

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To come back to the stamp for 50 years of TV: If one watches TV today one can ask himself if 50 years of television are really a reason to celebrate. Most of the time you see silly talk shows wherewith a solution also the client would accept is much higher, because of the money one gets paid and also because of the conference and the trust people put into the designer.

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To come back to the stamp for 50 years of TV: If one watches TV today one can ask himself if 50 years of television are really a reason to celebrate. Most of the time you see silly talk shows where friends accuse each other having stolen each others boy friend or you can see one soap opera after the other.

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So we thought that we would celebrate 50 years of German TV with the image you can see if there's a technical interruption - if there's no TV; it TV is out of order.

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In our 2nd proposal we showed the typical slippers many people wear when watch TV and there was another design with a bottle of beer and the sub line "50 Years of German TV". It was our aim to represent television not by the programmes broadcasted but by the audience. And since it is not allowed to show real persons on stamps our idea was to represent the people by the objects and accessories they use when they watch TV.

All these proposals were meant to be totally serious and we didn't want to make fun of the theme. It was just what we thought would be the right images and messages for that occasion.

2 weeks later we got the protocol of the jury session of the art commissions which makes the decisions on which designer, will be published. At the end of the protocol it said: "the art commission of the federal ministry of finances wishes to point out that the designers Jung und Pfeffer repeatedly and inappropriately suggested humour's designers for serious anniversaries and events."

I have to admit that this is the most beautiful thing somebody ever said about our work.

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"Don't create by commission..."

"...Create commissions"

In the 2nd part of our presentation we now would now like to tell you more about a project that we have initiated 5 years ago.

:output 5 an international yearbook for works of graphic design students from all over the world. Last year the 4th edition came out presenting 120 projects form students from 18 countries.

The projects you will see now are not our projects. They are projects made by students. Our role is collecting these projects, editing them together with an international jury, writing the text that come with the projects and designing the book.

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Here you can see the world of :output so that you have a clearer image of the dimension of the projects.

Last year students submitted more than 3.000 slides from 23 different countries.

In February last year an international jury met in Minneapolis to select 120 projects for the 4th edition of the book. There was Felipe Taborda from Rio de Janeiro and Denise Gonzales Crisp from Los Angeles. There was Peter Rea and Jonathan Barnbrook from London and Florian Pfefter. And there was Makoto Saito from Japan and Dieter Kretschmann for the whole organisation.

Together we watched in 2 days all the slides, which were projected on 4 slide projectors simultaneously.

Here you can see the book getting bigger and bigger each year.

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Like we did with our projects we also selected a strategy from our 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit to be the preface for each student project shown in this presentation. So again, the upcoming project is not done by us but by Manuela Pfrunder from Switzerland. What you will see are double spreads from the book.

"If too perfect, good lord angry."

This is a quote by name June Paik, famous Korean video artist.

It reflects the fact that perfection is not a very human idea. Or as Jack Lemmon said in "some like it hot": "nobody is perfect".

When I started to work as a graphic designer I always wanted to have a printed object with no spelling mistake in it. Today I start to love my mistakes. If you look back in history you can see that some of the biggest inventions and discoveries are actually the outcome of a mistake: Christopher Columbus discovered America searching for India. Or consider cheese: cheese is nothing else than milk gone bad.

Graphic designers always try to get to the highest level of perfection as possible. Best shown in these super heavy design manuals where the design for business card is defined for the next 100 years. But the vision of a perfect company where there is a rule for every case that could ever occur is not something I would like to support.

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The project "reinvention of the creation" Is a huge design project where the designer Manuela Pfrunder designed a manual for the world in which all people would be equal.

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"Not always we give something to the world with design,..." "

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"... Sometimes we also take something away."

This quote comes from Hans Rudolf Lutz, the Swiss designer and teacher.

On the one hand not everything gets better if a designer is involved.

On the other hand, the value of design can be measured by its ability to make the contribution to the culture we are living in. So if we add something we have to be very conscious and careful about what we adding.

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The following project by Matthias Goerlich and Florian Walzel from Germany is using the means of graphic design - respectively the design of signage systems in public space, typography and advertising - to bring the theatre play "hamletmachine" from the German author Heiner Muller into the public space and this to make comments on everyday life culture.

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Text  
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"You cannot not communicate"

There is something else that makes the projects in :output very special: unlike working for clients students can change their own subjects and topics. Oftenly these themes are very personal, sometimes they are about social issues or they are political statements. Which publisher would publish a magazine about the artificial? Did you ever hear about a design studio where they produce design for free under the condition that no project takes longer than one our to finish?

The next project by Elke Shiemann and Katrin Lahr from Germany is about the power of language and how the way we speak forms our consciousness.

+++ Text

Thank you very much for your attention, buy the book and.....

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... bye bye