



Powerhouse of ideas for footwear design

Deichmann offers an exclusive platform to designers on its 100th anniversary

From a small shoemaker's shop to the largest shoe dealer in Europe: in the last 100 years Deichmann has achieved a great deal. This year's one-hundredth birthday is going to be celebrated with a special project – the company has founded the Deichmann Design Atelier. Five young star designers from well-known European cities have been called upon to design some highly unique and exclusive shoe models, and their imagination is without limits. Whether it's breathtaking high heels or extravagant sneakers, the shoes will be presented in Berlin and hand-produced in limited editions. They are not available from dealers but will be exclusively raffled via the internet among footwear fans (www.deichmann.com). The very first step on the path to creativity has been taken in Pirmasens.

Pirmasens, 14 February 2013. Women and shoes – it's a uniquely special relationship. According to surveys, every second lady owns at least 25 pairs, and not without reason. Shoes, after all, emphasise personalities. A girl with trainers is casual and hip, and ladies in court shoes are sexy and brimming with self-confidence.

The anniversary campaign underlines Deichmann's intensive love of shoes in a very special way. The Berlin designer Sam Frenzel, Mads Dinesen from Denmark, Milou van den Berg from the Netherlands, Lenka Marková from the Czech Republic and the duo of Nova Chiu from London are the creative personalities gathering in the Deichmann Design Atelier. However, an effort was made to not only invite footwear designers. "In the creative process we also want to get in some surprising features for the product designs," said project manager Sonja Schröder-Galla about the concept.

The designers are some of the absolute shooting stars of the international fashion scene and have already been honoured with a host of awards. As in the case of Sam Frenzel: the designer born in Berlin but now resident in Paris has already worked for Chloé, Dior and Christian Lacroix, and in 2009 he won the Designer for Tomorrow Award. Merely one year later the 32-year-old presented his very first own collection at the Berlin Fashion Week. The British duo of Nova Chiu, consisting of the Chinese Nova Chiu and her companion Jeff Archer, is also now highly respected, having established themselves at the London Fashion Week. That doesn't come as a surprise, because Nova Chiu's final collection called Shangri-Ladida was hailed collection of the year 2011 at the College of Fashion, London.



Each shoe a unique specimen

In a first step, the participants of the Deichmann Design Atelier have already drawn up four or five designs and presented these during a workshop at the Deutsche Schuhfachschule (German Footwear College) at Pirmasens. Students at the college in their second semester will now produce a prototype from each design in the coming weeks. "I'm really pleased to be a part of this unusual, creative project," said the designer Mads Dinesen. His colleague Sam Frenzel said that everyone had heard of Deichmann in Germany and Europe. "I think it's a wonderful challenge to give my imagination free reign and to develop shoes for Deichmann that have absolutely no limits in terms of extravagance," emphasised the man from Berlin, who's motto is to design favourite pieces that you'll never want to give away.

A second step consists of the designers presenting their designs and prototypes and discussing these with their colleagues in a Berlin loft in summer. The internet is the place for any fans of the fashion community wanting to follow progress of the workshop. At the end, all of the footwear fan community will vote for the most attractive shoes from each of the participating designers on the Deichmann website and on Facebook. The five winning models will then be produced in a limited edition of six pieces each. The International Shoe Competence Center (ISC), of which the German Footwear College is a part, bears responsibility for realisation of the mini-series.

And the real attraction: the anniversary collection is not available through high-street dealers but will be exclusively raffled. Only when the winners have been selected do ISC contributors begin manufacturing the shoes, and of course in the required shoe sizes. Each winner gets a really one-off shoe, a unique specimen.

A trendsetter with tradition

The reason for this exciting campaign is the 100th anniversary of the shoe dealer Deichmann. The company, founded in 1913 by Heinrich Deichmann in Essen-Borbeck as a shoemaker's shop, has progressed into becoming the market leader in Europe. The Deichmann philosophy is to produce fashionable shoes for all age groups in good quality and at an unbeatable price, and the company has positioned itself successfully both in Germany and abroad with these principles. Today Deichmann is an international fashion and lifestyle company that develops its collections with in-house design teams.

Deichmann is still a family-owned company that places high value on growth from internal resources – the stock exchange and bank loans are not a part of business practice. But social commitment on the other hand is given much importance, and supporting young professionals is also high on the list. It's no wonder then that Deichmann found the ideal partner for its design initiative in the German Footwear College. Martin Thorenz, technical teacher for footwear technology and design, has made himself available as an initiator to the Deichmann Design Atelier, and he gains



support from Nicoline van Enter, Creative Director at the Footwear Innovation and Education Center SLEM in Waalwijk, NL. Added to this are 16 German Footwear College students in their second semester. The young ladies and men will be implementing the designs from the designers as part of their teaching projects, and this includes the cutting constructions and sample joins. They will also make sure that genuine prototypes are made from the highly creative drawings in the coming weeks.

The German Footwear College in Pirmasens is deemed to be one of the most traditional in the world, and the Adidas founder Adi Dassler also studied there. The educational program is unique in the Federal Republic of Germany and college graduates are highly sought after. Many have a first employment contract in their pocket before the final examination, and often with very well-known companies. Deichmann also employs a number of German Footwear College graduates in their in-house design department.

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DEICHMANN SE with headquarters in Essen (Germany) was founded in 1913 and is 100% owned by the founding family. The company is the market leader in the European footwear retail sector and employs more than 33,000 employees in 23 countries. Branches under the name of Deichmann are located in Germany, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, Croatia, Lithuania, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the Czech Republic, Turkey and Hungary. The Group is also represented in Switzerland (Dosenbach/Ochsen/Ochsen Sport), in Holland (Varnhagen) and in the USA (Rack Rom Shows/Off Broadway), and in Germany ROLAND. In the 2013 anniversary year the company is also starting up in Bosnia-Herzegovina.