



The Tulip and the Windmill – a Design Plus project

Frans van Heertum is creative director of the award-winning Dutch agency Van Heertum Design and the mind behind the beautiful art piece that comes with this issue of Inspire.

The Tulip and the Windmill is part something you call Design Plus. What is that?

“We have developed a different approach to the design process, which is called Design Plus. We use our network to involve production experts at a very early stage in the process. Knowing beforehand what can and what definitely cannot be achieved with a design project is the key of the Design Plus method.”

Where did you get the idea from?

“Each year we try to find a project that shows something new, so we ask the companies in our network if they have something exciting going on. When Joep Hoffmans at Point to Paper told us about their new laser cutting machine I immediately knew it could be such a project.”

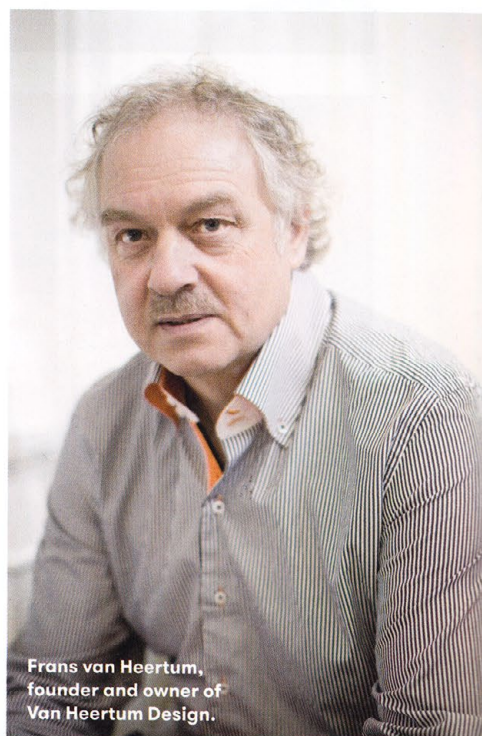
What was your next step?

“What I wanted to do required really good paperboard so I asked Iggesund if they wanted to be involved – and they were positive. The idea was to use a double layer of paperboard and make holes in the upper layer by die cutting so people could see something else through the paperboard. The laser cutting machine makes it possible to create the holes with a totally different precision than before, which gives totally new possibilities of creating new 3D effects with paperboard, and that is very important in packaging these days.”

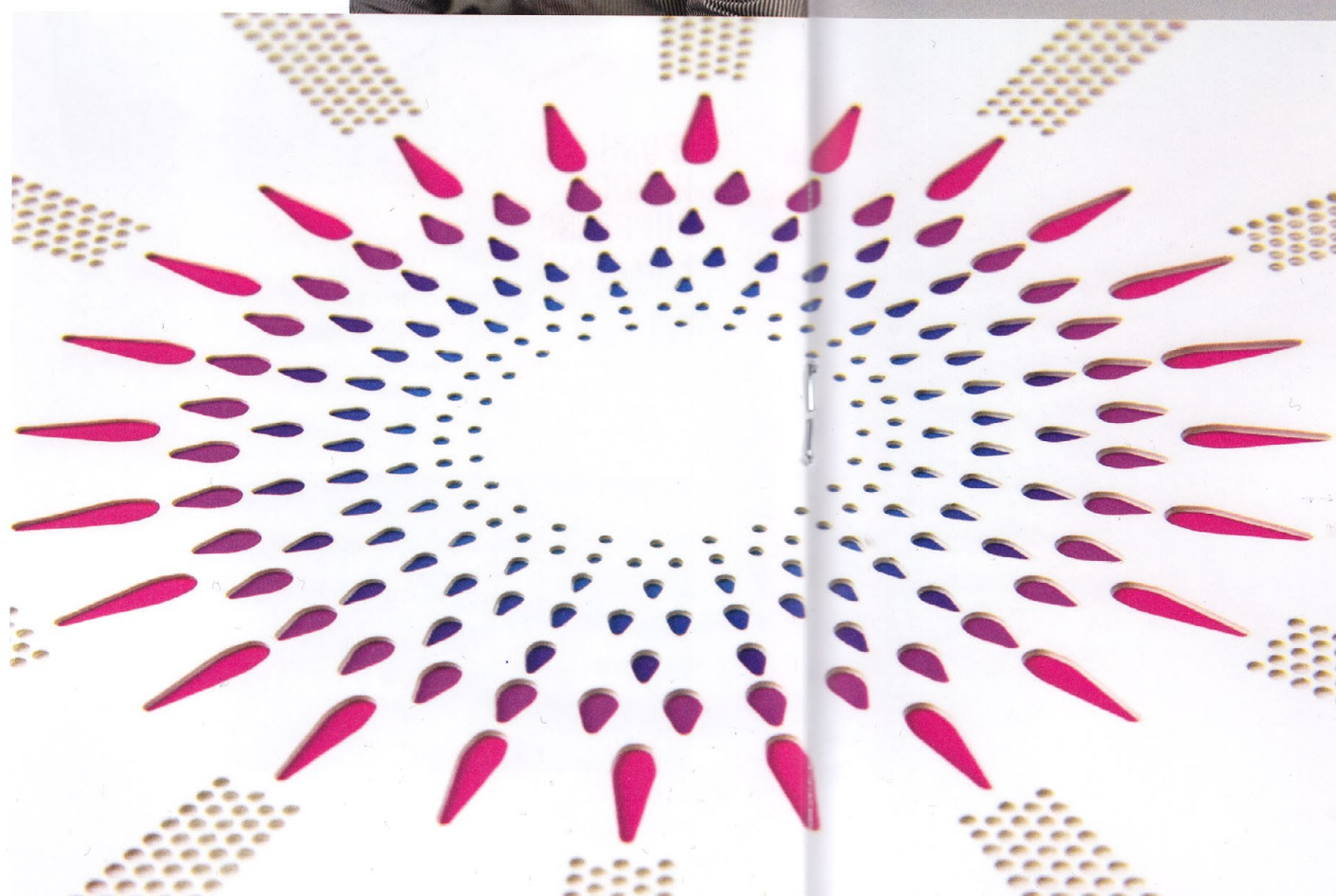
And the design itself?

“To create the right effect of movement, we thought of a rotat-

ing windmill that can be glimpsed through the laser cut holes. We wanted to add beautiful colours and were inspired by Dutch flowers. We made the flowers by embossing the paperboard but we let them stay white, so that the colour instead comes ‘out of the paperboard’ via the windmill.” —



Frans van Heertum, founder and owner of Van Heertum Design.



Refine your design with laser cutting

Point to Paper are laser cutting experts – and one of the partners in The Tulip and the Windmill project. We asked their CEO Joep Hoffmans for a five-step guide to laser cutting.

1

Do more with laser techniques

“Laser cutting all starts with mirrors. In the laser head there are moving mirrors. The laser comes from one point through the mirrors and swirls across the paper. It’s nothing like a traditional plotter. The process starts from one very specific point, which makes it fast. And the thinner the laser is, the faster it goes. The small diameter of the laser beam cuts, creases, engraves, perforates, personalises and etches complex and detailed illustrations, patterns, texts and images. All possible techniques can be used in combination with each other just by changing the parameters in the computer.”



2

Choose the substrate carefully

“Most substrates are not developed for laser cutting. Make sure to test all the substrates, since their properties greatly influence the end result of laser cutting. Not only the paperboard but also the ink, the coating and the laminate have a big effect on the end result. Ask a laser specialist for more advice before going forward.”

3

Express your creativity

“The limitations of traditional die-cutting belong to the past. With laser cutting you can give an extra dimension to your printed materials! The only thing you need is a digital vectorised file. Where traditional cutting stops, laser cutting takes over. Because of the ability of the process, the great precision and the high flexibility of edition size, the creative possibilities are endless.”

4

Forget about burn marks

“Laser cutting works with heat but generally speaking there will be no burn marks if you use the newest laser cutting technology. So when you are choosing your laser cutting partner, make sure to ask exactly which machines they have. Laser cutting smells because it’s burning. We have solutions to remove the smell and then we can perfume the sheets. This is totally unique.”

5

Do test runs

“Not convinced yet? Not sure about the end result you have in mind? Then do a laser test and let the results convince you. With the right knowledge and laser cutting equipment, a new world of cutting is right in front of you.” —

