

G . F
SMITH
1885 ONWARDS



Press Release — 1 May 2015

The Collection from G.F Smith

G.F Smith has been collecting paper for 130 years, searching the world for the very finest colours, textures and finishes. Now it unveils the results of that journey — in one landmark publication.

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Launched on 30 April 2015, The Collection is not just a book of G . F Smith's papers, it is the single most comprehensive work in the company's history of curating paper – and a compelling tribute to the beauty, tactility and versatility that paper provides, in all its myriad forms.

Created in partnership with Made Thought, The Collection showcases every one of G . F Smith's personally selected papers, sourced from all over the world, collating them into the definitive resource for designers, creatives and paper lovers everywhere.

From Accent Antique through to Zen, via the 50 iconic colours of Colorplan and the golden glories of Gmund Treasury, The Collection spans 45 paper ranges, across the full range of weights.

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‘We wanted to make it functional.’

Taking its previous paper-selector tools as a starting point, G . F Smith and Made Thought conducted extensive research into which editions and features were most useful to designers, using those findings to develop a ‘one-book solution’ for the selection of paper.

“The primary concern was to create an ‘everyday’ working tool for the creative,” says Ben Parker of Made Thought. “Appreciating that there are a multitude of routes to select and specify a single paper, we looked to the most trusted and long-standing tools for guidance – dictionaries and encyclopaedias. The key for us was understanding how to get the user to the right piece of information (or paper) as efficiently as possible. Each reference tool expertly delivers a different quality or function for the user, from thumb-tab indexing of dictionaries to page-number indexing of encyclopaedias.”

The Collection is indexed three ways, so users can search by range, application or by alphabetical order. The first G . F Smith selector to have been designed to work in parallel with gfsmith.com and its recommendation filters, the book is also robust enough to withstand daily use in a studio environment. Parker adds: “The spine is bright orange so its easy to find in a busy studio; the thumb tabs aid quick navigation to the five collection categories, and the papers are sequenced from light to dark to make colour comparison easier (specifically with whites and pale shades).”



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‘We wanted to make it comprehensive.’

“Our ambition was to provide one trusted ‘go-to’ tool and resource that works hand-in-hand with the website,” remarks G . F Smith’s Joint Managing Director, John Haslam. “Whether you require a stock with matching envelopes, a coloured heavy board, or a recycled sheet made in the UK – this book delivers it. Usability, navigation and practicality have all been methodically researched during 18 months of development. When you place this alongside our 130 years of product expertise and customer knowledge, I truly believe we have produced the very best paper selection tool available.”

Unlike previous G . F Smith selectors, The Collection presents every paper as a full sheet rather than the traditional paper chip. Parker explains the rationale behind the choice: “The most radical step was the decision to remove the chipping chart which has been a standard feature of G . F Smith selectors since they first introduced the technique to the UK in the 1960s. Although they provide a quick overview of a range, they lack the sensory detail that ultimately informs a decision.”

‘We wanted it to be a celebration of paper’

That’s why The Collection is not just a book of paper samples, but of paper stories too. Uniquely, each sheet includes details of not only its practical specifications, but the story behind it – its provenance, heritage and pedigree. As they browse these pages, users will discover unexpected tales of royal birthdays, beer, colour TV sets, a trip to Spain and – ironically – good paper made bad.

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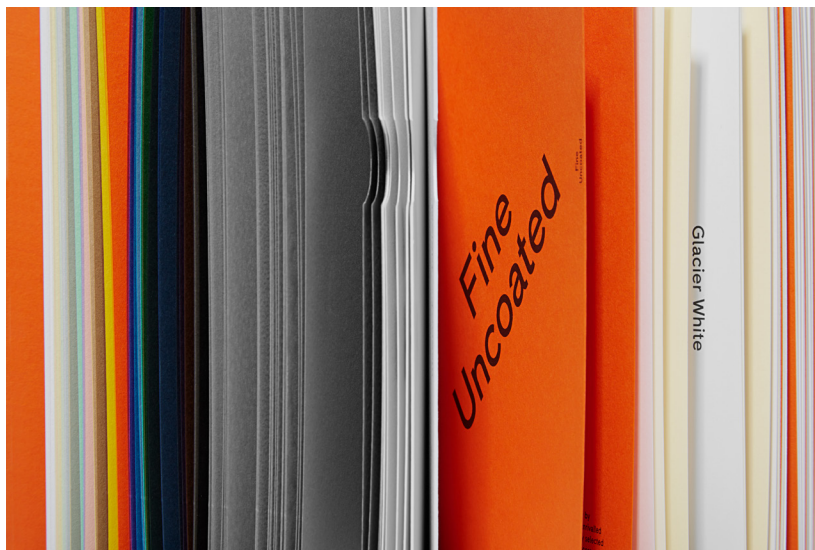
‘We wanted it to be a workhorse.’

The Collection is built to be used and thumbed through – an object that can be swiftly and simply navigated, but equally one that users can get lost in, roaming around a world of paper, discovering new combinations of colours and textures.

“It’s a tool that is simple, elegant and most importantly, a joy to use, yet is confidently chunky enough to ensure you don’t lose it” says John Haslam. “We want creatives to keep it on their desks and refer to it every day.”

So, why now?

Ben Parker explains: “As premium papers and substrates continues to reaffirm their status as a coveted and influential medium – and as the market continues to move from ‘value not volume’ with smaller print runs, higher quality specification, and increased consideration of substrate – we wanted to package G . F Smith’s papers into a form that reflected this trend. An elegant and timeless book format provided the perfect platform on which to elevate this carefully curated collection and reaffirm G . F Smith’s continued fascination and obsession with paper.”



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Notes for Editors

The Collection in Numbers

403 pages
130 years of paper expertise
45 paper ranges
18 months in the making
5 collections
1 book
188mm x 119mm x 100mm in size
1,575 grams in weight

About G . F Smith

George Frederick Smith founded the company after years as a commercial traveller, during which he developed his love for paper and a fierce entrepreneurial spirit. With his son Thomas Brooks Smith by his side (Thomas was to make a pioneering visit to America in search of paper), George set up offices in London and Hull. George Frederick Smith mirrored the spirit of his age, and left an indelible imprint on the way that we act and behave as a company today, built on three key factors that we adhere to. G . F Smith is a company built on remarkable people, long lasting and loyal relationships and a desire to search out and bring the very best to the marketplace. These three factors define G.F Smith's success.

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For more information, images, or to get your hands on a copy of
The Collection, please contact Sabine Zetteler at sabine@zetteler.co.uk
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