

A woody approach to the awards - with high quality results

Results of the 41st FINAT Label competition 2021

Author: Tony White, Chairman of Judges

The Hague, The Netherlands – 6 June 2021. *We have come through an unusual year for all of us with Covid-19 affecting our lives in many ways. We have seen highs and lows, we have had to modify the way we do things at work as well as in our everyday lives. It has been a year of postponed industry events with virtual meetings keeping the label industry alive and informed. We approached the judging in 2021 much better prepared than last year managing to complete the judging as close to normal as possible. The final decisions relating to the award winners were made during a virtual meeting of the judges on the 12th of May. The Category, Group and the Best In Show awards were announced on the last day of the FINAT ELF (European Label Forum) on the 4th June 2021 during a virtual presentation.*

This year, I noticed that more labels than usual were exhibiting a touch of humour in their design, mainly in the drinks and cosmetic categories. Maybe this is an unconscious reaction to the pandemic?



The design of the Best In Show label for the 2021 FINAT Label Competition was an eye-catching illustration of a twisted tree trunk reaching to the sky, OR was it an imaginary imitation of a golfer taking a massive golf swing? These questions came to the forefront of the jury members' minds during the judging process and no firm conclusion was reached. We leave the viewers to make up their own mind as to the intention of the designer. The more one looks closely at the total label the more detail becomes apparent. One discovers hidden farmhouses, stone archways leading to the depths of the landscape. Furrowed fields and the hint of a country village can be seen in the distance. A great design added to all this detail meant that **Priorat Sobre Todo entered by Etiketten Carini, Austria** was unanimously selected by the panel of judges as the Best in Show winner. The use of AM screening

added an extra level of interest by creating a copper plate engraving effect. When the label is viewed at an angle a whole raft of transparent foil images are revealed. Copper foiling and a degree of debossing bestows a quality look to the final result.

(This label also won the Marketing/End-uses group Award at the 41st Annual Competition and spearheaded a host of high quality entries throughout the whole competition.)

The competition is organised on an annual basis by the international European Label association FINAT and as usual enjoyed the services of an expert and dedicated team of judges led by Tony White of AWA Consulting. The judging panel consisted of Murat Sipahioglu of Fin Etiket, Steve Wood of Steve Wood Services and visiting judge Noel Mitchell, FINAT Technical Advisor.

The competition attracted 222 entries from 46 companies representing 27 countries worldwide. In addition to the 5 Group winners and the 23 category winners a total of 81 Highly Commended certificates will be distributed later in the year. The number of countries entering this year was led by France with 25 entries followed by Austria with 20 entries. The number of entries in each category was again led by Wines (58), Alcoholic Drinks (45), Cosmetics (22) closely followed by Sets of labels (19). The steady march of digital printing was noticed in the Marketing Group with 88 of the 108 entries involving digital in one form or another. Throughout the competition 83 entries were printed solely using digital technology.

Group Winners

The Group winners are organised, as usual, into the following five main groups including Marketing/End -Uses, Printing Processes, Non-Adhesive Applications, Innovation and Digital Printing.

The Winner in the **Marketing/End-Uses Group** was Etiketten CARINI GmbH, Austria for Priorat Sobre Todo. This label is getting near to the top of the quality ladder and is almost wasted on a bottle as it merits more attention than just selling a wine product. The use of AM screening adds a degree of interest to the label which one would not expect to get with FM screening techniques. Hold the label at an angle and another world of transparent foil images appears adding yet another layer to an already technically busy label.

Unusually, in fact the first time in the history of the FINAT Label competition, the jury decided to award two group winners in the **Printing Processes Group** as they found it impossible to separate the two entries.

The first winner was Multi-Color Montreal Canada Corp, Canada for Valley of Mother of God. This clean looking, well printed label in five colours uses offset lithography to achieve the quality result required for this product. A fairy tale image is used to emphasise the simplicity and purity of the gin. A whole raft of converting techniques including hot stamping, de-bossing and a very special die-cutting format all contribute to the effectiveness of this label. The gold seal adds that extra touch of class to the end result.

The second winner was DGS Baski Teknolojileri A.S., Turkey for Dalin Düş Bahçesi. Printed in seven colours using flexography this converter has captured the colour of the baby's skin tones perfectly. The combination of the yellow chick and the pink towel complement each other very well and adds further interest to an already busy label. An overall gloss varnish adds a degree of protection to the label during use.