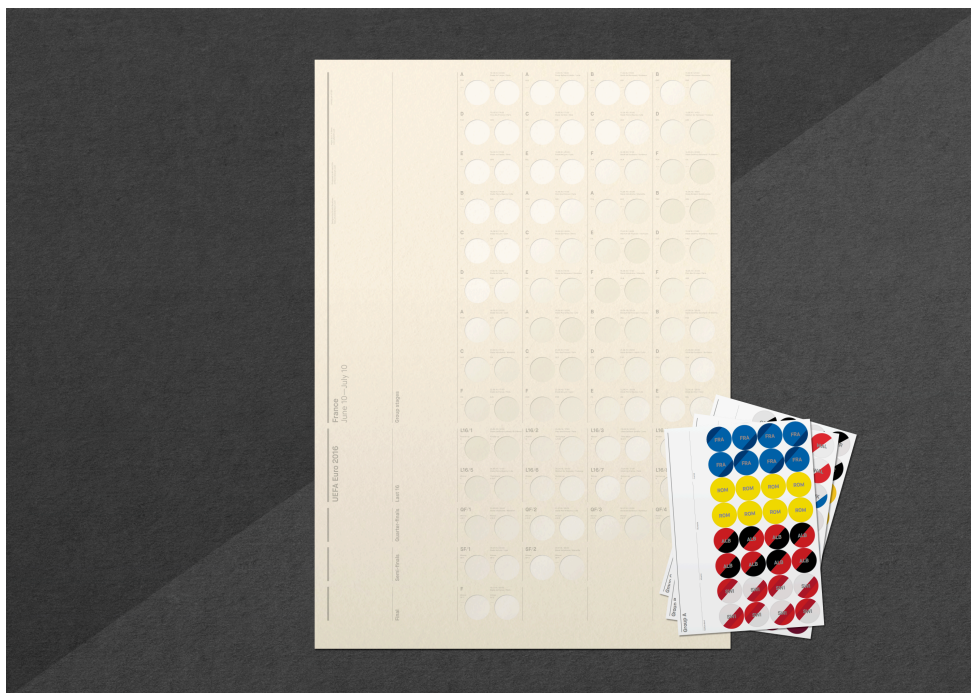


DESIGN TOURNAMENT // UEFA Euro 2016

NIRVANA CPH x STUDIO BLACKBURN

Every two years since 2002, the creative production agency **Nirvana CPH** and Paul Blackburn of brand design agency **Studio Blackburn** have set themselves a unique challenge: creating football-tournament wall charts that stand out from the crowd and achieve the delicate balance between strong design aesthetics and practical fan interaction (showing off the talents of both Blackburn and Nirvana in the process).



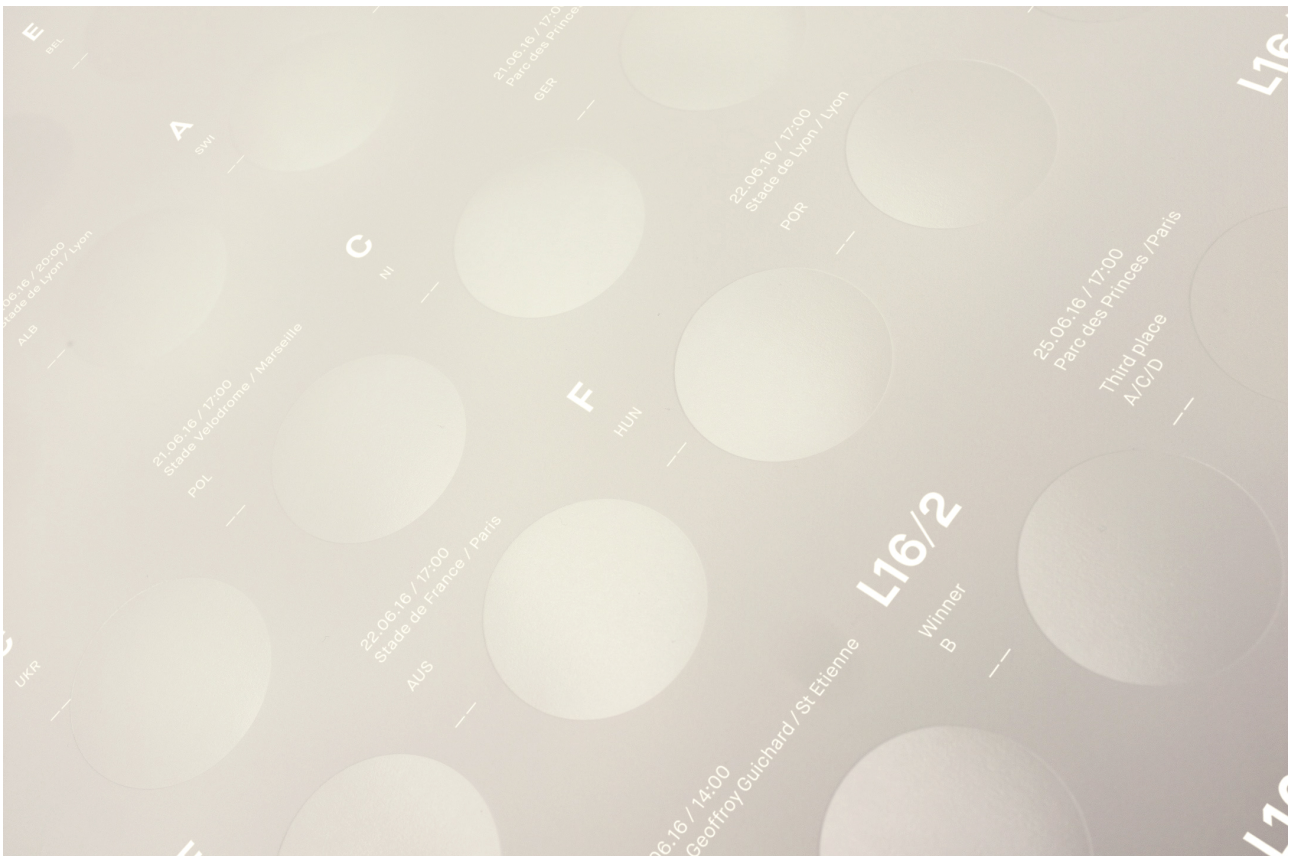
Over the last 14 years, Blackburn and Nirvana's charts have garnered something of a cult following among aficionados of design and football, with the limited edition releases being highly sought after and often achieving collector's-item status.

This year, however, for UEFA Euro 2016, the agency pairing has adopted a new and different approach. Rather than a simple, flat chart that allows user to write in fixtures and results as they're announced, the 2016 edition pays homage to the Panini sticker albums that featured in every self-respecting football fan's youth (and quite a few of their adulthoods).

"One of the central tenets of wall chart design is interaction, since the very concept invites you to write, scribble and draw on it as much, or as little, as you like. We liked the idea that this year's instalment could rethink and subtly alter that relationship; that's why we've added an extra element, in the form of circular stickers that provide a graphic representation of the colours of each participating nation."

Spencer Wallace, Founder and Managing Director at Nirvana CPH

The chart itself is an A1 sheet of **Cranes Lettra** paper stock in Pearl White from **G . F Smith**, adorned with gloss white text, which the owner can choose to preserve in its pure form or to develop into a sea of colour as the tournament evolves using the group sticker sheets included. This new dimension of interactivity in effect brings both the chart's owner and the twists and turns of the tournament itself into design roles, as the team colours transform the surface of the chart from clean-lined neutrality to a kaleidoscope of rainbow tones.



Cranes Lettra with white gloss text, from G . F Smith

This will be the seventh wall chart in the series, which originated in 1998 when Paul Blackburn, unimpressed with the quality of the freebie charts dished out by the British press whenever a major tournament took place, decided to design his own. After a few years mulling over the idea, he turned to Nirvana CPH for its expertise in paper stocks and production techniques, and the first chart hit the presses for the 2002 World Cup.

Now, after over a decade of working together, the two studios have developed a rich and frictionless relationship, allowing them to produce a tournament-commemorating wall chart in a matter of weeks. Why? "For us, the wall charts are about inviting people to connect with major tournaments on a level beyond just watching the matches," says Josh. "By bringing together considered design and beautiful production techniques, we aim to provide a lasting memory of each tournament that both reflects our passion for the game and acts as a showcase for the work we do."

'As football has become commercialised beyond our wildest imaginations over the last 16 years, I've tried to maintain a rigorous typographic approach to all of the wallcharts, occasionally dropping in a simple idea like the funeral feel to the 2008 one when England failed to qualify, and the number 10 shirt solution to the 2014 Brazil wallchart. The 2016 Euro wallchart is particularly special for reasons that will become apparent (sticker sheets and white on white screen printing!), plus it will be a great keepsake for what will definitely be an England victory...'

Paul Blackburn, Founder of Studio Blackburn



The limited edition Euro 2016 wall chart will be available at their launch on **Thursday 2nd June** and on request from Studio Blackburn and Nirvana CPH by emailing: info@nirvanacph.com.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

About Nirvana CPH

Nirvana Creative Production House does seemingly impossible things with materials, ranging from 2D and 3D packaging to graphics, films and online assets. For more than a decade, Nirvana has worked with iconic brands and renowned agencies, turning nascent concepts into physical and digital realities, whether that means coating buildings in vinyl, packaging a scent map of London, making personalised letters out of chocolate or developing methods of printing on any imaginable material. From Ben Sherman to Burberry, Liberty to Louis Vuitton and Sony to Swarovski, the Nirvana team has defied convention, expectation and probability to conceive, create and deliver material applications that delight, impress and astonish.

nirvanacph.com

About Paul Blackburn

Paul is the Founder and CEO of Studio Blackburn, a brand design consultancy established in Shoreditch, London, in 2011. Paul's varied career has included creatively directing a pan-European rebrand for Toyota, a new brand identity for Zaha Hadid Architects, a global rebrand for accountancy software giants Sage and a brand identity redesign for Trainline.

studioblackburn.com

For further details and images, or to request a chart, please contact Zetteler Creative Publicity at **sabine@zetteler.co.uk** or on +44(0)7791 568890.

Q&A WITH NIRVANA CPH'S JOSH WILSON

How did this ongoing collaboration come about?

Paul Blackburn, the founder of the eponymous design studio, first had the idea for his own tournament wall charts when he travelled to the 1998 World Cup in France and found himself dissatisfied with the offerings of the British press in comparison with their European counterparts.

His designs, however, were only one half of a process that is as much about materials and techniques as it is about graphics and typography – and that's where Nirvana come in. Using our experience across high-quality print projects, Nirvana brought Paul's earliest designs to life, and we have proudly done so on the occasion of each World Cup and European Championship since 2002.

What ensures that the result is different every two years?

From a creative production perspective, we always like to experiment with different materials and processes to keep the wall charts looking fresh and exciting. It's an in-house project that combines our work and our passion and allows us to express ourselves, so we always take the time to explore, discuss and test different options and combinations. That's a hugely important part of the production process for us, as we always want the finished article to meet the high standards we set ourselves.

What ideas informed the design and print process behind this year's edition?

Studio Blackburn were already some way down the path of designing this year's wall chart when we first met to discuss it, which was great to hear. They had taken inspiration from the Panini sticker books – a true icon that sits at the intersection of football and design, and which has satisfied many a collector's obsession over the years.

One of the central tenets of wall chart design is interaction, since the very concept invites you to write, scribble and draw on it as much, or as little, as you like. We liked the idea that this

year's instalment could rethink and subtly alter that relationship; that's why we've added an extra element, in the form of circular stickers that provide a graphic representation of the colours of each participating nation. For people that choose to apply their stickers to the wall chart, the effect will be to establish a sea of colour that serves as a record of the tournament's twists and turns. On the other hand, there are bound to be some people who want to preserve the wall chart in its cleanest form. For us, one of the exciting things will be seeing the different ways in which people use and maintain the wall chart, and how that's affected by the sticker packs we'll be giving away alongside them.

We invested time in testing different levels of emboss and deboss across a variety of paper stocks, in order to create either recesses or raised platforms to which the stickers can be applied. In the end, when we laid out all our test sheets side by side, a clear foil, applied to G . F Smith's Wild stock, really stood out as providing the best visual effect. < TBC

How long does the process take from concept to production? What stages are involved?

Once the concept is in place, it doesn't take long for everything to come together. The nice thing about Nirvana's relationship with Studio Blackburn is that they have confidence in our expertise in creative production and know that we can bring their design ideas to life. At the same time, we're well aware of their excellent capabilities as a graphics studio. That speeds things up a lot. A few meetings to hash out the concept and its implications from a materials perspective, followed by the finalising of the design and some testing of print techniques, means that the whole process takes only a matter of weeks.

What reaction do you want the project to achieve?

For us, the wall charts are about inviting people to connect with major tournaments on a level beyond just watching the matches. By bringing together considered design and beautiful production techniques, we aim to provide a lasting memory of each tournament that both reflects our passion for the game and acts as a showcase for the work we do.
