

## The New Guidelines for Evaluating Thematic Exhibits

The FIP Board has regular meetings with Commission Chairmen and Secretaries. One of the matters raised a few years ago has been the different wording used in the Guidelines for definitions of the same matter e.g. Presentation and Rarity.

An FIP Working Group was established to align the Guidelines across the different classes and all Commissions have been asked to simplify their Guidelines.

The objective was to simplify the wording so that it is more easily understood, especially for non-English speaking exhibitors and judges. For example – some of the old Guidelines refer to ‘collections’ instead of ‘exhibits’ and include words difficult to understand.

At the meeting of Commission Chairmen and Secretaries at PRAGA2018, it was pointed out that for judging exhibits there are three sets of requirements:

- **GREV** – setting out the principles for judging/evaluation and applicable to most classes
- **SREV** – providing more detail and specific to each class
- **Guidelines** – explaining in detail how the SREVs are to be applied/interpreted.

Why it is necessary for jurors and exhibitors to have to refer to three documents? The GREV should obviously remain. But why not combine the SREV and Guidelines?

The SREVs have to be approved by the FIP Congress, so it was not possible to change the SREVs at Bangkok2018. The Guidelines are prepared by each Commission and approved by the FIP Board – they can therefore be amended.

At the PRAGA2018 meeting it was agreed that amended Guidelines (including the content of the SREV) should be prepared by each Commission.

The existing TH Guidelines simplified, updated by current practice and with aligned wording, in-

cluding now also the SREV, were presented and unanimously approved at the FIP Thematic Commission meeting at Bangkok2018.

The FIP BOARD approved the TH Commission Guidelines and those of the other three Commissions at their August 2019 meeting in Buenos Aires and decided to present a motion to have them approved at the 2020 FIP Congress in Jakarta, Indonesia.

In August 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the FIP board of Directors had to make a difficult decision to postpone the 76th FIP Congress. The 76th FIP Congress shall proceed in Jakarta from 4 to 9 August 2022.

There are two articles in this issue of *TCNews* explaining the new guidelines for evaluating thematic exhibits. Stephanie Bromser explains the key changes to the guidelines on pages 4–7. The old and new guidelines can be compared side by side on pages 8–30. ■

*Peter Subadolc,*  
Chairperson, FIP Thematic Commission

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## What TC is about, its goals and main activities

The duties of FIP Thematic Commission (TC) are:

- To develop and promote general interest in Thematic Philately.
- To establish rules and procedures for Thematic Philately.
- To prepare brochures to explain Thematic Philately.
- To translate everything in the official FIP languages.
- To publish TC's news in FLASH and the FIP website.
- To co-operate with other philatelic organisations subject to the approval of the FIP Board.

The duties can be summarized in the following five basic activities of TC:

- Information:** To publish *TCNewsletter*, *TCNews* and TC Website.
- Education:** To stage FIP Thematic Seminars and Workshops and make available the presentations.
- Regulations:** To be responsible for the content of the Thematic Philately Guidelines and propose modifications of the Thematic SREV to the FIP Board and FIP Congress.
- Organisation:** To update the Delegates' contact information, the List of Thematic Jurors and results of FIP and continental exhibitions.
- Contacts:** To keep in touch with the FIP Board, the FIP member delegates and national societies of thematic philately worldwide.



**Orlando Eloy Corres**  
(1945–2021)

**I**t is with great sadness that I inform you that Orlando Eloy Corres passed away on 7 January 2021. Eloy, a philatelist since he was a child, was vice president of the Philatelic Society of the Argentine Republic. Since 1994 he has presided over the Argentine Thematic Philatelic Association, and the Argentine Philatelic Association of Private Posts since mid-2000.

A thematic philatelist specialized in Cinema; he has obtained great international achievements with his collection. He has been commissioner in countless national and international exhibitions, and observer for Argentina in many others.

He was a great philatelic chronicler and has published several books, but his special gift was the layout and editing of publications. Most magazines and philatelic books in Argentina from the last 30 years were designed and edited under his supervision. This led him to be the representative for Argentina within the FIP Philatelic Literature commission, and he was a juror for the “Álvaro Bonilla Lara” award (Award for the best stamp publication of the year awarded by the FIAF) on several occasions.

He was a National juror in the Thematic and Literature classes and a juror of the International Federation of Philately (FIP) since 2010. He also served as secretary of the jury in many national and international exhibitions.

Since 2006 he has served as Vice President of the Argentine Federation of Philatelic Entities, and in the last four years he was the delegate for the Americas in the Bureau of the FIP Thematic Philately Commission.

But beyond all his achievements, we can never forget the excellent person he was, a friend who was always there for those who needed him. One could stay with him talking for hours without noticing the time passing. A good friend has left us, and we will never forget him!

*Christian Gabriel Pérez*

**The Chairman of the FIP Thematic Philately Commission on behalf of the whole Board expresses condolences to the family and to the Argentinian Philatelic Federation.**

# New Thematic Guidelines

The main part of the Thematic Commission meeting at Thailand 2018 was devoted to the proposed New Thematic Guidelines as part of the FIP homogenization project. Issues were debated and further changes made during the meeting. The revised guideline was unanimously accepted. It is now still waiting for approval at the next FIP congress. This paper identifies the main changes.

TEXT STEPHANIE BROMSER

The long-term objective is to eliminate the SREV. If this is not able to be achieved the Thematics SREV needs to be updated, mainly to reflect the concept of the “story” and to better define “postal-philatelic material”. Revised and new text is shown in red.

When (if) the SREV can be updated:

The text in article 2 is intended to have the following changes: A thematic exhibit develops a **subject/theme by telling a story** according to a plan, as defined under 3.2.1, demonstrating thematic and philatelic knowledge through the items chosen. Such knowledge should result in the best possible selection and arrangement of the **appropriate postal-philatelic material** (ref. 3.1.1) **that illustrates the story told**, and the accuracy of the relevant thematic and philatelic text.

The text in article 3 is intended to have added: - **Appropriate postal-philatelic material is that which, for the purpose of transmitting mail or other postal communications, has been issued; intended for issue; produced in the preparation for issue; used, or treated as valid for postage by postal agencies.**

## GUIDELINES – KEY CHANGES

The following is a summary of the main changes in the revised guidelines and the criteria for evaluation.

### Appropriate Material

Clarification is given on the material than can and cannot be used in a Thematic exhibit. The rules always stated that items “must be **postal-philatelic**”. Three new paragraphs try to help understand and better interpret the term:

**The appropriate postal-philatelic material is that which, for the purpose of transmitting mail or other postal communications, has been issued, intended for issue, or produced in the preparation for issue, used, or treated as valid for postage by governmental, local or private postal agencies, or by other duly commissioned or empowered authorities.**

**Covers and other sorts of mail usually have several characteristics: stamp(s), postmark(s), labels and markings indicating the special treatment of this mailing, and sometimes indications for postage privileges. These are the elements of postal origin and/or significance, which can be used for thematic treatment. Other characteristics of the same mailing, like sender’s name and address information, decorative printings or illustrations on the envelope/card, or the message and other parts of the content, are the non-postal (= private) elements which cannot be used for thematic treatment.**

**This distinction between postal elements and private elements (maybe on the same item which went through the post) is the one and only rule for defining appropriate philatelic material in thematic philately. Therefore, it is fundamental for understanding the nature of “postal-philatelic material” in thematic philately, in contrast to social philately and open class, which both allow for the private elements of a mailing to be used in treatment.**

**Allowed items** have only minor changes to recognise some modern inclusions such as computer-generated postage.

The guidelines now recognise the occasional need to display **“borderline material”** that is important to the story AND where no appropriate material exists. The jury team is told to **“evaluate borderline material primarily with regards to its thematic significance, so it should never be shown solely for its rarity”**.

The list of **“Inappropriate material”** is now broken into 2 groups,

- Items that should never be shown, and
- Items that are not postal-philatelic but could be shown where no postal-philatelic material exists for important aspects of the theme. They must however always be supported by a thorough philatelic justification.

## Thematic Information and Treatment

One of the main changes in this section is the introduction of the concept of a story. The definition of Thematic Treatment has additional words:

A thematic exhibit illustrates the theme chosen by the exhibitor, or better, tells a story related to this theme. The theme or story is presented in the thematic text and illustrated with appropriate philatelic material.

The pages of an exhibit ought to present the chosen theme, as presented by the title and detailed in the plan, in its entirety, i.e. important parts of the chosen theme must not be omitted.

The need for the story illustrated by philately is stressed:

Each item must be connected to the chosen theme and present its thematic information in the clearest and most effective way.

The introduction of the story concept is also reflected in the guidelines for the Plan:

Ideally, the beginning of the following chapter has a logical link with that preceding. This helps to create an interesting story instead of an unconnected "list of contents". The best is when the chapters (and subchapters) themselves are structured like a story.

One of the main differences between Thematic and Topical is highlighted by the new words under Plan:

The plan should, as much as possible, present the synthesis of the story told by the exhibit. It should not be a mere list (e.g. lexicon approach).

New words stress the need for relevance of material i.e. Treatment and Knowledge:

The material displayed should be fully consistent with the subject chosen. The selection should show the appreciation of the exhibitor as to what is available in the context of his chosen subject. It should also include the fullest range of relevant philatelic material of the highest available quality.

The definition of Innovation was added for clarity:

Innovation is the personal approach of the exhibitor, highlighting the results of his/her ability to create an interesting story and illustrate it with the best material available.

## CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION – KEY CHANGES

### Consistent judging - Basic Requirements and Extra Achievements

Prescriptive marking scales, while not in the previous approved guidelines (Mexico 2000), had been introduced into Thematics. These were recommended in qualifying seminars and used by many judges, especially in FEPA. For example, the scale for Rarity was:

The points received by an exhibit for rarity are typically based on the following scale:

- Maximum 10 points: Normal and modern with no unusual items
- Maximum 12 points: Normal and modern material plus some unusual and scarce items
- Maximum 14 points: Several unusual and scarce items plus some rare item
- Maximum 16 points: Several rare items and many scarce ones
- Maximum 18 points: Overall presence of rare items, some world rarities
- Above 18 points: Overall presence of rare and significant world rarities

In Bangkok this convention of marking was debated. It was decided to instead define "Basic Requirements" and "Achievements" for each of the criteria to help achieve consistent judging. The new guidelines state:

- **Basic requirements:** When all of them are fulfilled a score equal to 80% of the maximum is assigned. When any of them is not fulfilled, a mistake occurs, and the 80% score is reduced accordingly.
- **Achievements:** These requirements are gradual goals on the road to make the exhibit outstanding. They are worth >80% of the maximum and the fulfilment of all of them implies the top score.

### Title and Plan

- **Basic requirements:** Presence of the plan page; adequacy of the plan page; consistency between the plan and the title; correct, logical and balanced structure (divisions and subdivisions); coverage of all major aspects necessary to develop the theme
- **Achievements:** The degree to which the plan tells a story.

## Development

- **Basic requirements:** Correct assembly and positioning of the items in conformity with the plan; a connection between the items and the thematic text; elaboration of all aspects of the plan; presence of a “red thread” that connects the single pages and chapters into a continuous story
- **Achievements:** Balance, by giving to each thematic point the importance corresponding to its significance within the theme; depth, shown through connections, cross-references, ramifications, causes and effects.

## Thematic Knowledge

- **Basic requirements:** Appropriate, concise and correct thematic text; correct use of thematic material
- **Achievements:** Thematic details in text and material; presence of new thematic findings for the chosen theme; “surprising” material (does not belong to the subject, but thematically fits into the story of that page).

## Philatelic Knowledge

- **Basic requirements:** Full compliance with the rules of postal philately; Appropriateness of postal documents; Appropriateness and correctness of the philatelic text, when needed; Presence of good range of postal-philatelic material throughout the exhibit and on single pages
- **Achievements:** Presence of widest possible range of postal-philatelic material and its balanced use; Presence of material which has not yet been researched for that theme, or where there has been very little research; Presence of philatelic studies and skilful use of important philatelic material.

## Rarity

- **Basic requirements:** Normal and modern material plus unusual and scarce items
- **Achievements:** Presence of rare items.

## Condition

- **Basic requirements:** Normal and modern material in excellent quality, plus all unusual in good quality and rare material in average condition
- **Achievements:** Rarities in above average up to the best quality, particularly from traditional philately, postal history and postal stationery.

## CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION – CHANGES

### Clarity of Thematic Treatment

The words in the old guidelines about treatment were not clear and open to loose interpretation. Clarity is provided:

In assessing treatment judges are looking for:

- A logical development that is easy to follow
- A clear and concise write up
- A balanced exhibit for the theme chosen
- The degree to which the plan tells a story

They will check that the exhibit:

- Reflects the theme implied by the title
- Is developed in accordance with the plan

The need to “tell a story” is emphasised in Treatment, both in the Plan and in Development:

The best plans are those in which the chapters (and subchapters) themselves are structured to tell a story and are evaluated much higher than those structured like a “list of contents”.

The storyline as presented by the plan should be developed on the single pages and written as a continuous story flowing through each page and through all pages. It should be read as in a book from top left to bottom right.

### Philatelic Knowledge to include Presentation and material selection

Postal-philatelic items (e.g. stamps, postal stationery, proofs, sketches.) should be shown in their entirety. Overlapping is allowed when showing varieties of postal stationery, in a way that the detail with the variety itself is clearly visible. Windowing of cancellation and imprint on a postal stationery is allowed when the thematic text refers to the cancellation. Windowing or folding is allowed for very large items such as large telegrams, complete sheets of stamps etc.

Very limited exceptions (at most one per frame on average) to this general rule are admitted, when the selected philatelic material significantly enhances the relation to the thematic text or is the only way to illustrate it. This refers to the inclusion of both borderline items or items of non-postal nature (e.g. commercially used old re-piquages, revenue stamps, covers with addresses sent to personalities subject of the theme, private prints, marks, vignettes and other similar material, if on postally travelled cover or document). In such cases the items must be fully justified as exceptions, thus proving the philatelic knowledge of the exhibitor.

**Rarity is clarified**

Judges will primarily be looking for:

- rarities of general significance in philately, if available for the theme
- rarities of specific significance for the chosen theme known to exist
- how easy it is to duplicate the exhibit

Judges will also be looking for:

- scarce and uncommon items, particularly from traditional philately, postal history and postal stationery

**Condition and Presentation words are standardised to other Sections**

**One Frame Guidelines have been added ■**

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****GUIDELINES  
FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE EXHIBITS  
OF THEMATIC PHILATELY**

## INTRODUCTION

## ARTICLE 1: COMPETITIVE EXHIBITIONS

These Guidelines have the objective of guiding collectors to assemble an exhibit and jurors to evaluate it according to the principles of the General Regulations for the Evaluation of Competitive Exhibits at FIP Exhibitions (GREV) and the Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Thematic Exhibits (SREV).

## ARTICLE 2: COMPETITIVE EXHIBITS

The pages exhibited ought to:

present the chosen theme as a whole, or

show in depth specific sections of the collection without losing the coherence and the continuity of the chosen theme. In this case it may be necessary to adapt the plan page (see 3.2.1 below) to suit the exhibit.

ARTICLE 3: PRINCIPLES OF  
EXHIBIT COMPOSITION**3.1 APPROPRIATE PHILATELIC MATERIAL**

Appropriate postal-philatelic material is that which, for the purpose of transmitting mail or other postal communications, has been issued, intended for is-

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)****GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING  
THEMATIC PHILATELY EXHIBITS**

## ARTICLE 1: COMPETITIVE EXHIBITIONS

*In accordance with Article 1.4 of the General Regulations of the FIP for the Evaluation of Competitive Exhibits at FIP Exhibitions (GREV), the Special Regulations (text in italics) have been developed to supplement those principles with regard to thematic exhibits.*

These Guidelines are issued by the FIP Thematic Commission to give practical advice on how to apply the GREV and the Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Thematic Exhibits (SREV), which were approved by the 54th FIP Congress in 1985 in Rome (Revised at the 61st FIP Congress in 1992 in Granada and in Jakarta 2012).

The Guidelines have been developed to assist exhibitors in the preparation and judges in the evaluation of thematic philately exhibits. They are intended to provide guidance regarding mainly:

1. The definition of appropriate philatelic material to be used
2. The principles of exhibit composition, and
3. The judging criteria of exhibits of thematic philately.

## ARTICLE 2: COMPETITIVE EXHIBITS

*A thematic exhibit develops a theme according to a plan, as defined under 3.2.1, demonstrating thematic and philatelic knowledge through the items chosen.*

*Such knowledge should result in the best possible selection and arrangement of the material and the accuracy of the relevant thematic and philatelic text.*

ARTICLE 3: PRINCIPLES OF  
EXHIBIT COMPOSITION

*A thematic exhibit uses the widest range of appropriate postal-philatelic material (ref. GREV Art 3.2).*

**3.1 Definition of Appropriate  
Philatelic Material**

The appropriate postal-philatelic material is that which, for the purpose of transmitting mail or other postal communications, has been issued, intended

**'OLD' GUIDELINES** (*SREV omitted*)

sue, or produced in the preparation for issue, used, or treated as valid for postage by governmental, local or private postal agencies, or by other duly commissioned or empowered authorities.

Appropriate postal-philatelic material has the following characteristics:

**Type of material:**

postal franking items (stamps, stamp booklets, postal stationery, franking meters, computer vended postage e.g. FRAMA labels, etc.) and their modifications (e.g. overprints, surcharges, and punch-perforations, as shown by "perfins"). However modified items are not to be included if the modification distracts from the original theme (e.g. by making it no longer visible); they may be used for the theme(s) related to the modification.

postal cancellations (ordinary, slogan, commemorative and other special postmarks)

stamps, cancellations, marks and/or cards indicat-

**'NEW' GUIDELINES** (*SREV included*)

for issue, or produced in the preparation for issue, used, or treated as valid for postage by governmental, local or private postal agencies, or by other duly commissioned or empowered authorities.

Covers and other sorts of mail usually have several characteristics: stamp(s), postmark(s), labels and markings indicating the special treatment of this mailing, and sometimes indications for postage privileges. These are the elements of postal origin and/or significance, which can be used for thematic treatment. Other characteristics of the same mailing, like sender's name and address information, decorative printings or illustrations on the envelope / card, or the message and other parts of the content, are the non-postal (= private) elements which cannot be used for thematic treatment.

This distinction between postal elements and private elements (maybe on the same item which went through the post) is the one and only rule for defining appropriate philatelic material in thematic philately. Therefore, it is fundamental for understanding the nature of "postal-philatelic material" in thematic philately, in contrast, to open philately, which allows for the private elements of a mailing to be used in treatment.

All other listings in this section of the guidelines are explanations of this rule. They show the typical range of postal-philatelic material as it occurs in the leading thematic exhibits and gives some warnings in those cases in which exhibitors try to stretch the definition of appropriate material. The following lists document the very wide range of material, which is appropriate for thematic development, given the thematic treatment refers to the mentioned elements of postal origin and/or significance.

**Type of material**

- Postal franking items (stamps, stamp booklets, postal stationery, franking meters, computer-generated postage e.g. FRAMA labels, Smart-Stamps etc.)
- Modifications applied to postal franking items (e.g. overprints, surcharges, and punch-perforations, as shown by "perfins"). However, modified items are not to be included if the modification distracts from the original theme (e.g. by making it no longer visible); they may be used for the theme(s) related to the modification.
- Postal cancellations (ordinary, slogan, commemorative and other special postmarks)
- Stamps, cancellations, marks and/or cards indi-

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)**

ing a postage privilege (e.g. authorities, military)

other items used in the postal operations, such as registration labels, postal route labels and markings, supplementary labels or markings (e.g. censorship, disinfection, crash mail), mail delivery dockets, reply coupons, forwarding agents markings, postal automation markings and labels, etc.; where applicable, these items should be on the relevant document.

items "intended for issues, or produced in the preparation for an issue", e.g. sketches, proofs

varieties and errors

revenue stamps. They are admitted as long as they are postally used or have postage validity. Revenue stamps for fiscal purposes are admitted in exceptional cases, when they are the only mean to describe an important thematic point.

**Time frame:**

postal material from the pre-stamp era, through the classic period, to the present day.

**Postal Services:**

in addition to the normal transmission of mail, specific types, e.g. (postage free) service- and military- post (including Airgraphs and V-mail); maritime, railway, and air mail of any type; prisoner-of-war and concentration camp mail; packet, parcel post and freight post

postal payment service

private post, authorised or tolerated by the official authorities, or active in total absence of an official post.

Under "other postal communications" are included other forms of postal services, like pneumatic post, telegrams, electronic mail (i.e. message sent electronically to a Post Office where it is printed out and delivered to an addressee), etc.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

cating a postage privilege (e.g. authorities, military)

- Other items used in the postal operations, such as registration labels, postal route labels and markings, supplementary labels or markings (e.g. censorship, disinfection, crash mail), mail delivery dockets, reply coupons, forwarding agents markings, postal automation markings and labels, etc.; where applicable, these items should be on the relevant document.
- Items "intended for issues, or produced in the preparation for an issue", e.g. sketches, proofs
- Varieties and errors
- Revenue stamps. They are admitted **if** they are postally used or have postage validity. Revenue stamps for fiscal purposes are admitted in exceptional cases when they are the only means to describe an important thematic point.

**Time frame**

Postal material from the pre-stamp era, through the classic period, to the present day.

**Appropriate Postal Services**

- Normal transmission of mail, including
  - (postage free) service- and military- post (including Airgraphs and V-mail);
  - maritime mail,
  - railway mail of any type
  - air mail of any type
  - prisoner-of-war and concentration camp mail
  - packet, parcel post and freight post
- Postal payment service
- Private post, authorised or tolerated by the official authorities, or active in total absence of an official post
- Other postal communications, including
  - pneumatic post
  - telegrams
  - electronic mail (i.e. message sent electronically to a Post Office where it is printed out and delivered to an addressee)
  - other similar forms of postal services

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****Inappropriate Material**

The following items are inappropriate:

fantasy issues from non-existent postal territories, issues of exiled governments or organisations without postal services private additional cancellations applied by a sender or a supplier before mailing the documents

picture postcards, unless they are postal stationery produced by a Postal Authority

private additional prints on postal stationery (also known as "repiquages")

administrative marks (not postal), when they do not give any postal privilege

private decorations on envelopes and cards

private vignettes (advertising labels), whatever the purpose of their use.

**Border-line material**

The variety of postal services and regulations in different countries and their evolution over time make it impossible to define a list encompassing all possible situations. Some items only follow to a certain extent the above definitions of appropriate or inappropriate material; therefore they should be used mainly when no other material is available to describe a specific thematic detail. When included in the exhibit, they should always be supported by a thorough philatelic justification.

Items belonging to the specific philatelic culture of a theme, a country or a region can be tolerated as much as they are justified and their number is proportional to the degree of elaboration of the exhibit.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)****Border-line material**

The variety of postal services and regulations in different countries and their evolution over time make it impossible to define a list encompassing all possible situations. Some items only follow to a certain extent the above definitions of appropriate or inappropriate material; therefore they should be used mainly when no other material is available to describe a specific thematic detail. When included in the exhibit, they should always be supported by a thorough philatelic justification.

Items belonging to the specific philatelic culture of a theme, a country or a region can be tolerated as much as they are justified and their number is proportional to the degree of elaboration of the exhibit.

The jury team shall evaluate borderline material primarily with regards to its thematic significance, so it should never be shown solely for its rarity.

**Inappropriate Material**

The following items and the information made available by them should not be used for thematic development:

**A)**

- fantasy issues from non-existent postal territories
- issues of exiled governments
- issues of organizations without postal services
- abusive, illegal and undesirable issues, as defined by the UPU and the FIP Philatelic Congress of 1976 (and available on the website of the FIP Fight against forgeries commission)
- picture postcards, unless they are postal stationery produced by a Postal Authority
- privately printed or manuscript annotated military postcards and lettercards (e.g. Feldpost), unless accepted or authorized by Postal authorities as admitted to the postal privilege without other official markings

**B)**

- private additional cancellations and cachets applied by a sender or a supplier before mailing the documents
- private additional prints on postal stationery (also known as "repiquages")
- administrative marks (not postal), when they do not give any postal privilege
- private decorations and decorative overprints

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****Thematic Information**

The thematic information is derived

directly from the purpose of issue (or of use) or the design of an item, or

indirectly as a result of a deeper analysis that enables the use of items that, at a first glance, do not show any connection with the theme.

Thus the thematic information can be drawn from:

the purpose of issue:

- those which follow changes in political situations
- those which document a particular period.

and, in addition to the primary and the secondary design of the item, from:

- the text, art style of illustration and similar peculiarities
- the material on which the item is printed e.g. granite (silk thread) or banknote paper, war maps
- the watermark design and the perforation (e.g. "perfins")

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

- on envelopes and cards
- private vignettes (advertising labels), whatever the purpose of their use

Aspects of category "B" are usually parts of mailings, which bear postal elements like stamps and postmarks. However, these are the typical "private elements" of such mailings, which are usually not admitted for thematic treatment, as explained above.

In exceptional cases (see also 4.2.2), where no postal-philatelic material for important aspects of the theme exists, the items under B) can be considered as acceptable items as long as they present a significant thematic connection and are supported by a thorough philatelic justification.

**Thematic Information**

*Each item must be connected to the chosen theme and present its thematic information in the clearest and most effective way.*

The thematic information used to illustrate the theme, or better, tell a story in a thematic exhibit is derived:

- directly from
  - the purpose of issue (or of use)
  - the design of an item,
- indirectly as
  - a result of a deeper analysis that enables the use of items that, at a first glance, do not show any connection with the theme.

Thus, the thematic information can be drawn from:

- the purpose of issue:

- those which follow changes in political situations
- those which document a particular period

- the design of the item, along with everything which is depicted or written on a stamp, postal stationery, postmark or other appropriate postal philatelic material.

- the text, art style of illustration and similar
- the material on which the item is printed, e.g., granite (silk thread) or banknote paper, war maps
- the watermark design
- the perforation (e.g. "perfins")

**'OLD' GUIDELINES** (*SREV omitted*)

- the text or illustration of margins, gutters, tabs, cover and interleaving of booklets, etc. functions of the postal service, which have a thematic significance (e.g. railway, telegraph, newspaper stamps, official service postal stationery, pigeon post).

The thematic information described above must be:

initiated by the postal service, or

introduced or added by the postal service (e.g. advertising appendices, marginal descriptions, postal stationery illustrations), or

approved by the postal service (e.g. postal stationery to private order).

Printing or surcharges added privately after the sale of the items do not fulfil this requirement.

Generic cancellations can be used because of the specific meaning of a place name, or of the reason a place exists. Alternatively, they must contain adequate thematic information (e.g. advertising text, illustration), in addition to the data concerning the place and/or the date. A postmark, even if of the pre-philatelic period, does not document the birthplace of a person. Also the postmark date and place, when related to a special event which happened on the same date and place, is relevant only if other thematic elements concern the theme or it has a specific thematic significance from a postal history standpoint; in the latter case it should only be used when it refers to an important detail of the theme.

Sender and addressee data represents insignificant information, unless the document shows a special postal privilege (e.g. reduced or free postage) as a result of the position, condition or status (e.g. military, government or other official mail) of one of the parties. The indication of reduced (or free) postage or the service postmarks, or equivalent markings of the postal route, provide sufficient evidence. In some instances sender and/or addressee data may be helpful as complementary thematic information, in combination with the postal elements of the document.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES** (*SREV included*)

- the text or illustration of margins, gutters, tabs, cover and interleaving of booklets, etc.

- functions of the postal service, which have a thematic significance (e.g. railway, telegraph, newspaper stamps, official service postal stationery, pigeon post)

The thematic information described above must be:

- initiated by the postal service, or

- introduced or added by the postal service, or
  - (e.g. advertising appendices, marginal descriptions, postal stationery illustrations)

- approved by the postal service
  - (e.g. postal stationery to private order).

Printing or surcharges added privately after the sale of the items do not fulfil this requirement.

Generic cancellations can be used because of

- the specific meaning of a place name, or
- the reason a place exists.
- Alternatively, they must contain adequate thematic information (e.g. advertising text, illustration), in addition to the data concerning the place and/or the date.

A postmark, even if of the pre-philatelic period, does not document the birthplace of a person.

The postmark date and place, when related to a special event, which happened on the same date and place, is relevant only if

- other thematic elements help to illustrate the theme, or
- it has a specific thematic significance from a postal history standpoint; in the latter case it should only be used when it refers to an important detail of the theme.

Sender and addressee data represents insignificant information, unless

- the document shows a special postal privilege (e.g. reduced or free postage) as a result of the position, condition or status (e.g. military, government or other official mail) of one of the parties. The indication of reduced (or free) postage or the service postmarks, or equivalent markings of the postal route, provide sufficient evidence.
- In some instances, sender and/or addressee data may be helpful as complementary thematic

### 'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)

The information made available by vignettes (i.e. pictorial labels), marks, cachets and decorative overprints of private origin (i.e. not postally authorised) should not be used for the thematic development. In exceptional cases, where no other material exists, these items can be considered as a part of the document as long as they are relevant to describe a specific postal route or they present a significant thematic connection.

### 3.2 THEMATIC TREATMENT

In thematic philately the concept defined by the GREV is represented by the plan.

The plan and the development represent the two aspects of an interlaced process, based on personal study and research by the collector on both the theme and the material. A deeper knowledge of the theme enables one to increase the number of facts and details and to look for additional items to illustrate them. A better knowledge of the material allows one to identify new pieces, which often must be justified through further study of the theme, which could result in a more elaborate plan.

#### 3.2.1 Title and Plan

The title and the plan represent a meaningful entity and reflect the specific characteristics of the chosen theme. Hence, different titles originate different plans.

If an exhibitor decides to show a self-contained section of his/her collection, the plan and the title of

### 'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)

information, in combination with the postal elements of the document.

### 3.2 Thematic Treatment

*The treatment of a thematic exhibit comprises the structure of the work (title and plan) and the elaboration of each point of that structure (development).*

A thematic exhibit illustrates the theme chosen by the exhibitor, or better, tells a story related to this theme. The theme or story is presented in the thematic text and illustrated with appropriate philatelic material (see Article 3.1).

In thematic philately, the plan represents the concept, as defined by the GREV. The **two subdivisions** Title and plan and Development represent the two aspects of an interlaced process, based on personal study and research by the collector on both the theme and the material:

- A deeper knowledge of the theme enables one to increase the number of facts and details described in the story and to look for additional items to illustrate them.
- A better knowledge of the material allows one to identify new pieces, which often must be justified through further study of the theme, which could result in a more elaborate plan.

The pages of an exhibit ought to present the chosen theme, as presented by the title and detailed in the plan, in its entirety, i.e. important parts of the chosen theme must not be omitted.

Innovation is the personal approach of the exhibitor, highlighting the results of his/her ability to create an interesting story and illustrate it with the best material available.

#### 3.2.1 Title and Plan

*The title with any subtitle defines the scope of the exhibit.*

The title and the plan represent a meaningful entity and reflect the specific characteristics of the chosen theme. Hence, different titles originate different plans.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)**

the exhibit must be consistent with that section.

The title represents the synthesis of the work. Therefore the title and the contents of the pages have to match and the sequence of the philatelic items mounted on the pages should give the full details of the story stated in the title. Boosting titles to make the exhibit more attractive can be misleading if they deviate from the concept developed in the pages.

The plan provides a clear and intelligible insight into all major aspects of the theme. It may:

be freely chosen in order to make the synthesis of a theme or an idea, or

derive naturally from the theme.

The structure may follow a time-related classification (historical, evolutionary), or subject-related criteria (scientific, systematic, organisational, economic, etc.), or other criteria. For instance, themes related to Organisations and Institutions (e.g. Red Cross, League of Nations, Council of Europe), repetitive events (e.g. Stamp Days, Olympic Games), etc. can be subdivided according to their structure, type of organisation, and individual events following thematically time- or place-related classifications.

Themes developed within an organisational or chronological framework should clearly show the historical background, the aims, tasks, results and effects of the activities of such organisations or events. The plan consists only of thematic divisions and subdivisions, with no generic chapters (e.g. "Miscellaneous", "Appendix"). Subdivisions by date of issue, issuing country, type of material (e.g. "Meters", "Postal stationery"), or purpose of issue (e.g. "Anniversaries") are to be avoided. Such items are

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

The title represents the synthesis of the exhibit. Therefore the title and the contents of the pages must match and the sequence of the philatelic items mounted on the pages should give the full details of the story implied by the title. Boosting titles to make the exhibit more attractive can be misleading if they deviate from the plan and its development on the pages.

*The plan defines the structure of the exhibit and its subdivisions and covers all major aspects relevant to the title. It should be entirely structured according to thematic criteria. The order of the main chapters and their subdivisions should demonstrate the development of the plan rather than list its main aspects.*

The plan should, as much as possible, present the synthesis of the story told by the exhibit. It should not be a mere list (e.g. lexicon approach). The plan provides a clear and intelligible insight into all major aspects of the theme. It may:

- be freely chosen in order to detail all the main aspects of a theme or an idea, or

- derive naturally from the theme.

The structure of the plan may follow:

- a time-related classification (historical, evolutionary), or
- subject-related criteria (scientific, systematic, organisational, economic, etc.), or
- other subdivision criteria, in the case of themes related to Organisations and Institutions (e.g. Red Cross, League of Nations, Council of Europe), repetitive events (e.g. Stamp Days, Olympic Games), etc., such as:
  - their structure,
  - their type of organization
  - individual events following thematically time- or place-related classifications.

Themes developed within an organisational or chronological framework should clearly show the historical background, the aims, tasks, results and effects of the activities of such organisations or events.

The plan consists only of thematic divisions and subdivisions, with no generic chapters (e.g. "Miscellaneous", "Appendix"). Subdivisions by date of issue, issuing country, type of material (e.g. "Me-

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)**

best used according to their thematic information. The same applies to special philatelic studies (ref.: 3.2.3).

The plan is supposed to present a logical order allowing the study of the entire exhibit without disturbing breaks between the different chapters. Ideally the beginning of the following chapter has a logical link with that preceding. This helps to create an interesting story instead of an unconnected "list of contents".

An effective plan covers the largest scope compatible with the title. In this respect, unless specifically stated in the title, the plan should not be limited by time or by geography, as far as the chosen theme allows it.

The different chapters should have a good balance, according to their relative thematic weight within the scope of the theme as defined by the title rather than by the quantity of material available.

The construction of an innovative plan is considered a prerequisite for an innovative development.

**The Plan Page**

The plan page comprises all major subdivisions of the plan; finer and more detailed subdivisions are presented, in principle, only on the individual pages. The plan cannot be replaced by a literary description or by a generic introductory statement.

An adequate plan page will ensure that the public and the jurors do not have to "reconstruct" the plan by browsing through the pages of the exhibit. The obvious difficulties caused by having to do so might be reflected in the understanding and the evaluation of the exhibit.

A numerical classification (e.g. decimal, legal systems) may be used if it helps to make the exhibit easier to understand. It should be limited to major divisions of the plan. Experience has shown that a two/three digits/letters system is sufficient.

In addition to the plan page, an introductory title page may highlight the theme.

The official FIP languages in which the title, the plan and any other introductory statement have to be

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

ters", "Postal stationery"), or purpose of issue (e.g. "Anniversaries") are to be avoided. Such items are best used according to their thematic information. The same applies to special philatelic studies (ref.: 3.3).

The plan is supposed to present **the content of the exhibit** in a logical order of chapters (and subchapters) allowing the study of the entire exhibit without disturbing breaks between the different chapters. Ideally the beginning of the following chapter has a logical link with that preceding. This helps to create an interesting story instead of an unconnected "list of contents". **The best is when the chapters (and subchapters) themselves are structured like a story.**

An effective plan covers the largest scope compatible with the title. In this respect, unless specifically stated in the title, the plan should not be limited by time or by geography, as far as the chosen theme allows it.

The different chapters should have a good balance, according to their relative thematic weight within the scope of the theme as defined by the title rather than by the quantity of material available.

The construction of an innovative plan is considered a prerequisite for an innovative development.

**The Plan Page**

*The title and the plan must be presented on a page at the beginning of the exhibit, written in one of the official FIP languages.*

**On the plan page all major subdivisions of the plan, or parts of the story told,** are described; finer and more detailed subdivisions are presented, in principle, only on the individual pages. The plan cannot be replaced by a literary description or by a generic introductory statement.

An adequate plan page will ensure that the public and the jurors do not have to "reconstruct" the plan by browsing through the pages of the exhibit. The obvious difficulties caused by having to do so might be reflected in the understanding and the evaluation of the exhibit.

A numerical classification (e.g. decimal, legal systems) **is recommended since it** helps to make the exhibit easier to understand. It should be limited to major divisions of the plan. Experience has shown that a two/three digits/letters system is sufficient.

In addition to the plan page, an introductory title page may highlight the theme.

The official FIP languages in which the title, the plan and any other introductory statement have to be

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)**

presented are English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish.

**3.2.2. Development**

The analysis of both the theme and the appropriate material, based on a thorough thematic and philatelic knowledge, is a prerequisite for the best possible thematic development. This enables the skilful selection of each item and its correct positioning and sequence, as well as a connecting description. This is necessary to ensure a proper understanding of the relationship between the item and the theme.

This is shown by:

the selection of the most suitable items for each thematic detail described.

the balanced utilisation of the items according to the significance of the thematic detail they support. The number of philatelic items available for the same detail should not be the basis for their inclusion.

the accurate thematic arrangement of the items shown on the same page according to the sequence of the "story". The correct sequence takes priority over the best appearance of the page.

Therefore, the simple classification of the philatelic pieces related to a subject is necessary but not sufficient to achieve an advanced degree of elaboration.

**The Thematic Text**

The thematic text:

illustrates the logical sequence of the development, by connecting the items shown. A good connection is effective and concise, without unnecessary information. This requires that the text be fluid enough to demonstrate the thread of the development.

explains the thematic qualification of an item, if required (Ref. 3.3 below)

gives appropriate information of the thematic details of stamps and documents.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

presented are English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish.

**3.2.2 Development**

*The development means to elaborate the theme in-depth, aiming to achieve an arrangement of the material fully compliant with the plan.*

The analysis of both the theme and the appropriate material, based on a thorough thematic and philatelic knowledge, is a prerequisite for the best possible thematic development. This enables the skilful selection of each item and its correct positioning and sequence, as well as a connecting description. This is necessary to ensure a proper understanding of the relationship between the item and the theme.

This is shown by:

- the selection of the most suitable items for each thematic detail described.

- the balanced utilisation of the items according to the significance of the thematic detail they support. The number of philatelic items available for the same detail should not be the basis for their inclusion.

- the accurate thematic arrangement of the items shown on the same page according to the sequence of the "story". The correct sequence takes priority over the best appearance of the page.

Therefore, the simple classification of the philatelic pieces related to a subject is necessary but not sufficient to achieve an advanced degree of elaboration.

**The Thematic Text**

*The thematic text ensures the necessary thematic links and to provide thematic details, whenever needed.*

It:

- illustrates the logical sequence of the development, by connecting the items shown. A good connection is effective and concise, without unnecessary information. This requires that the text be fluid enough to demonstrate the thread of the development.

- explains the thematic qualification of an item, if required (Ref. 3.3 below)

- gives appropriate information of the thematic details of stamps and documents.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)**

Any thematic explanation has to be closely related to the material shown, and any given statement must be covered by thematically appropriate philatelic items, otherwise it weakens the thematic development.

Even if FIP languages are not compulsory for thematic and philatelic text, exhibitors who intend to show frequently at international exhibitions are strongly advised to present their exhibit in one of those languages, to help in the understanding of their work (Ref. GREV 3.3).

**3.2.3 Innovation**

The exhibit is supposed to show the personal work of the exhibitor, highlighting the results of his/her ability to innovate. This requires personal effort by study, research and imagination and cannot result from the simple mechanical duplication of existing works. Exhibitors can take advantage of all sources available on the subject (e.g. thematic and philatelic literature as well as other collections) to push their research forward.

**3.3 QUALIFICATION OF PHILATELIC MATERIAL**

A short thematic description is necessary whenever the connection between the item and the theme is not self-explanatory. Items without a demonstrated relationship with the theme should be excluded.

When selecting qualified material for the exhibit, preference and greater importance has to be given to:

types of items that are the cornerstone of philately (i.e. stamps, postal stationery, cancellations)

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

Any thematic explanation has to be closely related to the material shown, and any given statement must be **supported** by thematically appropriate philatelic items, otherwise, it weakens the thematic development.

Even if FIP languages are not compulsory for thematic and philatelic text, exhibitors who intend to show frequently at international exhibitions are strongly advised to present their exhibit in one of those languages, to help in the understanding of their work (Ref. GREV 3.3).

**3.2.3 Innovation**

*Innovation is shown by the:*

- *introduction of new themes, or*
- *new aspects of an established or known theme, or*
- *new approaches for known themes, or*
- *new application of material.*

*Innovation may refer to all components of Treatment.*

The exhibit is supposed to show the personal **creative** work of the exhibitor, highlighting the results of his/her ability to innovate. This requires personal effort by study, research and imagination and cannot result from the simple mechanical duplication of existing works. Exhibitors can take advantage of all sources available on the subject (e.g. thematic and philatelic literature as well as other collections) to push their research forward.

**3.3 Qualification of Philatelic Material**

*The connection between the philatelic material and the theme must be clearly demonstrated, when it is not obvious.*

The material displayed should be fully consistent with the subject chosen. The selection should show the appreciation of the exhibitor as to what is available in the context of his chosen subject. It should also include the fullest range of relevant philatelic material of the highest available quality (GREV, Art. 3.4).

A short thematic description is necessary whenever the connection between the item and the theme is not self-explanatory. Items without a demonstrated relationship with the theme should be excluded.

When selecting qualified material for the exhibit, preference and greater importance has to be given to:

- types of items that are the cornerstone of philately (i.e. stamps, postal stationery, cancellations)

**'OLD' GUIDELINES** (*SREV omitted*)

and postmarks) as opposed to items with a lower postal connotation, even if their issue or use has been duly authorised by the post

issues which have information whose contents bear a direct relation to the issuing country from a political, historical, cultural, economic and/or similar standpoint. Avoid speculative

issues, which exploit the "fashion trends" in thematic philately (these dubious items ought to be in principle totally excluded), with special reference to issues not following the code of ethics of the UPU

normal issues, as opposed to additional parallel imperforate issues (stamps and souvenir sheets)

genuinely cancelled items, as opposed to items cancelled to order,

genuinely carried commercial mail with relevant cancellations, as opposed to mere souvenir

documents and any similar items which were created to please collectors, e.g. decorated FDCs (even when issued by the postal service), and maximum cards

genuinely carried items with correct postage and relevant thematic cancellations, as opposed to favour cancellations, often with underfranked postage, or, even worse, cancellations on stampless covers ("blank cancellations") unless due to a free postage privilege

documents with individual, differing addressees, as opposed to covers and cards received by the same addressee as a result of a subscription

correct postage frankings, as opposed to overfrankings due to philatelic reasons (e.g. complete sets)

meter frankings with correct postage, as opposed to favour cancellations (e.g. "000"), unless the latter is a "specimen" or it has a justified postal reason.

Exceptions to the above criteria may only be shown if properly justified.

The relative rarity or unusual characteristics of proofs, varieties and similar items, can increase the philatelic quality of the exhibit. Common varieties (e.g. minor colour nuances) play an insignificant role and they are likely to adversely affect the thematic development. If a variety does not clearly demon-

**'NEW' GUIDELINES** (*SREV included*)

tions and postmarks) as opposed to items with a lower postal connotation, even if their issue or use has been duly authorised by the post

- issues which have information whose contents bear a direct relation to the issuing country from a political, historical, cultural, economic and/or similar standpoint. Avoid speculative issues, which exploit the "fashion trends" in thematic philately (these dubious items ought to be in principle totally excluded), with special reference to issues not following the code of ethics of the UPU
- normal issues, as opposed to additional parallel imperforate issues (stamps and souvenir sheets)
- genuinely cancelled items, as opposed to items cancelled to order
- genuinely carried commercial mail with relevant cancellations, as opposed to mere souvenir documents and any similar items which were created to please collectors, e.g. decorated FDCs (even when issued by the postal service), and maximum cards
- genuinely carried items with correct postage and relevant thematic cancellations, as opposed to favour cancellations, often with underfranked postage, or, even worse, cancellations on stampless covers ("blank cancellations") unless due to a free postage privilege
- documents with individual, differing addressees, as opposed to covers and cards received by the same addressee as a result of a subscription
- correct postage frankings, preferably as multiple franking of a thematically important stamp, as opposed to overfrankings due to philatelic reasons (e.g. complete sets)
- meter frankings with correct postage, as opposed to favour cancellations (e.g. "000"), unless the latter is a "specimen" or it has a justified postal reason.

Exceptions to the above criteria may only be shown if properly justified.

The relative rarity or unusual characteristics of proofs, varieties and similar items, can increase the philatelic quality of the exhibit. Common varieties (e.g. minor colour nuances) play an insignificant role and they are likely to adversely affect the thematic development. If a variety does not clearly demon-

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)**

strate the connection with the theme, the normal item should be also shown as a reference.

Common stamps and documents are appropriate if they best represent important thematic details.

The use of maximum cards should be limited to a few, significant items, mainly to enhance the understanding of the thematic information on the stamp. In addition to the necessary concordance of subject, time and date, defined in the principles of Maximaphily, these items should have a theme-related cancellation.

The use of revenue stamps for fiscal purposes should be limited to a few, significant items, mainly to enhance the thematic development in very important points of the theme that cannot be covered otherwise. These items are to be properly justified.

**Philatelic studies**

Postal items and documents present a number of philatelic variants. If this material is of thematic and philatelic importance, then a concise and balanced philatelic study is commendable, so that this material can be properly shown.

A philatelic study follows in a systematic manner the criteria for traditional philately (e.g. development of the item, varieties), postal history (e.g. usage, routes, handling of the mail, postmarks) or any other postal philatelic discipline. A philatelic study may exploit existing sources for further personal research. In order to safeguard the balance of the exhibit, the aim of these studies is not completeness, but the presence of the most significant philatelic peculiarities. The extent of the studies is proportional to the degree of specialisation of the exhibit.

Philatelic studies, whenever included, blend with the thematic development without affecting the fluidity of elaboration of the exhibit. The thematic text has to continue in parallel with the study, so that there is no disturbing interruption.

**Philatelic text**

A philatelic text can be used when a specific philatelic characteristic of the item is not easily recognizable, for documenting the use of revenue stamps, or for presenting a philatelic study. Boosting definitions, in the style of those of the auction-catalogues, are inappropriate.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

strate the connection with the theme, the normal item should be also shown as a reference.

Common stamps and documents are appropriate if they best represent important thematic details.

The use of maximum cards should be limited to a few, significant items, mainly to enhance the understanding of the thematic information, **if this is too tiny to be properly seen**, on the stamp. In addition to the necessary concordance of subject, time and date, defined in the principles of Maximaphily, these items should have a theme-related cancellation.

The use of revenue stamps for fiscal purposes should be limited to a few, significant items, mainly to enhance the thematic development in very important points of the theme that cannot be covered otherwise. These items are to be properly justified.

Philatelic studies

Postal items and documents present a number of philatelic variants. If this material is of thematic and philatelic importance, then a concise and balanced philatelic study is commendable, so that this material can be properly shown.

A philatelic study follows in a systematic manner the criteria for traditional philately (e.g. development of the item, varieties), postal history (e.g. usage, routes, handling of the mail, postmarks) or any other postal philatelic discipline. A philatelic study may exploit existing sources for further personal research. In order to safeguard the balance of the exhibit, the aim of these studies is not completeness, but the presence of the most significant philatelic peculiarities. The extent of the studies is proportional to the degree of specialisation of the exhibit.

Philatelic studies, whenever included, blend with the thematic development without affecting the fluidity of elaboration of the exhibit. The thematic text has to continue in parallel with the study, so that there is no disturbing interruption.

Philatelic text

**A short explanation is required only when the material is not self-explanatory or there is a need to illustrate special research.**

A philatelic text can be used when a specific philatelic characteristic of the item is not easily recognizable, for documenting the use of revenue stamps, or for presenting a philatelic study. Boosting definitions, in the style of those of the auction-catalogues, are inappropriate.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****3.4 PRESENTATION**

The statement of the GREV suits perfectly thematic exhibits; hence there is no specific article in the SREV.

**ARTICLE 4: CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION****4.1. Thematic Treatment****'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)****3.4 Presentation**

The presentation and the accompanying text of the exhibit should be simple, tasteful and well balanced. It should add information to that provided by the material and show the level of understanding of the subject and the personal research of the exhibitor (Grev Art. 3.4).

See Art. 4.4 for hints on how this criterion is evaluated.

**3.5 One Frame Exhibits**

A One Frame exhibit of Thematic Philately is intended to be an exhibit with a very narrow theme that fits into one frame. If a theme can be shown in more than one frame, it is not suitable as a theme for a One Frame exhibit.

A selection of items from a multi-frame exhibit may be suitable only if the selection can completely treat a natural sub-theme of the exhibit within one frame. An extract of a multi-frame exhibit showing only the best items ("cherry-picking") from a multi-frame exhibit is not appropriate as a One Frame exhibit.

**ARTICLE 4: CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

*The general criteria, as specified in GREV Art. 4, are adapted to the peculiarities of the thematic class.*

In order to help consistent judging, within all of the following evaluation criteria there is a distinction between Basic requirements and Achievements.

*Basic requirements.* When all of them are fulfilled a score equal to 80% of the maximum is assigned. When any of them is not fulfilled, a mistake occurs and the 80% score is reduced accordingly.

*Achievements.* These requirements are gradual goals on the road to make the exhibit outstanding. They are worth >80% of the maximum and the fulfilment of all of them implies the top score.

**4.1 Thematic Treatment**

*Treatment will be evaluated according to the title and the plan, the development, and the innovation shown in the exhibit.*

Treatment is the presentation of the story for the theme chosen and its development throughout the pages, both showing an innovative approach.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****4.1.1. Title and Plan**

The title defines the overall concept, which then is structured through the plan. Inconsistencies between the title and the plan indicate either an inadequate breakdown of the title or an inappropriate synthesis of its structure in the selected title.

The plan page, that provides an insight into the theme, has to be shown at the beginning of the exhibit. Failure to do so will result in the automatic loss of three points."

The requirements for a correct, logical and balanced structuring into divisions and sub-divisions are defined as follows:

**Correct:** The plan should be accurate, scientifically reliable and sound

**Logical:** The sequence of the main chapters and their subdivisions must follow a rational order, without superfluous or misplaced chapters

**Balanced:** The same importance should be given to the different sections in accordance with the thematic significance and the available material coverage of all major aspects necessary to develop the theme.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

In assessing treatment judges are looking for:

- A logical development that is easy to follow
- A clear and concise write up
- A balanced exhibit for the theme chosen
- The degree to which the plan tells a story

They will check that the exhibit:

- Reflects the theme implied by the title
- Is developed in accordance with the plan
- Has new aspects and new approaches for known themes

**4.1.1 Title and Plan**

*The title and the plan will be evaluated considering the:*

- *consistency between the plan and the title*
- *presence of the plan page*
- *adequacy of the plan page*
- *correct, logical and balanced structure (divisions and subdivisions)*
- *coverage of all major aspects necessary to develop the theme.*

The title defines the overall concept, which then is structured through the plan. Inconsistencies between the title and the plan indicate either an inadequate breakdown **in the plan** of the title or an inappropriate synthesis of its structure in the selected title.

The plan page, that provides an insight into the theme, has to be shown at the beginning of the exhibit. Failure to do so will result in the automatic loss of three points.

The requirements for a correct, logical and balanced structuring into divisions and sub-divisions are defined as follows:

**Correct:** The plan should be accurate, scientifically reliable and sound

**Logical:** The sequence of the main chapters and their subdivisions must follow a rational order, without superfluous or misplaced chapters

**Balanced:** The same importance should be given to the different sections in accordance with the thematic significance and the available material coverage of all major aspects necessary to develop the theme.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES** (*SREV omitted*)**4.1.2. Development**

The correct assembly and position of the items, including the individual ones on each page, is demonstrated by a well understood, correct, and fluent thread of development. Misplaced items make development confused and hard to understand.

The balance is demonstrated by giving the appropriate depth and size to the various thematic details, according to their significance within the theme. This also applies to philatelic studies.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES** (*SREV included*)

The best plans are those in which the chapters (and subchapters) themselves are structured to tell a story and are evaluated much higher than those structured like a "list of contents".

Title and plan will be evaluated considering the:

*Basic requirements*

- presence of the plan page
- adequacy of the plan page
- consistency between the plan and the title
- correct, logical and balanced structure (divisions and subdivisions)
- coverage of all major aspects necessary to develop the theme

*Achievements*

- degree to which the plan tells a story

**4.1.2 Development**

*The development will be evaluated considering the:*

- *correct assembly and positioning of the items in conformity with the plan*
- *connection between the items and the thematic text*
- *depth, shown through connections, cross-references, ramifications, causes and effects*
- *balance, by giving to each thematic point the importance corresponding to its significance within the theme*
- *elaboration of all aspects of the plan.*

The storyline as presented by the plan should be developed on the single pages and written as a continuous story flowing through each page and through all pages. It should be read as in a book from top left to bottom right.

For an easy-to-follow development, each page should have on top the numbered chapter or subchapter that indicates which part of the plan is being developed on the page. An additional page title summarizing the content of the page is also helpful.

The correct assembly and position of the items, including the individual ones on each page, is demonstrated by a well understood, correct, and fluent thread of development. Misplaced items make development confused and hard to understand. **Items should be placed near the thematic text related to them.**

The balance is demonstrated by giving the appropriate depth and size to the various thematic details, according to their significance within the theme. This also applies to philatelic studies.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****4.2. Knowledge, Personal Study and Research**

The GREV considers “philatelic and related knowledge”, that can be seen as the result of two components:

- A “concept” related knowledge. In almost all classes is of postal and philatelic nature: issues, usages, printing processes, rates, routes, services, and so on. In thematic philately this “concept” is of a thematic nature: cars, bridges, history, nature, sport, etc.; hence “thematic knowledge” is that which is based on personal study and research and sound knowledge of the subject studied.
- “Philatelic knowledge”, that relates to the material used to support the concept. This component is common to all classes.

**4.2.1 Thematic Knowledge, and its related Personal Study and Research**

Thematic knowledge refers to the overall knowledge of the theme as expressed in the choice of the

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

Development will be evaluated considering the:

***Basic requirements***

- correct assembly and positioning of the items in conformity with the plan
- connection between the items and the thematic text
- elaboration of all aspects of the plan
- presence of a “red thread” that connects the single pages and chapters into a continuous story

***Achievements***

- balance, by giving to each thematic point the importance corresponding to its significance within the theme
- depth, shown through connections, cross references, ramifications, causes and effects

**4.1.3 Innovation**

*Innovation will be evaluated according to Art. 3.2.3.*

***4.2 Knowledge, Personal Study and Research***

The GREV considers “philatelic and related knowledge”, that can be seen as the result of two components:

- A “concept” related knowledge. In almost all classes is of postal and philatelic nature: issues, usages, printing processes, rates, routes, services, and so on. In thematic philately this “concept” is of a thematic nature: cars, bridges, history, nature, sport, etc.; hence “thematic knowledge” is that which is based on personal study and research and sound knowledge of the **theme** studied.
- “Philatelic knowledge”, that relates to the material used to support the concept. This component is common to all classes.

**4.2.1 Thematic Knowledge, and its related Personal Study and Research**

*Thematic Knowledge, and its related Personal Study and Research will be evaluated considering the*

- *appropriateness, conciseness and correctness of the thematic text*
- *correct thematic use of the material*
- *presence of new thematic findings for the theme.*

Thematic knowledge refers to the **general** knowledge of the theme as **shown** in the choice of the

**'OLD' GUIDELINES** (*SREV omitted*)

items, their correlation and the degree of appropriateness of the accompanying text; the correct thematic use of material is reflected by the degree of appropriateness to cover specific thematic details.

Thematic knowledge is also demonstrated by the use of material that has a thematic qualification, which is not immediately obvious and needs to be discovered by the exhibitor.

Thematic knowledge assumes the absence of thematic errors and avoids pretexts for introducing material not directly related with the theme or unnecessary borderline items.

The level of thematic study and research is evaluated by taking into account the availability of previous studies of the theme, in order to assess how much the treatment took advantage of available thematic and philatelic literature, catalogues and documented research. This will then be compared with the personal research and study shown in the exhibit.

**4.2.2 Philatelic Knowledge, and its related Personal Study and Research**

The full compliance with the rules of postal philately concerns, for instance, the presence of items that are unsuitable for collecting purposes because of their state (e.g. cut stamps or cut postal stationery, improper maximum cards)

**'NEW' GUIDELINES** (*SREV included*)

items, their **mutual relationship** and the degree of appropriateness of the accompanying text; the correct thematic use of material is reflected by the degree of appropriateness to cover specific thematic details.

Thematic knowledge assumes the absence of thematic errors and avoids excuses for showing material, that is not directly connected with the theme or doubtful, or unnecessary borderline items.

Thematic knowledge is also demonstrated by the use of "surprising" material, that is thematically appropriate, even if not immediately seen from the material alone, but whose appropriateness was discovered by the exhibitor.

The level of thematic study and research is evaluated by taking into account the availability of previous studies of the theme, in order to assess how much the treatment took advantage of available thematic and philatelic literature, catalogues and documented research. This will then be compared with the personal research and study shown in the exhibit.

*Basic requirements*

- appropriate, concise and correct thematic text
- correct use of thematic material

*Achievements*

- thematic details in text and material
- presence of new thematic findings for the chosen theme
- "surprising" material (which does not belong to the subject, but thematically fits into the story of that page)

4.2.2 Philatelic Knowledge, and its related Personal Study and Research

*Philatelic Knowledge, Personal Study and Research will be evaluated considering the*

- *full compliance with the rules of postal philately*
- *presence of the widest possible range of postal-philatelic material and its balanced use*
- *appropriateness of postal documents*
- *appropriateness and correctness of philatelic text, when required*
- *presence of philatelic studies and related skilful use of important philatelic material.*

The full compliance with the rules of postal philately concerns, for instance, the presence of items that are unsuitable for collecting purposes because of their state (e.g. cut stamps or cut postal stationery, improper maximum cards).

**'OLD' GUIDELINES** (*SREV omitted*)

The presence and balanced utilisation of all the different philatelic types of material should be obtained by presenting items of all periods and from the largest number of countries, within the possibilities of the chosen theme.

The suitability of the postal documents considers their philatelic appropriateness, including the number and the justification of borderline items, if any, as well as the selection of items of real philatelic significance rather than of extravagant pieces.

Personal philatelic study and research are demonstrated by the presence of:

material which

- has not yet been researched for that theme, or where there has been very little research
- refers to an uncommon area of collecting
- philatelic studies presenting a true, well documented, philatelic in depth analysis and which are not just an excuse for showing an accumulation of more pieces without any serious philatelic foundation.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES** (*SREV included*)

Postal-philatelic items (e.g. stamps, postal stationery, proofs, sketches..) should be shown in their entirety. Overlapping is allowed when showing varieties of postal stationery, in a way that the detail with the variety itself is clearly visible. Windowing of cancellation and imprint on a postal stationery is allowed when the thematic text refers to the cancellation. Windowing or folding is allowed for very large items such as large telegrams, complete sheets of stamps etc.

The presence and balanced utilisation of all the different philatelic types of material should be obtained by presenting items of all periods and from the largest number of countries, within the possibilities of the chosen theme.

The suitability of the postal documents considers their philatelic **appropriateness**, as well as the selection of items of real philatelic significance rather than of extravagant pieces.

Very limited exceptions (at most once per frame on average) to this general rule are admitted, when the selected philatelic material significantly enhances the relation to the thematic text or is the only way to illustrate it. This refers to the inclusion of both borderline items or items of non-postal nature (e.g. commercially used old repiquages, revenue stamps, covers with addresses sent to personalities subject of the theme, private prints, marks, vignettes and other similar material, if on postally travelled cover or document). In such cases the items must be fully justified as exceptions, thus proving the philatelic knowledge of the exhibitor.

Personal philatelic study and research are demonstrated by the presence of:

- material which has not yet been researched for that theme, or where there has been very little research
- philatelic studies presenting a true, well documented, philatelic in-depth analysis and which are not just an excuse for showing an accumulation of more pieces without any serious philatelic foundation.

**Basic requirements**

- Full compliance with the rules of postal philately
- Appropriateness of postal documents
- Appropriateness and correctness of the philatelic text, when needed
- Presence of a good range of postal-philatelic material throughout the exhibit and on single pages

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****4.3 Condition and Rarity**

The condition is based on the usual overall criteria for evaluation in philately. For modern material good condition is an essential requirement. Booklets should be presented complete with stamps.

Cancellations must be clear, and allow the stamp design, where thematically relevant, to be clearly visible.

The rarity is based on objective criteria such as recognised absolute scarcity and difficulty of acquisition.

It is essential that varieties, proofs, essays, are rarer than the issue itself, in order to increase the philatelic level. The same applies to blocks, strips, etc.

It is obvious that items which, despite being very rare, have no or insufficient relationship to the theme, should not be included in the evaluation of this criterion.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)***Achievements*

- Presence of a widest possible range of postal-philatelic material and its balanced use
- Presence of material which has not yet been researched for that theme, or where there has been very little research
- Presence of philatelic studies and skilful use of important philatelic material

***4.3 Condition and Rarity***

*The criteria of "Condition and Rarity" require an evaluation of the quality of the displayed material considering the standard of the material that exists for the chosen subject, the rarity and the relative difficulty of acquisition of the selected material.*

**4.3.1 Rarity**

The rarity is based on objective criteria such as recognised absolute scarcity and difficulty of acquisition.

It is essential that varieties, proofs, essays, are rarer than the issue itself, in order to increase the philatelic level. The same applies to blocks, strips, etc.

It is obvious that items which, despite being very rare, have no or insufficient relationship to the theme, should not be included in the evaluation of this criterion.

Judges will primarily be looking for:

- rarities of general significance in philately, if available for the theme
- rarities of specific significance for the chosen theme known to exist
- how easy it is to duplicate the exhibit

Judges will also be looking for:

- scarce and uncommon items, particularly from traditional philately, postal history and postal stationery

*Basic requirements*

- Normal and modern material plus unusual and scarce items

*Achievements*

- Presence of rare items

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****4.4 Presentation**

The efforts of the exhibitor are demonstrated by the arrangement of the items and the text on appropriate exhibition pages.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)****4.3.2 Condition**

The condition is based on the usual overall criteria for evaluation in philately and is related to the degree of rarity of the items present in the exhibit.

All items should be in the best possible condition. The condition of items is evaluated as if they were stamps: No tears, no missing corners, no bends, no stains, no missing perforations (if present), etc.

- The condition of common material should be impeccable.
- Exhibitors are encouraged to show unique or very rare material that does not occur in fine condition, but are cautioned from including other items in a condition that may reduce the perceived overall condition of the exhibit.
- It is important to remember that the actual condition obtainable will vary according to the country and period.
- Commercially used items are to be preferred to philatelic produced ones.
- Cancellations should be as clear as possible with all essential wording complete and allow the stamp design, where thematically relevant, to be clearly visible.
- Booklets should be presented complete with stamps.
- If an item has been restored or manipulated, it must be described as such.

***Basic requirements***

- Normal and modern material in excellent quality, plus all unusual in good quality and rare material in average condition

***Achievements***

- rarities in above average up to best quality

**4.4 Presentation**

*The criterion of "Presentation" requires an evaluation of the:*

- *clarity of the display*
- *clarity of the text*
- *the overall aesthetic balance of the exhibit.*

The method of presentation should show the material to the best effect and in a balanced way.

The efforts of the exhibitor are demonstrated by the arrangement of the items and the text on appropriate exhibition pages in order to effectively communicated the story and to highlight the philatelic material in an attractive and aesthetic way.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)**

Presentation will be evaluated on the basis of:

clarity of the display

clarity of the text

the overall aesthetic balance of the exhibit.

**ARTICLE 5: JUDGING OF EXHIBITS**

The thematic jurors must complete an evaluation form in order to be guided towards a thorough and consistent judgement.

The presence of faked, forged or repaired items, which are not clearly marked as such, will cause the downgrading of the exhibit by the Jury, according to the report of the special Expert Team appointed at each exhibition.

Reprints must be presented as such. Weak or faded postmarks must not be redrawn on piece; instead a copy of the postmark should be redrawn and presented next to the

Collectors are therefore recommended to have any doubtful item expertised before selecting it for the exhibit and the original of the certificates should be included behind the sheet, in the same transparent protective cover. In case a photocopy is used, the same has to be certified by the Federation. Alternatively, the commissioner may bring the original certificate for use if needed. Irrelevant of how the certificate is made available, at the end of the philatelic text concerning the item certified should be put the abbreviation "e" in bold thus **(e)**.

**'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

The presentation of the exhibit is evaluated on:

- Overall aesthetic balance on the frames and the individual pages
- Good use of the page – with not too much white space on the pages
- The write-up is clear and concise, i.e. sufficient write-up – but not too much text
- Any photocopies/scans must be a minimum of 25% different in size from the original
- Careful and neat mounting

Other factors:

- No advantage or disadvantage shall apply as to whether the text is handwritten, typewritten or computer printed.
- Brightly coloured inks and coloured album pages should be avoided.
- Mounting of long covers at an angle should be avoided.

**ARTICLE 5: JUDGING OF EXHIBITS**

*5.1. Thematic exhibits will be judged by the approved specialists in their respective field and in accordance with the section V, Art. 31 to 46, of the GREX (ref.: GREV, Art. 5.1).*

The thematic jurors must complete an evaluation form in order to be guided towards a thorough, **un-biased** and consistent **judging**.

The presence of fake, forged or repaired items, which are not clearly marked as such, will cause the downgrading of the exhibit by the Jury, according to the report of the special Expert Team appointed at each exhibition.

Reprints must be presented as such. Weak or faded postmarks must not be redrawn on piece; instead, a copy of the postmark should be redrawn and presented next to the original.

Collectors are therefore recommended to have any doubtful item expertised before selecting it for the exhibit and the original of the certificates should be included behind the sheet, in the same transparent protective cover. In case a photocopy is used, the same has to be certified by the Federation. Alternatively, the commissioner may bring the original certificate for use if needed. Irrelevant of how the certificate is made available, at the end of the philatelic text concerning the item certified should be put the abbreviation "e" in bold thus **(e)**.

**'OLD' GUIDELINES (SREV omitted)****'NEW' GUIDELINES (SREV included)**

5.2. For thematic exhibits, the following relative terms are presented to lead the Jury to a balanced evaluation (ref.: GREV, Art. 5.3).

<b>1. Treatment</b>	<b>35</b>
Title and Plan	15
Development	15
Innovation	5
<b>2. Knowledge, Personal Study and Research</b>	<b>30</b>
Thematic	15
Philatelic	15
<b>3. Condition and Rarity</b>	<b>30</b>
Condition	10
Rarity	20
<b>4. Presentation</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## ARTICLE 6: CONCLUDING REMARKS

6.1 In the event of any discrepancies in the text arising from translation, the English text shall prevail.

6.2 The Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Thematic Exhibits at FIP Exhibitions were approved at the 66th FIP Congress on October 14, 2000, in Madrid. They take effect immediately following the closure of Congress.

These Guidelines were unanimously approved at the FIP Thematic Commission Meeting during the FIP Exhibition THAILAND 2018 in Bangkok, Saturday 1 December 2018 at 11-13 pm.

They were approved by the FIP Board at its meeting on 28 August 2019 in Buenos Aires.

They will be presented for approval to the delegates at the FIP Congress in Jakarta, Indonesia, 2020.

# Pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian colonies 1912–1932

Located in the equator, in the heart of Africa, the history of Congo is cruel. Conditions improved when the Congo Free State, privately owned by King Leopold II of Belgium, became a Belgian colony in 1908. The Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi are a treasure trove of thematic philately. Pictorial stationery cards were published between 1912 and 1932. There are 222 different images in total.

TEXT & IMAGES JARI MAJANDER, AIJP

The Congo Free State was a vast area of land in central Africa roughly in the territory of the current Democratic Republic of Congo. In 1885–1908 it was privately owned by King Leopold II of Belgium. Leopold's salaried deprived the indigenous population and committed a genocide. When information about atrocities was revealed, the Belgian parliament took over the state and renamed as the Belgian Congo. In November 18, 1908, the Congo Free State became a Belgian colony.

The Governor-General was appointed to the colony affairs. Conditions improved, though the colonial administration did not even seek to resolve all problems in the area. Colonial hosts were primarily interested in exploitation of the abundant natural resources of Congo. The Congo mines produced a lot of raw materials. Other human needs, such as health care and basic education of the population, were only partially satisfied.

The first stationery cards of the Belgian Congo were those issued by the Congo Free State with value im-

prints overprinted CONGO BELGE. They were issued in 1909. From the postal stationery point of view the first overprinted stationery cards of the Belgian Congo is a really versatile collection area. They are not pictorial cards i.e. their reverse side is empty. During the same year the value imprints were replaced with new ones corresponding to the new design of the definitive stamps for the Belgian Congo.

## The first pictorial stationery card issue of the Belgian Congo

In 1912, the first pictorial stationery card series of the Belgian Congo was issued [Figure 1], intended for both domestic and foreign use. Based on the recommendation of the UPU, the size of the stationery cards became 140 x 90 mm. The colour of the paper is chamois. The colour of the 5 cent value imprint was changed to yellow-green [Figure 2] and the 10 cent became carmine red [Figure 3], also in accordance with the UPU recommendation. The design of the value imprint was based on the contemporary defini-

**Figure 1.** The African leopard (*Panthera pardus*), also known as the panther, is a smooth and strong feline. It lives alone and preys at night. The range of catches is very diverse. The card no. 51 belongs to the first series of pictorial stationery cards published for the Belgian Congo in 1912. It is easily identified by the card number and the name of the colony in the two official languages.



tive stamp series of the Belgian Congo, palm trees of which the nearest trunk is climbed by a native.

The value imprint side of the stationery cards is divided into two parts. The right side is for the value imprint and lines for writing the name and address of the recipient. In the left side of the card a message can be written.

These cards form the first pictorial stationery issue of the Belgian Congo. They were introduced on 1 November 1912 and remained valid until 1 January 1922. On the back of the cards is a image numbered 1-72, The same subject can be found on both the 5c and 10c cards, so there are a total of 72 different images and 144 different cards. All images are matte black and white.

On the picture side, the identification number is printed before the name of the colony, which is written in two languages, French and Flemish:

**Congo Belge – Belgisch Congo**

Next to the name of the colony is often the locality and then a short bilingual text explaining the subject. The texts on the picture side are usually printed directly on top of the image, rarely to the margin.

Significant differences can sometimes be found on the picture sides of some cards. For example, an interesting variety of card no. 5 exists. The picture shows natives offset a huge pile of termites. This image appears as a mirror image on some cards, in others the image is in the right direction.

Card no. 23 features the snow-capped Ruwenzori Mountains. There are variations of the cards, where the picture is clearly moved to the left. In general there are many minor changes in the pictures, arising from the production, when geletin coated paper has shrunk. The cards of the first series were printed by Waterlow & Sons in London.

**Figures 2-3.** In the first pictorial postal stationery series, there are two different value imprints, 5c yellowish green intended for domestic use and 10c carmine red for foreign use. The design of the value imprint is palm trees, the nearest is being climbed by a native.



**Figure 4.** The cards of the first series of the Belgian Congo were surcharged when postage rates changed. Three different surcharges exist: 15 c / 5 c, 15 c / 10 c (picture at left) and 30 c / 10 c.

Postal rates changed in 1921, when the value imprints were surcharged: 15 c / 5 c, 15 c / 10 c and 30 c / 10 c [Figure 4]. The pictures on the cards remained the same. Hence each subject appears in five different cards, with two basic values without surcharges and three surcharged values. Surcharged cards are more rare because they were in use shorter time. 15 c / 5 c is the most unusual of the these provisional issues.

Because the surcharges were made by hand, numerous variations of the cards exist. Distinguishing between true error prints from fakes can be difficult, sometimes almost impossible.

When surcharged cards were not available, the additional postage was usually paid with stamps affixed to either the value imprint side or the picture side. The Belgian collector M. Christiaens sent a considerable number of such cards from all over the Belgian Congo.

## The second pictorial stationery card issue of the Belgian Congo

The pictorial stationery card issues in the Belgian Congo continued on February 1st 1922. At that time, new tariffs and new pictures were introduced. The second series of prepaid cards are slightly smaller than in the first series – 137 x 88 mm. The paper of

the cards is cream-coloured and slightly thinner than earlier.

The colour of the value imprint corresponding to the low value of 15 cent is greenish blue [Figure 5] and the high value of 30 cent is crimson (deep carmine red) [Figure 6]. The design of the value imprint remained the same as in the first series.

The pictures on the back side of the cards in the second series are numbered from 73 to 122, so there are 50 different subjects [Figure 7]. The image subjects in 15 c and 30 c cards are identical. The printing location was changed: the value side was printed by Atelier du Timbre à Malines. The picture sides were printed on the Maison Thill press in Belgium. The quality of the print is the same as in the first series. The images are sepia coloured.

30 cent cards are more unusual than 15 cent cards. In general, the rarity of cards is in the same category as in the 1912 issue. Cards of the second series were officially valid until January 31st 1933, but their use apparently continued even after that. Cards of the second series were not surcharged.

The names of the localities printed on the image side of the cards in the first and second series are obviously those that were in use in the Belgian Congo at that time. When Congo became independent in 1960, all urban geographical names were totally decolonial-



**Figures 5-6.** In 1922, the denominations of the cards of the first series were upgraded. The postage rates had increased already on 1 March 1921. There are two different value imprints, 15 cent greenish blue and 30 cent dark carmine. The design of the value imprint is the same as in the first series.



**Figure 7.** Belgian Catholic missions established schools and hospitals throughout the colony. Baudouinville (now Moba) on the west coast of Lake Tanganyika grew from a small Catholic village the center of the Catholic church in the Belgian Congo. Featured are members of the Tabwa tribe carrying food. The card no. 88 is from the second series of pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Congo from 1922.

ized. For example, Élisabethville, named after Queen Elisabeth, wife to king Albert I, became Lumumbashi. Léopoldville, named after King Leopold, became Kinshasa, and Stanleyville, originally founded by Henry Morton Stanley, was renamed Kisangani.

Cards of the first and second pictorial stationery series exist also as test prints, without the picture on the reverse side.

### The third pictorial stationery card issue of the Belgian Congo

The third set of pictorial stationery cards was introduced in July 1st, 1927. The value imprints correspond to the new postage rate and there are new pictures. The paper used in the cards is either cream or bright white. The cards in the third series are the same size as in the previous series – 138 x 88 mm.



**Figures 8-9.** Introduced in 1927, the third series of pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Congo has two different value imprints, 45 c green and 1 fr carmine red. The design of the value imprint is the same, but the subtitles for the third set of cards have been reduced.

**Figure 10.** A bicycle company led by an European officer was one of the mobile units of Force Publique, the Belgian colonial army in the Congo. It operated in the Katanga area in south-eastern Congo. The card no. 12 in the third series of the pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Congo was released in 1927.



The new value imprints are 45 cent green [Figure 8] and 1 franc crimson (deep carmine red) [Figure 9]. The design of the value imprint was maintained same as in the previous series. The cards are still divided into two parts, but the subtitles are simple compared to the previous two series.

The picture sides of the cards in the third series are numbered from 1 to 50, that is, there are 50 different subjects [Figure 10]. The numbering of cards starts from the beginning, but there are few printing errors regarding numbering. Subject no. 8 may also have no. 52 and subject no. 19 may also have no. 9. The subjects are different from the previous series. The same picture can be found on both 45 cent and 1 franc cards. The images in all cards are sepia-coloured, there are no more black and white images.

**Table 1.** Changes in postage rates of sending a postcard within the colony (domestic), to Belgium and internationally.

	Domestic	Belgium	International
1.4.1910	5 c		10 c
1.4.1920	10 c		
1.3.1921	15 c	15 c	30 c
1.5.1924		30 c	45 c
1.10.1925	30 c		60 c
1.8.1926			75 c
1.10.1926	45 c	45 c	
1.1.1927			90 c
1.5.1927	60 c	60 c	1 fr



**Figure 11.** Postage rates of the Belgian Congo were straightforward. This card was sent from Léopoldville on September 5th 1922 to Brussels. The postage rate of sending a postcard to Belgium was 15 cents from 1 March 1921 until 1 May 1924, when it was raised to 30 cents. This card is from the second series of pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Congo and represents the most common use of pictorial stationery cards.

**Figure 12-13.** The stationery card no. 100 of the second Belgian Congo series sent on 20 May 1924 from Luebo to Aurillac, France. International rate was increased to 45 cents on 1 May 1924. Face value 15 cents + 15 cents stamp affixed to the reverse side. Postage due 15 cents was paid by the receiver.



The Hutu are bantu-speaking indigenous people, who wore skirts of cloth made from tree bark.

As in the previous series, the distinctive number of the card is printed on the picture side. However, on the picture side of the cards in the third series, the name of the colony is no longer printed. Short bilingual text explains the subject and it may reveal a locality. Texts on the picture side are always printed directly on the image. The value imprints of the third series were not surcharged. The third series of cards were printed by l'Imprimerie Notre Pays in Brussels. The cards were postally valid until December 31st 1932.

Postage rates increased rapidly throughout the 1920's [Table 1]. However, the postage rate of sending a postcard within the territory and to Belgium was the same except from 1 May 1924 to 1 October 1925.

### The pictorial stationery card issue of the Belgian Occupied East Africa

In the late 19th century, the German Empire annexed the then Kingdoms of Rwanda and Burundi to their own colonies. They were formed German protectorates, i.e. protected areas. These areas of the Great Lakes of Africa were managed as part of Ger-

man East Africa. In practice the number of Germans in the area was very small and the influence of the empire was nowhere to be seen.

As the First World War raged in Europe, the Belgian armed forces invaded German East Africa in 1916. The Belgian troops occupied mountainous areas east of Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika, in the African Great Lakes region.

In 1917, a pictorial stationery card series was issued for the Belgian Occupied East African Territories. They are easily distinguished from the pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Congo. The value imprint is overprinted with four dark blue lines:

**EST AFRICAIN ALLEMAND  
OCCUPATION BELGE.  
DUITSCH OOST AFRIKA  
BELGISCHE BEZETTING.**

i.e. German East Africa / Belgian Occupied Territory in two languages, French and Flemish.

The size of the stationery card cards is approximately 139 x 89 mm. The colour of the paper used in the

cards is chamois. The colour of the 5 cent value imprint is yellow-green [Figure 14] and the 10 cent is carmine red [Figure 15], as in the first series of pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Congo. The series issued for the Belgian Occupied East African Territories came into use on July 25, 1918 and was valid until the end of 1921. Just like the first series of the Belgian Congo, these cards were printed by Waterlow & Sons in London.

**Figure 14-16.** Two basic cards from the series of the Belgian Occupied East Africa. Value imprints are overprinted with the name of the territory in two languages. Later, when the postage rates were increased, cards were surcharged

The picture sides of the stationery cards in the first series are numbered 1–50 [Figure 17]. The same pictures can be found in the 5 cent and 10 cent cards. On the picture side, the identification number is printed before the official name of the territory in two languages, French and Flemish:

**EST AFRICAÏN ALLEMAND (Occupation Belge)  
DUITSCH OOST AFRIKA (Belgische Bezetting)**



**Figure 17.** The Kigali barracks was founded during the German colonial administration in 1907. It is the present-day capital of Rwanda and the center of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The card no. 34 in the series of the Belgian Occupied East Africa released in 1934.

like in the overprint. Next to the name of the territory is often the name of the location and a short bilingual text, which explains the subject of the picture. Image texts are usually printed on the image.

When postage rates changed, the value imprints were surcharged with new values: 15 c/5 c and 15 c/10 c [Figure 16]. The image subjects on the cards remained the same. Thus, every image subject occurs on four different cards, two values without surcharge and two values as surcharged. Pictorial stationery cards containing both overprint and surcharge are more unusual than other cards.

Pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Occupied East African Territories exist also without overprint, but they were never officially issued.

## The pictorial stationery card issue of Ruanda-Urundi

Ruanda and Urundi were two separate kingdoms in the Great Lakes region. In 1894, they were annexed by the German Empire and eventually became two districts of German East Africa. In the Treaty of Versailles, German East Africa was annexed to the British Empire as Tanganyika. The areas occupied

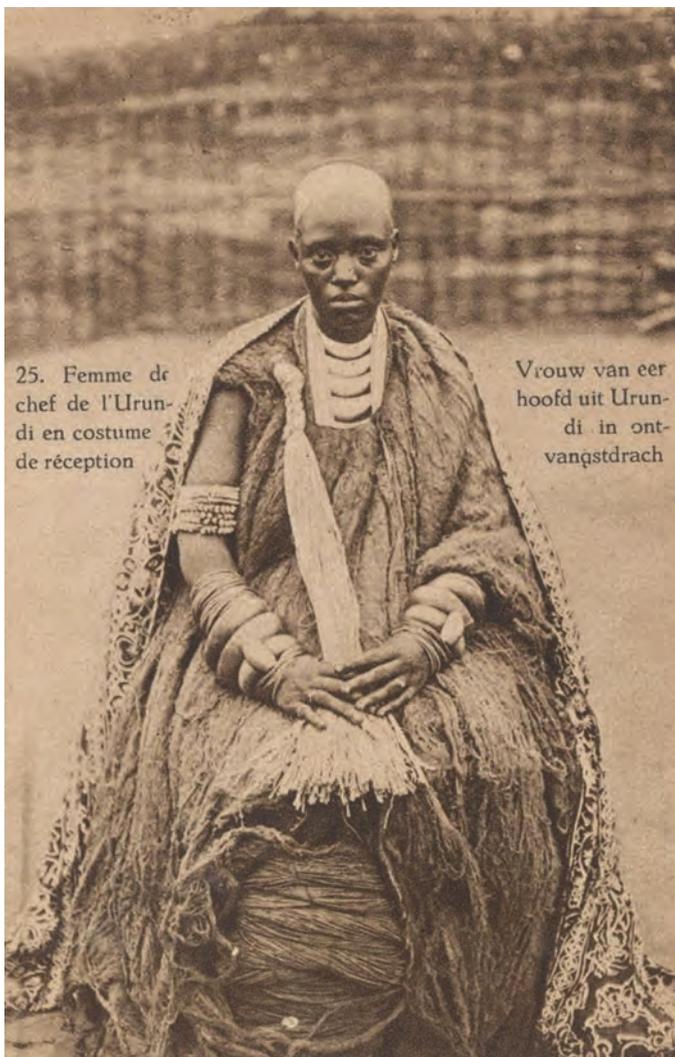
by Belgian troops were left to the Belgian military administration and was renamed Ruanda-Urundi,, although it represented only a fraction of the territories already occupied by the Belgian forces in East Africa. In 1924 Ruanda-Urundi became the mandate of the League of Nations, whose administration was entrusted to Belgium.

When the name of the occupied territory was officially changed to Ruanda-Urundi, another series of pictorial stationery cards was issued in 1927, and was postally valid until January 1st, 1933. In this time the value imprint is overprinted with two lines:

### RUANDA URUNDI

The colour of the 45 cent value imprint is green [Figure 19] and the 1 franc is carmine red [Figure 20]. On the picture side the cards are numbered 1–50 [Figure 18]. The pictures are the same as in the third series of the Belgian Congo. The size of this overprinted edition was relatively small, 39 250 for the 45 cent and 20 200 for the 1 franc value. This series was not re-issued as surcharged.

In 1962 Ruanda-Urundi became the two independent states of Rwanda and Burundi.



25. Femme de chef de l'Urundi en costume de réception

Vrouw van een hoofd uit Urundi in ontvangstdrach

**Figures 18-20.** The card no. 25 in the Ruanda-Urundi series released in 1927 features Urundi chief's wife in reception costume. Value imprints of the two overprinted values: 45 cent green for domestic use and 1 franc carmine red for international use.



## Themes of the pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian colonies

The pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian Congo, the Belgian Occupied East African Territories and Ruanda-Urundi are well suited to thematic exhibits. The subjects are local: indigeneous tribes and colonial hosts, native villages and larger towns, landscapes, traffic infrastructure and various means of transport, as well as animals and plants. Leisure activities of the colonial hosts are prominently featured on the pictorial cards featuring golf, tennis and hunting.

It is possible to find stationery cards on many different topics. [Table 2] is a list of stationery card based on the main subject of the image. A closer look at the images reveals side topics that are not listed in [Table 2]. All different images are available online at [2].

For example, stationery card No. 74 of the second Belgian Congo series [Figure 22] is great for telling not only about the development of railways in Central and Southern Africa, but also about cycling in general. There are bicycles leaning against a pole at the railway station. Bicycles were used by locals to travel from and to the train station. Combining railways for long distance transport and bicycles for short distance transport is still, 100 years after the card was issued, a current topic.

**Table 2.** Pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian colonies arranged by subject. 1#, 2# and 3# refer to the first, second and third series of the Belgian Congo. EA# refers to the cards of the Belgian Occupied East Africa. The number after the hash sign is the number printed on the picture side of the card.

<b>administration buildings</b> 1#31; 1#54; 1#69; 2#73; EA#20	<b>landscapes</b> 1#1; 1#42; 3#17; EA#37; EA#49
<b>aeroplanes</b> 2#95	<b>mills</b> 2#82–86; 3#33–38
<b>agriculture</b> 1#45; 1#50; 1#56; 1#70; 2#80; 2#94; 3#40	<b>mountains</b> 1#23; EA#43
<b>animal husbandry</b> 1#36; 3#7	<b>native tribes</b> 1#37; 1#38; 2#101; 2#109; 2#118; 2#120; 2#121; 3#18–19; EA#12; EA#46
<b>army</b> 1#4; 1#12; 1#33; 2#103; 3#9–10; 3#12–13; EA#3–5; EA#8; EA#23; EA#26–28; EA#34; EA#41; EA#47; EA#50	<b>parks and gardens</b> 1#26; 2#89
<b>automobiles</b> 3#31–32	<b>person profiles</b> 2#119; 3#22–28; EA#11
<b>boats</b> 1#41; 1#66; 2#92; 3#39; EA#1; EA#15–16; EA#21; EA#30	<b>plantations</b> 1#40; 1#59; EA#18
<b>bridges</b> 1#10; 1#58; 3#1; EA#9; EA#35–36; EA#45	<b>post</b> 1#27
<b>caravans</b> 1#20; 1#55; 3#8; EA#6–7; EA#10; EA#26; EA#29; EA#40	<b>prisons</b> 1#21
<b>children</b> 2#113; 2#118; 2#121; 3#29; 3#45	<b>railways</b> 1#2; 1#6; 1#16; 1#25; 1#49; 2#74; 2#82; 2#86; 2#104; EA#19; EA#38
<b>colonial hosts</b> 2#96; 2#109–116; 3#31	<b>religion and churches</b> 2#88; 2#116; 3#4
<b>culture</b> 2#120	<b>rivers</b> 1#3; 1#17; 1#57; 1#63; 1#66–68; 3#6; 3#32; EA#15–16; EA#21; EA#39; EA#45
<b>domestic animals</b> 1#11; 1#19; 2#108	<b>science</b> 2#75
<b>education</b> 2#113; 3#43–46; 3#49; 3#50	<b>ships</b> 1#30; 1#32; 2#92; 3#39; 3#49; EA#13–14; EA#33
<b>electricity</b> 3#41	<b>sports and leisure</b> 1#47; 2#77; 2#78
<b>fishing</b> 2#90; 3#21	<b>termites</b> 1#5; 1#60
<b>food and water</b> 1#19; 2#88; 2#99	<b>towns</b> 1#48; 1#61; 3#2–4
<b>forests</b> 1#9	<b>trade</b> 1#35; 2#81; 2#87; 3#16; 3#20
<b>handicrafts</b> 1#29; 2#100; 2#114	<b>traffic</b> 1#22; 1#72
<b>harbours</b> 1#24; 1#44; 1#46; 1#61	<b>trains</b> 1#6; 1#16; 2#74; 2#104; 3#5; EA#38
<b>hospitals</b> 3#48; EA#17	<b>trees and plants</b> 1#15; 1#16; 1#29; 1#43; 1#71; 2#88; 3#15; EA#2
<b>hunting</b> 1#52; 1#53; 2#91	<b>villages and settlements</b> 1#13; 1#38; 1#39; 2#79; 2#93; 2#98; 2#117; 3#29–30; EA#42
<b>industry</b> 3#42; EA#31	<b>waterfalls</b> 1#64; 1#65; 2#97; 3#14; EA#44
<b>labour</b> 1#8; 1#11; 1#28; 1#32	<b>weapons</b> 1#34; 3#11; EA#14; EA#22; EA#24; EA#48
<b>lakes</b> 1#7; 1#18; EA#25; EA#32; EA#49	<b>wild animals</b> 1#51; 2#105–107; 2#122
	<b>woodwork</b> 2#76; 3#44; 3#47; 3#49

## Philatelic importance and collecting

All pictorial stationery series and cards presented in this article are officially published by the postal administration of the Belgian colonies. The postal stationery cards of the Belgian Congo, the Belgian Occupied East African Territories and Ruanda-Urundi can be certainly displayed in thematic exhibits. The reverse side pictures can be freely used to take advantage of the development of the theme.

Care should be taken when purchasing the cards, for there are also ordinary postcards without value imprint that very much look like the pictures on the reverse sides of the Belgian Congo stationery cards. Behind such postcards is a Belgian publisher named

Nils. Naturally there is no value imprint on these postcards and therefore they cannot be displayed in thematic exhibits.

What makes the stationery cards of the Belgian colonies appealing, is that all of them are available at a reasonable price, if you are interested in a certain image and the value side does not matter. Among collectors, and thematic philatelists in particular, there is more interest to certain themes, that may rise the purchasing value of some of the cards. The market price of the Belgian Congo pictorial stationery cards starts at about 10 euros, but is seldom over 100 euros.

The pictorial stationery cards of Ruanda-Urundi are much more scarce than those of the Belgian Congo. The printing of the Ruanda-Urundi cards is less than 40 000, but the Belgian Congo cards were printed



**Figure 21.** The railway connected the port of Bukama on the navigable section of the Lualaba River through the Katanga mining area to Elisabethville (now Lubumbashi) and thence on to Sakania, where it was connected to the Rhodesian railway network. The card no. 6 of the first Belgian Congo series features a steam locomotive of the *Compagnie de Chemin de fer du Katanga* (CFK) on the Bukama–Elisabethville line.

**Figure 22.** From Elisabethville in the south-east of the Belgian Congo, it was possible to reach as far as the Cape of Good Hope by rail. Railway was constructed from the Cape to the Congo in 1893-1910. The card no. 74 of the second Belgian Congo series features the railway station of Elisabethville with a train leaving for the Cape. Some locals used bicycles to travel from and to the train station.





60 Congo Belge - Belgisch Congo

Attaque d'une termitière sur la nouvelle route de Lukafu.  
Aanval van eene termietenwoning op den nieuwenweg van Lukafu.

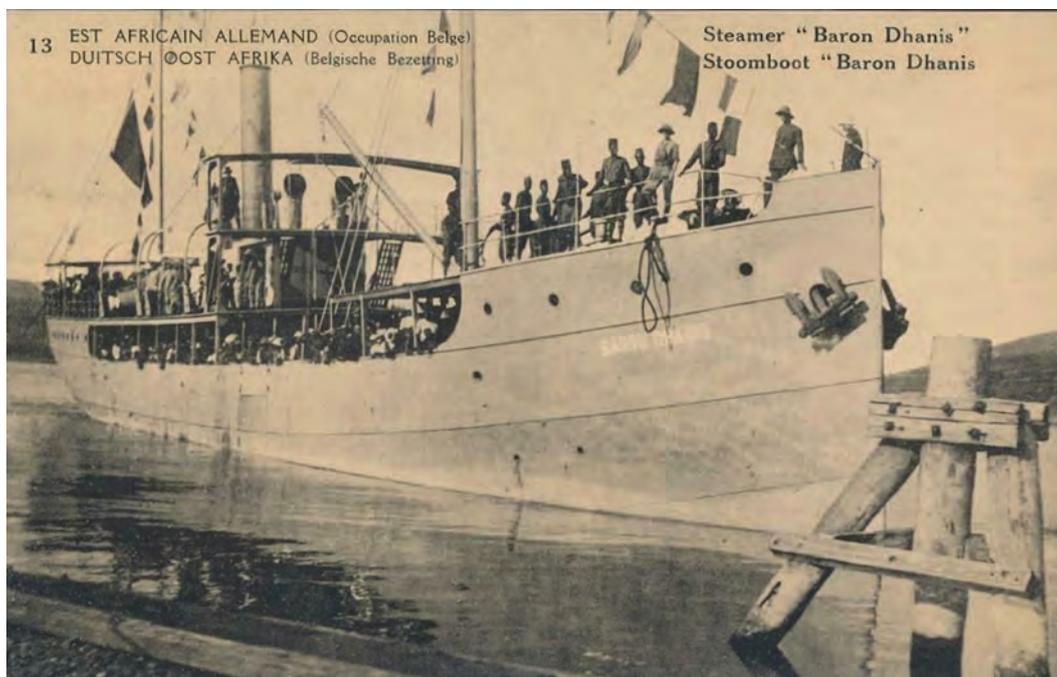
**Figure 23.** Mound-building termites on the new Lukafu road. The mound grows by termites transporting soil onto the mound surface and depositing it there. The termite mounds sometimes have a diameter of 30 metres and are often built around trees. The card no. 60 of the first Belgian Congo series.

**Figure 24.** Palm oil mill on Île de Mateba, the major river island close to the mouth of the great Congo river. The fruit of the oil palm is crushed by grinding. Palm oil mills utilized forced labour. The card no. 28 of the first Belgian Congo series.



28 Congo Belge  
Belgisch Congo

Huilerie au bord du fleuve dans l'île de Mateba.  
Olielagerij op de oevers van den stroom in het eiland Mateba.



13 EST AFRICAIN ALLEMAND (Occupation Belge)  
DUITSCH OOST AFRIKA (Belgische Bezetting)

Steamer "Baron Dhanis"  
Stoomboot "Baron Dhanis"

**Figure 25.** The card no. 13 of the Belgian Occupied East Africa series features a large steamer *Baron Dhanis* on Lake Tanganyika. Until the end of 1915 Lake Tanganyika continued to be patrolled by the Germans. The Belgians constructed the steamer while the Allies secured control of Lake Tanganyika. The steamer was named after Francis Dhanis, a Belgian colonial civil servant and soldier noted for his service for the Congo Free State.

in hundreds of thousands. A significant number of cards of the third set remained unused, and the remaining stock was destroyed.

Many cards have been cancelled-to-order (CTOs). From the philatelic point of view, genuinely mailed stationery cards are preferred, and they are valued more than CTOs or unused cards. It can show up in prices, that are easily multiples of those not genuinely used. The price increases if the card has been used in exceptional circumstances or the type of delivery is somehow unusual (for example, registered, postage due or returned). Stationery cards mailed to Belgium are common, cards used within the terri-

tory are unusual, and international mail can be scarce depending on the destination. Cards to France, the Netherlands and the Great Britain are much more common than to other international destinations. Corner wear in the used cards is normal, unused cards should always be of the highest available quality. ■

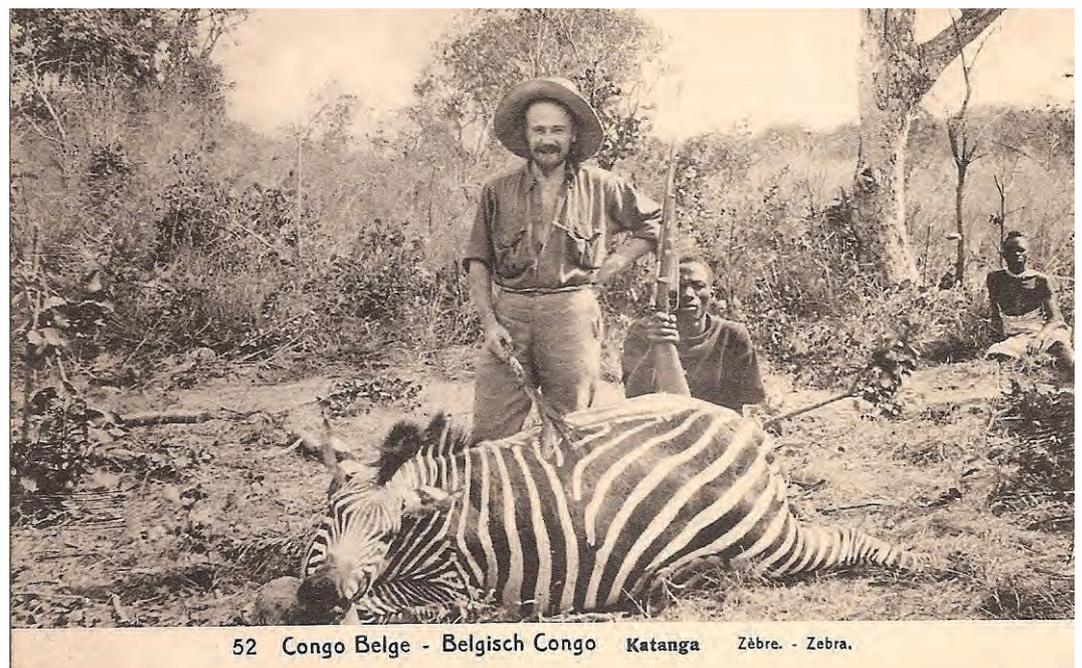
#### SOURCES:

- [1] **JACQUES STIBBE: LES ENTIERS POSTAUX DU CONGO ET DU RUANDA-URUNDI.** 2021, SOCIÉTÉ BELGE DE L'ENTIER POSTAL & BELGIAN CONGO STUDY CIRCLE.
- [2] **WWW.CONGOBELGE.COM.** BRUCE LOCKHART.
- [3] **WWW.CONGOPOSTE.BE.**



**Figure 26.** Elisabethville prospered with the development of a regional copper mining industry. Colonial societies showed great ingenuity in constructing systems of exclusion. The Golf Club was reserved for the white (European) population, but natives were common as caddies. The card no. 78 of the second Belgian Congo series.

**Figure 27.** Big game hunting was another popular pastime among the colonists. Zebras were common trophy animals, prized for their skins and heads. Zebra stripes come in different patterns, unique to each individual. Sadly, the number of zebras in the present day Democratic Republic of the Congo is extremely low. The card no. 52 of the first Belgian Congo series.



52 Congo Belge - Belgisch Congo Katanga Zèbre. - Zebra.

# Some ideas for development and strengthening of the thematic exhibit “The Lepidoptera”

As a thematic exhibitor I specialize in butterflies and moths, being attracted by their beauty and grace. I began this thematic more than 40 years ago and prepared my exhibit “The World of Butterflies and Moths”, which later won many international awards including large vermeil at Portugal 2010 and Philanippon 2011. This article shows some unusual philatelic material for development and strengthening of the theme “The Lepidoptera”.

TEXT & IMAGES VLADIMIR KACHAN, BELARUS

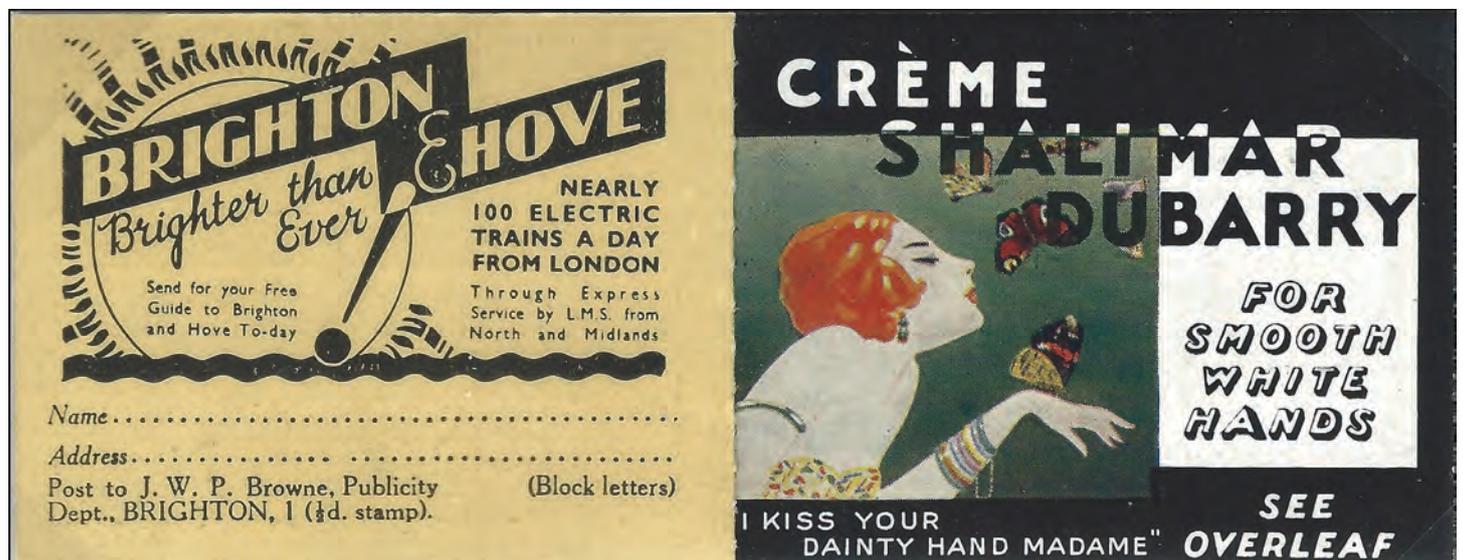


Figure 1. The world's first booklet with illustration of butterflies.

Butterflies and moths have a wide distribution in philately [Figure 1]. About 250 countries and territories have dedicated postage stamp issues to them, a total of about 9,000.

The first stamps with the pictures of moths appeared on the issues of Netherlands India in 1902. Appearing in the border design on the stamps of the Dutch East Indies on 25 June 1902, the four outstretched stylized moths attract attention of Lepidoptera philatelists [Figure 2]. A sphingid moth representing *Hippotion celerio* is depicted in the four corner spandrels of the set from seven stamps with portrait of Queen Wilhelmina. This moth is agriculturally important in the region, as it is one of several species largely responsible for the pollination of Papaya (*Chamaedorea tepejilote*), which is exported to the Netherlands and the whole of Europe. Perhaps for this reason, the moth *Hippotion celerio* was depicted on stamps of the Dutch East Indies.

Figure 2. Stamp of the Netherlands India 1902 with error - missing perforation at the top of the stamp.



The oldest butterfly stamp is the Hawaii issue of 1890 [Figure 3]. An unidentified butterfly species adorns Princess Liliuokalani's hair in the form of a barrette.



Figure 3. Hawaii proof 1890 with portrait of Princess Liliuokalani and butterfly brooch.

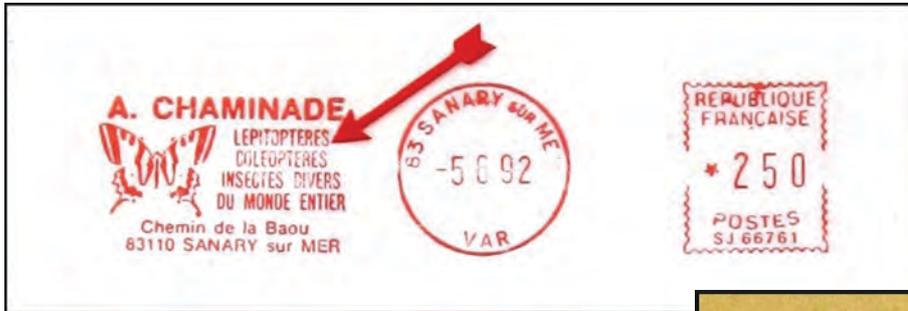


Figure 4. Meter mark of France 1992 with order Lepidoptera.

The butterflies and moths comprise the second largest order in the insect kingdom. The order of butterflies and moths is known as the ‘Lepidoptera’ [Figure 4], derived from the Greek words for ‘scale’ and ‘wing’. Over 170 000 identified species of butterflies and moths are known worldwide. They can be identified by 4 scale-covered wings, a long coiled proboscis, and life cycle including a caterpillar stage.

The life cycle of a butterfly is amazing. During their lives, butterflies and moths pass through four very different stages. These are egg, larva or caterpillar, pupa or chrysalis, and adult [Figure 5]. Their bodies go through great changes. These changes are called metamorphosis. Butterflies are beautiful: their eggs rival Faberge’s for sheer art [Figure 6].



Figure 5. Stationery card of USSR 1965 illustrates the life cycle of a moth.



Figure 6. Stamp of Vanuatu 1991 with egg of Monarch butterfly on the tab.

First of all a small larva hatches from an egg. For the first time the egg is mentioned in the publicity letter card of France 1890 with advertisement “The True Lightning Liquid Insecticide only product destroys the eggs of all harmful insects” [Figure 7]. The larva eats the empty egg because it must start to build up energy for the next stage of the cycle. We know the larva as a caterpillar [Figure 8]. Caterpillars of different species look very different. Caterpillars of some species of butterflies and moths serve as food for many ethnic groups around the world [Figure 9].

When caterpillar has finished growing it finds a place where it can hang or bury itself, and chan-



Figure 7. Letter card of France 1890 with egg in advertisement.



**Figure 8.** Postmark 1932 of the Larva municipality of Spain in the province of Jaén.



**Figure 9.** Caterpillars of the *Gonimbrasia belina* moth as African Delicacy on the Venda stationery card 1991.

ges into a chrysalis. Most moths make a cocoon to protect the chrysalis [Figure 10]. When the adult has completely formed, it breaks the skin of the chrysalis or cocoon and emerges.

The earliest cancel in the form of a stylized butterfly dates from the late 18th century in the Duchy of Modena, a small Italian state that existed from 1452 to 1859. The city of Modena processed postal correspondence with a postmark in the form of a stylized butterfly in 1793 [Figure 11].



**Figure 10.** Cancel 1830 of Bozzolo (Cocoon) Municipality in the Italian province of Mantova.

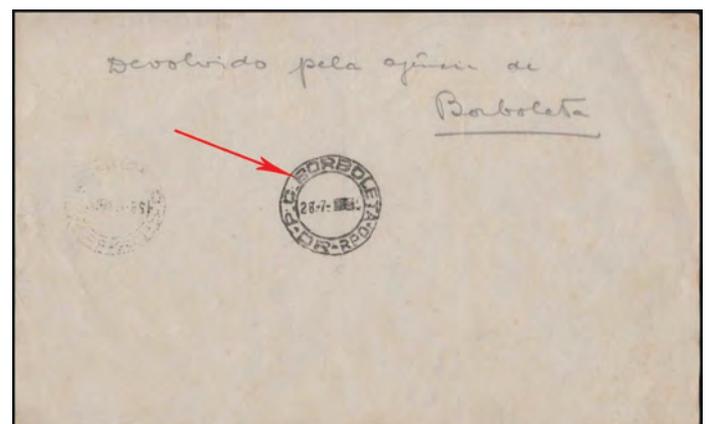


**Figure 11.** From the Italian state of Modena, a stylized butterfly marking, appears on a 1793 stampless letter.



**Figure 12.** Letter of Brazil post passed in 1957 with postmark of Borboleta.

Several types of postmarks of USA with the names of the settlements as Butterfly, Mariposa (Spanish for Butterfly), Papillion (French for Butterfly) are known to philatelists. But almost unknown to philatelists is the postmark of the settlement Borboleta in Brazil. The name Borboleta means butterfly in Portuguese and it is a small locality in the Pitanga municipality in the state of Paraná, southern Brazil [Figure 12].



Farfalla is the Italian word for butterfly. Ship “Farfalla” belongs to the Corvet category – Pelican class, and was built in Italy in 1943-1948, modernized in 1952-1954. Marine military mail on this ship used cancel “Poste Italiane Nave Farfalla” and also violet round cachet with text “Nave Farfalla” [Figure 13].



**Figure 13.** Violet round cachet with text “Nave Farfalla” that processed mail correspondence of the military ship “Farfalla” (Butterfly).

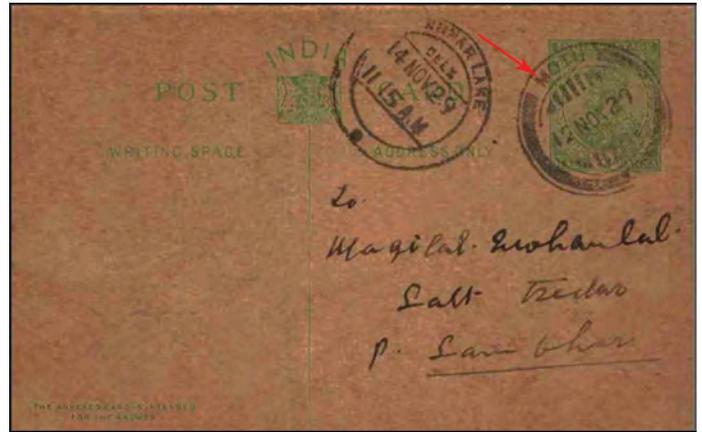
Moth is also known as a town in Jhansi district in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh [Figure 14]. The place was earlier called “Monastery” (in Hindi) and during British rule in India the name changed to “Moth” due to their British accept.

The first known postal stationery in the world with the image of a butterfly is the Thurn and Taxis entire postal 1863 [Figure 15]. The Thurn and Taxis Post was a private company and the successor to the Imperial Reichspost of the Holy Roman Empire in western Europe. The Thurn and Taxis Post was operated by the Princely House of Thurn and Taxis between 1806 and 1867. The company was headquartered in Regensburg from its creation in 1806 until 1810 when it relocated to Frankfurt am Main where it remained until 1867. From 1852 to 1866 the company printed its own postage stamps and postal stationeries.

Butterflies are so loved that the postal administrations of many countries issue congratulatory telegrams depicting these beautiful creations of nature. The first such telegram was issued by the Norwegian post in 1926 [Figure 16]. Even during the Second World War was used British Airgraph as secure method to correspond with soldiers stationed abroad which has greetings with the image of butterflies [Figure 17].

Since the dawn of Man we have co-existed with butterflies and moths. Their effect on man has been far-reaching, inspiring us in all aspects of the arts, sciences and humanities. Butterflies are the most beautiful creations of nature, the top of its artistic mastery, undoubted masterpieces of evolution [Figure 18]. Moths are often regarded as less engaging, but with their diversity of shapes, sizes, and colours, they are as fascinating as butterflies [Figure 19]. Owing to their beauty and daytime flying, butterflies take the spotlight. But moths are equally important for their impact on man in both a positive way (through sericulture) [Figure 20] and a negative way (larval destruction of crops) [Figure 21].

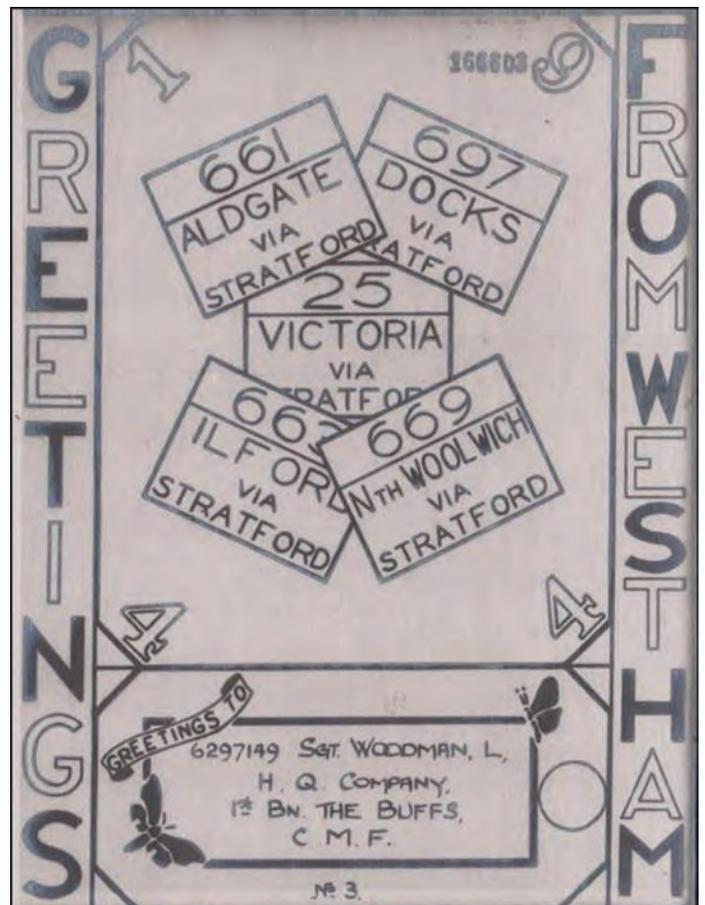
I hope that philatelists of the Lepidoptera theme will find in my article interesting information for further searching of unknown philatelic materials with butterflies and moths and the development of their collections. ■



**Figure 14.** Stationery card of India with postmark of Moth town 1929.



**Figure 15.** Entire postal with printed stamp of one silbergroschen value of Thurn and Taxis, which decorated with flowers and small flying butterfly used on April 23, 1863.



**Figure 17.** Greetings with the image of butterflies on the British Airgraph 1944.



Figure 16. Telegram from Norway 1926 with butterflies.



Figure 18. Stationery card of China 1898 with butterflies.

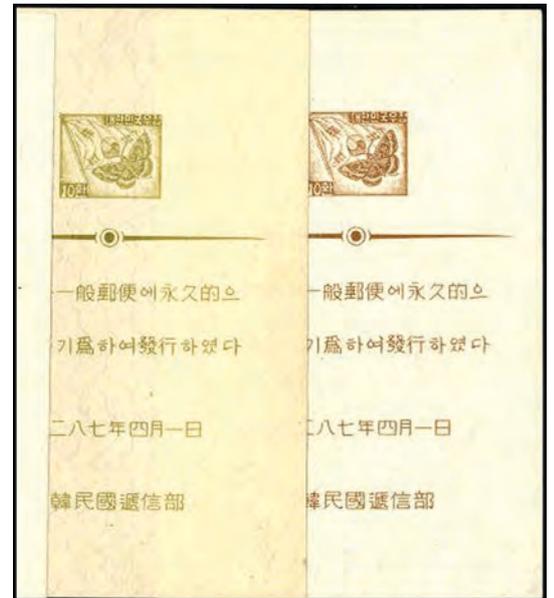


Figure 19. South Korea 1954 souvenir sheet with variety in green - the first souvenir sheet in the world with moth



Figure 21. Artwork of Mauritania 1988 with harmful moth.



Figure 20. Prestamped letter from Rome in 1844 depicting a silkworm on a postmark - the first in the world.

The author is always glad to share his experience and to help for philatelists with Lepidoptera theme in improving their philatelic collections. Please write by e-mail: [vladimirkachan@mail.ru](mailto:vladimirkachan@mail.ru). My post address: Vladimir Kachan, street Kulibina 9 - 49, Minsk-52, BY-220052, Republic of Belarus.



# Unusual postage stamps – A threat or a possibility for thematic philately?

**Postage stamps have been issued for over 180 years for satisfying postal needs and for appealing to general public. As early as the late 19th century, stamps began to appear for secondary purposes. Through the years, the postal administrations around the world were getting creative with the stamp designs and materials they were made from. Today more and more unique and innovative stamps are issued alongside conventional ones.**

TEXT & IMAGES JARI MAJANDER, AIJP

**F**or more than 180 years, postage stamps have been issued in different sizes, colours and shapes, printing them using various technologies and different materials. There are stamps published over time for a myriad of different postal purposes, many of which in the light of today are very unusual. On the other hand, there are also numerous unusual stamps whose size, shape or material have been chosen mainly to attract collectors and generate profit and sometimes even to support the national economy.

If you think of postage stamps issued for their primary purpose, i.e. for the payment of postage, it is clear that unusual sizes, shapes, printing methods and materials that do not make them easier to use or more suitable for their intended use are in principle unnecessary.

Postage stamps are less and less being used for their original purpose. Postal administrations worldwide face financial challenges. They have realised that there is still money to be made by issuing stamps. But instead of issuing ordinary stamps, they have decided to spice things up and come up with more unique and innovative issues. In this way they are also trying to engage a new generation of stamp collectors.

Today unusual stamps are issued worldwide. Many postal administrations have outsourced designing, manufacturing, marketing and sales activities of the stamps they issue, some more and others less. Between postal administrations there is nowadays also competition for who comes up first to publish new types of stamps that no longer have little to do with the payment of postage. This is despite that the Universal Postal Union (UPU) has defined ethical guidelines binding on all member countries [1] for the publication of stamps.

The main focus of this article is on unusual stamps that are among the first of their kind or have been published for other than postal reasons, such as the need to appeal to collectors.

However, in order to better understand the present, it is also worth going back in time and look at in what sizes, colours and shapes, and on what materials stamps have been printed before. There are many cases where such unusual stamps have also had actual postal need. Unusual examples of stamps can be found from all eras all over the world.

## The size of stamps

The size of postage stamps has varied surprisingly little over time. The size of stamps is mainly affected by their usability, sometimes by their postal purpose and most often for reasons other than postal. In general the usability of stamps is adversely affected in both extremes, when stamps are either too small or way too large.

Stamps can be regarded as unusual when they are either very small on the one hand or very large on the other. In some cases there has been a clear postal, financial or compulsory reason for issuing such stamps, however, the great majority of unusual stamps in this respect have been published for some other, such as commercial or political, reason.

The most common size of definitive stamps became established when the Penny Black was introduced in 1840 [Figure 1]. Initially, Rowland Hill specified that stamps should be 3/4 inch square, but finally altered the dimensions to 3/4 inch wide by 7/8 inch tall. This typical size (19 x 22 mm) was already in use in some of the revenue stamps issued before the Penny Black. At that time most definitive stamps depicted either coat of arms or portrait of the ruler, and the size was perfect for illustrating them.

When pictorial definitive stamps and commemorative stamps started to appear in the late 19th century, they were created in slightly larger size, which brought out more details in their diversified subjects. Also in later times, commemorative stamps have usually always been larger than the definitive stamps of the same era.



**Figure 1.** One penny black of the United Kingdom (1840).



**Figure 2.** 10c red from the first definitive series of Bolivar (1863/1866).

The **smallest stamps** in the classic era of philately were in use in the province of Bolivar in Colombia from 1863 to 1873. They were only 9.5 x 12.5 mm in size [Figure 2]. The 10c stamp could even be bisected and used as a 5c franking on a cover!

In 1856–1864 the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin issued stamps in size 24 x 24 mm [Figure 3], but they could be divided into four parts so that each had face value of just  $\frac{1}{4}$  shilling. These quarter stamps were therefore only 12 x 12 mm in size. Similar stamps were in use also in the Duchy of Brunswick (Braunschweig).



**Figure 3.** Mecklenburg-Schwerin Bull's head with crown stamps (1864) could be divided into four parts, each with face value  $\frac{1}{4}$  shilling.



**Figure 4.** Bantam stamps of South Africa (1941) are separated by straight-cut rouletting. To save paper, three stamps fit in the size of one.

Extra-small postage stamps have been published during the classic era not only in Colombia but also in Spain (1872–1877, newspaper stamps), the United Kingdom (1870, Queen Victoria in small format,  $\frac{1}{2}$  p), Victoria (1874, 1901 Queen Victoria with diadem,  $\frac{1}{2}$  p) and South Australia (1883, Queen Victoria in narrow format,  $\frac{1}{2}$  p). The reason for the small size of these stamps is clearly postal: their face value was less than the face value of any other stamp issued so far in the country.

The so called Bantam series was published in South Africa in 1942–44. Bantam is a nickname for *small-breed poultry*. There was a shortage of paper during the Second World War, so for economic reasons the stamps are just 24 x 13 mm in size. Three stamps could be printed using the paper normally used for one. The Bantam stamps of South Africa were published in two languages, English and Afrikaans.

Some postal tax stamps, such as Notopfer Berlin 1948–49 [Figure 5], Nicaragua 1949–59 and Colombia 1940–51, were also much smaller than normal stamps. They were used to collect a small payment of a compulsory tax on mailing letters and parcels. The small size made it easy to affix an extra stamp to an envelope.

In Italy small packet post stamps came into use in 1914. These se-tenant stamps were designed so that one of the stamps (“Sul bollettino”) remained on the parcel’s shipping form and travelled with the parcel, and the other (“Sulla ricevuta”) was affixed to the sender’s receipt [Figure 6].

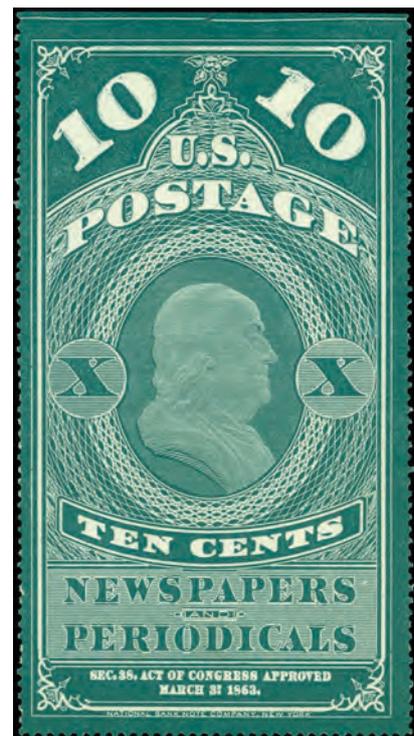


**Figure 5.** Postal tax stamp (“Notopfer”) to collect 2 pf to benefit the West Berlin population in 1948–1954.



**Figure 6.** Italian se-tenant packet post stamp of 1914–1917, the left part intended for parcel and the right part as sender’s receipt.

Very small stamps are philatelic curiosities of their own, but unusual stamps can be found also at the other extreme. The **largest stamps** of the classic era appeared in the United States in 1865: newspaper stamps in three denominations, 5, 10, and 25 cent [Figure 7]. Their size is 51 x 95 mm. Large size was necessary because the stamps paid postage for broadsheet-sized or even larger newspapers. They had to be as visible as possible, so they were also colourful.



**Figure 7.** 10c newspaper stamp issued in the United States in 1865. It was intended for paying postage of newspapers and periodicals.



**Figure 8.** 10 Cts. express letter stamp issued by Imperial Post of China in 1906. With a rare specimen overprint. The size is 248 x 70 mm.

Large stamps were issued by the Imperial Post and the Republic of China for domestic express mail in 1905–1916. The largest of them is 248 x 70 mm [Figure 8]. They are divided into four or five parts separated by perforations, acting as postage stamps, counterparts of both originating and receiving post offices, and sender's receipts. These stamps have an image of either a dragon or a goose. Having so many parts, each with a particular postal role, obviously increases the size of the complete entity.

In the 1960s and 1970s, large postage stamps were also issued in the Soviet Union, the largest of them in 1962 depicting the cosmonauts Gagarin, Titov, Nikolaev and Popov, the size of which is 150 x 70 mm. It is similar to a miniature sheet, but perforated throughout, printed and issued in sheets (2 x 4). This and many other stamps of the era were issued for propaganda purposes. The Cold War had already lasted several rounds at that time.

American philatelist and businessman Finbar B. Kenny published large stamps for the sheikhdoms, including Fujeira and Ajman, in the early 1970s, but they are not considered postal. The largest stamp (81 x 147 mm) commemorated the landing of Apollo on the Moon.

In 1984, Guatemala published a series of airmail stamps depicting cultivation of coffee [Figure 9]. The two highest-value stamps in the series are large, measuring 86 x 112 mm and 105 x 75 mm. The purpose of these airmail stamps was to market Guatemalan coffee abroad.



**Figure 9.** Guatemala's climate and volcanic soil creates ideal conditions for the cultivation of coffee. Guatemala regularly publishes stamps to market the coffee grown and brewed there. In 1984, a series of nine airmail stamps was issued, the two highest values are particularly large.

Here are some other particularly large stamps:

*20th Anniversary of the GDR* (GDR 1969); *Literature - Outlaws of the Marsh* (P.R. China 1987–1997); *Literature - Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (P.R. China 1988–1998); *Cocori (Children's Story)* (Costa Rica 2003); *Treasures from the Archives* (Australia 2004–2005); *The 25th Session of Arabian Gulf States Co-operation Supreme Council* (Bahrain 2004); *World Day Of The Blind* (Oman 2004); *Peace Mandala* (Mongolia 2004); *World's Tallest Tree - The Yellow Meranti* (Malaysia 2020); *500th Anniversary of Ferdinand Magellan's Discovery of the Philippines* (Philippines 2021).

Of these, the Peace Mandala stamp [Figure 10] issued by Mongolia in 2004 is one of the largest (135 x 186 mm). It is difficult to see a non-commercial purpose for the issuance of such large stamps. The competition for the questionable honour of the world's largest stamp is likely to continue.

## The colours of stamps

The evolution of the colours of stamps is closely linked to the evolution of printing methods, however the different denominations of stamps are also typically distinguished by different printing col-



**Figure 10.** Mongolia issued a large self-adhesive miniature sheet visualizing Buddhist life in a mandala in 2004. It contains an extra-large stamp illustrated above. The size of the stamp is 135 x 186 mm. The centre part of the stamp is similar to the world's largest Peace Mandala (76 x 46 m) proposed in Ulanbaatar in 2004.

ours. In the beginning postage stamps were **monochromatic**, such as the Penny Black and the Two Pence Blue of 1840. The colours were chosen differently so that the postman could quickly distinguish the stamps from each other. However, a red cancellation was hard to see on the black design and the red ink was easy to remove, which made it possible to re-use cancelled stamps. In February 1841, the Penny Red replaced the Penny Black, and black ink was used for cancellations instead.

As early as 1843 the cantonal stamps of Zürich were printed in **two colours**, black and red. Two years later the Swiss canton of Basel issued the beautiful Basel Dove [Figure 11] in **three colours**: crimson, black and blue. It was the first tri-coloured stamp in the world. Creating tricolour stamps was demanding because every colour had to be printed separately. The Basel Dove is also unusual, because it features a white embossed dove carrying a letter in its beak.



**Figure 11.** The world's first tri-colour stamp, the Basel Dove, issued by the Swiss canton of Basel on 1 July 1845, the only stamp issued by Basel.



**Figure 12.** Multi-coloured charity stamp of New South Wales (1897) with specimen overprint. The face value was 2 1/2 pence and the sale price was as much as 2 shillings 6 pence.

**Multi-coloured** stamps with more than three colours had to wait longer. The New South Wales stamp from 1897 [Figure 12] is one of the first multi-coloured stamps in the world. The sale of the charity stamps raised funds for the construction of hospitals - the selling price was many times the postage.

The member states of the Universal Postal Union agreed in 1878 on the use of **standard colours** in foreign mail. Green was for printed matter, red for postcards and blue for letters. Practice was made compulsory by the UPU Congress in 1897. Initially, the member states complied well, but difficulties increased in the 1930s and the order was abandoned in 1952.

Sometimes attention has been sought by using **metallic colours**. The earliest example in the classic era can be found in Switzerland. The 60 cent and one franc stamps of the 1826 Sitting Helvetia definitive series were printed in copper and gold, re-

spectively. Metallic colours were considered to bring more appreciation to higher values. The first stamps printed completely in metallic colour were the highest drachma values of the Greek Hermes definitive series of 1901: 2 Dr in bronze, 3 Dr in silver and 5 Dr in gold [Figure 13].



**Figure 13.** High drachma values of the Greek Hermes definitive series of 1901 completely printed in metallic colours for the first time in the world.

Later, stamps have also been printed on metallic foils, we will return to this later when talking about various materials on which stamps have been and are being printed.

Today, the vast majority of the new stamps are multi-coloured. Multiple colours do no longer incur significant additional costs in the production of stamps. On the other hand, also single and two-colour stamps are still being published, in particular as definitive stamps.

## Postage stamp gum

The Penny Black was the first adhesive stamp with gum applied to the back of the stamp. The gum used consisted of wheat starch and acacia. The gums used in postage stamps have varied over time from gum arabic to synthetic modern formulations, but the principle has remained the same: gum is moistened before the stamp is affixed to a mailable item.

However, in China almost all stamps were issued **ungummed** in 1940–1959. Glue jars were available at post office counters. Either customers themselves or postal clerks adhered the stamps on the envelope. This was done mostly in countries with extreme tropical climates. The high humidity literally made gums rot while the stamps were waiting to be used.

During World War II the gum shortage escalated and in many places, such as the Indochina region from 1941 to 1944, stamps were issued un gummed. Immediately after World War II, the stamps in the Allied occupied territories of Germany were only **partially gummed** (so-called economy gum, in German *Spargummi*).

The gum commonly used in stamps is made of dextrin or gum arabic, which tastes unpleasant. In 1955–1956, the Deutsche Bundespost conducted experiments with some stamps containing gum flavoured with peppermint!

**Self-adhesive** postage stamps with a separate backing paper came into use for the first time in Sierra Leone in 1964 and Tonga followed in 1969. The self-adhesive stamps for Sierra Leone were made by an English manufacturer specializing in self-adhesive stickers and tapes, Samuel Jones and Co [Figure 14]. These stamps did not see significant postal use in Sierra Leone. In Tonga, the introduction of self-adhesive stamps had a good reason: in humid climate traditional gum-coated stamps tended to stick to each other.



**Figure 14.** The world's first self-adhesive stamps were published in Sierra Leone in 1964. The stamps are diecut following the outline of the map of Sierra Leone. The background paper shows the printer of the stamps.

In the United States self-adhesive stamps were first tested in 1974 [Figure 15]. Preparing the first self-adhesive stamp proved to be too expensive. Later it was found that the rubber-based gum used in the stamps caused brown spots on stamps and also on envelopes.



**Figure 15.** The Christmas stamp issued in the United States in 1974 is self-adhesive and has die cut slits to make it harder to peel off from an envelope, therefore making it more difficult to fraudulently re-use the stamp.

Peel-and-stick stamps became widespread throughout the world in the 1990s. Today, a considerable number of new stamps are published as self-adhesives. They have been well received by the public – after all they are much easier to use than traditional water-activated stamps.

## The perforations of stamps

The first stamps were imperforate, so they had to be removed from the sheets either by tearing or cutting with scissors. Over time there has been many different ways to ease separation of stamps. Since 1850 (the Penny Red), the perforation has been one of the most distinctive features of traditional stamps.

The serpentine rouletted stamps of Finland (definitive models 1860 and 1866) were separated by small cuts in the paper instead of perforation holes, a method completely different from perforation. A simpler straight-cut rouletting was used in the South African Bantam stamps [Figure 4].

To provide additional strength for use in vending machines, **interrupted perforations** are missing selected perforation holes, leaving a larger-size bridge than normal. Such coil stamps were in use e.g. in Danzig (1924–1933) and the Netherlands (1926–1939).

In some countries, such as Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, it was common to produce both perforated and imperforate stamps, especially to arouse the interest of collectors. There was no postal need at all for such imperforate co-issues.

Although there are many different types of perforations, the perforation itself has rarely been the primary means of attracting interest. Recently a novelty type of perforation has appeared, the so called **syncopated perforations**. The syncopated perforation on a stamp is interrupted with holes of different sizes or shapes at regular intervals. Syncopated perforations exist at least with the following shapes: ellipses, stars, hearts, maple leaves, bones, and dinosaurs [Figure 16]. Portugal has continued using the Cross of Portugal (aka Order of Christ Cross) as an “interrupter” since 2007 [Figure 17].



**Figure 16.** In 2017, China Post issued two miniature sheets featuring *Chinese Dinosaurs* with different dinosaur-shaped syncopated perforations. The smaller image above shows one of the design perforations on the reverse.



**Figure 17.** Two examples of novelty syncopated perforations: maple leaf -shaped syncopated perforation in *Big Cats*<sup>BL</sup> (Canada 2005, joint issue with China) and the Portuguese Cross in the *100th Anniversary of the Museu Nacional de Arte* (Portugal 2011).

Syncopated perforations may also be applied as a security device. In the 1990s, some countries began adding large oval-shaped holes to the perforations on opposite sides, as an anti-counterfeiting measure.

Sometimes **false perforations** have been printed on imperforate stamps. Previously mentioned Finbar B. Kenny made some stamps with embossed perforation for the sheikhdoms (Ajman, Manama). Obviously there was no postal need for such issues.

Because perforating stamps is a long-standing tradition, self-adhesive stamps with wavy cuts that **mimic perforation** have become common. They can be identified by looking at the edges of the stamp with a magnifying glass: in real perforations, the paper fiber is torn at each tooth, while the imitated perforations are perfectly smooth.



**Figure 18.** Swedish poet and musician Carl Michael Bellman on the 2014 coil stamp of Sweden. It has an imitated perforation typical for self-adhesive stamps today. The stamp has several security features which make counterfeiting and re-use more difficult, such as microtext printing, special inks and die cut slits. It was expensive to produce this stamp, therefore the face value is higher than normal.

In order to prevent counterfeiting, security features, such as security perforation, die cut slits [Figure 18] and optically variable ink have been added to stamps. Such anti-counterfeiting security features therefore also have a postal significance.

## Unusually shaped stamps

The most traditional shape of a stamp is a **rectangle**. This shape was defined already before the first postage stamp was issued, because the revenue stamps at that time were also rectangles. The first stamps of some countries, such as Finland, were oval. However, they were commonly cut into rectangles.

The first **polygonal stamps** were introduced in England in 1847 and in India in 1854, but they were also commonly cut into rectangles.

**Triangular stamps** of the Cape of Good Hope from 1853–1864 are among the most famous stamps of the classic era of philately. According to legend, these stamps were made triangular in shape because they should at first glance stand out from the English stamps of the time. Newfoundland also issued a triangular stamp in 1857, but otherwise they did not gain much popularity in the Commonwealth.



**Figure 19.** Cape of Good Hope 4d blue triangular stamp printed on white paper, issued in 1855.

Tip down triangular stamps were published in Latvia (1921, 1928, 1932 and 1933) and Iceland (30 øre airmail stamp from 1930).

**Diamond** had been a fairly popular shape of the Russian local Zemstvo stamps [Figure 20], as well as the late 19th century German city stamps. However, the first diamond shaped stamps were issued in Nova Scotia and Brunswick already in 1851. The



**Figure 20.** Imperforate diamond-shaped Zemstvo stamp of Volchansk issued in 1872. Very few stamps were used and only 9 stamps are known to exist with postmarks.

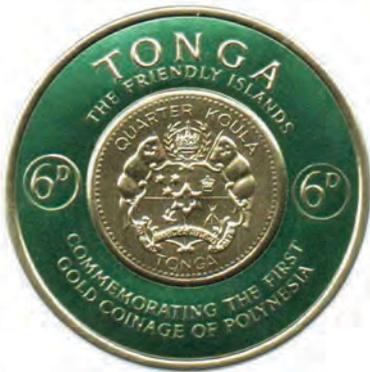
subjects of these issues were heraldic flowers and the crown of the empire.

Tannu Tuva issued a few series of large triangular and diamond-shaped pictorial stamps with domestic animals, nomadic life and local scenes in 1934–1936 [Figure 21]. These stamps were printed in Moscow, had very limited postal use in Tannu Tuva, and were sold mainly to collectors. Triangular and diamond-shaped stamps became widespread throughout the world in the 1960s.



**Figure 21.** The Tannu Tuva diamond-shaped postage stamp from 1934 was sold mainly to foreign collectors to raise foreign currency.

An all-round postage stamp has also been an early invention. Some U.S. postage stamps were round as early as the 1840s, for them the apparent model was the round postmarks of the time. In the 19th century, round stamps were also used in India and Afghanistan.

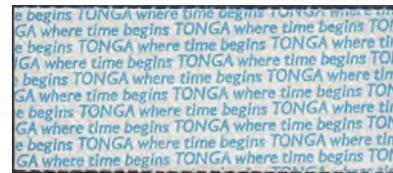


**Figure 22.** An all-round Tongan stamp printed on metal foil, from a series celebrating the first gold coins in Polynesia in 1963. In the center of the stamp is an embossed image of a Tongan gold coin. The shape of the stamp is suitable for coins.

Tonga issued all-round stamps - the so-called beer glass mats - in 1963 to celebrate the issuance of Polynesia's first gold coins [Figure 22]. The stamps feature an embossed image on the gold foil and there are three different sizes, the highest nominal value having the largest diameter (80 mm). Two years later the stamps were re-released as surcharged with new values. Another series of the same type, showing coins and printed on metal foil, was released in 1967.

The production of Tongan stamps has been unique in many ways since 1963. In 1964, stamps were issued in the shape of the heart and a map of the main island of Tongatapu and also printed on metal foil.

Between 1969 and 1985 Tongan stamps were invariably issued in self-adhesive die-cut format, allowing for a completely free form. So you can find Tongan stamps from that era in shapes of banana, coconut, pineapple, watermelon, six-pointed star, crown, cross, scout emblem (fleur-de-lis), in the form of an oil tower and a medal [Figure 23].



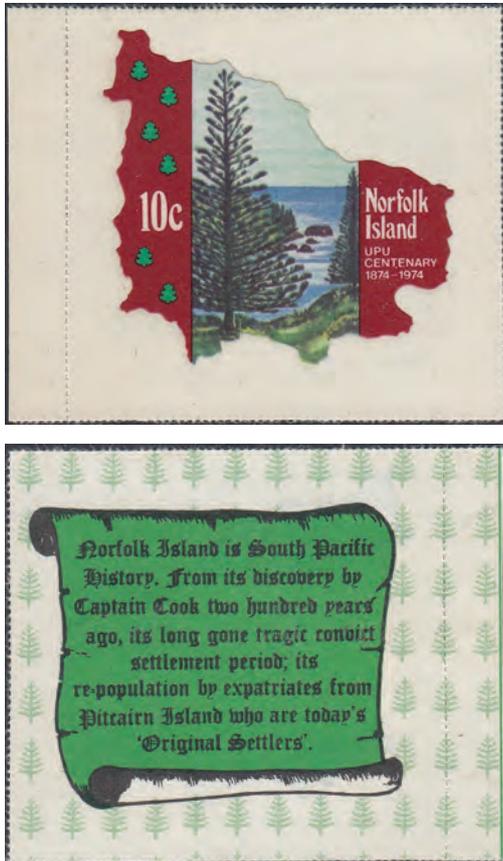
**Figure 23.** Self-adhesive official stamps in the form of bananas and coconuts were issued in Tonga in 1970, 1972 and 1978. The 1970 stamps are affixed to a backing paper repeatedly marked “TONGA, where time begins”.



**Figure 24.** A self-adhesive stamp cut in the shape of an open jewelry box. Issued in Sierra Leone in 1970. At that time most of the country's gems were being sold abroad illegally.

In Sierra Leone, special-shaped self-adhesive stamps were issued from 1964 to 1971. The shapes used in the Sierra Leone stamps were e.g. cola nuts, country map, coat of arms, diamond, eagle, map of Africa, anvil and opened jewelry box [Figure 25].

Norfolk Island issued self-adhesive stamps shaped as the island from 1974 to 1978 [Figure 26].



**Figure 26.** The Norfolk Island self-adhesive stamp of 1974 has taken shape from the outline of the island. The background paper tells about the history of the Norfolk Island.

These are some examples of the shapes of the early self-adhesive stamps. Today the range of different shapes is certainly much more abundant. There are stamps with innovative shapes, such as butterfly, cobweb, tree leaf, sea shell, starfish, heart, diamond, tortoise, banderole, fan, coffee cup, bottle, shirt, puzzle pieces, water drop and Star of David.

Conventionally perforated stamps have been published in the shape of an irregular polygon, although it is no longer very easy to remove such stamps from entire sheets.

Malta issued Christmas stamps in various shapes in the late 1960s. The 1967 Christmas stamps [Figure 27] were trapezoidal in shape and the following year they were shaped into irregular polygons. The stamps were printed in sheets arranged in rows upside-down relative to each other. Early trapezoidal and traditionally perforated stamps were issued also in Malaysia in the late 1960s and 1970s.



**Figure 27.** Malta's 1968 Christmas stamps are in the shape of an irregular pentagon. They were published as sheets with the stamps arranged head-to-tail (tête-bêche).

In 1969, Gibraltar issued stamps whose perforations follow the shape of the famous Rock of Gibraltar [Figure 28]. In addition, they are also perforated in the shape of a traditional rectangle, i.e. they are intentionally partly double perforated.



**Figure 28.** Gibraltar gained autonomy with the new constitution in 1969. It was celebrated with a series of four stamps whose perforation follows the outline of the Rock of Gibraltar.



**Figure 29.** An all-around stamp issued in Singapore in 1978. To ease detaching stamps from the sheets, they were completely double perforated.

Also, round stamps are often perforated twice to allow the stamps to be easily removed from sheets: the inner perforation is circular and the outer is square. Examples are the Singapore issues of 1978 and 1980–1983 celebrating the submarine cable connection between Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines [Figure 29], and the definitive stamps of New Zealand depicting kiwis (1988–2002). Later, stamps with double perforated hearts (*St. Valentine Day*, France 1999–) and ovals (French Andorra 2007) have also been issued.

It is clear that traditional perforation becomes almost impossible when the stamps are made completely free-form. As noted above, self-adhesive stamps generally are die-cut, meaning that the stamps themselves are cut entirely apart, held together only the backing paper. Therefore self-adhesive stamps no longer need to be perforated in order to be detached from each other.

## Unusual printing materials

Paper is by far the most common and inexpensive printing material for stamps. Fibers such as wood, bark, straw and certain grasses are used to make paper. The paper is made from compacted cellulose pulp, to which linen or cotton is added to increase durability. The paper can be coated in various ways, which improves the reproduction of tones. Coated papers are have a very smooth surface, which makes it easier to print on them.

Special coatings (such as chalked surface and phosphor-coating), watermarks and silk threads set in the stamp paper have been used as security features to discourage counterfeiting. Silk-threaded paper was in use already in the Mulready stationeries in 1840. In postage stamps the same means were used in the United Kingdom (1847–1854), Bavaria (1849–1868) and Switzerland (1854–1862). The Swiss Seated Helvetia definitive stamps (Strubel) were printed on paper with silk threads dyed blue, red or green.

The thickness and other properties of the paper used to make stamps have varied over time. In 1862, prepayment of postage became obligatory and gold was discovered in New Zealand, suddenly increasing demand for stamp paper. Due to lack of watermarked paper, the Chalon Heads of New Zealand were also printed on brittle, semi-transparent pelure paper, the thinnest paper used for stamp printing.



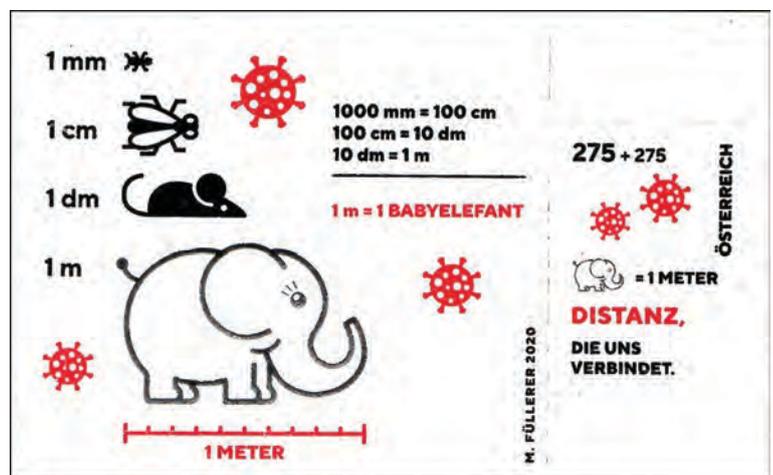
**Figure 30.** Arirang is lyrical folk music. Stamps issued in South Korea in 2004 were printed on traditional handmade Hanji paper. Hanji is known throughout Asia for its white colour tone and excellent durability.

The thickest papers in use have been cardboard papers, as in 10, 15 and 20 kopecks stamps printed in November 1915 in Russia. They were used mainly as a substitute for silver coins, but also to some extent as postage stamps.

The shortage of actual stamp paper also led to the use of other unusual papers, such as sugar sack paper (British Guiana 1856), rice paper (El Salvador 1889), blue lined 'exercise book paper' (Ecuador 1872, Mexico 1884–1887), postal accounting forms (Oaxaca 1915), German military maps, cigarette papers and unfinished banknotes (Latvia 1918–1919) and French blue banknote paper (Guernsey 1942). Stamps of the Polish prisoner of war camps (1941–1944) were printed on all kinds of available paper – cardboard boxes, wood chips and even toilet paper.

In addition to conventional machine-made stamp paper, handmade and other specialty papers have also been used to make stamps. Here are some recent examples of using traditional handmade and other specialty papers as stamp material:

- **Hanji paper:** *Arirang – Lyrical Folk Music* (South Korea 2014) [Figure 30].
- **Xuan paper:** *Historical Calligraphy*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2010–2011); *Ci of the Song Dynasty*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2012); *Bronze Phoenix Lantern*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2016).
- **Washi paper:** *150 Years of Japan's Modern Postal Service*<sup>BL</sup> (Japan 2021).
- **Parchment paper:** *Homage to Franklin D. Roosevelt*<sup>BL</sup> (Brasil 1949); *500th Anniversary of the World's First Circumnavigation* (Portugal, Spain 2019).
- **Chrome paper:** *50th Anniversary of the Moon Landing* (United States 2019).



**Figure 31.** An Austrian miniature sheet issued in 2020 for the Combat Corona Campaign. Coronavirus unleashed a worldwide frenzy of toilet-paper buying, which inspired Austrian Post to print this miniature sheet on toilet paper.

• **Wood paper:** *Discoverers of Oceania* (Spain 2017–2021).

• **Rock paper:** *Inland Explorers*<sup>BL</sup> (500<sup>EX</sup>, Australia 2012); *Caves*<sup>BL</sup> (250<sup>EX</sup>, Australia 2017).

• **Toilet paper:** *Combat Corona Campaign*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2020) [Figure 31].

• **Recycled paper:** *Liberty Torch* (USA 1991); *Tropical Plants*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (USA 1999); *Forest Fire Prevention*<sup>BL</sup> (Brazil 1999) [Figure 94]; *Environment Charter* (France 2005); *International Year of Biodiversity*<sup>BL</sup> (South Africa 2010); *Flora* (Morocco 2010); *Green Post* (Finland 2010); *Green Living*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2011).

A new look was sought for the stamps from unusual materials as early as the late 1950s. In 1958, a miniature sheet was issued in Hungary on the occasion of the FIP Congress in Brussels [Figure 32]. The block was printed on wax cloth.



**Figure 32.** A Hungarian miniature sheet from 1958 is printed on wax cloth. It has four triangular shaped stamps that are imperforate at the bottom.



**Figure 33.** Polish Post's 400th anniversary issue from 1958 is printed on silk fabric in lithographic printing. The miniature sheet is imperforate and un gummed.



**Figure 34.** An imperforate and un gummed miniature sheet issued in East Germany in 1963. It was printed in offset lithography on dederon (polyamide) fabric, the slight deformation of which caused oblique angles to the miniature sheets. So the oblique sheet cuttings are normal for this issue!

In screen printing or serigraphy, the printing surface does not need not be in compression and need not be flat. Thus, it is suitable for printing on a wide variety of materials, such as silk fabric. There are some stamps and miniature sheets printed on genuine silk fabric [Figure 33] and, in order to save costs, artificial silk (rayon) or silk laminated on paper. Some examples of stamps printed on genuine silk:

• **Silk:** *400th Anniversary of Polish Post*<sup>BL</sup> (Poland 1958) [Figure 33]; *Winner of "Miss World" Competition*<sup>BL</sup> (Grenada 1971); *Italian Silk Industry*<sup>STATIONERY</sup> (Italy 2001); *450th Anniversary of Polish Post*<sup>BL</sup> (Poland 2008) [Figure 35]; *Chinese Lunar New Year* (Hong Kong 2012–2021); *Liechtenstein Palace, Vienna*<sup>BL</sup> (Liechtenstein 2013); *50th Anniversary of the Birth of King Mohammed VI*<sup>BL</sup> (Morocco 2013); *Aga Khan Award for Architecture*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2013); *130th Anniversary of Macao Post*<sup>BL</sup> (Macao 2014); *80th Anniversary of the FSPL* (Luxemburg 2014); *Ancient Chinese Paintings - Qing Dynasty*<sup>BL</sup> (Taiwan 2015); *Queen*



**Figure 35.** In keeping with tradition the 450th anniversary issue of the Polish Post was also printed on silk, but this time with screen printing technology, which gives excellent results.

*Elizabeth II* (Jersey 2015); *Olympic Games*<sup>BL</sup> (Colombia 2016); *Traditional Costumes*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2017).

As for the special printing materials of the stamps, Bhutan cannot be ignored. Between 1967 and 1975,



**Figure 36.** Thangka (literally “saved message”) is a traditional Tibetan religious painting used in meditation. The Bhutanese stamp, issued in 1969, is printed on silk laminated on paper. Bhutan issued silk stamps also in 2021, but due to religious aspects, they cannot be used for postage, as informed by the postal directorate.



**Figure 37.** A self-adhesive miniature sheet of Bhutan issued in 1971 was printed on molded plastic, the first of its kind in the world. It features world famous archaeological finds, but not directly related to Bhutan.

several dozen series of stamps printed on silk laminated on paper [Figure 36], metal foil, plastic laminate, and molded plastic were published in Bhutan.

In several series, a three-dimensional or oil-painting-like surface has been provided for the embossed plastic laminate. Strangest looking are 3D stamps made entirely of molded plastic, which appeared in Bhutan in 1971 [Figure 37].

In 1973, several special stamp sets were prepared for publication in Bhutan. The series of scout stamps containing liquid crystal gel eventually went unpublished, but a small number of stamps ended up in philatelic merchants before the release date.

Bhutan’s screen-printed “Talking stamps” issue in 1973 [Figure 38] consisted of a series of self-adhesive stamps laminated with vinyl disks containing recordings of Bhutanese history and national anthems in both Dzongkhan and English languages. The stamps are playable like vinyl records.



**Figure 38.** The 1973 Bhutan stamp series is playable as 33  $\frac{1}{3}$  RPM audio discs. The stamps are made in screen printing by laminating a disc made of polyvinyl chloride on the backing paper. The diameter of the audio discs is either 6 or 10 cm (2.5 or 4 inches).

The Bhutan stamp program was set up specifically to raise money to improve Bhutan’s infrastructure. Early 3D stamps printed on laminated plastic surfaces were issued in Bhutan 1967–1975 on popular themes such as space conquest, butterflies, aquarium fish, insects, birds, mammals, paintings, classic cars and fungi. They were created by Burt Todd, an American entrepreneur and founder of the Bhutan Stamp Agency, who designed, printed and sold the stamps to the international market. Similar stamps were also created for the sheikhdoms by Finbar B. Kenny in the early 1970s. These stamps were issued mainly to attract collectors.

Tongan stamps printed on metal foil were mentioned earlier. However, Tonga was not the first country to issue stamps printed on **metal foil**. The aluminum foil coating was first used in 1955. One value in the Hungarian 1950 airmail stamp series was reissued in 1955 to honour the International Conference on Light Metals, this time coated with aluminum foil [Figure 39].



**Figure 39.** The world's first stamp printed on thin aluminium foil was issued by Hungary in 1955 for the International Conference on Light Metals. It is a re-issue of the airmail stamp issued 5 years earlier.

A similar stamp printed on aluminium foil was also issued by the Soviet Union on 17 October 1961 to celebrate successful spaceflights [Figure 40]. Six days later, the same stamp was released again as overprinted to commemorate the 22nd Communist Party Congress. Spaceflights brought glory to the Communist Party! In the Soviet Union stamps printed on metal foil appeared also in 1965 and 1976, the latter partly in gold, also celebrating the Communist Party Congress.

Early postal administrations that have used metal foils in stamps are also Sierra Leone, Bhutan and the Sheikdoms. These experiments were short-term. They were printed by an English stamp printing press Walsall Security Printers. The highest number of stamps printed on metal foil was issued by the countries of the French Commonwealth in 1969–1971. They were produced by the French companies Bocard and Société Pierre Marotte.

The first gold foil stamp was issued by Gabon in memory of Dr. Albert Schweitzer in 1965. Tonga used palladium foil in the 1967 *Coronation* set. Bolivia issued six different souvenir sheets printed on a tin foil in 1986. The only stamp printed on a bronze foil is by Paraguay in 1987. Canada issued stamps printed on a platinum foil in 1998–2002.

In a few rare cases, printing on a metal foil is somehow related to the purpose of the stamp issuance, as in Hungary 1955 [Figure 39]. In 1969, Bhutan issued a series of stamps printed on an extremely thin stainless steel foil depicting the manufacture of steel.

**Figure 40.** The Soviet Union celebrated successful spaceflights and the 22nd Communist Party Congress in 1961. This stamp printed on aluminium foil was not embossed.



Today, stamps printed on metal foils such as gold, gilt, silver, bronze and copper, are numerous. Whereas the 'foil' is laminated with plastics or paper, the 'leaf' is made with real metal. **Metal leaf** is a very thin sheet of metal. Stamps printed on real gold or silver are obviously expensive to produce:

- **Silver:** *The End of Gold Standard* (Netherlands 2001); *Pontificate of John Paul II* (Polish-Vatican joint issue 2003); *Albert II and Leopold I* (Belgium 2005); *Marianne* (France 2006); *Marianne and Europe* (France 2008); *FIFA World Cup* (France 2010); *Rugby World Cup* (France 2011); *Piet Hein* (Netherlands 2011); *Handball* (France 2012); *Centenary of the Republic of Estonia* (45 000<sup>EX</sup> Estonia, 2018); *100 Years of the First Olympic Gold for Estonia* (10 000<sup>EX</sup> Estonia 2020) [Figure 41].

- **Gold:** *350th Anniversary of the Death of Rembrandt van Rijn* (3500<sup>EX</sup> Netherlands 2019); *End of World War II* (500<sup>EX</sup> Netherlands 2020); *Dutch East Indies* (Netherlands 2020); *250th Anniversary of the Birth of Ludwig van Beethoven* (Sint Maarten 2020); *Queen Máxima* (500<sup>EX</sup> Sint Maarten 2020, 500<sup>EX</sup> Bonaire 2021); *Hugo de Groot* (1500<sup>EX</sup> Netherlands 2021); *Art - Girl with Pearl Earring, by Johannes Vermeer* (Saba 2021) [Figure 41].



**Figure 41.** An Estonian stamp printed on silver, issued in 2020. Weightlifter Alfred Neuland was the first Estonian to win Olympic gold. *Girl with Pearl Earring* in the stamp printed on 24 carat gold, limited edition for Saba, the Caribbean Netherlands.

Stamps have been printed also on other special materials, such as wood, cork, leather, transparent films and plastic. Here are some examples of regular and limited edition stamps and miniature sheets<sup>BL</sup> printed on special materials:



**Figure 42.** The Swiss stamp, issued in 2004, was printed on wood from 120-year-old Swiss fir trees. The thickness of the stamp is only 0.7 mm.



**Figure 44.** The Portuguese self-adhesive stamp, issued in 2007, was printed on thinly sliced cork only 0.35 mm thick. Every stamp is unique due to the cellular nature of the cork. Portugal accounts for more than 30% of the world cork production.

- **Wood:** *22nd Anniversary of Independence*<sup>BL</sup> (Gabon 1982); *50th Anniversary of Air France*<sup>BL</sup> (Djibouti 1983); *Universal Postal Congress*<sup>BL</sup> (Gabon 1984); *200th Anniversary of the Birth of John J. Audubon*<sup>BL</sup> (Djibouti 1985); *Albrecht Dürer Commemoration* (Paraguay 1986); *Fight against Leprosy*<sup>BL</sup> (Djibouti 1987); *Wedding of Japan's Crown Prince Naruhito with Masako Owada*<sup>BL</sup> (Djibouti 1994); *Swiss Wood* (Switzerland 2004) [Figure 42]; *Basilica di S. Vincenzo in Galliano* (Italy 2007); *Flora and Fauna - Durrell and Darwin* (Jersey 2017); *20th Anniversary of the Austrian Federal Forests - Oak Tree* (Austria 2017); *Elm Trees of Our Lady of Belen, Cabeza de Buey* (Spain 2020); *100th Anniversary of Järvselja Nature Reserve*<sup>BL</sup> (Estonia 2021) [Figure 43].

- **Cork:** *The Cork Industry* (Portugal 2007) [Figure 44]; *Bicentenary of Independence* (Ecuador 2009); *International Year of the Forest*<sup>STATIONERY</sup> (Portugal 2011).

- **Rubber:** *200th Anniversary of the Birth of Cosme García Sáez* (Spain 2018) [Figure 45].



**Figure 43.** An Estonian partially rounded miniature sheet was issued in 2021. It was printed on wood and respects the primeval forest conservation area of Järvselja, which was established in 1924. The natural size of the block is 120 x 72 mm.



**Figure 45.** An embossed Spanish stamp honoring Spanish inventor Cosme García Sáez has been printed on rubber (2018). It is the world's first stamp printed on rubber. In addition to the silhouette of the inventor, the stamp features a sketch of a submersible.



**Figure 46.** The Austrian stamp, issued in 2015, is printed on leather. In addition, six small Swarovski crystals have been added to the stamp.



**Figure 47.** The world's first stamp "printed" on a porcelain plate, Austria 2016. Porcelain has been burned three times to ensure bright colours and to improve contrast. The rose is the emblem of Vienna Porcelain.



**Figure 48.** A postage stamp issued by the Austrian Post in 2016 with the image printed in reverse on the back of the glass. In the stamp the Virgin Mary holds the dead Jesus in his arms.

• **Leather:** *Alpine Lederhosen* (Austria 2015); *Leather Embossers* (Spain 2021) [Figure 46].

• **Pottery:** *Augarten Porcelain – Rose of Vienna* (Austria 2014) [Figure 47].

• **Glass:** *Pietà and Cross* (Austria 2016) [Figure 48].

• **Embroidered fabric:** *St. Gallen Embroidery* (Switzerland 2000) [Figure 49]; *Arte Del Merletto Lacework* (Italy 2004) [Figure 50]; *Edelweiss* (Austria 2005); *Clusius 'gentian* (Austria 2008); *National Costumes – Dirndl* (Austria 2016); *140th Anniversary of the First Postage Stamp of San Marino* (San Marino 2017) [Figure 49]; *Styrian Hat* (Austria 2018) [Figure 51]; *90th Anniversary of the Vatican City State* (Vatican City 2019); *300th Anniversary of the Principality* (Liechtenstein 2019); *FFP2 Mask – COVID-19* (Austria 2021).

• **Other fabrics:** *100th Anniversary of FIFA* (Singapore 2004); *50th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations with China* (Afghanistan 2005); *Mahatma Gandhi*<sup>BL</sup> (India 2011); *80th Anniversary of the FSPL*<sup>BL</sup> (Luxembourg 2014); *Final Panel of the Bayeux Tapestry*<sup>BL</sup> (Alderney 2014); *Queen Elizabeth II – Longest Reigning Monarch in British History*<sup>BL</sup> (Jersey 2015); *50th Anniversary of the Canadian Flag*<sup>BL</sup> (Canada 2015); *Portuguese Textile Industry*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2017); *150th Anniversary of the Birth of Mahatma Gandhi*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2019); *150th anniversary of the Song Festival*<sup>BL</sup> (Estonia 2019); *Chinese Lunar Year* (Hong Kong 2019); *Commitment to Art* (Switzerland 2021).

• **Transparent plastic film:** *Ice Crystal* (Finland 2008) [Figure 52]; *2nd Arab Stamp Exhibition* (UAE 2009); *Valentine's Day* (France 2012); *International Year of Crystallography*<sup>BL</sup> (joint issue of Belgium and Slovenia 2014); *Christmas Stained Glass*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2015) [Figure 52]; *The Five Senses* (Ireland 2015); *Etihad Museum* (UAE 2016); *Spanish cinema – Malaga Film Festival*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2017); *Traditional Trades – Stained Glass Artists* (Spain 2018); *Christmas* (Luxembourg 2018); *75th Anniversary of National Identity Document* (Spain 2020); *30th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic* (Armenia 2021).



Figure 49. The world's first embroidered fabric stamp, St. Gallen Embroidery, Switzerland 2000. The 140th anniversary of the first postage stamp of San Marino issue from 2017 has also been embroidered.

Figure 50. Titled *Arte Del Merletto Lacework*, an usual stamp depicting flowers and buds was issued by Italy in 2004 to honour lace. It is a self-adhesive fabric stamp created with machine-embroidery.



Figure 51. In 2018, Austria issued an embroidered stamp featuring the Styrian Hat. 6,600 needle stitches and 33 metres of Merino wool thread was needed to make each stamp.



Figure 52. Stamps printed on transparent plastic film give a glass-like impression very suitable to feature ice crystals (Finland 2008) and stained glass (New Zealand 2015).

• **Laminated 3D plastic surface:** *Star Wars*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2017); *First Satellite of Bhutan*<sup>BL</sup> (Bhutan 2018); *Reef Safari*<sup>BL</sup> (Australia 2018); *30th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations with China*<sup>BL</sup> (Palestine 2019).

• **Plastic:** *Flag* (USA 1990–1991) [Figure 53]; *Crypto Stamp* (Austria 2019); *PET Recycling* (Liechtenstein 2020); *Sports - Ski-tip* (Austria 2021).

• **Foam:** *European Football Championship* (Austria 2008); *100th Anniversary of the Estonian Football Federation* (Estonia 2021).



**Figure 53.** In 1990–1991 USPS printed definitive stamps on plastic. They were issued in sheets the same size of paper currency for sale in select ATMs. Plastic stamps were considered a success, but were soon replaced with paper stamps because of complaints received from paper cyclers.

## Unusual printing techniques

The processes and techniques of printing postage stamps have evolved tremendously during the last 180 years. The traditional printing methods, many of which existed already before the postage stamp era, are lithographic (flat plate) printing, typographic (relief/letterpress) printing, intaglio (recess/line engraved or photogravure) printing, embossing and screen printing.

Good results can be achieved with many printing methods, but the best techniques produce impressive results. Philatelists have always valued the crisp details of intaglio stamps, that have been line-engraved by famous engravers, such as Pierre Gandon, Jean Pheulpin and Czesław Ślania.

The all time most common postage stamp printing methods have been (in the order of popularity) offset lithography, photogravure, recess, typography and traditional lithography [Figure 54]. Offset lithography, in particular, has been commonly combined with other printing methods, including recess, embossing and foil stamping (aka hot stamping).

Embossing is a traditional method used already before the first postage stamps appeared. Embossed

stamps are printed by pressing the stamp paper between a recess and relief die. The desired part of the image is raised above the surface of the stamp. The raised area can be flat or three-dimensional. The first stamps with colourless embossed images were issued by Switzerland (1845), the United Kingdom (1847) and Schleswig-Holstein (1850). The Basel Dove has the first colourless image (the dove) to appear on a coloured background [Figure 11]. This stamp is also the first using two printing methods – letterpress and embossing.

Stamp printing techniques are constantly being enhanced. Stamps with a partially embossed image are occasionally produced today. Combined with foiling with metallic shades, overlays, or holographic textures, the resulting stamp can give a striking three-dimensional and glittering impression.

Faster and more cost-effective printing techniques have been introduced, such as rotary press printing, multicolour offset lithography printing and photolithography, as well as recently also digital printing methods.

In **digital printing** it is possible to cost-effectively



**Figure 54.** In 1957–1959, Austrian State Printer produced the Mariazell Basilica definitive stamp using three different printing methods. In 1960 the stamp was printed in smaller format in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd. While the difference in quality between the intaglio and letterpress printing is easily recognizable in the coarser drawing, the offset version again approaches the finer image of the first. Clearly the letterpress printing did not meet the quality requirements of the time.

make small printings even so that all the resulting stamps become unique. Digital printing is used to produce ATM labels, stamps of modern private posts, personalized stamps and miniature sheets, as well as any stamps requiring quick production, such as the *Gold Medal Winners of the Olympic Games* stamps issued in some countries, such as Australia in 2000 [Figure 54]. Thermal printing, laser and inkjet printers are also sometimes used.



**Figure 54.** Photographs of the Australian gold medallists at the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000, taken during the medal presentation ceremony, were sent digitally to the design team for placement and captioning within a pre-designed template. Finalised designs were then sent digitally to printing staff in each of the 6 capital cities. The designs were digitally printed on specially produced pre-perforated paper to produce sheets of 10 stamps. The stamps were available to the public around the country by noon the next day.

A **photo mosaic** is a digitally made image that consists of small photos. In 2016, Finland Post ran a campaign to collect photos of faces from the public. Hundreds of small photos were positioned on the booklet pane in the form of the map of Finland. Each stamp and booklet of *The Faces of Finland* issue of 2017 is unique [Figure 55]. A total of 60 000 booklets were printed.

Also IGPC produced miniature sheets with photo mosaics for its customers in the Millennium series. Later issues include *Pope Benedict XVI 80th Birth Anniversary*<sup>BL</sup> (Mongolia 2007). However, in these cases the photo mosaics are identical.

New printing techniques utilize **special inks**, such as metallic inks, optically variable inks, heat or light-responsive inks:



**Figure 55.** Digitally produced photo mosaic consisting of small faces from the public issued to honour the 100th Anniversary of the Republic of Finland in 2017. Each booklet pane has 10 different stamps and all booklets have different photos. The total print run of this booklet was 60 000.

- **Fluorescent ink** makes the desired parts of the stamp image, that are invisible in daylight, to shine under UV light. Such inks are also used to create anti-counterfeiting watermarks and security lettering. Numerous such stamps and miniature sheets<sup>BL</sup> have been issued. Since 2001 almost all stamps of Ukraine shine under UV light. The most interesting examples are those that reveal new details in the design of stamps. For example, in the £10 definitive stamp of the United Kingdom issued in 1993, a long wave UV light reveals the design of Britannia's shield with Union Flag in yellow. Some other examples:

*Midsummer Festival of Ivana Kupala* (Ukraine 1997); *12th General Assembly of International Council on Monuments and Sites* (Mexico 1999); *Millennium - Mathematicians*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2000); *Millennium - Stephan's Crown*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2001); *Gulf of Finland Lighthouses*<sup>BL</sup> (Finland 2003); *Bridges* (Thailand 2004); *Railroad*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2006); *Nocturnal Animals*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2008); *Peace Tower in Videy* (Iceland 2008); *Global Warming*<sup>BL</sup> (Norway 2009); *Blue Whale* (Canada 2010); *50th Anniversary of the Swiss National Anthem* (Switzerland 2011); *Total Solar Eclipse*<sup>BL</sup> (Indonesia 2016); *Astronomy - Milky Way and Northern Lights*<sup>BL</sup> (Canada 2018); *100th Anniversary of the RAF* (Isle of Man 2018); *James Bond*<sup>BL</sup> (UK 2020);

*Sherlock Holmes* (UK 2020); *Community Foundation*<sup>BOOK-LET</sup> (Canada 2021); *Snow Mammals*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Canada 2021) [Figure 56].

• **Photochromic ink** reacts by changing colour e.g. under the influence of UV radiation from the Sun. A variety of colours are available with the photochromic effect. The photochromic effect is most effective when printed onto a white background. Few miniature sheets have been printed with photochromic ink: *Children's Health: Being SunSmart*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2015) [Figure 57].

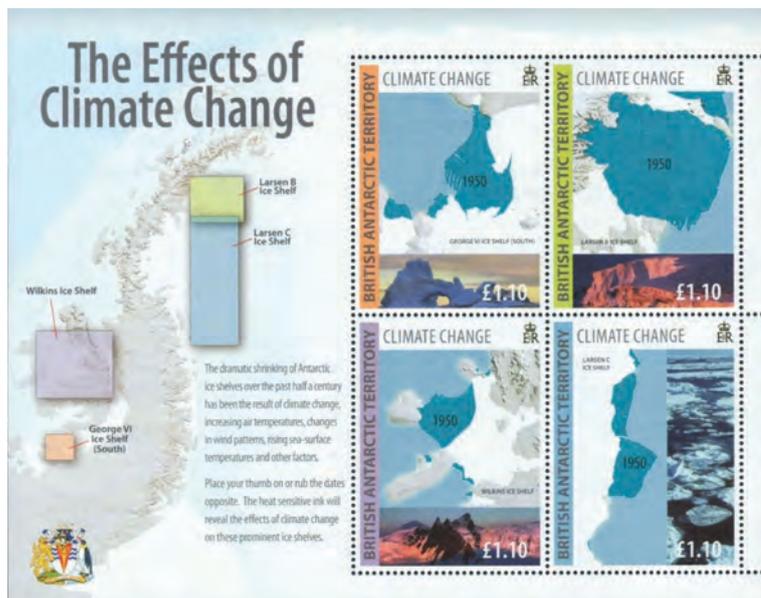


**Figure 56.** The Snow Mammals booklet of Canada (2021) features tracks of animals in snow, which are visible only under UV light.



**Figure 57.** The parasol in the die-cut New Zealand miniature sheet (2015) is printed with photochromic ink that changes colour under the influence of UV radiation. The white and yellow umbrella turns purple and green.

• **Thermochromic ink** changes colour according to temperature, which may reveal hidden images or text. Some types of thermochromic ink can turn transparent above the activation temperature. As the ink cools, the original colours return.



**Figure 58.** The miniature sheet issued for British Antarctic Territory in 2009 features heat-sensitive ink. By placing finger on the maps, the effects of climate change on the pack ice is demonstrated.

Some examples of issues with thermochromic ink: *The Weather*<sup>BL</sup> (UK 2001); *Centenary of the Nobel Prize* (UK 2001); *World No Tobacco Day* (Qatar 2003); *Alphabet* (Guernsey 2003); *December Stamps* (Netherlands 2003); *100th Anniversary of the Magic Circle* (UK 2005); *Sculptures in Snow*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Finland 2006); *Gold Rush Era*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2006); *Preserving Glaciers and Polar*

**Figure 59.** Illustrating the famous novel of Agatha Christie, this stamp has thermo-



... over the second window, revealing the murderer.

*Regions* (Iceland 2009); *50th Anniversary of the Budapest Research Reactor*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2009); *The Effects of Climate Change*<sup>BL</sup> (BAT 2009) [Figure 58]; *Renewable Energy* (Liechtenstein 2010–2011); *Meteorological Institute of Belgium*<sup>BL</sup> (Belgium 2013); *Endangered Seabirds*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2014); *The Five Senses* (Ireland 2015); *Sports*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2015); *Agatha Christie* (UK 2016) [Figure 59]; *Dinosaurs* (Spain 2016); *Civic Values - Solidarity* (Spain 2016); *Total Eclipse of the Sun* (United States 2017); *Coastal Eclipses*<sup>BL</sup> (Alderney 2017); *Bloodhound Engineering*<sup>BL</sup> (Isle of Man 2017); *Arcade Game*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2017); *Leisure and Hobbies - Chess*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2018); *Climate change*<sup>BL</sup> (Finland 2018); *19th World ARDF Championship* (South Korea 2018); *Literature - New Words in Spanish from 2019* (Spain 2020); *The Four Seasons*<sup>BL</sup> (Ross Dependency 2020).

• **Glitter ink** contains shiny mylar that result in a printed image with a vibrant sparkling effect: *Christmas - Mailbox* (Brazil 2006); *Signs of the Zodiac* (Ukraine 2008); *Favourite Australian Films*<sup>BL</sup> (Australia 2008); *Europa - Astronomy*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2009); *Princess Lillifée*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 2009); *Valentine's Day - Fairies*<sup>BL</sup> (Finland 2010) [Figure 60]; *Traditional Past Time Games*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2010); *Guan Yin Goddess of Mercy*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2010); *New Year Celebration*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2010–2012); *Likay* (Thailand 2011); *Christmas* (Argentina 2011); *Festival Mask*<sup>BL</sup> (Philippines 2014); *Miss Universe*<sup>BL</sup> (Philippines 2016); *Christmas* (Luxembourg 2017); *Ciel de Terre Adélie*<sup>BL</sup> (TAAF 2020).



**Figure 60.** Valentine's Days Fairies in the miniature sheet of Finland (2010) are printed with glitter ink.

• **Pearlescent ink** is a special ink with pigments that create a pearly sheen: *Jewelry Industry* (Australia 1996); *Guan Yin*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2009–2010); *80th Anniversary of the Birth of H.M. Queen Sirikit*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2012).

• **Magnetic ink** is a petroleum-based ink blended with magnetic iron oxide particles. In 2010, Poste Italiane issued the *Made in Italy - Federacciai* stamp for the Italy Steel Federation. This stamp is unusual, because it can be picked up by a magnet!

The first **three-dimensional (3D) stamps** were issued in Italy in 1956 [Figure 61]. The red and cyan colours were printed slightly apart. When the stamp is viewed with coloured glasses the image looks three-dimensional. This is an early example of a 3D anaglyph image on a postage stamp.

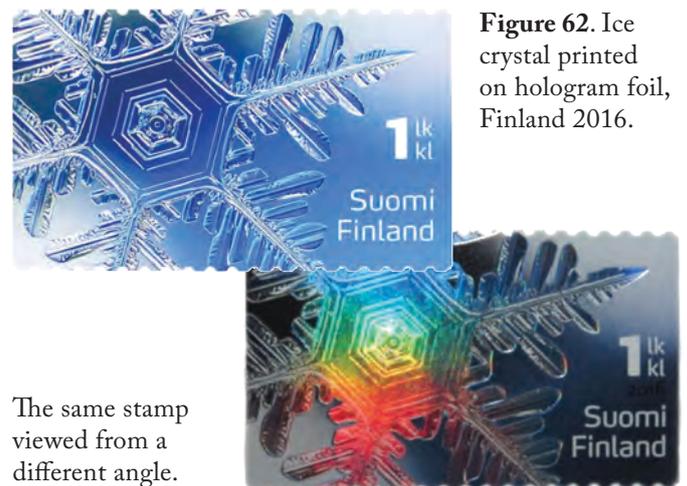


**Figure 61.** In 1956, Italian Post issued stamps to commemorate Italy's admission to the UN. The stamps have a pair of images anaglyphed for red and cyan filters. With 3D red cyan glasses, the image can be seen in three dimensions.

**3D anaglyph** images have two different colour images, one for each eye. Seen through anaglyph glasses, both the images reach the eye for which it is intended, creating a three-dimensional image. Some examples: *Celebrate the Century, 1950s*<sup>BL</sup> (USA 1999); *Campo del Cielo Meteorites*<sup>BL</sup> (Argentina 2007); *Dinosaurs*<sup>BL</sup> (South Africa 2009); *Football World Cup*<sup>BL</sup> (Ecuador 2010); *Treasures of Museums*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2013); *Dinosaurs* (Spain 2015–2016); *3D Grytviken* (South Georgia 2019); *50th Anniversary First Moon Landing*<sup>BL</sup> (Uruguay 2019); *Asteroid Day* (Luxembourg 2021).

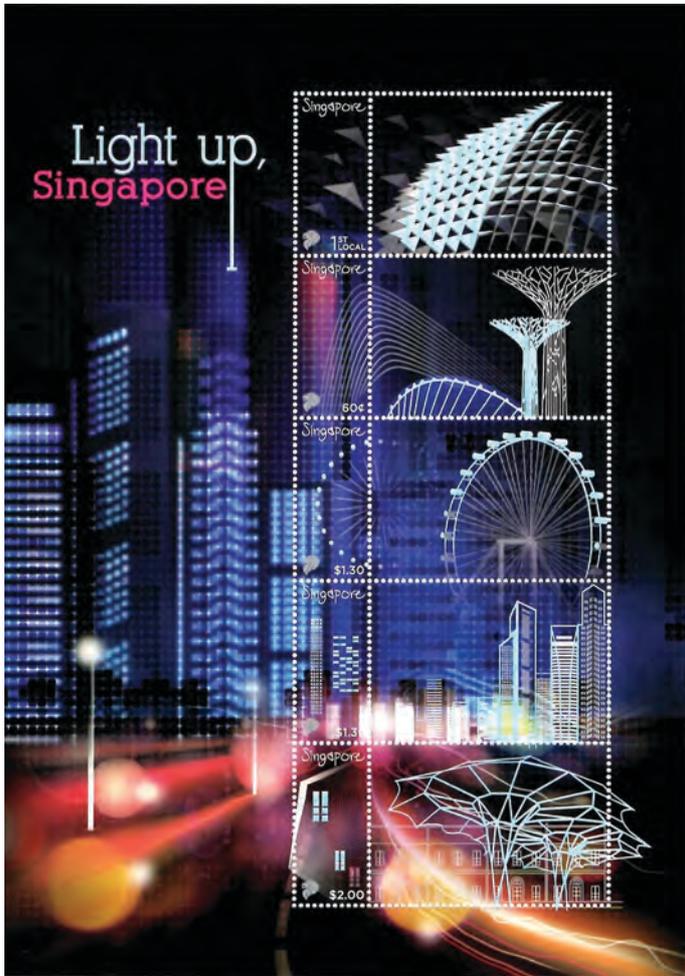
**3D stereographic effects** can be created by traditional printing methods with 2D images representing different perspectives of the same object. Special viewing glasses are not needed. Examples: *Chemistry* (Finland 1991); *Christmas* (New Caledonia 1994); *Europa Peace and Freedom* (Guernsey 1995); *European Year of Creativity and Innovation* (San Marino 2009); *Minerals* (Slovenia 2001); *100th Anniversary of the Titanic Disaster*<sup>BL</sup> (Belgium 2012).

Since the 1990s, more advanced 3D printing technologies have emerged. 3D holography or **holographic foiling** is used to create colour tones from



**Figure 62.** Ice crystal printed on hologram foil, Finland 2016.

The same stamp viewed from a different angle.



**Figure 63.** Using holographic foil technique, the Singapore Post MyStamp miniature sheet, released in 2017, creates a prismatic impression with varying colours.

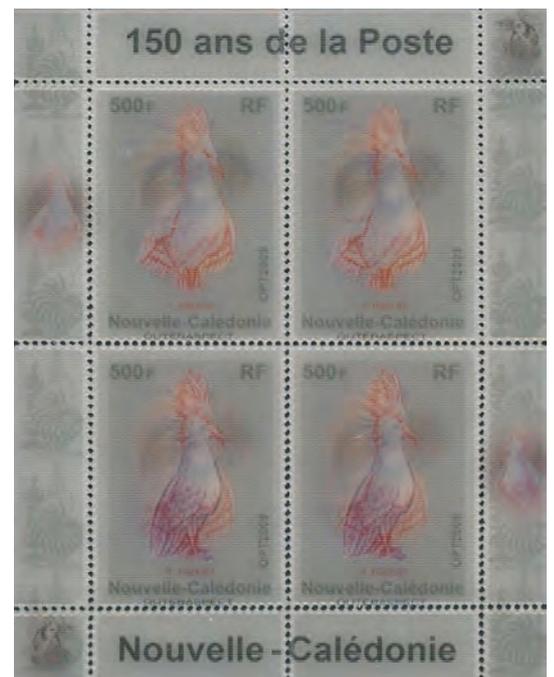
different angles. The most common holographic foils are either silver-backed or transparent. They create a reflective image with a bright and dense metallic appearance. Some examples of holographic foiling:

*50th Anniversary of the Swiss Air Rescue* (Switzerland 2002); *Greetings from the United Nations* (UN New York 2003); *X-Planes* (USA 2006); *50 years of TV broadcasting* (Finland 2007); *Olympic Games*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2007–2008); *Fauna of Turkmenistan* (Turkmenistan 2008); *Europa - Astronomy* (Liechtenstein 2009); *Firefly*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2010); *Haunted Canada*<sup>BL</sup> (Canada 2014–2016); *World Youth Stamp Exhibition*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2014); *Hungarian Saints*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2015, 2018); *Ice crystal* (Finland 2016) [Figure 62]; *Ice Flowers*<sup>BL</sup> (AAT 2016); *Lunar New Year*<sup>BL</sup> (South Korea 2016–2020); *Bioluminescent Life*<sup>BL</sup> (USA 2017); *National Heritage Month - Philippine Sunsets*<sup>BL</sup> (Philippines 2017); *Jades of the Hongshan Culture* (China 2017); *Christmas* (Åland 2018); *Year of the Dog*<sup>BL</sup> (Macao 2018); *Insects*<sup>BL</sup> (Ukraine 2018); *Ukrainian Inventions* (Ukraine 2018); *Astronomical World*<sup>BL</sup> (Japan 2018); *Science and Technology Innovation* (China 2019); *Heart warming* (Hong Kong 2019); *Seuso Treasure II*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2019); *Crypto Stamp* (Austria 2019); *Christmas* (Liechtenstein 2020); *Stained Glass Windows of Old Lviv*<sup>BL</sup> (Ukraine 2020).

A **3D lenticular image** is a two-dimensional planar image that appears to be three-dimensional when turning or watching from different angles. In 3D-lenticular printing several images are divided into alternating parallel lines and overlaid with a transparent film of long parallel lenses. When changing the viewing angle, an illusion of motion or other 3D effects result.



**Figure 64.** The Canadian miniature sheet issued in 2009 features 3D lenticular printing. When the viewing angle is changed, the image shows the illusion of movement, ie a short image animation. Stamps feature actual footage of the historic 500th goals of Maurice “Rocket” Richard, Jean Beliveau and Guy Lafleur.



**Figure 65.** The 2008 New Caledonia stamp features 3D lenticular printing. By changing viewing angle, one can see five completely different images of the almost flightless kagus.

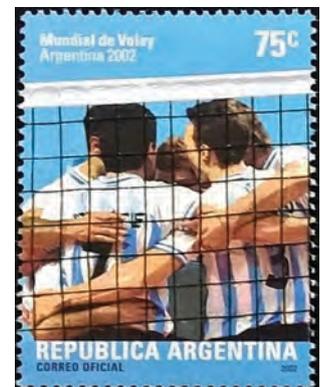
Some examples of 3D lenticular images with an **illusion of motion**: *Olympic Games* (New Zealand 2004); *Ryder Cup* (Ireland 2006); *Winter Olympic Games – Gold Medal Winners* (Netherlands 2006); *Year of the Surf*<sup>BL</sup> (Australia 2007); *Museum of Communications 100 years* (Switzerland 2007); *Andreas Herzog*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2008); *Alpine skiing*<sup>BL</sup> (Finland 2008); *Thai Puppet Shows*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2009); *Centenary of Vienna Technical Museum* (Austria 2009); *100 Years Montreal Canadian Hockey Team*<sup>BL</sup> (Canada 2009) [Figure 64]; *FIFA World Cup*<sup>BL</sup> (Slovakia 2010); *Centenary of the railway service*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2010); *30th Anniversary of the Dutch Film Festival*<sup>BL</sup> (Netherlands 2010); *World Environment Day – Dinosaur* (Turkey 2012); *Superman*<sup>BL</sup> (Jersey 2013); *Weather Phenomena*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2014); *FIFA World Cup*<sup>BL</sup> (Russia 2017); *Art of Magic – Rabbit out of Hat*<sup>BL</sup> (United States 2018); *Inclusive Communication*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2018); *Solo – Star Wars Story*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2018); *Space Pioneers*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2019); *50th Anniv. of the Moon Landing*<sup>BL</sup> (San Marino 2019); *Khalifa Satellite* (UAE 2019); *150th Anniv. of the Real Club De Regatas De Santander* (Spain 2020).

Some examples of 3D lenticular images with **other 3D effects**, such as change of the image, viewing the same image from different points of view or zooming: *Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum* (UAE 2006); *World Rugby Champions* (France 2007); *Venus Von Willendorf* (Austria 2008); *Kagus*<sup>BL</sup> (New Caledonia 2008) [Figure 65]; *FAB – The Genius of Gerry Anderson*<sup>BL</sup> (UK 2011); *Underground Engineering Excellence*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2011); *Rugby World Cup*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2011); *50th Anniv. of Star Trek*<sup>BL</sup> (Canada 2016); *90th Anniv. of the Birth of Queen Elizabeth II*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2016); *First Satellite of Bhutan* (Bhutan 2018); *Frankenstein 200 Years*<sup>BL</sup> (Jersey 2018); *Concession of FHASA*<sup>BL</sup> (Spanish Andorra 2019); *Tyrannosaurus Rex* (USA 2019); *European Football Championships*<sup>BL</sup> (Belgium 2021).

**Tactile printing** is used to create textured surfaces on stamps that look and feel familiar, for example textile, rock, tarmac, plaster or even shark skin. Some recent examples: *Watchtowers* (Philippines 2014); *Heritage month – Filipino textiles*<sup>BL</sup> (Philippines 2014); *KLIA 2 – Next Generation Airport Hub*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2014); *Dinosaurs* (Spain 2015); *Swiss Inventions – Menzi Muck “The Walking Excavator”*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 2021); *50th Anniversary of Doctors without Borders* (Switzerland 2021) [Figure 66]; *Sea Life*<sup>BL</sup> (Japan 2021).



**Figure 66.** The Swiss Post issued two stamps to mark the 50th anniversary of the Doctors without Borders organization (2021). They feature a touch print: the surface of the bandage clip or a plaster can be felt with fingers.



**Figure 67.** The volleyball net has been thermographically printed and feels like a real net. Argentina 2002.



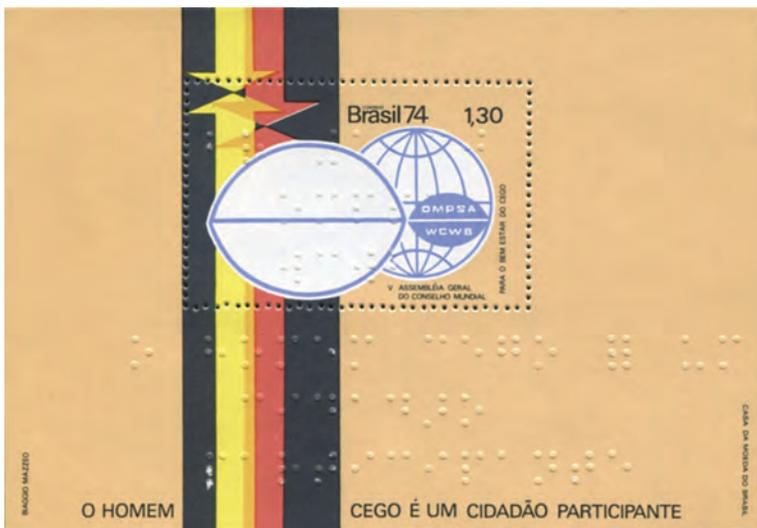
**Figure 68.** Industrial mining of oil shale began in 1916 in Estonia. Eesti Post issued this unusual miniature sheet to commemorate the centenary of the oil shale mining in Estonia. In the miniature sheet image, two stones have been thermographically printed, which gives them a rough surface.



**Figure 71.** The 2012 issue of Finland featuring golden wedding rings with varnish coating on foil paper.

**Thermographic printing** is a special type of tactile printing: a powdery substance is added to a surface printed with inks. The printed surface is heated, causing the powder and ink mixture to dry, which results in a raised effect on the stamp paper. The first thermographically printed stamps were issued in Turkey as early as 1966–1971. Some recent examples of stamps and miniature sheets printed with the technology: *Men's World Volleyball Championship* (Argentina 2002) [Figure 67]; *Marine Life - Sea Shells* (Jersey 2006); *Easter bunny* (Finland 2007); *Micro Monsters*<sup>BL</sup> (Australia 2009); *Renewable Energy* (Liechtenstein 2010); *Energy Self-sufficiency*<sup>BL</sup> (Argentina 2014); *Recovery of Commercial Air Navigation Sovereignty*<sup>BL</sup> (Argentina 2014); *The Five Senses* (Ireland 2015); *Christmas* (Luxembourg 2015); *100th Anniversary of Estonian Oil Shale Mining*<sup>BL</sup> (Estonia 2016) [Figure 68]; *50th Anniversary of the Galileo Planetarium*<sup>BL</sup> (Argentina 2017); *Palaces and Castles* (Belgium 2017); *Children* (Hong Kong 2017); *Sports - Have a Ball*<sup>SHEET</sup> (United States 2017).

**Braille printing** is another special type of tactile printing that renders text as “braille dots”. Braille is used by people who are visually impaired, including people who are blind. Stamps containing braille embossing have been issued by many countries, the first was Brazil in 1974 [Figure 69], and in particular in 2009 on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Louis Braille’s birth.



**Figure 69.** Miniature sheet issued in Brazil in 1974 to commemorate the 5th World Council for the Welfare of the Blind. The subtitle in braille letters says “The blind man is a participating citizen.” The paper used in the sheet is so light weight that it does not hold the raised braille for any significant period of time.

A **decal** (French *décalcomanie*) is a printed image that can be easily transferred, through the application of water or heat, to another surface where it remains attached. The only stamp so far created with decal printing was issued by Spain in 2021 [Figure 70].

**Special coating**, such as a varnish or lacquer coating, can be applied overall or just on parts of the print surface, and is used to give protection to the surface, emphasize the desired parts of the stamp image or to embed decorations into stamps. A varnish coating is a liquid coating applied to a printed surface to add a clear glossy, matte or satin



**Figure 70.** *Leisure and Hobbies*, issued by Correos Spain in 2021, is the only stamp in the world with decal printing. The “I Love Stamps” decal can be applied to the skin like a tattoo.

finish. Some recent examples of varnish or lacquer coating include *Wedding Rings* (Finland 2012) [Figure 71]; *Record*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 2014); *150th Anniversary of the Death of Charles Dickens* (Isle of Man 2020); *Minerals and Rocks*<sup>BL</sup> (Croatia 2020); *50th Anniversary of Doctors without Borders* (Switzerland 2021).

Varnish coating can also be used to create transparent shadow effects, for example *Moths* (Finland 2008), where the shadows of the moths with their wings spread are printed with a target varnish. Unfortunately normal scanning of a stamp image does not reveal the transparent shadow effect at all.

## Material additions

Stamps are decorated with non-paper materials adhered to them. Material additions do not have any postal role, but may be of interest to the public and collectors.

Prior to the 1970’s, there were few material additions on stamps, mainly due to the technical challenges of permanently attaching small pieces of other material to stamp paper.



**Figure 72.** In 1972, Guinea published an airmail set printed on silver and gold foil to commemorate President Nixon’s trip to Beijing. Two miniature red rubies have been adhered on the 24 carat gold foil of the 1200 fr stamp.

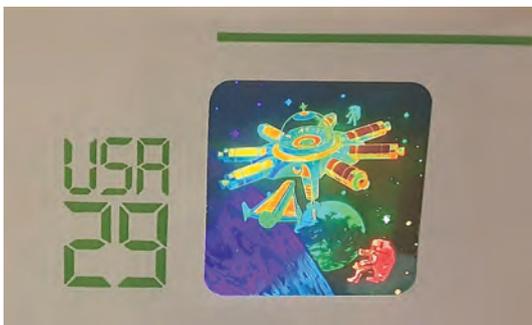
**Hot foil stamping** is the first technology that has been widely used to affix a very thin layer of metallic film on a stamp paper, producing a glossy design. Gold and silver foil additions became popular already in the 1960's, but now there are also stamps with aluminium, bronze, platinum, titanium, copper and nickel foils affixed.

Hot foil stamping can be combined with embossing to make the text or images on the stamps more noticeable. New Year stamps often feature an embossed gold- or silver-foil animal figure according to the Chinese lunar calendar. In particular, the French company Cartor Security Printing specializes in this hot foil printing process.

A laser-generated **hologram** consists of several different image layers with each one visible at a different angle. When the hologram is moved the image slowly changes giving an impression of movement and often colour change and contrast variations. Holograms are applied to stamp paper by hot foil stamping using heat and pressure. Stamps with holograms became popular after their introduction in Austria in 1988



**Figure 73.** In 1988, Austria issued the world's first hologram stamp. Being a novelty, it had to solve many technical challenges. Holograms were applied using hot foil stamping. Over 3 million stamps were printed, with many minor varieties.



**Figure 74.** In the stamped envelope of the United States issued in 1992 the hologram is visible through a window. The denomination has been printed on the envelope itself, which could be easily cancelled. This was done to compromise some of the early drawbacks of using hologram foils.



**Figure 75.** Another early hologram stamp, the Canadian Space Program issue of 1992, is also known for a number of different varieties, for example, the position of the space shuttle in the hologram varies, there may be small black lines across the hologram (aka “the meteor shower variety”), as well as misplaced holograms.

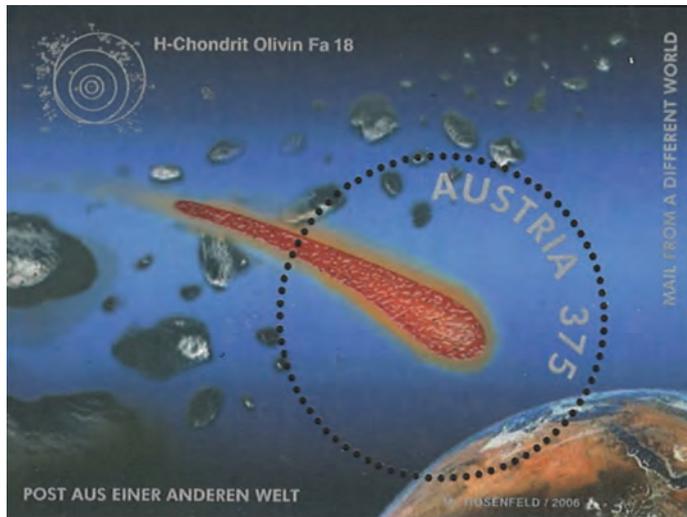
[**Figure 73**]. The peak for hologram stamps was in 1999–2000, in celebration of the start of the new millennium.

Initially there were many challenges in creating stamps with holograms. The hologram technology was still relatively new, having been created in the 1960s. One drawback was that the hologram could not cover the entire stamp surface. It would have been inconvenient, if the stamp needed to be held at a certain angle to read the denomination. Moreover, the foil tended not to hold ink. For these reasons, for example the USPS initially preferred to issue postal stationery envelopes rather than stamps with holograms. A design depicting an orbiting space station was used three times: on a 25¢ envelope in 1989, a 29¢ envelope in 1992 [**Figure 74**], and a 32¢ envelope in 1995.

The subjects chosen for holograms vary widely, but initially emblems and space related themes were the most popular. More than 100 countries have issued stamps or miniature sheets with holograms, so here it is possible to list only some of the earliest examples:

*Austrian Export* (Austria 1988) [**Figure 73**]; *20th International Biennial Art Exhibition*<sup>BL</sup> (Brazil 1989); *Space Achievement and Exploration*<sup>STATIONERY</sup> (USA 1989) [**Figure 75**]; *Post and Telecommunications as a business enterprise* (Finland 1990); *New Coat of Arms*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 1991); *Butterflies*<sup>BL</sup> (Poland 1991); *Finnish technology* (Finland 1992); *Canadian Space Program* (Canada 1992) [**Figure 75**]; *Graf Zeppelin* (Mongolia 1993); *Inauguration of State Television*<sup>BL</sup> (San Marino 1993); *Queen Elizabeth II* (Isle of Man 1994); *25th Anniversary of the First Manned Moon Landing* (New Zealand 1994, Bhutan 1994); *Cartoon Dogs*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Finland 1995); *Launch of MEASAT IBL* (Malaysia 1996); *Australian Jewelry Industry* (Australia 1996); *50th Anniversary Celebrations of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne* (Thailand 1996); *Self-government of Åland 75 years*<sup>BL</sup> (Åland 1997); *Total Solar Eclipse*<sup>BL</sup> (Netherlands Antilles 1998); *New Millennium* (Canada 1999); *Petronas Twin Towers*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 1999).

Special adhesives and coatings have made it possible to attach **small particles**, such as sand and dust, on a stamp paper. Stamps and miniature sheets have been decorated with the following unusual materials:



**Figure 76.** The Austrian miniature sheet (2006) contains 0.03 g of meteorite dust. It comes from a 19 kg meteorite found in Morocco in 2004 that contains olivine, known as a silicate mineral. Meteorite dust was affixed using special adhesive.



**Figure 77.** The Rock of Gibraltar se-tenant stamps issued in 2002 are the first in the world to be produced with genuine limestone powdered and sintered to the image where the rock is showing using a thermographic printing process.



**Figure 78.** A miniature sheet featuring the Giant Stelae of Cantabria was issued in Spain in 2017. The famous Barros Stele in the foreground is embossed. The stamp has stone dust embedded in it using a thermographic printing process.

- **Meteorite dust:** *Mail from a Different World*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2006) [Figure 76]; *Europa Stamps - Astronomy*<sup>BL</sup> (Norway 2009); *New Zealand Space Pioneers* (New Zealand 2019).

- **Volcanic ash:** *Eyjafjallajökull Volcano Eruption* (Iceland 2010); *Turtles - Lonesome George* (Ecuador 2013).

- **Rock particles, sand:** *Views of the Rock* (Gibraltar 2002) [Figure 77]; *Geology of Hong Kong*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2002); *The Royal Road - Treasure Preserved by Nature* (Brasilia 2005); *Pa Hin Ngam National Park*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2007); *50th Anniversary of the Haus des Meeres* (Austria 2007); *Granite from Guernsey used for St. Paul's Cathedral* (Guernsey 2008); *Rally Driver, Marcus Grönholm* (Åland Islands 2008); *50th Anniversary of Asterix*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2009); *Ornamental Stones*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2010); *UNESCO World Heritage - Curonian Spit* (Russia 2010); *Taxi Hand Signs* (South Africa 2010); *35th Anniversary of the Green March*<sup>BL</sup> (Morocco 2010); *Tourism - Beaches* (Vanuatu 2011); *UNESCO World Heritage - Wrangel Island*<sup>BL</sup> (Russia 2012); *UNESCO World Heritage - The Great Wall* (Hong Kong 2012); *Winter Olympics 2014 - Sochi* (Liechtenstein 2013); *Ancient Cultures - Menorca Talayótica* (Spain 2014); *Gottardo* (Switzerland 2016); *Bays of Curacao* (Curacao 2016); *Archaeological Sites*<sup>BL</sup> (Costa Rica 2016); *Nature in DMZ* (South Korea 2017); *Giant Stelae of Cantabria*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2017) [Figure 78]; *High Speed Line Mecca - Medina* (Spain 2018); *Melaka Museum*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2018); *Bridges - Pont d'Engordany* (Spanish Andorra 2018); *Must Visit Tourist Destinations* (South Korea 2018); *Hong Kong Hiking Trails - MacLehose Trail*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2019); *Traditional Trades - Miners* (Spain 2019); *500th Anniversary of Panama City* (Panama 2019); *Space Pioneers* (New Zealand 2019); *Azabache Minerals*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2020).

- **Clay dust:** *Thai handicraft*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2003); *Davis Cup Winner*<sup>BL</sup> (Russia 2003).



**Figure 79.** A piece of Atlantic cod skin has been attached to the stamp of the Faroe Islands (2016). All stamps are unique.

- **Gold nugget:** *California Gold Rush* (Liechtenstein 2018, personalized stamp).
- **Metal:** *Kagu*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (New Caledonia 2003).
- **Leather:** *World Stamp Championship Jakarta*<sup>BL</sup> (Indonesia 2012); *Fish Skin* (Faroe Islands 2016) [Figure 79].
- **Ceramics:** *50th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations with China*<sup>BL</sup> (Morocco 2008).



**Figure 80.** This miniature sheet issued by Slovenia in 2013 is the first on which part of the design is covered with real sea salt from the Piranske Soline saltworks. It has been printed using a thermography technique.



**Figure 81.** This omnibus stamp commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar has small chips of wood, from the original oak timbers of HMS Victory.

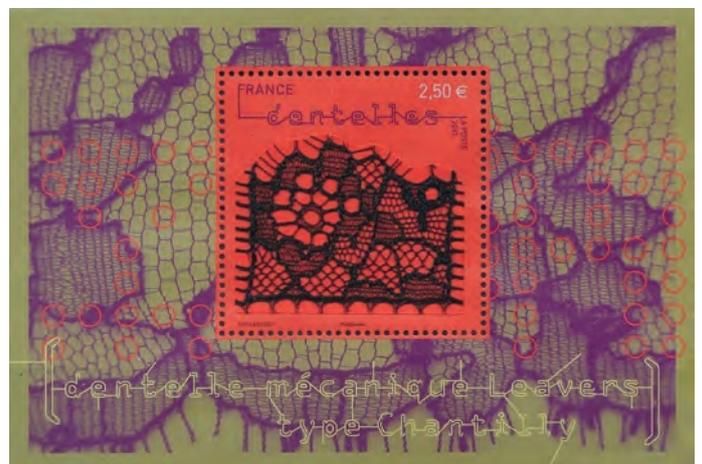


**Figure 82.** The UN declared International Year of the Soils in 2015 was commemorated in Spain by issuing this unusual stamp featuring real seeds of petunia.

- **Plastic:** *Stamp Collectors* (Spain 2020).
- **Pearls or beads:** *Pearl Diving Tools*<sup>BL</sup> (UAE 2005); *Peranakan Beads*<sup>BL</sup> (Singapore 2008).
- **Sea salt crystals:** *Marine Fauna* (Slovenia 2013) [Figure 80].
- **Wood chips:** *200th Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar* (Gibraltar 2005, omnibus) [Figure 81]; *Brazilian Trees*<sup>BL</sup> (Brazil 2011); *Hobbit: The Battle of Five Armies*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2014); *Painting and Calligraphy on Fans*<sup>BL</sup> (Taiwan 2016).
- **Seeds:** *Flower Greetings*<sup>BL</sup> (Netherlands 2007); *Earth Day* (Morocco 2010); *Blossoming Flowers* (Belgium 2010); *Seeds of France*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2011); *International Year of the Forest*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2011); *83rd Anniversary of the Birth of King Bhumibol* (Thailand 2011); *Save the Ghaf Tree*<sup>BL</sup> (UAE 2011); *Our City in a Garden*<sup>BL</sup> (Singapore 2013); *World Food Day*<sup>BL</sup> (Trinidad and Tobago 2013); *International Year of the Soil* (Spain 2015) [Figure 82]; *Fertility Day* (San Marino 2016); *Vegetables - Grow Your*



**Figure 83.** To commemorate the 50 anniversary of the Colombian Navy training tall ship ARC Gloria, this miniature sheet was issued in 2018 with a piece of sail cloth attached to the stamp. It is a numbered sheet of 1,800 printed.



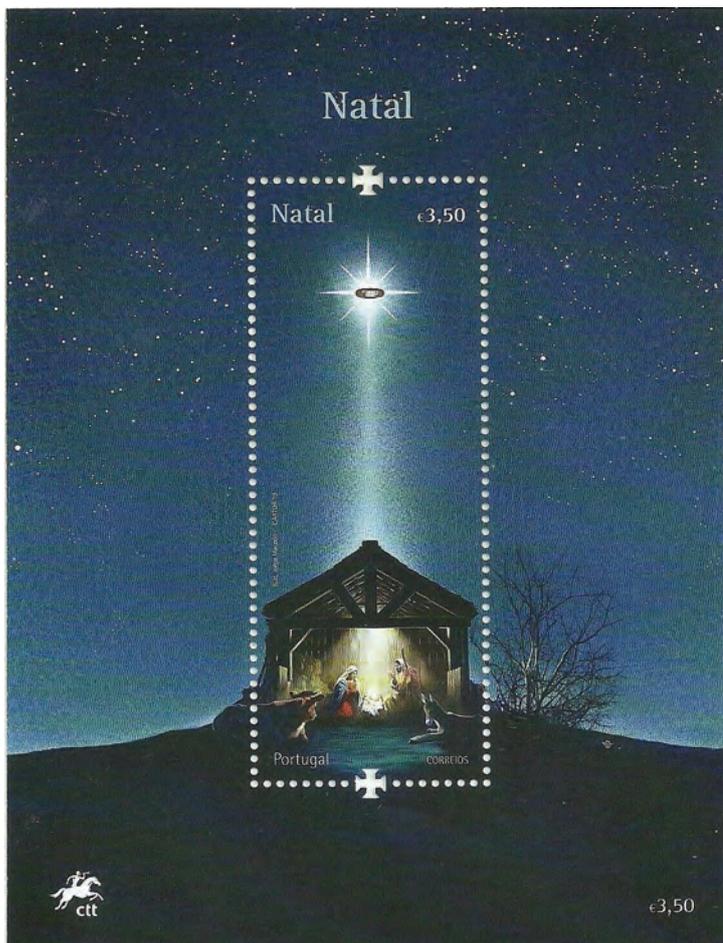
**Figure 84.** In 2011, the French Post Office published four different miniature sheets with a lace pattern from different parts of France (Calais, Le Puy en Velay, Chantilly and Alençon). Attached to this miniature sheet is a machine-made lace pattern of Chantilly stiffened with hot glue.

*Own*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2017); *Common Poppy* (Estonia 2021).

• **Fabric:** *Final Four – Vitoria Gastiez*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2019); *World Stamp Championship – Batik Cloth*<sup>BL</sup> (Indonesia 2012); *New Zealand National Rygby Team – All Blacks* (New Zealand 2015); *50th Anniversary of the Gloria Training Ship*<sup>BL</sup> (1800<sup>EX</sup> Colombia 2018) [Figure 83].



**Figure 85.** In 2004, for the first time, the Austrian Post, in cooperation with Swarovski, issued stamps with small crystals. The miniature sheet contains 12 glittering crystals.



**Figure 86.** The Christmas miniature sheet issued by Portugal in 2019 has a built-in LED light that can be activated with a mobile phone having the NFC (Near Field Communication) capability.

• **Velvet, fluff, flock:** *Lunar New Year Animals* (Hong Kong 2003, 2007, 2011); *Happy New Year* (Russia 2003); *Moomin and Sniff* (Finland 2004); *Roses* (Thailand 2005); *Christmas Tree* (Armenia 2009); *With Love – Heart*<sup>BL</sup> (Australia 2009); *Argentine Sporting Idols – Guillermo Vilas*<sup>BL</sup> (Argentina 2009); *Lunar New Year Animals* (Hong Kong 2011); *Christmas* (Luxembourg 2014); *Fight Aids* (Monaco 2014); *100th Anniversary of the Estonian Native Cattle Stuck Book* (Estonia 2014); *56th International Art Exhibition* (Switzerland 2015); *Giant Panda Conservation Project*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2015); *Signing of the Peace Agreement*<sup>BL</sup> (Colombia 2016); *Aubusson Tapestry* (France 2015); *Textile Industry*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2017); *Icelandic Sweater* (Iceland 2017); *20th Anniversary of the Madrid Protocol*<sup>BL</sup> (TAAF 2018); *Lucky Pig* (Switzerland 2019); *Christmas* (Estonia 2019); *Personalities – Dominic Thiem* (Austria 2021).

• **Silk:** *25th Asian International Stamp Exhibition* (Thailand 2010); *130th Anniversary of Macao Post* (Macao 2014).

• **Embroidery:** *Pigeon Orchid*<sup>BL</sup> (Singapore 2009); *Petit Point*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2010); *85th Stamp Day – Kalocsa Rose* (10 000<sup>EX</sup> Hungary 2012).

• **Lace:** *Traditional Laces*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2011) [Figure 84].

• **Synthetic material:** *100th Anniversary of the Estonian Football Federation* (7500<sup>EX</sup> Estonia 2021).

• **Crystals:** *Swarovski Glass Art Exhibition*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2004) [Figure 85]; *Fireworks*<sup>BL</sup> (joint issue of Austria and Hong Kong 2006); *European Football Championship*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2008); *60th Royal Wedding Anniversary*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2010); *Holy Crown of Hungary*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2011); *Alpine Lederhosen* (Austria 2015); *Christmas Snowflakes* (Austria 2017); *Christmas Tree* (Austria 2019).

• **Diamonds:** *60th Anniversary of the Accession of Queen Elizabeth II* (600<sup>EX</sup> Jersey 2012); *60th Anniversary of the Prince Karim Aga Khan IV* (7000<sup>EX</sup> Portugal 2018).

• **LED light:** *Christmas – Star of Bethlem*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2019) [Figure 86].

## Scenting of stamps

The world's first scented stamps were issued by Bhutan in 1973 [Figure 87]. Printed using scented ink, these stamps picture and smell like roses. More than four decades later, the rose scent continues to be popular.

Besides printing stamps with scented ink, there are a few other ways to produce fragrant

stamps. The stamp paper or glue may be impregnated with the scent (Russia 2003). The current approach is to create a special coating containing micro-encapsulated fragrance in bubbles. The scent is released when the coating is rubbed and the bubbles burst (aka scratch-and-sniff stamps). In this way the scent lasts much longer, at least several years.

- **Rose:** *Rose Varieties* (Bhutan 1973) [Figure 87]; *Greeting Stamp* (Netherlands 1997); *“Share Love”, Good Neighbour Campaign* (South Korea 2000); *Roses*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Norway 2001); *International Stamp Exhibition “Philakorea 2002”* (South Korea 2001); *Pro Juventute: Christmas Rose and Rose Varieties* (Switzerland 2002); *Valentine’s Day* (Thailand 2002–2014); *Flower Painting – Valentine’s Day* (Austria 2002); *Voscilna Mark – Love* (Slovenia 2003); *Roses in Malaysia*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2003); *Ghent Flower Show – Roses* (Belgium 2005); *Roses* (Australia 2006); *Fragrance of Roses*<sup>BL</sup> (India 2007); *Special Occasions* (Australia 2008); *Flowers* (Israel 2008); *Definitive Issue – Rose*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Germany 2010); *Flowers – Roses*<sup>BL</sup> (South Africa 2009); *Flora – Flowers* (Morocco 2010); *Flowers – Roses*<sup>BL</sup> (Cyprus 2011); *Valentine’s Day – Roses*<sup>BL</sup> (Taiwan 2012); *30th Anniversary of the Princess Grace Rose Garden* (Monaco 2014); *Flowers – Roses* (Malaysia 2014); *125th Anniversary of the Botanical Garden of the Faculty of Science*<sup>BL</sup> (Croatia 2014).

- **Jasmine:** *Tourism – Perfume Industry* (Norfolk Island 2001) [Figure 88]; *Jasmine* (Thailand 2004); *Jasmine*<sup>BL</sup> (India 2008); *Flora – Plants*<sup>BL</sup> (Cyprus 2012); *Flora – Jasmine* (French Polynesia 2013).

- **Other flowers:** *Flowers of the Garden Parks of Singapore*<sup>BL</sup> (Singapore 1998); *Protection of Wildlife and Plants* (South Korea 2000–2001); *“Share Love”, Good Neighbour Campaign* (South Korea 2000); *Orchids* (South Korea 2001–2005); *Horticulture Exhibition “FLORIADE ‘02”* (Netherlands 2002); *Flower Painting – Valentine’s Day* (Austria 2002); *Special Brand of Bow – Bouquet* (China 2002); *Garden Flowers*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2004); *Croatian Flora – Medicinal Herbs* (Croatia 2004); *Flora* (Bosnia Herzegovina 2004); *Domestic Flowers* (Greece 2005); *Orchids* (France 2005); *Frangipani tree* (French Polynesia 2006); *Narcissus Poeticus* (French Andorra 2008); *Flowers* (South Africa 2008); *National Flower Festival*<sup>BL</sup> (Argentina 2008); *Flowers* (Israel 2008); *Easter 2009 – Decorated Easter Eggs* (Slovakia 2009); *Definitive Issue – Lily of the Valley*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Germany 2010); *Paintings – Carrying the Cross* (Slovakia 2012); *Stained Glass Windows – Crucifixion* (Slovakia 2014).

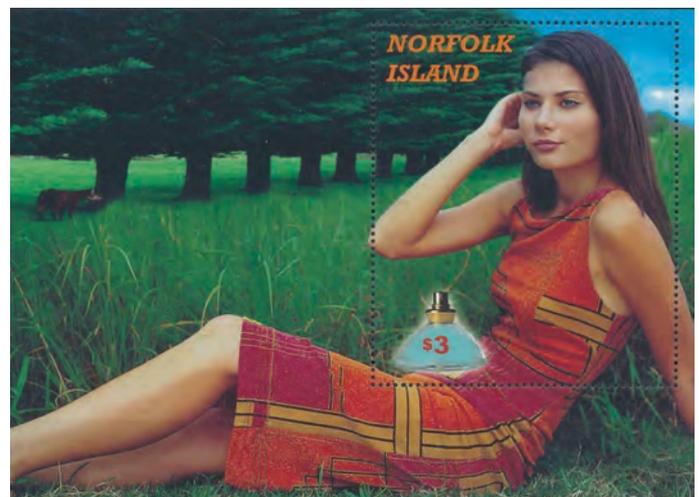
- **Perfume:** *Tourism – Perfume Industry* (Norfolk Island 2001) [Figure 88]; *Greetings Stamp – Love* (Slovenia 2004); *Happy New Year* (Ukraine 2004); *Traditional Perfumes*<sup>BL</sup> (Qatar 2008); *Tahitian Tiare Monoï Oil* (French Polynesia 2008); *Visakhapuja Day*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2011); *Indian Perfumes*<sup>BL</sup> (India 2019).

- **Incense:** *Frankincense – Salalah Tourism Festival*<sup>BL</sup> (Oman 2012); *Traditions and Customs* (Spain 2016).

- **Fruits:** *Gifts of Nature* (Russia 2003); *Fruits – Pine-*



**Figure 87.** The world’s first scented issue (Bhutan 1973) depicts a variety of roses, each with an authentic scent. The printing process used ink, which incorporated the actual aroma of roses. The scent lasted three to five months at best.



**Figure 88.** The Norfolk Island miniature sheet from 2001 smells like jasmine perfume. The issue celebrating the perfume industry features a miniature sheet, four stamps, and a stamp booklet, all scented with jasmine essence.



**Figure 89.** The Swiss miniature sheet issued in 2017 has a special lacquer coating, when scratched reveals the fragrance of quince (or the Cydonian apple). This process preserves the scent for years.

apple (French Polynesia 2005); *Merry Christmas* (Iceland 2005); *Fruits - Coconut* (French Polynesia 2007); *Tropical Fruits* (New Caledonia 2007); *Passion Fruit* (French Polynesia 2009); *Fruits* (Germany 2010); *Flora - Flowers* (Morocco 2010); *Fruits - Mango* (French Polynesia 2010); *Pineapples*<sup>BL</sup> (Papua New Guinea 2011); *Fruits - Grapefruit* (French Polynesia 2012); *Flora - Aromatic Plants*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2012); *Fruits*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2014); *Quince Scent*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 2017) [Figure 89]; *Fruits - Orange* (French Polynesia 2017); *Children* (Hong Kong 2017); *Bees and Lemons* (Morocco 2019); *Fruits - Banana* (French Polynesia 2020).

- **Apple cider:** *Gastronomy - Protected Designations of Origin of Asturias*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2020).

- **Fruit ice:** *Frozen Treats*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (USA 2018).

- **Herbs and spices:** *Brazilian Aromatic Plant - Priprioca* (Brazil 2004); *20th Anniversary of Autonomy* (French Polynesia 2004); *Easter* (Slovakia 2010); *Easter*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Slovakia 2011); *85th Stamp Day - Kalocsá Rose* (10 000<sup>EX</sup> Hungary 2012); *Oregano* (Cyprus 2013); *Christmas - St. Nicholas*<sup>BL</sup> (Netherlands 2013); *The Five Senses* (Ireland 2015); *Croatian Flora* (Croatia 2016); *Blooming Herbs* (Greece 2016); *Herbs - Basil* (French Polynesia 2018).

- **Gingerbread:** *Christmas Rose* (Switzerland 2002); *Christmas Market* (Luxemburg 2002); *Merry Christmas* (Norway 2005); *Christmas* (Finland 2007); *Christmas* (Slovenia 2011); *Christmas* (Slovakia 2011); *Christmas*<sup>BL</sup> (Estonia 2017); *Christmas* (Iceland 2018); *Christmas* (Greenland 2018).

- **Berries:** *Gifts of Nature* (Russia 2003); *50th Anniversary of Charter for the Welfare of Children* (South Korea 2007); *Fruits* (Germany 2010); *Stamp Day - Protection of the Soil*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2011) [Figure 90].

- **Honey:** *Insects - Bees* (Isle of Man 2012); *Honey* (French Polynesia 2014); *Brazilian Meliponinae Bees*<sup>BL</sup> (Brazil 2015); *Traditional Slovene Breakfast* (Slovenia 2015); *100 Years of the Jersey Beekeepers Association*<sup>BL</sup> (Jersey 2017) [Figure 91].

- **Cocoa, chocolate:** *100th Anniversary of Chocosuisse*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 2001) [Figure 92]; *400 years of Chocolate in France*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2009); *Belgian Chocolate*<sup>BL</sup> (Belgium 2013).

- **Coffee:** *Coffee* (Brasilia 2001); *Coffee Production* (New Caledonia 2002); *250th Anniversary of Douwe-Egberts Coffee Roasting* (Netherlands 2003); *Stamps and the Senses - Bicentenary of the Birth of Louis Braille* (Portugal 2009); *Polish Marks in Europe - Jerzy Franciszek Kulczycki* (Po-



Figure 90. Both sides of the strawberry scented embossed French miniature sheet issued in 2011.

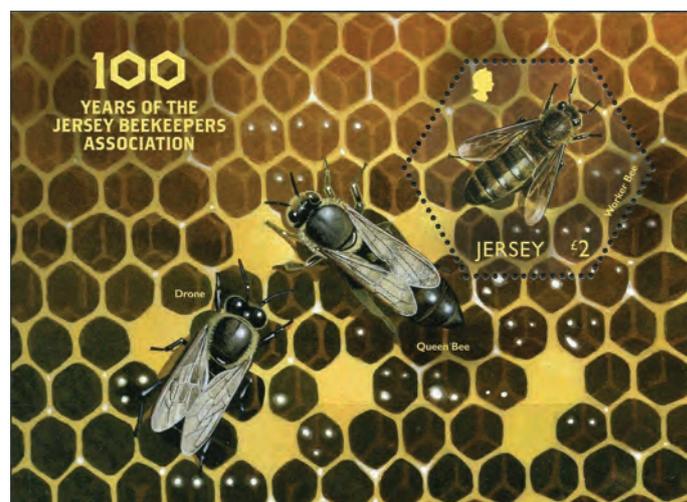


Figure 91. When rubbing the hexagonal stamp, the infused honey scent is released from this miniature sheet issued by Jersey in 2017.



Figure 92. This miniature sheet is the 100th anniversary issue of the Swiss Chocolate Manufacturers Association (Chocosuisse) in 2001. The miniature sheet is printed on paper resembling a realistic chocolate bar. On top of the paper is a coating that, when scraped, spreads the scent of the delicious chocolate.

land 2009); *50th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations with Korea* (Columbia 2012); *Arabic Coffee Tools*<sup>BL</sup> (UAE 2013); *Coffee* (French Polynesia 2015); *Coffee*<sup>BL</sup> (India 2017); *Coffee Processing*<sup>BL</sup> (Papua New Guinea 2018).

• **Tea:** *Tea Culture* (Hong Kong 2001).

• **Trees:** *Sandalwood*<sup>BL</sup> (New Caledonia 2004); *Merry Christmas* (Iceland 2005); *Sandalwood*<sup>BL</sup> (India 2006); *Neighborhood Assistance* (South Korea 2006); *Sauna*<sup>BOOK-LET</sup> (Finland 2009); *EUROPA Stamps - The Forest* (Poland 2011); *Flora* (New Caledonia 2014); *Christmas - Stained Glass Windows of Romanticism* (Slovakia 2014); *EUROPA Stamp - Old Toys* (Spain 2015); *World Bamboo Fair* (South Korea 2015); *Flora - Sandalwood* (French Polynesia 2016); *Signing of the Peace Agreement*<sup>BL</sup> (Colombia 2016); *Christmas* (Greenland 2018); *Christmas* (Hungary 2021).

• **Eucalyptus:** *Centenary of the Nobel Prize* (UK 2001); *Native Plants* (Australia 2011); *Easter* (Slovakia 2015); *Flora - The Grandpa Tree*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2018).

• **Burned wood:** *Forest Fire Prevention*<sup>BL</sup> (Brazil 1999) [Figure 93]; *150th Anniversary of the Costa Rica Fire Department*<sup>BL</sup> (Costa Rica 2015).

• **Grass:** *International Flowers and Gardens Exhibition*<sup>BOOK-LET</sup> (Australia 2000); *Paris Philex - UEFA European Football Championship*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2016).

• **Meat:** *Year of the Pig*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2007); *Protected Designation of Origin - Guijuelo ham and Ribera del Duero wine* (Spain 2018); *Gastronomy - Spain in 19 Dishes*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2020).

• **Sea:** *Greetings Stamps* (South Korea 2002).

• **Fuel:** *75th Anniversary of Oil Production in Austria* (Austria 2007).

## Seasoning of stamps

The peppermint-flavored stamps issued by German federal post office in 1955–1956 were mentioned before. Recent seasoned novelties include

• **Strawberry:** *The Five Senses* (Ireland 2015).

• **Mandarin:** *Spanish Gastronomy*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2014).

• **Almond:** *Spanish Gastronomy*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2014).

• **Chocolate:** *Belgian Chocolate*<sup>BL</sup> (Belgium 2013).

• **Vanilla:** *Stamps and the Senses - Bicentenary of the Birth of Louis Braille* (Portugal 2009); *Children* (Hong Kong 2017).

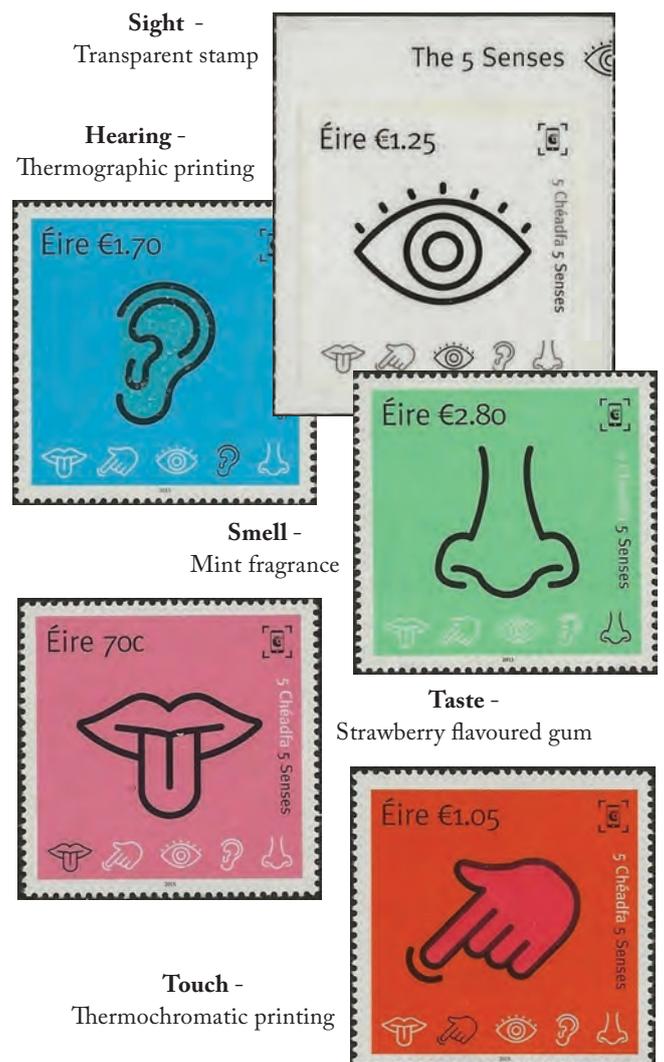
• **Cider:** *Spanish Gastronomy*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2020).

• **Sea salt:** *Marine Fauna* (Slovenia 2013).

• **Ham:** *Year of the Pig*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2007).



**Figure 93.** Brazil's miniature sheet printed on recycled paper issued in 1999 reminds people of the risks of forest fires and destruction of the rain forest. Appropriately, the stamps have been saturated with the smell of burnt wood.



**Figure 94.** *The Five Senses* issued in Ireland in 2015 is one of the few multi-sensory stamp sets. Each stamp has been produced using a different printing method.

A flavoured stamp is usually included in a so-called **multi-sensory stamp set**, such as *100th Anniversary of the Birth of Louis Braille* (Portugal 2009) [Figure 94], *Superman* (Jersey 2013); *The Five Senses* (Ireland 2015) and *Children* (Hong Kong 2017), with each stamp produced with a different printing method.

Due to the proliferation of self-adhesive stamps (as well as the pandemic), it is likely that multi-sensory stamp issues in general, and flavoured stamps in particular, will remain scarce.

## Unusual forms

Stamps are issued in various 2D shapes, such as rectangles, triangles, circles and ovals, as discussed before. But there are also more complex forms of stamps, having a third dimension. Before introducing stamps with 3D forms, let's go through some categories of unusual stamps having a 2D shape with a twist.

**Card stamps** are usually self-adhesive stamps that are issued as sheets that resemble credit cards in size and appearance. Card stamps have been issued by a few postal administrations:

*Flags and Map* (North Korea 1993, 1995); *Map of Kiribati* (Kiribati 1993); *8th-century Travels of Hye Cho* (North Korea 1994) [Figure 95]; *Korean Tiger* (North Korea 1994); *Turtle Ship* (North Korea 1994); *Takt-sang Monastery* (Bhutan 1994); *Map of Bhutan* (Bhutan 1994); *Map of Moldova* (Moldova 1994); *50th Anniversary of the United Nations* (Moldova 1995, Croatian Post Mostar 1995, Kiribati 1995, Tanzania 1995); *Rose of Sharon* (North Korea 1995); *Virgin Mary* (Croatian Post Mostar 1996).

**Cut-outs** have regular or irregular shapes in stamp paper that have been removed using a die or laser-cut technology. There are many such cut-outs in the margins of miniature sheets, but some also in stamps. The cut-outs have shapes of jigsaw pieces, fish, butterflies, dominoes, trees, teapots, maps, filigree silhouettes, lace, stars, hearts, arrows, masks, and even holes caused by cigarette burning or gun.

*Literary Begins at Home* (Canada 1996); *Pet Fish* (Hong Kong 2003); *Christmas* (Liechtenstein 2004); *Forest Conservation* (Argentina 2004); *Nostalgia* (Liechtenstein 2007); *Etisalat* (UAE 2007); *Journey into Space*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Sweden 2009); *Swallow Tail Butterfly*<sup>BL</sup> (Taiwan 2009); *Simon Wiesenthal* (Austria, Israel 2010, joint issue); *Euploea Butterfly* (Taiwan 2011); *Chinese Lunar New Year*<sup>BL</sup> (Liechtenstein 2011–2021); *Teas of Taiwan*<sup>BL</sup> (Taiwan 2012); *Nyonya Kebaya Traditional Wedding attire*<sup>BL</sup> (Malaysia 2013); *Symbol of Love* (Thailand 2014); *Gold Earrings and Painting* (South Korea 2014); *Record* (Switzerland 2014); *Bobbin Lace* (Spain 2015); *International Year of Light* (Liechtenstein 2015); *Spread your love* (Lebanon 2018); *Macao Stamp Show - the Ballad of Mulan* (United Nations 2018); *Hiking Trails*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2019); *Native Bees*<sup>BL</sup> (Australia 2019); *Elm Trees of*

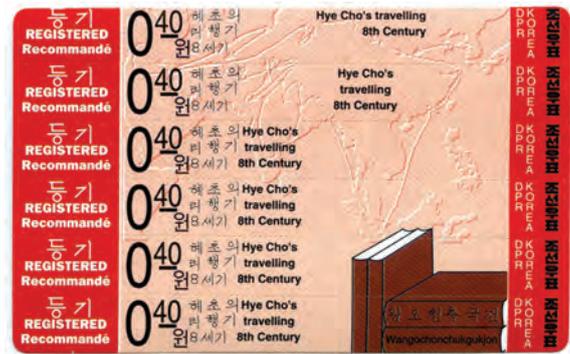


Figure 95. Card stamps issued in North Korea in 1994 to commemorate the journey of Hyecho, a Buddhist monk, to India in 723.



Figure 96. The *Our Lady of Belén* issue of Spain (2020) is printed on wood paper in the form of a cut trunk with year rings. The cut-out has a shape of a tree.



Figure 97. The only known nested stamp was issued in a die-cut miniature sheet of Finland in 2011 to commemorate the Struve Geodetic Arc stretching from the North Sea through Finland to the Black Sea. The inner stamp (at right) is in the form of a map of Finland. The outer stamp (at left) may easily break when the inner stamp is removed.

*Our Lady of Belén, Cabeza de Buey* (Spain 2020) [Figure 96]; *250th Birth Anniversary of Beethoven* (Spain 2020); *Dominoes*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 2021).

A **nested stamp** is a bizarre special case of a cut-out, where the cut-out is another postage stamp of its own. The only such issue so far is the *Struve Chain*<sup>BL</sup> (Finland 2011) [Figure 97]. In this case the outer stamp is nearly impossible to use postally without breaking it.

Miniature sheets and stamps with **moving parts** have two or more layers that can be moved relative to each other. There are few such stamp issues so far:

*Copa América*<sup>BL</sup> (Argentina 2011); *International Year of Water Cooperation - Using Water Wisely*<sup>BL</sup> (South Africa 2013) [Figure 98]; *15th Anniversary of the Centro de Relevo - Institute for Deaf People*<sup>BL</sup> (Colombia 2016); *Leisure and Hobby - Card Games* (Spain 2020).

Miniature sheets with **interactive folds** or die cuts have a special paper architecture that makes it possible open, fold or pull out stamps:

*Issenheim Altar Pieces*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2012) [Figure 99]; *Children's Book Week*<sup>BL</sup> (Netherlands 2012) [Figure 100]; *Christmas*<sup>BL</sup> (New Zealand 2016); *UNESCO World Heritage - Monuments of Oviedo and the Kingdom of the Asturias*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2017); *Reopening of the Royal Theater*<sup>BL</sup>



**Figure 98.** This miniature sheet issued in South Africa (2013) raises the awareness of the importance of using fresh water wisely. It contains five drop-shaped stamps reflecting the five recognized water uses. The top plate of the sheet can be rotated so that one stamp and its description appear at a time.



**Figure 99.** This miniature sheet features the Isenheim Altarpiece, the masterpiece of Matthias Grünewald. The altarpiece can be explored by opening the shutters of two levels.



**Figure 100.** The first miniature sheet with pop-up stamps was issued on the occasion of the Children's Book Week in the Netherlands in 2012. Pulling out the cardboard slider opens a 3D stamp.



**Figure 101.** The Spanish air mail centenary in 2020 was celebrated by issuing a pop-up stamp, that has a die cut, simulating a biplane dropping an envelope.

(Spain 2017); *Portugaleta - Metal Bridge*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2017); *Old Radios*<sup>BL</sup> (Brazil 2018); *Christmas - 200th Anniversary of Silent Night*<sup>BL</sup> (Brasil 2018); *Christmas*<sup>BL</sup> (Spanish Andorra 2018); *Artistic Heritage - Houses of Colour*<sup>BL</sup> (Spain 2018); *40th Anniversary of European Parliament Elections* (Spain 2019); *100th Anniversary of the First Spanish Air Mail* (Spain 2020) [Figure 101].

It is expected that there will be many more issues in this category in the future.

### Functional stamps

The term functional stamp here refers to such unusual stamps that also have some other function besides paying a postage.

In addition to Bhutan (1973), few other postal administrations have issued stamps that can be played as **vinyl audio records**: *Record*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 2014; national anthem jazz version) [Figure 102]; *250th Anniversary of the Birth of Ludwig van Beethoven* (Spain 2020; Beethoven's 5th Symphony).

There are also a few stamps (or rather postal stationeries) that can be played as CD audio records or DVD video records: *100th Anniversary of the Monarchy* (Bhutan 2008); *In Harmony with Nature* (Bhutan 2008) [Figure 103]; *King Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck* (Bhutan 2009); *Pending Voter, State Flag* (Bhutan 2009); *Olympic Games* (North Korea 2009).

In these cases CD or DVD containing the postage stamp need to be mailed in a windowed envelope, meaning that the whole is at the same time a kind of postal stationery.

A **readable book** is featured in the following issues: *75th Anniversary of the National Book Week* (Netherlands 2010); *Reopening of the Vatican Library* (Vatican City 2010) [Figure 104]; *Bangkok World Book Capital*<sup>BL</sup> (Thailand 2014).

These are early examples of the **augmented reality** associated with stamps. The stamp itself may convey additional information, or additional information may be available in some other media, like web pages or videos displayed by smartphones.



Figure 105. The Swiss stamp (2007) with a BeeTagg was issued in cooperation with Swiss Tourism and their winter advertising campaign.



Figure 102. Swiss miniature sheet issued in 2014 has a round stamp with a special coating, when placed on a record player, plays a brass band version of the Swiss national anthem.



Figure 103. This CD-ROM stamp issued in Bhutan in 2008 includes 9 minute documentary about Bhutan's commitment to the protection of their environment.



Figure 104. This stamp celebrated the reopening of the Vatican Apostolic Library in 2010 after renovation. The stamp is a miniature book inserted into a slot on a backing card.



**Figure 106.** The first cryptographic stamp was issued in Austria in 2019. It is made of plastic with 3D holographic printing. 150,000 were printed in total. In this 1st generation version of crypto stamp there are five different digital representations. A QR code connects to the digital representation. The colour of the digital presentation was determined randomly, red being the most valuable.



**Figure 107.** The first Swiss cryptographic stamp has 13 different digital representations (NFTs). The number of units varies between 50 and 65,000. The Matterhorn is the least rare of them.

In 2007 Swiss Post issued a stamp with an incorporated mobile tag (BeeTagg) [Figure 105]. It required installing the free BeeTagg app into the smartphone. The reader recognized the tag and displayed a pre-defined web page in the phone. BeeTaggs have since been replaced with QR codes and the BeeTagg links no longer work.

**QR or pattern codes** are now the most popular way of combining stamps with augmented reality. Mobile phones can natively scan QR codes without downloading an external app. Addresses and contacts can be easily encoded as a QR code for augmented reality. The QR code is read on a smartphone, after which the phone works according to the information contained in the code, for example opens a specific web page or plays the song of a bird (Netherlands 2016; personalized stamps).

The first stamps containing a QR code were issued in 2011 in Taiwan, Liechtenstein and Croatia. Since then QR codes on stamps have become common and are found in all cryptographic stamps. Today, QR codes are also used to track shipments (eg the Plus stamps used in Finland).

Royal Mail has recently announced that a unique QR code will appear next to the iconic portrait of Queen Elizabeth II in all definitive stamps of the United Kingdom. The idea is to prevent re-use of stamps, but the code can also contain messages from the sender to the recipient.

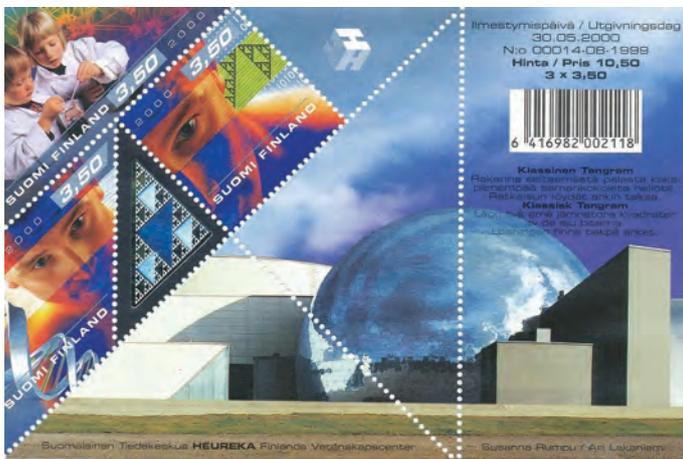
**NFC technology** can be used connect to other devices wirelessly. A NFC chip can store data, music etc. The information can be displayed on a smartphone with an installable application. There are already some miniature sheets with NFC chips added: *Christmas - Star of Bethel*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2019) [Figure 86]; *A Time for Hope*<sup>BL</sup> (Portugal 2020); *Commemoration of the 40th National Stamp Popularity Poll*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2020); *Combat Corona Campaign*<sup>BL</sup> (China 2020).

The idea of a **cryptographic stamp** varies from issue to another, but it usually consists of two parts: physical, which can be used as a stamp, and the corresponding digital representation of the stamp or a NFT (a non-fungible token) which is stored in the blockchain. Stamps are printed with a QR code and often with scratch off printing. The address of the digital representation is encoded in a QR code. A surface that is scratched or a NFC chip contains secret keys that can be used to gain full control of the digital representation in the blockchain. These NFTs can be collected and traded, i.e. transferred from one owner to another in the blockchain, just like coins of virtual currencies.

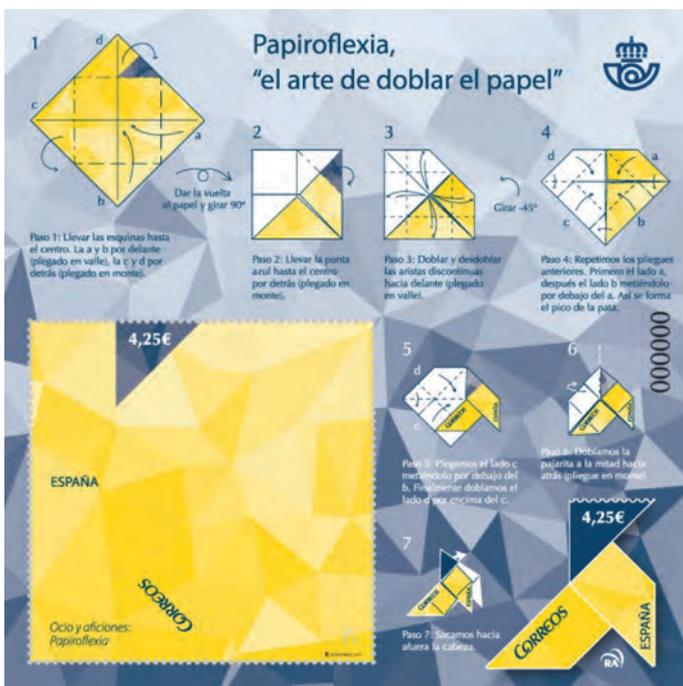
The following cryptographic stamps have been issued recently: *Crypto stamp* (Austria 2019–2021) [Figure 106]; *Day of the Stamp - Croatian Post Crypto* (Croatia 2020); *UN Crypto* (UN postal administrations 2020);



**Figure 108.** In 2021, Liechtenstein commemorated the founding of PEN International by issuing a miniature sheet with scratch off printing in black. The purpose is to draw attention to the distorting and manipulative effect created by omitting words from quotes of writers.



**Figure 109.** The miniature sheet issued in 2010 in Finland is a tribute to the Heureka Science Center. The sheet was designed in the form of an ancient Chinese puzzle, the tangram. By reorganizing the three stamps and other pieces, two smaller squares can be formed. The solution to this puzzle is printed on the back of the miniature sheet.



*Crypto Stamp Rimac Nevera* (Croatia 2021); *Crypto-currency Stamp* (Gibraltar 2021); *Blockchain Technology from the Principality* (Liechtenstein 2021); *Crypto Stamp* (Switzerland 2021) [Figure 107].

It is likely that many more crypto stamps will be issued in the near future and there will be different concepts behind them.

**Flip book stamps** are issued in miniature sheets or booklets that contain a series of stamps or labels, slightly different from each other, that can be arranged in a flip book format. There are only a few such issues so far:

*World EXPO 2010*<sup>BL</sup> (Hungary 2010); *Israeli Animation - The 50th Anniversary of ASIFA*<sup>BL</sup> (Israel 2010); *200th Anniversary of the Birth of Gaspard-Félix Nadar*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2020).

**Scratch stamps** have a print surface under which text or images are revealed when the surface is scratched off. Such issues include e.g.

*Centenary of Cinema* (New Zealand 1996); *Greetings Stamp* (Netherlands 1997); *With friendship*<sup>BL</sup> (Finland 1998); *Lunar Chinese New Year* (Hong Kong 1999); *Greetings Stamps* (Liechtenstein 2001); *Valentine's Day* (Norway 2003); *Centenary of the Magic Circle* (UK 2005); *50 years of Austrian Airlines* (Austria 2008); *South African Quiz*<sup>BL</sup> (South Africa 2010); *National Communications Day* (Thailand 2013); *Mother's Day* (China 2013); *Greetings Stamps*<sup>BL</sup> (France 2016–2018); *New Born - Its a Boy / Girl* (New Caledonia 2017); *Pen International*<sup>BL</sup> (Liechtenstein 2021) [Figure 108].

Miniature sheets or stamps may contain **interactive games**, tricks or illusions:

*Heureka Science Center*<sup>BL</sup> (Finland 2000) [Figure 109]; *Christmas - The Game of the Goose*<sup>BL</sup> (San Marino 2003); *Centenary of the Magic Circle* (UK 2005); *23rd Asian International Stamp Exhibition*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2009); *30 Years of the Pan African Postal Union: Bridging the Digital Divide*<sup>BL</sup> (South Africa 2010); *Beneficial Insects - Bees*<sup>BL</sup> (Canada 2012).

A special type of an interactive game is a **jigsaw puzzle** consisting of postage stamps as pieces:

*42nd Anniversary of the International Children's Games* (Argentina 2010); *Madagascar 3*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2012); *Halloween*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2013); *Die Biene Maja*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2014); *Easter Bunny*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2015); *Christmas*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2016); *Birthday Party*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2017); *A Letter's Journey*<sup>BL</sup> (Austria 2019).

**Figure 110.** The miniature sheet issued in Spain contains a stamp that can be folded, by following the instructions given into a bow tie. Origami is an ancient art of creating paper figures.

**Crafting** may involve modifying postage stamps by pasting stickers, drawing, painting or paper folding:

“Picture Postage” *Greetings Stamps* (Canada 2000); *Fun Fruit ‘n’ VegSmilers*<sup>BL</sup> (UK 2006); *Children Stamps - Chinese Idioms and their Stories*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2011); *Signs of Heaven*<sup>BOOKLET</sup> (Finland 2014); *World Post Day*<sup>BL</sup> (South Africa 2014); *Chinese New Year*<sup>BL</sup> (Tonga 2015–2016); *Paper folding - Origami* (Spain 2017) [Figure 110]; *Year of Giving*<sup>BL</sup> (UAE 2017); *My Gift to Estonia - Children’s Drawing Competition*<sup>BL</sup> (Estonia 2018).

**Hand colouring** is a special type of crafting, only few issues exist so far: *National Philatelic Exhibition NABA 2000*<sup>BL</sup> (Switzerland 1999–2000); *Children’s Stamps*<sup>BL</sup> (Hong Kong 2001).

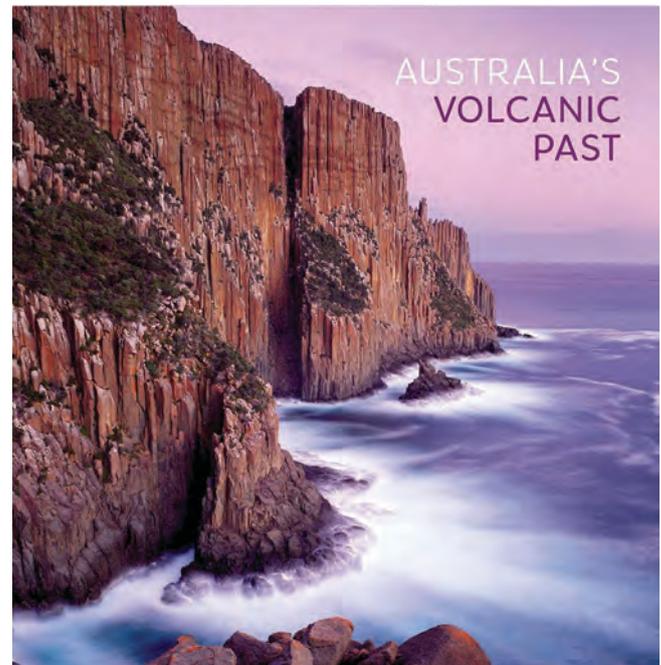
## Some general remarks

The number of unusual stamps is constantly increasing. It started to accelerate in the 2010s and is likely to continue. Completely new types of stamps are entering the market. Today the trend is to issue larger entities such as miniature sheets<sup>BL</sup> instead of single stamps. This way postal agencies can sell more at once and if there is something special on the miniature sheets, also more at a higher price.

Today, unusual stamps and miniature sheets are issued all over the world. The postal administrations of some countries have been clearly more experimental in this respect, such as Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Estonia, Finland, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, China, Hong Kong and Thailand.

This article lists only some of the unusual issues produced by leading international stamp agencies, such as IGPC and Stamperija Ltd., as they they may not be available at all in the countries represented by these agencies. On the other hand, at the moment, it seems that with the exception of some very large stamps, scented stamps and odd-shaped miniature sheets, these stamp agencies do not produce very many unusual stamps. One reason may be the higher production costs of unusual stamps compared to ordinary stamps. From a business point of view it is less risky to produce stamps using traditional printing methods or digital printing. The volume of issues is considered more important.

Some unusual types of stamps and miniature sheets are now so common that they should no longer be considered very unusual. Such types include, but are not limited to, odd-shaped stamps and miniature sheets, stamps with metallic foil, stamps with holograms or holographic prints that cover only small parts of stamps, as well as stamps with postal logos or serial numbers printed with fluorescent ink. Stamps with QR codes will become very common when postal administrations develop their postal services.



**Figure 111.** The Australia’s Volcanic Past special edition features four odd-shaped digitally printed miniature sheets. Only 150 packages were printed by Australia Post. The price of the package, AUS\$ 69.90, is four times the face value of the stamps. The corresponding normal issue consists of the same stamps printed in sheets.

In many cases, it is difficult to distinguish between so-called normal issues, which eventually end up as the main types in stamp catalogues, and other issues, which have a limited edition and availability, and may not appear in stamp catalogues. Limited edition stamps may be produced only in a few dozen or hundreds of copies and are often sold out quickly. In this article, such limited issues are marked in gray and are listed if they are the only issues of the type.

Australia Post, for example, has produced a number of special issues in addition to normal issues. Such special issues are typically varieties of normal issues. They are marketed as the *Impressions Series* [Figure 111], *Limited Editions*, *Impressions Premium Folders* or the like, are neatly packaged and obviously priced much higher than normal issues.

Often, such special issues are published at philatelic events, such as the World Stamp Exhibitions, and their availability may be limited to one event or even limited to a single day of an event outside the country of origin.

Such exclusive issues with limited editions should only be considered as souvenirs, as they are marketed as rare collectibles and not for actual postal use.

The same is true for stamps printed in silver or gold alloys: it is unlikely that they will ever be used for genuine mailing, or if somebody uses them for mailing, they are unlikely to ever reach their destination.

There are also many stamps and miniature sheets that are private i.e. not issued by postal authorities. For example, miniature sheets printed on wood in the late 2010's in the name of some African countries, such as Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, Guinea Bissau, Niger, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone and Togo, were produced in low numbers for a dealer in China and were priced high.

Personalized stamps offered by many postal authorities to the general public and businesses are almost always printed in low numbers. Therefore, their availability is usually very limited. The designs of personalized stamps are approved by the postal administrations, but may be modified by private parties afterwards.

Traditional stamp catalogues, such as Michel, Yvert and Stanley Gibbons, provide little information so far on new printing methods, especially when multiple methods have been used. It makes it difficult to distinguish between the main and special issues with a limited edition.

Some fully official issues may be difficult to obtain from outside the issuing country. For example, the *Vegetables - Grow Your Own* miniature sheet [Figure 112], issued in New Zealand in 2017, was only available in New Zealand: stamps have live seeds that are banned from being exported!

As stated at the beginning of this article, the reason for the issuance of many modern stamps is something quite different from the actual postal need. For example, it is difficult to imagine what is the postal advantage in issuing stamps made of ceramics. Such stamps are issued only to attract collectors, they are beautiful - and unusual.

Everyone can decide for themselves whether they want to collect such specialties. At least for those interested in printing techniques, there is a lot to learn from them.



**Figure 112.** In 2017, New Zealand Post issued a miniature sheet which contain real herb and vegetable seeds. Due to export restrictions, these stamps were valid only for use in domestic New Zealand and were not for sale and delivery outside New Zealand.

## Exhibiting unusual stamps

According to the Guidelines for the SREV of Thematic Philately [2], an exhibit may contain *appropriate postal-philatelic material, which has been issued for the purpose of transmitting mail or other postal communications*. Postal franking items, such as stamps, miniature sheets and postal stationeries issued by postal administrations, regardless if they are usual or unusual, clearly meet this definition. Unusual stamps, miniature sheets and postal stationeries can therefore be freely displayed in thematic exhibits.

Illegal, abusive and undesirable issues, as defined by the UPU Philatelic Code of Ethics [1], regardless if they are usual or unusual, are considered inappropriate in thematic exhibits. For discussion of abusive and undesirable stamp issues, see [3].

However, to increase demand and minimize risks posed by higher production costs, postal administrations often issue unusual stamps in limited editions, which means limited availability. In many cases it is clear that such issues are not really intended to be used as postage, but only to be collected.

[1] requires that issuing postal authorities shall ensure that postage stamps are *printed in sufficient quantity to meet potential operational requirements and foreseeable philatelic needs*. Therefore, the extremely small print sizes of some issues must be considered undesirable. Limited issues that are printed in a few dozens or hundreds clearly do not meet the requirement for general availability, and therefore displaying them in thematic exhibits should be avoided. In cases of doubt, the exhibitor should explain the status of the item in philatelic text.

If, in addition to an ordinary issue, there is a limited-edition variety of the ordinary issue, the availability of which is severely restricted, as is often the case,

then higher priority in thematic exhibits should be given to the ordinary issue.

However, varieties of an ordinary issue, that have not been planned or result from changes in production process (e.g. between different printing runs), are obviously considered important material for thematic exhibits and can be displayed without restrictions.

It is an interesting question whether there are practical cases where a limited-edition stamp with limited availability can be presented in a thematic exhibit. The strongest argument against displaying such items in thematic exhibits, in particular if they are modern, is their lack of postal-philatelic significance. If they are only intended to be collected, then they contribute nothing to the rarity of postal-philatelic material, and should therefore generally be avoided.

There is no objection, though, to displaying such items as postally used. A genuinely cancelled item on cover with correct postage takes precedence over a cancelled-to-order (CTO) item, an unaddressed or unmailed cover, first day cover, souvenir document or any other document which was created to please collectors [Figure 116].

An example of this is the Tannu Tuva stamps issued in 1934–1936 [Figure 21]. These stamps, intended for the remote People's Republic of Tannu Tuva (in existence in 1921–1944), were printed in Moscow and mainly sold by the Soviet Philatelic Association, a business run by the Soviet Union authorities. If collectors preferred cancelled stamps, they were CTO-cancelled in Moscow.

Although the main motivation for printing these stamps for Tannu Tuva was collecting foreign currency, a small number of stamps was actually sent to Tannu Tuva, where a few of them were postally used. Because these stamp sets did not contain suitable values to be used to pay local postage, genuinely used local covers are therefore virtually unknown. A common practise



**Figure 113.** Registered cover with the 10ch red “Talking stamp” of Bhutan (1973) tied by Phuntsholing bilingual double-ring postmark. Late philatelic use (April 1977), but genuinely carried cover to India. There are several covers with the same sender and recipient. Photo: discogs.com.



**Figure 114.** A registered airmail cover from Kyzyl to Czechoslovakia in 1937 (with arrival postmark of Olomouk on the back side). It contains four values from the 1935 pictorial issue of Tannu Tuva. There are several dozen Tannu Tuva covers with different stamps for the same recipient, so it is very likely that this is part of the philatelic correspondence. Determining whether this cover was actually mailed from Kyzyl requires expertise. Because there are no postmarks indicating transit, it is safe to assume that this cover was mailed from Moscow rather than from Kyzyl. Photo: Cherrystone Auctions.

was to buy stamps in Moscow, affix stamps on covers, send them to Kyzyl (the capital of Tannu Tuva) with a request to mail them from Tuva to their destinations. In other words, these covers are postal, but are considered philatelic correspondence [Figure 114].

The catalogue prices of the metal foil stamps of Sierra Leone [Figure 115] are low, but genuinely used covers with correct postage are much more difficult to acquire. In general, displaying an unusual item postally used on cover can take up a lot of space on an exhibition page. The exhibitor should carefully consider whether displaying such items will enhance the exhibit and is therefore in the exhibitor's best interest.

Some types of unusual stamps are easy to utilize in thematic exhibits. An exhibitor of a certain theme can benefit from displaying stamps that have been printed on materials or have material additions, that are related to the theme. For example, displaying a stamp containing a piece of genuine fish skin [Figure 79] in an exhibit telling about fish or cooking is an interesting possibility from the point of view of thematic development.

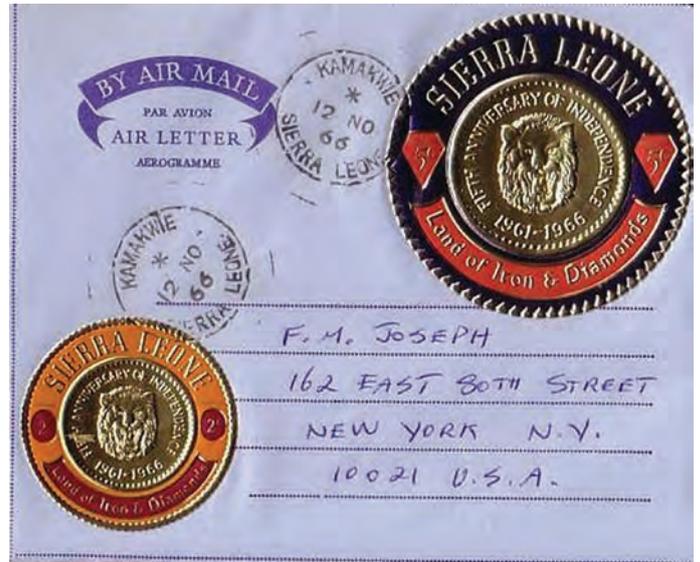
On the other hand, scented, seasoned, photochromatic, thermochromatic and 3D-lenticular stamps, for example, are much more difficult to benefit from, due to the limitations in traditional exhibiting.

In principle, some functional stamps could be exhibited with a number of copies, each showing a different 'facet' of the stamp. Again, however, the question is how much space on an exhibition page should be reserved for this purpose.

Many unusual stamp issues tend to be more expensive than ordinary issues. There are two reasons for this. First the initial face value of an unusual issue is likely to be higher due to higher production costs. Second, unusual stamps seem to be quite popular with collectors. For instance, the unusual stamps of Bhutan can get surprisingly high prices given their low postal-philatelic significance [Figure 113].

The best resources for studying details of unusual stamps and other postal items are currently [4] and [5]. There is a good chance that Google finds more information about a specific issue from [4] using the issue name listed in this article, the name of the issuing country, the year of issue + "moi stamp". For example: "Marine Fauna Slovenia 2013 moi stamp". Try it!

Hopefully publishers of the major stamp catalogues will include more detailed information about special printing methods in the future editions of their catalogues. [6] can be used as a reference for printing methods of new issues, but many details can be incomplete or even incorrect, so care must be taken. ■



**Figure 115.** An airmail letter from Sierra Leone to the United States. Postage (5+2c) has been paid with metal foil stamps of the 1966 issue, which commemorates the 5th anniversary of the independence and the first gold coinage of Sierra Leone. Photo: Greg Jorgensen.



**Figure 116.** An unaddressed first day cover with the 10ch. red and 1.25nu. blue "Talking stamps" of Bhutan (1973), tied by the Phuntsholing bilingual double-ring postmark. This unaddressed first day cover is considered merely a souvenir and should be avoided in thematic exhibits.

#### SOURCES:

- [1] **PHILATELIC CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE USE OF UPU MEMBER COUNTRIES** [WWW.UPU.INT/UPU/MEDIA/UPU/DL.PHIL/RECOMMANDATIONC13-2016CODEOFETHICSEN.PDF].
- [2] **FIP GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE EXHIBITS OF THEMATIC PHILATELY.**
- [3] **IN QUEST FOR ABUSIVE AND UNDESIRABLE STAMP ISSUES**, TCNews No. 29 | SEPTEMBER 2020.
- [4] **PHILAQUELY MOI** [PHILAQUELYMOI.BLOGSPOT.COM] CONTAINS A WEALTH OF ILLUSTRATIVE IMAGES AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNUSUAL STAMPS, BUT ALSO INCLUDES MANY ISSUES WITH LIMITED EDITIONS AND BY INTERNATIONAL AGENTS.
- [5] **DENTELLI STRAVAGANTI** [ERYX.IT/DENTELLI] A CATALOG AND IMAGES OF UNUSUAL STAMPS CATEGORIZED ACCORDING TO TYPE AND TIME OF ISSUE.
- [6] **COLNECT** [COLNECT.COM] A WORLD-WIDE STAMP CATALOG WITH SOME INFORMATION REGARDING PRINTING METHODS OF RECENT ISSUES.

## Future FIP and Continental Exhibitions with Thematic Class

as of **January 2022**, subject to changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic

19–26 February 2022	London, United Kingdom	<b>LONDON 2022</b> www.london2022.co	FIP Patronage Specialized WSC
31 March–3 April 2022	Budapest, Hungary	<b>HUNFILEX 2022</b> mabeosz.hu/hunfilex2022	FIP Patronage Specialized
18–22 May 2022	Lugano, Switzerland	<b>HELVETIA 2022</b> www.helvetia2022.ch	FIP Patronage Specialized WSC
9–12 June 2022	Toronto, Canada	<b>CAPEX 2022</b> capex22.org	FIP Recognition (FIAF)
4–9 August 2022	Jakarta, Indonesia	<b>INDONESIA 2022</b>	FIP Patronage Specialized WSC
13–16 October 2022	Liberec, Czech Republic	<b>LIBEREC 2022</b> liberec2022.eu	FIP Recognition (FEPA)
8–12 November 2022	Cape Town, South Africa	<b>CAPE TOWN 2022</b> capetown2022.org	FIP Patronage Specialized
25–28 May 2023	Essen, Germany	<b>IBRA 2023</b>	FIP Patronage General World
11–15 August 2023	Taipei, Chinese Taipei	<b>TAIPEI 2023</b> taipei2020.post.gov.tw	FIP Recognition (FIAP)

## Results of the FIP and Continental Exhibitions

as of **January 2022**

### **NOTOS 2021**, FIP Recognition (FEPA),

Athens, November 19–22, 2021



937	Khripkov, Yury	RU	The alphabet of Orthodoxy (5 frames)	68 SB
942	Picconi, Salvatore	IT	San Marino: History of ancient land of freedom (8)	88 LV
950	Joing, Jean-Luc	FR	La Franc-Maçonnerie (The Freemasonry) (8)	95 LG SP
958	Gándara Rodríguez, Jose Angel	ES	Colón; Rumbo a las Yndias (8)	85 LV
966	Riedl, Peter	AT	Franz Joseph Habsburg-Lothringen (5)	78 LS
971	Christodoulidis, Costas	GR	Hellas (Greece), 19th-21st century, The Renaissance of a Nation (5)	72 S
976	Turyn, Leanid	BY	The history of development of northern latitudes (5)	80 V
981	Szirtes, György	HU	In memoriam György Endresz, world recorder Ocean flyer (1)	45
982	Liutikas, Darius	LT	The Scout Movement in the Baltic Countries. History and Development (5)	68 SB
987	Vanyó, József	HU	World Wars and what happened between them (5)	66 SB

992	FencI, Petr	CZ	Gagarin in a Skirt (5 frames)	83 V
997	Ghose, Chandrajit	IN	Summer Olympics - Philatelic material issued by Greece and host country from 1896 to 2021 (5)	60 B
1002	Schullian, Rufin	IT	Citius, Altius, Fortius - Olympic Games Paris 1924 (5)	85 LV
1007	Bánás, Artúr	HU	One of the Most Popular Winter Sports - Alpine Skiing (5)	83 V
1012	Ghose, Chandrajit	IN	FIFA World Cup (5)	60 B
1017	Constantourakis, George(s)	CA	Lord Byron - The unconventional Poet of Genius and Champion of Liberty (5)	76 LS
1029	Florkievitz, Vasile	RO	Ein Leben gewidmet der Musik - Franz Liszt (5)	71 S
1034	Kiefer, Joerg	DE	Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdetagen... (5)	85 LV
1039	Yazgan, Yasemin	TR	Wingless swans (5)	73 S
1044	Egelriede, Dieter	DE	Die altgriechische Mathematik, ihre Fortentwicklung und Impulse (5)	92 G SP
1049	Christodoulidis, Costas	GR	Meteorology (5)	73 S
1054	Veggeland, Turid	NO	Bitter Pills and Strong Drops (8)	95 LG SP
1062	Dr. Athale, Dinar	GB	Diabetes - The Sweet Smell of Success (5)	76 LS
1067	Mey-Raz, Yohanan	IL	Preventing Accidents and Diseases (5)	73 S
1072	Dr. Athale, Dinar	GB	Indelible Evidence - The History of Forensic Medicine (1)	70
1073	Rautenburg, Jörg	DE	Kinderzeichnungen berühren weltweit - Ihre Geheimnisse und magische Kraft (5)	82 V
1078	Bánás, Artúr	HU	A Miracle of a Great Discovery, the Victoria Falls (1)	81
1087	Licata, Giovanni	IT	The Palm - the Queen of Plants (8)	93 G
1100	Ferant, Veni	SI	An Everlasting Tree - Olive (1)	75
1101	Sasidharan, Anilkumar	GB	Of Whales & Whaling (5)	76 LS
1106	Calin, Constantin	RO	Lions in Human Culture (5)	78 LS
1111	Pavleski, Sinisha	MK	Rooster - Potent and brave (1)	63
1112	Antonovska, Liljana	MK	Companion of Man (1)	63
1113	Barak, Izhak	IL	The development of aviation and transportation of mail by air until 1914 (8)	87 LV
1121	Calani, Gianantonio	IT	The old dream of 4 wheels (8)	88 LV
1129	Florea, Mihai Emanoil	RO	The Steam Locomotive (5)	70 S
1134	Cymerys, Bogdan	PL	Safety on the roads First (5)	85 LV

**BANGABANDHU 2021**, FIAP Recognition  
1st FIAP Virtual International Stamp Exhibition,  
December 10–30, 2021



**BANGABANDHU  
2021**

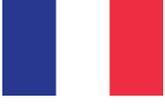
56	Han Zinhui	China	Bamboo (5 frames)	75 LS
57	Capt. Vijay Wadhwa	India	Extreme birds (5)	76 LS
58	Anand Kakad	India	“The Phasianidea family of Birds” – Their impact on man and the world around us (5)	86 LV
59	Adesh Pramod Barde	India	Hidden Treasure of Mother – Rocks and Minerals (5)	71 S
60	Nunuk Sri Prasetyorini	Indonesia	“Who Supposed to be the Queen” (5)	84 V
61	Pradip Bajracharya	Nepal	Fish (5)	70 S
62	Jinsoo Kim	South Korea	The Tiger (5)	76 LS
63	Sriraam Kalingarayar	India	Tracing the Evolution of Ramayana – An Author’s Journey (5)	83 V
64	Upender Vennam	India	HARE RAME... HARE RAME... I AM RAMAYANA (5)	76 LS
65	Vinod Kumar Shirasangi	India	Lord Buddha and Buddhism (5)	68 SB
66	Binod Krishna Shrestha	India	Genius of the Ancient World – The Buddha (5)	75 LS
67	Nguyen Thu Quyen	Vietnam	Mystery of Human Life and 12 Vietnamese Zodiac (5)	62 B
68	N Sridevi	India	Musical Instruments (5)	61 B
69	Wang Yongjun	China	The Invisible Wings of Human Communication – From Signal Fire Turret to Telegraph, Telephone and Satellite Communication (5)	77 LS
70	Salim Zid	UAE	Space Program of the USSR (5)	
60 B				

**One Frame Thematic Exhibits**

107	Ritu Kalra	India	World Refugee Year	55
110	Ritu Kalra	India	Dreams Got Wings	78
117	Stephen Chivers	New Zealand	Niue Telegraph	81
136	S. M. Rafiqul Islam	Bangladesh	Worldwide Shell Stamps	55
137	Sayajit Ghosh	Bangladesh	Rabindranath Tagore, A Lighthouse of the Bengalis	78
138	Suyou Sen Gupta	Bangladesh	A Glimpse of Scouting Activities in Bangladesh	71
139	Md. Nazrul Islam Sohel	Bangladesh	Literature & Song	64
141	Liu Haizhong	China	Bamboo Rhyme	79
142	Tushar Deshpande	India	ELEPHANTname – The Elephant Chronicles	82
143	Capt. Vijay Wadhwa	India	Evolve ... A Beak at Evolution	81
144	Jeevan Jyoti	India	Rainbow	77
145	Capt. Vijay Wadhwa	India	Above & Beyond – Bird Migration	83
146	Fernando T.X. Martins	Portugal	Olympic Games – Berlin / 1936	77
147	Pham Ngoc Son	Vietnam	What is Volcano?	68
148	Pham Hao	Vietnam	Vietnam Folk Paintings	61
149	Raquel Arabella Miranda	Guatemala	The World of Mafalda	78
150	Kyound OG Min	South Korea	Korean War	65

## FIP Accredited Jurors of Thematic Philately Class

as of **January 2022**

	Country	Team leader	Name	Year of birth
	Argentina	✓	Otero Eliseo Ruben	1949
	Australia		Benson Yung Lin	1955
	Australia		Beston Bernard P	1946
	Australia		Bromser Charles	1949
	Austria		Kunz Alfred	1951
	Austria		Wagner Reinhard	1946
	Belgium		Bracke Koenraad	1959
	Belgium		Ghys Jozef	1947
	Brasil		Capucio Carlos Eduardo	1954
	Brasil	✓	Macedo Reinaldo Estevao	1960
	Brasil		Luis Claudio Fritzen	1961
	Brasil		Ribeiro Jr Geraldo de Andrade	1952
	Bulgaria		Lasarov Lasar	1947
	Bulgaria		Nikoltchev Christo	1943
	China	✓	Jiao Xiao Guang	1951
	China		Liang Hong-Gui	1928
	China		Shi Yi Ping	1946
	China		Wang Zhi Gang	1962
	China		Yang Gui Song	1958
	China		Zhang Weiwei	1968
	Costa Rica		Diaz Luis Fernando	1948
	Denmark	✓	Jørgensen Jørgen	1944
	Finland		Majander Jari	1962
	Finland		Mäkinen Jukka	1970
	France	✓	Jimenez Bernard	1951
	France		Menchon Michel	1939
	France		Nadal Marcel	1943
	France		Roussel Jean-Claude	1945

	<b>Country</b>	<b>Team leader</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Year of birth</b>
	Germany		<b>Fischer Peter</b>	1937
	Germany	✓	<b>Hess Wolf</b>	1945
	Germany	✓	<b>Läge Damian</b>	1961
	Germany	✓	<b>Maas Joachim</b>	1954
	Germany	✓	<b>Schmidt Alfred</b>	1966
	Germany		<b>Mengel Manfred</b>	1940
	Hong Kong		<b>Szeto Daniel</b>	1951
	India		<b>Mehta Dhirubhai</b>	1925
	Indonesia		<b>Adikusuma Teguh Wira</b>	1979
	Indonesia		<b>Putranto Tono Dwi</b>	1967
	Israel		<b>Barak Izhak</b>	1943
	Israel		<b>Lador Menachem</b>	1952
	Israel		<b>Magier Joshua</b>	1943
	Italy	✓	<b>Morolli Giancarlo</b>	1939
	Japan	✓	<b>Naito Yosuke</b>	1967
	Rep. Korea		<b>Chang Se-Young</b>	1948
	Rep. Korea		<b>Huh Jin-Do</b>	1941
	Rep. Korea		<b>Kim Chang Han</b>	1956
	Rep. Korea		<b>Kim Seong-Kwon</b>	1963
	Rep. Korea		<b>Lee Soon-Kyu</b>	1940
	Luxemburg		<b>Wolff Joseph</b>	1934
	Malaysia		<b>Ye Cho San</b>	1956
	Netherlands		<b>Van Deutekom Anton</b>	1951
	Norway		<b>Slettebø Hallvard</b>	1958
	Paraguay		<b>Kron Carlos E.</b>	1941

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	Poland		<b>Babut Roman A.</b>	1948
	Poland		<b>Gruszczynski Jerzy</b>	1931
	Poland		<b>Malendowicz Ludwik K.</b>	1942
	Poland		<b>Wiatrowski Zygmunt</b>	1928
	Poland		<b>Zbierski Marek</b>	1954
	Portugal		<b>Goncalvez Borralho Antonio</b>	1938
	Portugal		<b>Oliveiro e Sousa Eduardo J.</b>	1949
	Portugal		<b>Pedroso Maia Julio Manuel</b>	1960
	Russia		<b>Borodin Aleksei</b>	1955
	Singapore	✓	<b>Chan Huei Lock</b>	1944
	Singapore		<b>Tan Ngiap Chuan</b>	1965
	Singapore		<b>Tan Roger</b>	1953
	Slovakia		<b>Jankovič Vojtech</b>	1964
	Slovenia	✓	<b>Suhadolc Peter</b>	1950
	Spain		<b>Iglesias Xifra José Luis</b>	1951
	Spain	✓	<b>Moreno José Ramón</b>	1949
	Sweden		<b>Bengtsson Bengt</b>	1947
	Sweden	✓	<b>Hällström Jonas</b>	1972
	Thailand		<b>Jiraprasertkun Phairot</b>	1972
	United States		<b>Ertzberger Darrell</b>	1957

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**Future numbers of TCNews will publish updates.**

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as of January 2022

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**TC delegates and their contact information can also  
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