

Colour & Tactility

A new, colour-inspired identity for design futures agency FranklinTill



Stationery by FranklinTill. Photography by Luke Evans.

Every company aspires for its branding to act as an expression of its values and personality, but few succeed in creating a **visual identity that embodies their actual sphere of activity**. Futures agency **FranklinTill** has just unveiled a comprehensive brand overhaul that is both inspired by and visually defines its core areas of expertise: **colour and material futures**.

In the eight years since **Caroline Till** and **Kate Franklin** set up the agency, FranklinTill has become one of the most respected and influential forces in global design innovation. It delivers research-based strategic insight and inspiration to world-leading brands in the lifestyle and design sectors, and shares its findings through editorial, exhibitions, events, workshops and industry-leading publication **Viewpoint** as well as the sustainable-making manifesto **Radical Matter**, published in March this year.

As its work has progressed over the years, FranklinTill's mission has become clearer and more focused: to explore innovations in colour and material, in order to facilitate sustainable innovation in global design. Now, after two years being hidden behind a holding page, FranklinTill is **relaunching with a new website and a suite of stationery and print assets**, created in close collaboration with London design consultancy **Commission**.

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'We wanted to bring across our focus on colour and material and have this sense of texture and tactility running through everything. We find Commission are one of the most tactile graphic design studios; they really focus on texture, even on purely digital-based output.'

– **Caroline Till**, co-founder, FranklinTill

The focal point for the identity is a **simple colour block**, in two colours, proportioned **65:35** to reflect the percentage of space occupied by the letters of **Franklin** and **Till** in the company name. Its form mirrors the colourweights used in the textile industry to illustrate the recommended deployment of colour palettes, and also pays tribute to the techniques used in marquetry, bringing a **material dimension** to the logo. The block design is particularly versatile, allowing endless combinations of colour and, in its printed form, texture, as different papers can be used to create **tactile contrasts** – highlighting the growing importance of touch in an increasingly digitalised world. Even without overlaid text, the block is intended to function as a visual signature of FranklinTill, allowing the brand to be instantly recognisable regardless of the colour or the material palette used.

'Our starting point was to focus on what the studio does best – design, colour, and materials. The identity needed to have a sensitive approach that touched on all these aspects, but at the same time we wanted to give them a solid identity with a timeless quality that could transcend the trends and aesthetic movements that the studio profiles. An initial point of reference was the colour-calibration cards used to match colours accurately in photography and print. We've always loved Peter Saville's cover for New Order's Power, Corruption & Lies, which references a similar trope and have enjoyed the tension between the Fantin-Latour painting of flowers from the 1890s and the swatches of colour on the side. We later found out that FranklinTill actually use something similar to this in their own process, called colourweights which tied in nicely to what we proposed.'

– **David McFarlane**, Creative Director, Commission



Stationary and bespoke enamel badges. Photo by Luke Evans.

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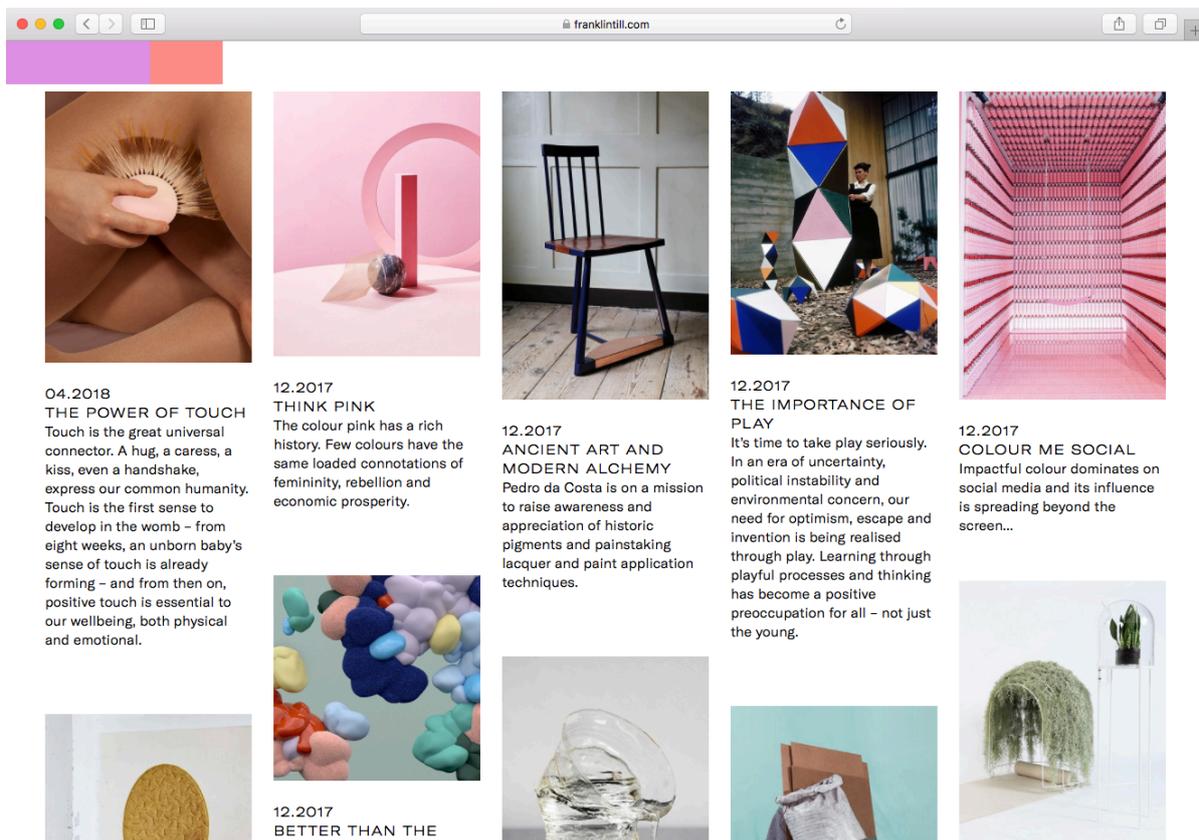
'We have combined marquetry, foiling, embossing and litho print to create a very unique set of stationery. For FranklinTill, who care so much about material and tactility, bespoke stationery that reflects this is a must.'

– **Daniel O'Kane**, International Client Manager, Imprimerie du Marais

As well as defining the look and feel of the new website, the identity has been rolled out across FranklinTill's stationery – including **letterheads**, **compliment slips**, and **textured stickers** debossed with the company name – all of which has been created by the Parisian ateliers of the pioneering print specialists **Imprimerie du Marais**, making use of recycled papers and card stock in accordance with FranklinTill's sustainability-led approach to innovation.

The new business cards in particular demonstrate the **sensory flexibility of the colour block** – allowing for different combinations of colour and card to be used for each member of the FranklinTill team, giving everyone an opportunity to communicate their individual identity within that of the wider company through their unique colour choice and material selection.

The branding has also been extended to wearable accessories, care of a collaboration with the pin-maker Plain Pins, which has translated the colour block into a **bespoke range of enamel badges**, coloured according to the palette choices of the FranklinTill team.



The new journal section of FranklinTill's website.

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FranklinTill's new branding coincides with the launch of a streamlined **new website**, rebuilt to reflect the remit of its activity in consultancy services and editorial communications, and to share its research insights – covering everything from the psychology of colour to the function of biophilia in the urban environment. Featuring on the upper right of each page, the FranklinTill colour block is coded to automatically change its palette as the user navigates around the site, informed by the colour proportions of the main image on each page.

Simple, versatile, and perfectly engineered for both digital and physical contexts, FranklinTill's new identity design demonstrates how branding can mean more than a memorable logo; with the right design, it can also serve as an authentic expression of an organisations' aims, interests and expertise.

Visit franklintill.com to see it in action.

Notes to Editors

About FranklinTill

In 2010, disillusioned by the flighty, short-term approach of the forecasting industry, Kate Franklin and Caroline Till brought together extensive experience in design, education, research and forecasting to found their one-of-a-kind agency. Today, FranklinTill delivers research-based strategic insight and inspiration to world-leading brands in the lifestyle and design sectors. The company specialises in providing content with context, identifying convergences in sociocultural movements, scientific and technological innovation and public mindset, and communicating its findings via a variety of platforms. Underpinned by Kate and Caroline's expertise in sustainable design innovation, every project sees a studio of researchers, designers and writers working alongside a roster of collaborative talent to create a holistic, positive impact. Always founded on fact, never short of inspiring, FranklinTill's publications, design consultancy, workshops, exhibitions and events, creative content, editorial, art direction, styling and commercial visual strategy have helped countless organisations stay afloat in a rapidly changing world.

FranklinTill's clients include: Caesarstone; the Crafts Council; Channel 4; Curver; Design Junction; Future Publishing; G. F Smith; Heimtextil; Humanscale; Pernod Ricard; IKEA/ Space 10; Samsung; Thames & Hudson; VF Corporation; and University of the Arts London.

W: franklintill.com

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