Orell Füssli Celebrates 500 Years with Unique House Notes

Orell Füssli is celebrating its 500th anniversary this year, having been founded in 1519 by Christoph Froschauer (just 71 years after Johannes Gutenburg, a goldsmith in Germany, is credited with inventing the printing press). The company's first products were books, most notably the Zurich Bible printed in 1531. Intaglio printing was introduced into the company in 1603, it produced its first security documents in 1826 and printed the Swiss banknotes for the first time in 1914. Since 1973 the company has produced all Swiss banknotes.

To celebrate this special milestone – five centuries of printing is no minor achievement – Orell Füssli Security Printing (OFS) has introduced a unique new house note concept – not one but three house notes in one. The design was partially revealed earlier this year, but overlaid by a jigsaw puzzle from which one piece was removed each month running up to the full unveiling at the Intergraf security printing conference in Copenhagen this month.

The planning for the anniversary started in 2015 when the idea of a special house note first surfaced. A design competition was launched in 2016, with Christophe Métroz being chosen out of a group of five Swiss graphic artists. He selected the theme of 'Time' along with 'Swissness', 'long historical tradition' and 'looking to the future'.

The anniversary note is a collaboration between OFS and project partners KURZ, SICPA, KBA NotaSys, Landqart, CCL Secure, Hueck Folien and Zeiser. It is special not only for its design concept but that it is printed on three different substrates – standard cotton-based paper, Landqart's *Durasafe*®, and CCL Secure's *Guardian*™.

The objective was to demonstrate how a single design could be adapted to the unique characteristics and technical requirements of each substrate and the security features, at the same time achieving the main objective of any house note, namely demonstrating OFS's expertise in creating tailor made solutions for its customers in terms of substrate, feature selection and design integration.

One design, three substrates

The three banknotes can be seen in Fig 1, the main obvious difference between them being the security feature used in the window.

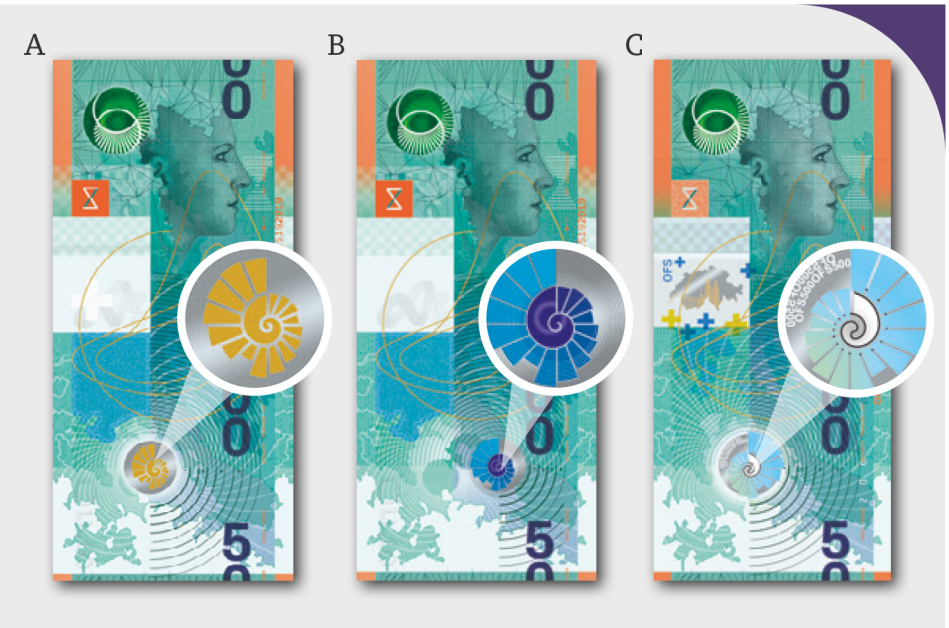
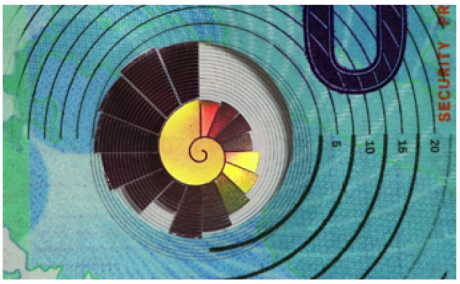


Fig 1: the new specimen note produced on Durasafe (A), cotton paper (B) and Guardian (C).

In the version featuring Durasafe (A), a composite of paper (both outside layers) and a transparent polymer (inner core) fused together, the *Thrusafe*™ transparent window (below) is overprinted with *SICPA's OVI*®.

In the cotton version (B), known for its tactile feel accentuated greatly by intaglio printing, the window has *KINEGRAM*® *APL*, an innovative window patch from KURZ, in combination with a *KINEGRAM REVIEW*® feature.

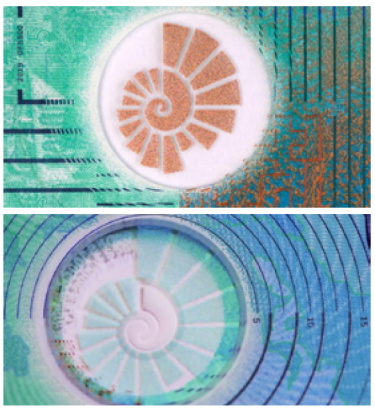


The KINEGRAM APL in the window of the cotton-based note.

In the Guardian note (C), where the structure is a pure polymer core selectively coated with multiple opaque layers so that a transparent window remains, there is a motif printed in the window.

There are a wide variety of security features, most of which are common to all versions; whilst others are specific to one or more of the substrates. Intaglio and offset are prominent, providing the colour and design but also some of the features themselves, such as numbering, microtext (both offset and Intaglio), UV, see-through register, and a double *TwinTilt* latent image.

Other security features include fine line OVI printing, *SPARK*® *TrueSpin*, *Microperf*®, a watermark and *ColourSwitch*™ thread (for the Durasafe and cotton versions) and *Viewsafe* (Durasafe only).



The Viewsafe feature in the Durasafe note (above) and the printed motif in the Guardian note (below).

The 500th anniversary banknotes are instantly recognisable as being Swiss by their innovative modern design, colours and complexity with simplicity. Swiss banknotes are also generally recognised as being the most secure and, if these were circulating banknotes, it is also most unlikely that any decent counterfeits would emerge.

However, their main objective was to mark 500 years of continuous printing at Orell Füssli, and given their special purpose and display of what can be achieved in today's banknotes – in terms of design, printing, security features and quality – they will hopefully set Orell Füssli on course for another 500 years!