

How Creative People See their City of Design

A poster competition organized by the UNESCO Cities of Design raised the question which symbols, forms, colours and stories creative people would use to describe their City of Design. Now, a jury has selected the five designs for Graz from 49 Austrian and international submissions – including designs from Japan – which will be presented together with the contributions from the other cities in a touring exhibition to be presented in the Cities of Design.

Graphic designer Paul Scherübl from BETA Lab was able to successfully convince the jury. With his design he was the overall winner of the poster design competition which was launched in the ten Cities of Design—Berlin, Buenos Aires, Kobe, Montreal, Nagoya, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Seoul, St. Étienne and Graz. The competition with the title “CODE” stands for City Of Design and the posters are supposed to visualize the unique code of each UNESCO City of Design. The central question raised in this competition was which symbols, forms, colors or stories turn the individual cities into Cities of Design. For graphic designer Paul Scherübl, for example, “City of Design” means many things, but also nothing. His design relates to anything and everything, with no specific reference. “More often than not, the blurry and ephemeral gaze reveals more than detailed investigation. And this is already where the code comes into play,” he explains.

The competition was held in 8 Cities of Design and the Creative Industries Styria (CIS) were in charge for Graz. Graphic designers, illustrators and photographers who live or work in a City of Design were eligible to enter it. In total, 49 local and international creative people have submitted their ideas on the City of Design Graz. The up to ten best designs from each city will be featured in an exhibition which is to be presented in all ten Cities of Design. Graz will participate with five contributions. “The purpose of the posters is to illustrate what has made, makes or will make Berlin, Buenos Aires and the other Cities of Design unique,” Eberhard Schrempf, CEO of Creative Industries Styria (CIS), explains.

The jury consisted of Severin **Filek**, designaustria (Wien, A), Josyane **Franc**, Cité du design St. Etienne (F), Mike **Fuisz**, moodley brand identity (Graz, A), Bernd **Maier**, Rubikon (Graz, A), and Catherine **Rollier**, FH Joanneum – University of Applied Sciences, Degree Programme Information Design (Graz, A).

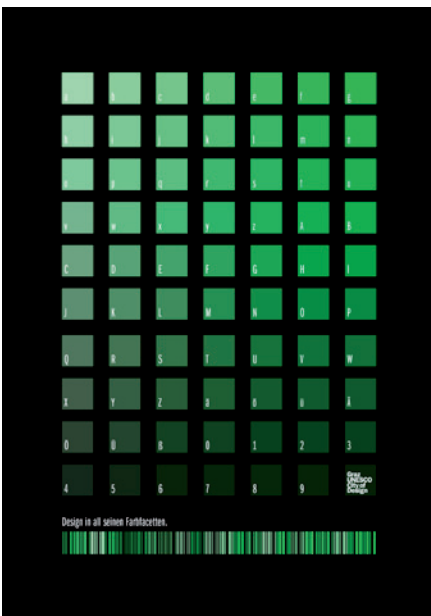
The best contributions of the City of Design Graz and their descriptions:



Paul Scherübl (A)

Graz is beautiful. Beautiful, because it has the Kunsthaus and the punks around the fountain on Hauptplatz square. Beautiful, because it has Herms Fritz and industrial design. Beautiful, because Wolfgang Bauer has conquered our hearts with his dirty stories in the Forum Stadtpark and because you can stroll past jeweller's shops in Mediterranean flair. But in concrete terms? In concrete terms this doesn't mean anything. Graz is no City of Design in the Kunsthaus, nor is it in the château of Schloss Eggenberg. Nor is it in the Forum Stadtpark or at the FH Joanneum – University of Applied Sciences. It is exactly this gentle resistance with which Graz defends itself against people pointing a finger at a spot and saying something like “Here! Here, Graz is a City of Design!”—“Here, it is beautiful!” justifying this distinction.

And the poster? The poster is beautiful. But also isn't. It relates to anything and everything, and with no specific reference. More often than not, the blurry and ephemeral gaze reveals more than detailed investigation. And this is already where the code comes into play.



Simon Cazzanelli (A)

A code is the key with the help of which we grasp and capture our environment. In a society where everything is only about right or wrong, left or right, black or white, the subtle facets and color shades in-between is what counts. A “City of Design” is hard to define with a catchword and hard to quantify with figures. The same goes for any visual breakdown because it can only work if we consider every smallest element and every most insignificant detail. The color green can be read in many ways: it relates to green Styria, design's sustainability but also to a lively and “green” city such as Graz. The alphabet has been coded using a color grid and finally features the slogan “Graz UNESCO City of Design” in the bar code at the bottom. The design of the poster makes a clear and structured impression—both features being indispensable for a code.



Matthias Kampitsch (A)

For me, that is, someone who wasn't born in this city, the Schlossberg has always been the absolute highlight in Graz. The vista you enjoy from the top of the Schlossberg is one-of-a-kind. The clock tower has kept watch over Graz for many centuries. For the Grazers it is a point of orientation, not only a clock where the time of day can be read off. Moreover, I think that the Grazers are proud of their landmark. Designers partly frown on portraying or illustrating "the clock tower once again" but for me the clock tower is the secret king of Graz. This is why I fully focused on the clock tower when I created my poster for CODE. It is the symbol Graz is identified with far away from the city limits too.



Manuel Platzer (A)

A CODE needn't always be encrypted but rather clear and accessible for everyone. The complexity and diversity of the city of Graz is what I deal with in my basic concept. In the process I found out that Graz has much more to offer. This led to visualizing its complexity in the form of a hidden objects puzzle. An essential element was the task of choosing appropriate elements or sights: the clock tower, the Styrian Panther, the stadium, the Kunsthaus, the University of Graz, the opera house, the Mur island, the tramway and the Graz public transport network. For the colour concept I chose the colours of the emblem of the city of Graz, that is, green, red and yellow. What was the deciding factor was the fact that the Styrian coat of arms also contains these colours and thus a reference to the many commuters to the provincial capital is provided. I chose yellow as the main colour because the panther in the coat of arms also wears a yellow, or rather golden, three-leafed crown of leaves and is a symbol for power and/or dominion.



Tomislav Bobinec (A)

For me, a code is a system consisting of defined symbols which represent different things and facts in different arrangements and enable quick communication. Graz too, has a code for me, which has been systematized and graphically presented in this design, and which explains how design is created in Graz. The city itself, with its places of communication and dialogue, the alleys and streets connecting these places—these are the basic symbols; together with the Mur River, which is in its turn can be seen as a code for the continually changing city and the people who live there. Of course, everybody who lives here sees the city with different eyes: Some places are more important for architects than they are for politicians, artists use the streets in different ways than tram drivers—yet only the combination of all different forces of a city such as Graz creates design that works. Here, this is expressed by means of the symbols which are highlighted to varying degrees and which are arranged to each other in different ways—moreover, the different “perspectives” of a city are presented in different colours: Thus the colours code the various industries of the city participating in the design process.

Creative Industries Styria/ Pressebetreuung:

doppelpunkt PR- und Kommunikationsberatung GmbH

Ansprechpartner: Susanne Hanfstingl

E susanne.hanfstingl@doppelpunkt.at

M +43 (0) 664 88 66 73 76

Graz
UNESCO
City of
Design

graz-cityofdesign.at
www.cis.at