

The House of MinaLima is a must see for any Harry Potter fan. With four floors of stunning artwork featured in the films (both the Harry Potter series and Fantastic Beasts), there's plenty to be seen in the little building on Greek Street. Initially opening as a three month pop-up, today MinaLima were celebrating their first birthday in the location.

To mark the special occasion, the house has faced a rearrange and some new prints have appeared among the mix. Rather fittingly, the main purpose of the press morning was to show off the new and improved press room. Relocated to the first floor, the prints displaying the beautiful typography from the Daily Prophet and New York Ghost articles are now one of the most prominent features, displayed alongside all of the intricate wanted posters from both films. The press room, which was previously on the fourth floor in the smallest room, was proving to be very popular among visitors, so following many requests to display more pieces from the newspaper collections it seemed the best expansion option. The Fantastic Beasts collection, which was previously on the first floor, has been condensed and moved to the fourth floor room, which has actually proved more fitting as the cosiness of that room really helps to make the work 'pop'.

Unfortunately, due to the upcoming sequel to Fantastic Beasts, Miraphora Mina and Eduardo Lima were unable to attend the press morning as they are busy in the studios, but we were able to question the hosts who work alongside them. They explained how MinaLima is a rather unique company in the sense that though they are a graphic design company, their main focus is actually illustration.

Talking about the press room specifically, they stated that when they found out about the opening scene of Fantastic Beasts with the flashing news articles, they had to have all hands on deck to create the desired number of newspapers. They had several people producing one cover, and each would take about two to three weeks to create. Articles and headlines would be created, fact checked for continuity purposes, and then put together in the desired compositions. Each article is an actual story, written purely for the newspapers. Even though the

pages were rarely seen on screen for more than a matter of seconds, the designers wanted to ensure that they couldn't be caught out repeating stories or even just using Lorem Ipsum.

We also asked them about the differences between designing pieces for the world seen in Harry Potter and the world seen in Fantastic Beasts. Obviously, for Harry Potter the muggle world was just the same as modern day, so didn't leave much to creativity. Everyone was itching to work on the designs for the magical world because that was what was new and exciting, with everything being left to their imagination. However, when news of Fantastic Beasts was spread and it was discovered that it would be set in 1920s America, suddenly the no-maj world was just as interesting due to the art deco style of the 20s.

I was particularly interested to learn about the process the studio went through in order to create one of the designs. Sameera Hanif, one of our hosts for the morning, explained "we start off with doing a lot of research by looking at books and ephemera from different periods and cultures for inspiration. We are fascinated by books, our studios and homes have hundreds of books so this is an ongoing process. We would then sketch out a design in pencil before working it up using computer softwares such as photoshop. Generally we use a lot of scanned textures in our designs. If we are producing a prop, we would create a mock-up as well. For fonts, we do a lot of research into historic fonts for inspiration and to ensure that it fits the right style for that period."

In reference to the actual production of the prints, they talked about having to use green screens in place of images. During the production, there was no way of knowing what image the producers of the films would want to put on any of the newspapers or poster, and so green screen was used. This also meant that the images were able to move. When it came to then making prints of the designs, they then had to go back through the films and get screen grabs of the images that were put in post-production.

As I am a graphic design student myself, I decided to take the opportunity to ask about the transition from being a student to working in the industry. Though neither of the hosts were designers themselves, they both said how competitive the industry is due to people being drawn to the idea of typography and illustration. Despite many people studying the subject for their degree, graphics is an area that does not need a specific qualification to enter the field. It is also growing drastically as an industry due to increased consumer needs, meaning that even the university courses are becoming more popular and competitive. This isn't to say that people should be discouraged to find a job in the industry - it was said that MinaLima keep all CVs and portfolios on file and refer back to them whenever they have an opening, and have previously hired students just out of education.

This rearrange is definitely something that is helping to keep the contents of the house interesting. Anyone who may have visited early would remember the beautiful works of collective nouns before the introduction of the Fantastic Beasts works, and it is the constant changing of the work on display that helps to keep the interest going. As someone who has visited on multiple occasions, it was great to see the new works looking so at home among the ones that have been displayed since the opening. I certainly think that the new press room is a fantastic expansion, and would highly recommend a visit to anyone interested in Harry Potter or graphic design.

BY LUCY