

Our winning cover was designed by Jono Garrett and Simone Rossum of BlackRiver FC. Jono and Simone are part of a young trio of designers at BlackRiver FC, a boutique design and advertising agency. Started in 2005, the agency prides itself in creating work that is not only remarkable, but worth remarking about. They find creative solutions for the likes of Nando's, MINI South Africa, 1st for Women Insurance, 94.7 Breakfast Xpress, Virgin Money Insurance and Virgin Mobile.



Photograph by Graeme Borchers



ARCH WINNERS

MEET THE WINNERS OF OUR 'MAKE YOUR MARK ON THE ARCH' COMPETITION – SIMONE ROSSUM AND JONO GARRETT OF BLACKRIVER FC.

Earlier this year, *The Arch* sent out a call to designers, photographers and illustrators inviting them to design a cover for this, our Spring issue, which also happens to make its appearance in our birthday month. Yes, we're already a year old!

We felt that Simone and Jono's design, which appears on our cover captures all that is quintessential to our brand: It's graphic simplicity is striking, yet understated and chic. The curvy, whimsical spring elements are balanced by the cleverly oxymoronic open boundary of the number one (another

metaphor for 'arch'). The added element of 'roots', at the base, is a reference to *The Arch* magazine as a young brand, establishing itself and looking to its future growth. The virtually all-black idea is utterly unexpected and serves as a mysterious wrapping for the surprise within. All-in-all an elegant winner!

Apart from making their mark on our cover, we're awarding the winners with this splash feature to showcase a few more of the BlackRiver FC gems.



NANDO'S RAMADAAN

This year, Nando's wanted to stretch their identity and break away from the standard print layouts for the Ramadaan campaign. So BlackRiver FC began by unpacking the core principles of Ramadaan and found that out of all the things one learned during Ramadaan, five principles stood out the most: love, patience, forgiveness, sharing and sacrifice. But why should these only apply to the Islamic faith? They are universal traits that every human should aspire to as they bring peace and beauty to the world.



Marli Heunis of BlackRiver FC therefore designed these words, with their Arabic translation carefully and pain-stakingly woven into each execution, to reflect this beauty and to visually translate the thought that Nando's is inspired by Ramadaan.

BLACKRIVER FC FOOSBALL TABLE

BlackRiver FC was invited to exhibit alongside fellow South African creatives at the annual Toffie Pop Culture Festival in Cape Town. Toffie Pop showcases the best in international pop culture and design with an audience drawn from ticket holders and peers in the local creative industry. The exhibition offered a platform for the agency to flex its creative muscle and showcase its ability to a like-minded audience at a renowned design festival.

All participants in the festival were provided with a standard table as a display surface. "Our main objective was to stand out amongst the other exhibitors so we decided to do away with the conventional exhibition surface and customise our space

with a branded foosball table instead." Football is an integral part of BlackRiver FC's agency culture; employees' business cards are player cards, the boardroom is called 'The Stadium' and the bathrooms are decorated to look like locker rooms.

However, this was no ordinary foosball table; BlackRiver FC took the idea further by adding the unexpected and creating team players each possessing individual characters, genders and race. "These customised players represent not only our dynamic South African culture, but the make-up of our agency too – our team members whilst remaining individuals, form a 'united' group. This serves to reinforce the ideal within the agency that we are capable of amazing things when we work together as a team."

The piece had immediate standout value and showcased the agency's ability to think outside the box and deliver a unique and relevant creative solution.

"OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE WAS TO STAND OUT AMONGST THE OTHER EXHIBITORS SO WE DECIDED TO DO AWAY WITH THE CONVENTIONAL EXHIBITION SURFACE AND CUSTOMISE OUR SPACE WITH A BRANDED FOOSBALL TABLE INSTEAD."



NANDO'S VIDA E CAFFÈ

Nando's, already synonymous with great quality chicken, teamed up with Vida e Caffè to give their customers the same amazing experience in their after-meal coffee. Our job was to seamlessly merge these two well-known and respected brands in such a way that they play off each other's strengths without subtracting from or interfering with the established design intrinsics their consumers have come to recognise so well.

Happily, they shared a brand colour. And so the idea was simple: Red. The challenge was that in store, there is already a lot of collateral in that there are so many things going on at once, each demanding attention. BlackRiver FC had to devise a look and feel that would cut through everything else. They settled on a stark red and white graphic device comprising of both Nando's and Vida e Caffè elements.

The result was an eye-catching graphic representation of the fiery passion shared by these two brands.



FFW CALL CENTRE

The 1st for Women Call Centre space represents the very start of the brand's journey. BlackRiver FC were tasked with bringing the intrinsics of the brand into the work environment and creating a space staff would not only enjoy spending time in but also allow them to 'live' the brand.

The agency achieved this by designing relevant words and quotes that were ingeniously made to appear as though they were created from a telephone cord. These words were then combined with illustrations depicting the key offerings of the brand, thus bringing the brand intrinsics into the workspace in a creative and engaging way.



VIRGIN MOBILE STARTER PACKS

When Virgin Mobile relaunched into the South African market, BlackRiver FC had to rethink the current design of the Virgin Mobile Prepaid Starter Pack, which was still aligned with the old campaign. The new packs had to capture the very essence of Virgin Mobile.

Given that competitor starter packs are quite similar and often get lost on the shelf, the brief presented a real opportunity for BlackRiver FC to stand out from their competitors in a smart way and optimise this piece of communication as a touch point to really talk to targeted consumers. "Our solution was to quite literally speak to and engage our audience with quirky, smart lines of copy that encapsulate the Virgin Mobile tonality, positioning and essence and set the starter packs apart from competitors," says Simone.



MINI 6 COLOURS TO STAND BY

The World Cup was coming to South Africa. But instead of being euphoric, many locals were pessimistic and cynical. MINI was determined to change this.

6 Colours to Stand By was about uniting South Africans. BlackRiver FC introduced MINI mirror caps, emblazoned with the national flag that could attach to any car. It was the first of its kind in South Africa. And MINI gave them away, for free, to anyone. Within five weeks, 3,3 million cars across South Africa sported the MINI mirror caps. In one of the rare moments since democracy, the nation rallied together and celebrated how far we'd come. ✚

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