

Printers in
Wonderland
GraphEx 2026



Honoring Excellence in Graphic Communication

Circle of Excellence

GRAPHEX
2026

April 22nd

Fiorella's Event Space

Overland Park, KS



Celebrating print,
packaging, label,
and sign professionals

2026 PIA MIDAMERICA GRAPHEX AWARDS



PIA MidAmerica hosts the annual Graphic Excellence Awards (GraphEx) competition to recognize our industry's outstanding technical achievements in innovation and print production. Hundreds of entries are submitted each year in an array of categories including brochures, magazines, calendars, campaigns, packaging and much more. Our independent judges select the extraordinary pieces in the competition to be recognized for Best of Show, Best of Division, Specialty, Best of Category awards and Awards of Recognition.

In addition, we want to recognize businesses and technical professionals who make up one of the industry's largest regional trade associations in the United States. These professionals and award-winning companies demonstrate outstanding technical capabilities in print and finishing techniques. Distinguished industry leaders are recognized with Executive of the Year, Print Champion and Professional of the Year honors. Join me in congratulating all the winners on their outstanding contributions that have made a positive impact on our region.



Best,

Teresa G. Campbell

Teresa Campbell, PIA MidAmerica President

2026 PROFESSIONALS OF THE YEAR



As a third-generation leader of Allied Litho, Pat Maher carries forward a legacy that began in 1949. Growing up on the shop floor, Pat learned the business from the ground up, turning early tasks into a lifelong passion for print. His career gained momentum in sales, where his ability to connect with customers expanded Allied's market presence. Recognizing that packaging and large-format printing would shape the future, Pat led bold investments in specialized 73-inch and 56-inch presses, followed by a seven-color KBA press in 2019. After purchasing the remaining shares from his cousin, Pat now holds full ownership of the family-founded company. Outside the office, Pat is an avid golfer and baseball fan who supports the Kansas City Royals Foundation. He is committed to philanthropy, donating printing services to veteran-focused organizations like Red White and Bluma. Above all, Pat is a leader who cares for his employees, ensuring Allied Litho continues to earn industry respect.



Melissa Dupin began her career in the printing industry on September 1, 1990, at a time when office management was narrowly defined, and technology was limited. Over the past 35 years, as the company evolved and expanded, so did Melissa's role—growing from essential office support to serving today as both Chief Financial Officer and Vice President. Throughout her career, Melissa has been a cornerstone of the company's success, balancing strategic leadership with hands-on involvement. Her day-to-day responsibilities span customer service and direct client interaction, estimating, pricing, vendor sourcing, and presenting detailed quotes to customers. Melissa introduced and continues to manage employee healthcare and retirement benefit programs, researching options and negotiating contracts for the best coverage for employees. Melissa Dupin exemplifies what it means to be a Print Champion: a trusted leader, a dedicated client advocate, and a steady force whose commitment, adaptability, and integrity have made a lasting impact on both Alpine Litho-Graphics and the communities we serve.

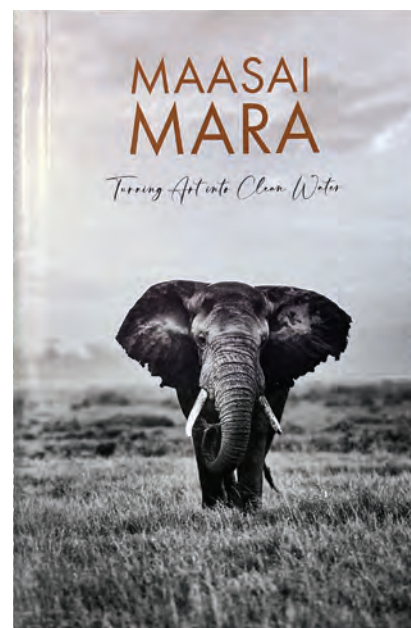
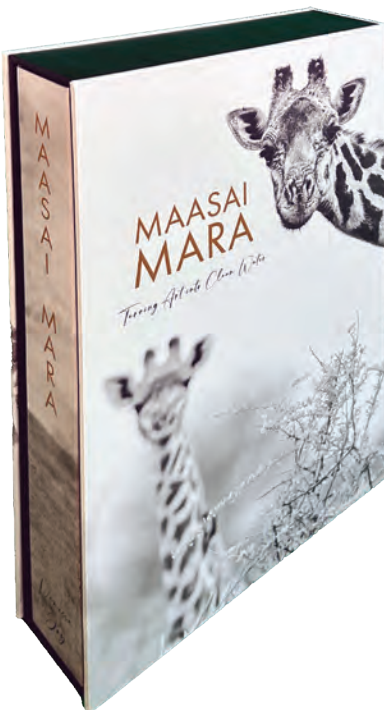


BEST OF SHOW

PLATINUM —● **H&H Color Lab**

Aura Album with Slip Case

Fully handcrafted lay-flat digital inkjet photo book printed on a Polielettronica 20" printer on Fujifilm 20" Lustre photographic paper, Fujicolor Crystal Archive type DP II. The block is assembled on a lay-flat mounting system, housed in a custom linen-wrapped hard cover with a printed dust jacket. Accompanied by a custom slip case with Fujifilm paper.



GOLD* **Spartan Printing & Packaging**

XOXO Gina Look Book Vol 1

**awarded to a OK/TX entrant*

BEST OF SHOW

SILVER

LARGEPRINTING.com

Designer Wall Transformation

Large-scale environmental graphics and dimensional branding installation produced digitally on Canon Colorado and Agfa Tauro wide-format printers. Cutting was executed on a Kern Optiflex Laser, Kongsberg C, and Summa cutters. Materials include 3M IJ180 with 8518 gloss laminate, expanded PVC, quarter-inch digital acrylic, and Chemetal with 6-color plus white ink.



BRONZE*

RegisterMarks

Madison Higgins Wedding
Invite Suite

BEST OF KS/MO

PLATINUM

Walsworth

Mountain Gazette #204

Perfect-bound, soft-cover oversized magazine printed offset on Heidelberg presses with no coatings applied. The cover is 100lb White Accent Opaque Smooth Cover and the text is 60lb White Finch Offset Text. The uncoated production approach preserves the natural tactile feel of the paper while delivering rich, detailed photographic reproduction throughout the finished piece.



**awarded to a OK/TX entrant*



GOLD

Modern Litho

Cotton Heritage Catalog 2026

Perfect-bound fashion catalog printed 4/4 offset on a Heidelberg XL 105 10-color press. The cover is 120lb Endurance White Silk with soft-touch aqueous coating and the text is 70lb Husky Opaque Smooth Text. Perfect binding was completed on a Mueller Martini perfect binder, delivering consistent color and image quality throughout.

SILVER

Varsity Yearbook

BLOOD OF HERCULES

Book dust jacket produced offset on a Heidelberg 40" SM106 8-Color Perfector, printed 4/4 on 100lb Anthem Gloss Text. The jacket features two-sided suede and soft-touch lamination applied on a D&K Laminator. Die cutting and creasing were completed on a Saroglia die cutter to achieve precise fold lines and finished dimensions.



BRONZE

Single Source Printing

Pop Lock & Drop it

Stacking box display produced digitally on an Acuity UV Flatbed printer using Fuji UV inks on 80lb gloss cover stock with gloss lamination. The piece is laminated and precision-cut and scored on a Kongsberg table. The Alice in Wonderland-themed design features a pop-lock assembly structure that builds into a dimensional retail display.

DIVISION 1



PLATINUM

AlphaGraphics (Downtown KC)

Company Holiday Card

Specialty greeting card featuring a printed cellophane acetate overlay layer with snowflake and snow patterns, layered over the card to create a snow globe effect while revealing the artwork beneath. The transparent overlay technique demonstrates precise registration between the printed acetate and the base card to achieve a dimensional holiday presentation.



GOLD

MEDiAHEAD!

Domain Cigars

Specialty-embellished cigar label and band set printed digitally on an HP Indigo on peel-and-stick substrate, with copper metallic foil stamping and embossing executed on GMA equipment and die cutting on a roll cutter. The intricate label design showcases precise foil registration and fine embossed detail at a miniature scale across both components.



SILVER

Vahalla

Kiss Poster Series

Limited-edition series of four screen-printed posters, hand-numbered at 500 each, die-cut into a coffin shape. Each poster uses 6 to 8 process colors plus a spot glow-in-the-dark ink layer, all printed with UV-curable inks on Cougar 100lb White. The series showcases precision screen registration across multiple ink passes.



BRONZE

C K Print & Design

Hard Rock Cafe Custom Wrapped Electric Guitar

Digitally printed custom guitar wrap produced on a Roland Ecosolv Press using Roland eco-solvent inks on 3M IJ180 vinyl, then laminated with 3M gloss ultra lamination. The wrap was precision-applied to a Jackson Dinky Electric guitar body, demonstrating exact conformity to compound curves and contours for a seamless branded finish.

DIVISION 2



PLATINUM

SMC Packaging

2025 Wizard of Oz Centerpiece

Fully dimensional die-cut table centerpiece produced digitally on an EFI VUTEk h5 Digital Printer using UV-LED curable inks on 200lb E-Flute all-kraft board. The design team engineered a flat-pack die-cut structure that assembles into a three-dimensional Wizard of Oz themed centerpiece, showcasing precision cutting accuracy and vivid digital UV print quality.

GOLD

J&J Printing

Count Basie - By Creative City KC

Stitch-bound 24-pg booklet with square back spine produced in combination on a Ryobi 750G LED UV Press and Ricoh Pro C9210 Graphic Arts Edition, finished on a Horizon Booklet Maker. The cover is 100lb Classic Tech Weave Epic Black Cover, text is 65lb Cougar White Smooth Digital Cover.



SILVER

Sun Graphics

B & W Trailer Hitches All Products Catalog Book

Perfect-bound 4-color process catalog printed offset on a Komori Lithrone S40 6-color press with aqueous coater on Lynx 80lb Cover and Lynx 80lb Text stocks using INX inks throughout. Perfect binding was executed by Seidl Bindery. The catalog delivers consistent color fidelity and sharp image reproduction across its full product photography pages.



BRONZE

Walz Tetrick Advertising

2025 Kansas City Symphony Campaign

Comprehensive multi-piece luxury print campaign produced on Classic Crest Eggshell Natural and Cougar Smooth Natural stocks. The complete suite features foil stamping, embossing, and specialty finishing coordinated as a joint entry between Harvest Graphics and NextPage.



DIVISION 3

PLATINUM

Modern Litho

Bukowski Summer 2026 Catalog

Perfect-bound catalog with specialty coating produced entirely offset. The cover is printed 4/4 on a Heidelberg SM52 on 100lb Endurance Gloss Cover with gloss aqueous coating. Text is printed 4/4 on a Heidelberg XL 105 8-color press on 80lb Endurance Gloss Book, folded on an MBO folder.



GOLD

Walsworth

Gina Diamonds Flower Co.

Hard-cover, Smyth-sewn square-back book printed using a combination of Heidelberg offset and J Press digital inkjet presses. The cover is 95lb White SCS COC Sterling Ultra CIS Litho FSC on 98lb Grey Graphic Board. Interior pages are on 100lb White Accent Opaque Smooth Text. The environmentally certified production uses FSC-certified stocks throughout.

SILVER

Modern Litho

JE Dunn Year In Review 2024

Perfect-bound annual book produced offset 4/4 on a Heidelberg XL 106 8-color press. The cover is 100lb Patriot Blue Smooth Finish Classic Crest Cover with strike-through dull varnish and spot gloss UV. Text is 100lb Flo Gloss Book with PMS UV ink.





BRONZE

Walsworth

The Southern Mirror

Hard-cover, Smyth-sewn square-back book printed offset on Heidelberg presses. The cover is 95lb White SCS COC Sterling Ultra C1S Litho FSC on 120lb Grey Graphic Board. Interior pages are 100lb White Accent Opaque Smooth Text. The piece features premium case-bound construction with Smyth sewing for durability and clean lay-flat performance throughout.

BEST OF PACKAGING

PLATINUM*

CME Printing

Utility Perspectives 2025 Campaign

GOLD*

Impact Stamping

Disney Star Wars/Coke Box

SILVER*

Impact Stamping

Izzy Birthday Box



BRONZE

Sun Graphics

Surface Hair Awaken Box

UV-coated folding carton printed offset on a Komori Lithrone S40 6-color press with aqueous coater on Manchester METSA 24pt C1S stock. INX International inks and primer coating were used for 4-color process printing, with UV coating applied by Feiereisen. The carton showcases precise registration and consistent ink coverage across a multi-panel folding construction.

**awarded to a OK/TX entrant*

SPECIALTY AWARDS

JUDGES' CHOICE Hallmark Cards

Appreciated Time

Offset-printed specialty piece produced on an 8-color Heidelberg XL 106 press with INX International inks on WestRock stock. The piece was run through two passes of foil on an Iijima 1060 foiler using specialty dies from UEI and Unnivacco foil, then die-cut on a Bobst Vision Cut and folded on a Signature folder to complete the finished construction.



BEST COLLABORATION Mpress

Charlotte Street Visual Artist Awards

Multi-component combination-printed piece featuring a 6-pg insert and a 16-pg insert, a 6-panel accordion fold foil-stamped pocket folder, and a die-cut pocket holder. The cover was printed offset on a Heidelberg CD 74 on 100lb French Steel Gray Cover, with text printed digitally on a Xerox Versant on 80lb and 100lb Lynx Text and Kraftone Chipboard. Foil by JB Letterpress, stitching by KBB.

BEST USE OF PAPER J&J Printing

KVC Health Systems - Candlelight Club Gala Invitation

Offset-printed specialty invitation featuring a double slide-out panel construction that reveals the invitation through a window, finished with a belly band and sealed with a custom logo wax seal. Printed on a Ryobi 750G LED UV Press on 80lb Mohawk Felt Bright White Cover and 80lb Classic Linen Grey Cover.





SPECIALTY AWARDS

BEST USE OF INK

AlphaGraphics Downtown KC

Mean Mule Menu

Specialty printed menu produced to showcase exceptional ink application and color management in a hospitality environment. The ink density, and substrate compatibility deliver rich color reproduction across the full range of food and beverage imagery on the finished piece.



BEST USE OF SUBSTRATE

Gill Studios

VIASAT

Large-format digitally printed piece produced on a Swiss Q Large Format Digital Inkjet Press on 24pt polycoated poster stock, then square-cut on a guillotine knife cutter. Digital inkjet inks were used throughout to deliver vibrant, high-density color coverage across the oversized format with clean, accurate trimming on the finished piece.

BEST OF PREPRESS

Varsity Yearbook

Varsity Yearbook Portfolio Vol. 30

Richly embellished Smyth-sewn case-bound book featuring a quarterbound cover with anti-scratch matte lamination, Silktouch finish, and multiple specialty treatments including Metallay, blind deboss, clear foil, and screen-printed texture. Produced offset on a Heidelberg 40" SM106 8-Color Perfector on 100lb Matte, 100lb Gloss, 8pt C1S, and 95lb C1S Litho Label stocks.



SPECIALTY AWARDS



BEST OF EMBELLISHMENT*

MetroVCS

Sewell Platinum Dinner Invitation

BEST OF FINISHING

NextPage

FMX25 Double Pop-Up Mailer

6" x 9" double pop-up direct mail piece printed offset on a Komori press on 100lb Opaque Cover stock and mailed in a clear envelope. The engineering of the double pop-up structure demonstrates exceptional die-cutting precision and fold accuracy, creating a dramatic dimensional reveal upon opening that maximizes recipient engagement at the moment of delivery.



BEST USE OF BINDING*

ColorMark

Joon Loloi Explore the Trade Program

BEST OF SIGNAGE

Gill Studios

FIZZ THE SEASON

Point-of-purchase signage piece produced using a combination of large-format digital inkjet and UV screen printing. The piece was digitally inkjet printed wrong-reading on 8 mil clear static vinyl using a Swiss Q press, then overprinted right-reading with UV screen ink on a General cylinder screen press. The layered print technique creates depth and visual impact.



**awarded to a OK/TX entrant*

SPECIALTY AWARDS

BEST OF INNOVATION

Allied Litho

Valentines Day Scented Carton

Specialty folding carton printed 4-color process plus rose-scented aqueous coating on a KBA press on a .012 SBS board sheet. The scented aqueous coating was supplied by Scentisphere, creating a distinctive sensory unboxing experience.



STUDENTS



FIRST PLACE*

University of Houston

Tet, Year of The Horse

SECOND PLACE

Pittsburg State University

Jayli Johnson Portfolio
Self-Promotion

THIRD PLACE

Pittsburg State University

Cody Jinks Album
Promotion Concept
designed & Produced
by Emma Forst

**awarded to a OK/TX entrant*

2026 PROFESSIONALS OF THE YEAR



CUSTOMER SERVICE PROFESSIONAL

Jane Gill
Action Mailing &
Printing Solutions



EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL

Doug Younger
Pittsburg State
University



OUTSTANDING TEAM

Dominga Mendina
– Finishing Lead
Ariadna Onofre
– Finishing
Lee Ortiz
– Print Technician
Romy Zabaleta
– Finishing
Lisbeth Penate
– Finishing
Mauricio Martinez
– Finishing
Ana Yopez
– Finishing
Amalia Felix
– Finishing
Single Source
Printing
– Finishing Team



HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONAL

Chad Riggins
Broadridge



PREPRESS PROFESSIONAL

Cindy Wallraff
J&J Printing



PRINT OPERATIONS PROFESSIONAL

David Fitzpatrick
Action Mailing &
Printing Solutions



PRODUCTION PROFESSIONAL

James Ring
NextPage



SUPPLIER OPERATIONS PROFESSIONAL

Misty Willey
Clampitt Paper Co of
Kansas



YOUNG PROFESSIONAL

Shane Hermanson
Single Source
Printing

PREPARE FOR 2027



With this year's GraphEx wrapping up, it's never too early to start planning for next year!

Why not keep the excitement going? Begin gathering your entries now and submit them early! Consider setting up a collection box to gather your standout pieces, special stories, and a copy of the job ticket.

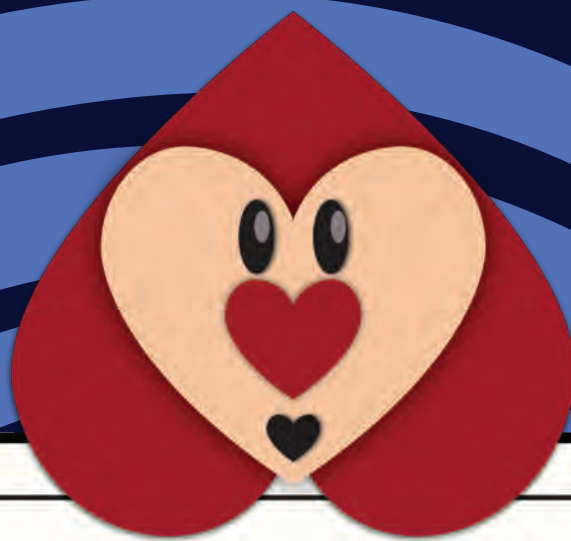
Our 2026 GraphEx submissions are open year-round. Submit anytime at piamidam.org/entries.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



CELEBRATING OUR PRINT PARTNERS





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Honoring Excellence in Graphic Communication

Thank you for being part of this evening's special celebration of print and those who make printed communications come alive.

We are excited you are part of our print community. Stay connected through our regular events (Ink on Tap Happy Hours, Golf Tournaments, PrintOberfest), follow us on social and your favorite podcast platform. Membership is company wide. Ask us how you can take advantage.

Production Notes

Paper: 100 lb. Moorim Pro-Digital Gloss Cover

Press: Canon varioPRINT iX sheetfed inkjet press

Email us at info@piamidam.org

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