



Frank Baier

On the flap, ready, go...!

Books are usually differentiated between hardcover and softcover – but in between there is an alternative worth considering.

Gone are the days when we only had the choice between the inexpensive, usually perfect-bound paperback with a four-page cover and the more expensive, hardcover, either with or without a (protective) cover. Customers from the publishing scene in particular demanded alternatives for their print publications. This is why so-called gatefolded brochures have established themselves in various literature genres in the book market.

Fiction or non-fiction books, architectural editions or program catalogs, guidebooks or travel guides convince readers with their practical presentation and handling and sometimes even simplify popular reading. There is a small advantage in that a brochure with flaps, which you open and close between any two pages like any other book, does not need a bookmark or bookmark – because that is what the flaps are for.

Competition winner gatefolded brochures

Meanwhile, gatefolded brochures, for the production of which Muller Martini offers the [FA 650](#) front cutting unit, can be found everywhere in bookstores – some books in this design have even won several awards. Every year, for example, the [Stiftung Buchkunst](#) awards a prize for the „Most Beautiful German Books“. Some of the publications awarded in this traditional competition are softcovers with flap covers in a variety of designs.

„Auftritt Appenzell“ by [Scheidegger & Spiess](#) was published in 2018 as an airy, light approach to the special identity of the Swiss countryside. Warm colors throughout on soft uncoated

paper, open thread stitching with red yarn and red embossed writing on the flap cover merge into an ensemble.

Unfolding as a challenge

Perhaps the book designers in 2019, before the start of work on the new publication „Domizile auf Zeit“ by the same publishing house, shouted a loud „On the flap, ready, go...!“ The paper cover, which can be opened in all directions, mostly up and down, creates curiosity – and for this very reason it is no easy task for the readers. After all, the spine of the gatefolded brochure, which is produced in sturdy thread stitching, was firmly attached to the cover. Speaking of content: the authors of this visually impressive work portray a total of 30 places of retreat for artistic creation in Switzerland.

The initiators of the [Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele 2020](#) created an eye-catching publication with the program catalog produced in thread-stitching. Due to the effects of the corona pandemic, however, the event was unfortunately not realized. Neon shades of orange, violet and green run through the entire „Fest Spiel Buch“ from the cover of the open Swiss brochure to the inside of the cover flaps.

Art-oriented flap cover

The title of [Spector Books](#), which was chosen in 2020, is somewhat unwieldy: „Demonstrationsräume. Künstlerische Auseinandersetzung mit Raum und Display im Albertinum“, accompanying publication of two exhibitions of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. Art lovers should spread out the flap cover of the English brochure completely in front of them. In the opinion of the competition jury, this makes it easier to unravel colored areas, photos and texts laid over one another like transparencies.

Last, but not least: Today, the flap cover can serve as a decorative or protective element or, more likely, have additional utility value due to printed information. But it does not always have to be „only“ the overview of contents, the author’s portrait or the publisher’s advertising, as is the case with fiction, non-fiction or technical literature.

Frank Baier, Editor-in-Chief “Bindereport”