

Brief history of visionandfactory

I had been working as a graphic artist and an independent graphic designer for a number of years when I finally started my own graphic design studio, visionandfactory, established in 1990. I had been lucky enough to be in a position to work on a Apple Macintosh computer since 1985, due to the fact that Dolmen Computer Applications (now RealDolmen) was an important client of mine at the time. This made me one of the pioneers in what was then called 'desktop publishing'. Software applications were very awkward stuff back then (we started out with Illustrator 1.1, PhotoShop 1.0 & PageMaker 1.0) and technical barriers were so high that designing on a computer was definitely not an easy job in this "prehistoric" phase of our digital era. Not to mention the prehistoric hardware. We even designed full colour brochures on a black & white Macintosh SE screen, for instance. Yet, files were already being transferred by modem before the internet. Technology evolved really fast, but we were designers, not technicians. We wanted to stay alert, so we didn't restrict ourselves to computer design only. Our studio became a lab, everyone was encouraged to try different kinds of work processes and interaction between analog and digital environments was par for the course. We used to seek out complex assignments, such as corporate identity projects, publication & signage systems and exhibition design projects and we started to develop websites really early. This is our fourth completely new design for our own website.

visionandfactory immediately began to grow steadily. A few years on, there were ten of us, nearly all designers. We have never worked with accounts. I strongly believe in immediate interaction between client and designer. We were always happy to collaborate with external designers, partners or studios - Studio Dumbar (Netherlands) for instance. In these early years, visionandfactory started to work for a lot of national and international companies in ITC and the paper industry. Our studio became a recommended partner for developing inventive paper introduction campaigns, paper collections and paper dedicated books and publications. In addition, visionandfactory started developing identity programs for cultural and governmental organisations and international companies, events and conferences. A lot of our work was nominated for awards and published in books and magazines worldwide (see biography).

In 2006, I decided to reorganize the studio, moved our office from the city center to a smaller penthouse studio and started working on my own again, collaborating with a worldwide network of colleagues & designers. Addmagazine resulted from this collaboration. I strongly believe in new working models, that do not confine knowledge within just one studio.

Teammembers of visionandfactory were (in alphabetical order):

Eric Albert, Kurt Cornelis, Hilde De Ceukelaire, Gerda De Ceukelaire, Isabelle De Graeve, Ilka Deltrap, Kathrin Gleidner, Nico Goossens, Patrick Hannaert, Tom Hautekiet, Christophe Heylen, Philippe Hulet, Johan Jacobs, Maryvonne Jacobs, Dave Jans, Marcel Lennartz, Kim Matthé, Chiara Mutticelli, Ronny Reuman, Winnie Tsjang, Mark Van Varik & Johny Van de Vyver.

Interns at visionandfactory were (in alphabetical order):

Lies Bosman, Els Bauwelinck, Kris De Bruyne, Ellen de Jong, Arne De Schouwer, Tom De Smedt, Stijn Druyts, Michel Elands, Joeri Gielis, Nathalie Kronal, Jan Lemaire, Christophe Liekens, Tom Nulens, Nico Potvin, Sebastiaan Smets, Tom Suykens, Roel Van Bouwel, Bavo Van Hecke, Tom Van Iersel, Bart Verbist & Fenna Zamouri.

Hugo Puttaert (Brussels, February 2009)