Extreme Philately
The Most Unusual Stamps of the World
Part 4

Genevieve V. A. Gee¹ and Indraneil Das²

¹1E8 Village Grove Condominium, Lorong F, Jalan Stutong, BDC
93350 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

²Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, 94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia
idas@unimas.my

Bosnia Herzegovina (Croatian Post Mostar)
Lady of Medjugorje
Issued: 1 June 2012 (SG C344)
Face value: K1: First stamp with INFRAREDESIGN®
security features. Silhouette of church in Medjugorje and Our
Lady's face seen with IR camera

This is the fourth and final part of a series of articles on unusual stamps of the world (see Gee
and Das 2019a, 2019b, 2020). This instalment features stamps that show images visible under
infrared light, image or text in microtext (including one listed in the Guinness World Records
as with the most words- 1,969- being the Universal Declaration of Human Rights); stamps
with hidden images or words that can be detected using a special decoder; customizable
stamps with booklet inserts; stamps in comic book format; book-like stamp, including stamps
with attached booklets; stamp booklets with recipes and in calendar format; flipbook stamps,
that, when rapidly flipped, creates illusions of moving objects; stamps with interactive folds
that transform into parcels, produces pop-up paper creations or even a Chinese wedding
sedan chair; a “selfie” stamp, in a nod to our society’s obsession with tech devices; stamps
with moving parts; scratch-off stamps, including one that gave away raffle tickets to the
Football World Cup 2006; stamps with interactive games/tangram; one that contains water-
activated paint at back of sheetlet that is die-cut in the shape of a colour palette; and one in
the form of a jigsaw puzzle, and finally, multi-sensory stamps, involving the senses of
hearing (through thermography), smell (of peaches), taste (vanilla-flavoured) or touch
(thermochromatic), as well as technologies such as augmented reality and the last set, also
tempting the senses of taste (strawberry-flavoured adhesive gum), touch (ink changes colour
when touched), sight (image of eye on transparent paper), hearing (embedded particles
produce noise) and smell (mint fragrance).

References
Philatelic Society of Kuching, Sarawak 11(2):50–90.
Infrared Stamps

Bosnia Herzegovina (Croatian Post Mostar). Minerals
Issued: 24 October 2014 (SG MS1315)
Face value: K4.50
INFRAREDESIGN® is system derived from metamerism, which makes use of colour printing process. Colours that look identical under a certain light, show different shades when submitted to a different light. Under infrared light, on background of "green schist" is image of parish church of Our Lady of Sljeme on Mount Medvednica; background of "prehnite" visible on coast of island of Vis

Stamps with Micro Text

United States of America. Red Fox
Issued: 14 August 1998 (SG 4368)
Face value: US$1
Microprinted words (‘Red Fox’ at bottom centre and ‘USPS’ on top right) under magnification, and image of a fox visible under USPS decoder
South Africa. The Bible Society of South Africa
Issued: 19 November 1987 (SG 626)
Face value: R0.16
Microtext stamp

Hungary. History of Hungarian Chess
Issued: 24 September 2004 (SG 4755–4818)
Face value: fo50 (x 64)
Microprinted stamps; largest stamp set; each stamp either brown and black or pink and black, colours alternating to simulate squares on chess board; 1,600 characters in micro text tells history of chess in Hungary
United Nations, New York, Vienna and Geneva
International Stamp Exhibition UNEXPO17
Bellefonte. 70th Anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Issued: 27 October 2017 (SG MS awaited)
Face value: $1.15, SFr2, €1.70
Listed in the Guinness World Records database as stamps with the most words, 1,969 words, for the entire text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its preamble in French.
Issued as a miniature sheet, with three stamps, the additional stamps show the same in English (1,771 words) and German (1,660 words).
Offset printing with microprinting technique and silver-foil

Israel. 25 Years of Independence
Issued: 3 May 1973 (SG MS562)
Face value: £1
Microtext on stamp
United States of America. Bright Eyes
Issued: 1998 (SG 3470–3474)
Face value: US$0.32 (x 4)
Hidden images visible under USPS decoder

United States of America. Space Shuttle “Endeavour” on top of Boeing 747 SCA 911 (Express Mail)
Issued: 19 November 1998 (SG 3539)
Face value: $11.75
United States of America. Movie Monsters  
Issued: 30 September 1997 (SG 3363–3367)  
Face value: US$0.32 (x 5)  
Scrambled Indicia / Hidden images

United States of America. Harry Houdini  
Issued: 3 July 2002 (SG 4153)  
Face value: US$0.37  
Four chains envelope magician Harry Houdini (1874–1926) between corresponding pairs of coloured dots; self-adhesive
Customizable Stamps

Canada. Greetings Stamps
Issued: 28 January 1994 (SG 1580–1581)
The Netherlands. Greetings Stamps
Issued: 1 September 1998 (SG 1894–1898)
Face value: €0.80 (x 5)
Customizable, self-adhesive stamps
Stamp Books

Guyana. 50th Anniversary of Disney’s Uncle Scrooge Character
Issued: 15 October 1998 (SG 5339–5378)
Face value: $35 (x 4); $35 (x 4)
Comic book format stamps
57
Isle of Man. Christmas. Dennis and Gnasher
Issued: 29 October 2018 (SG MS2399)
Face value: £8 (comprising 1st Class x 2, EU x 2, £1.25 x 2, RoW x 2)
Comic-book format stamps

The Netherlands. 75th Anniversary of Book Week
Issued: 9 March 2010 (SG 2763)
Face value: €2.20
Book-like stamp
Issued: 23 April 2013 (SG 3463a)
Face value: ฿5
Stamp with booklet attached
New Zealand. Wildfood Book Format

Date of issue: 25 February 2004 (SG 2689–2691)

Face value: NZ$9 (comprising three designs x 2 of NZ$1.50 stamps)

Postcard cookery book format, with four strange recipes; six ‘edible’ wildlife stickers; self-adhesive airmail stickers.

Issued in selected post outlets and also sold by stamp resellers in key tourism areas.
Hungary. Wild Duck Cookery Book Format
Date of issue: 29 July 1988 (SG 3851, 3853)
Face value: 2ft, 4ft
Cookery book format, with six recipes for cooking wild ducks

61
Calendar Format
India. Splendour of India / Happy New Year
Date of issue: 1 January 2017 (SG 3231–3242)
Face value: ₹ 25 (x 12)
Annual calendar of 12 stamp sheetlets
64

Issued: 7 August 1997 (SG 3392–3408)

Face value: US$0.50 (x 18)

Flipbook and movie wheel stamps
Hungary. Gömböc
Issued: 30 April 2010 (SG 5252)
Face value: Ft100 (x 30)
Stamp flip-book

Israel. Israeli Animation- 50th Anniversary of ASIFA (Association Internationale du Film d’Animation), France and 25th Anniversary of ASIFA, Israel
Issued: 21 November 2010 (SG 2044–2058)
Face value: ₪1.70 (x 15)
Stamp flipbook
Stamps with Interactive Folds

South Africa. World Post Day
South African Post Office
Issued: 9 October 2014 (SG MS2146)
Face value: R10 (x 5)
Stamps fold into parcel box

Spain. 55th EXFILNA Philatelic Exhibition Portugalete. Metal Bridge
Issued: 9 October 2017 (SG MS5172)
Face value: €3.15
Folding block sheet with punch that reproduces the metallic Vizcaya Bridge. Stamp is pop-up, with augmented reality
Tonga. Chinese Lunar New Year. Year of the Rooster
Issued: 10 August 2016 (SG MS1813)
Face value: $15, 16.90
Stamp foldable into shape of Chinese wedding sedan chair,
with 2 diamond-shaped stamps
United Arab Emirates. Year of Giving
Issued: 5 September 2017 (SG xx)
Face value: AED3 (x 2)
Pop-out cutting of box when stamp folded; self-adhesive, hexagonal

“Selfie” Stamp

Switzerland. The Selfie Stamp
Issued: 7 September 2017 (SG 2164)
Face value: SFr1.00
Reflective stamp

69
Stamps with Moving Parts

South Africa. International Year of Water Cooperation - Using Water Wisely
Issued: 20 March 2013 (SG MS2004)
Face value: International mail (x 5)
Moving parts stamp

Spain. 20th Anniversary of Reopening of the Royal Opera House
Issued: 10 February 2017 (SG MS5114)
Face value: €3.15
Moveable parts stamp
Scratch-off Stamps

**Indonesia. Football World Cup - Germany**
Issued: 6 May 2006 (SG 3085–3088)
Face value: Rp2,500 (x 4)
Scratch-off stamps, offering raffle ticket to the Football World Cup 2006; self-adhesive

**South Africa. South African Quiz**
Issued: 5 November 2010 (SG 1867–1876)
Face value: R4.90 (x 10)
Scratch card style stamps
Stamps with Interactive Games

**Hong Kong. 23rd Asian International Stamp Exhibition, Hong Kong**
Issued: 14 May 2009 (SG MS1545)
Face value: HK$50
Tangram/interactive puzzle game stamps

**Macau. Magic Squares I**
Issued: 9 October 2014 (SG MS1998)
Face value: mp2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9
Magic squares game stamps
Estonia. My Gift to Estonia – Children’s Drawing Competition
Issued: 1 September 2018 (SG MS868)
Face value: €4.15
Water-activated paint at back of sheetlet; die-cut in shape of palette
73
Austria. Madagascar 3- Europe’s Most Wanted (Animated Film)
Issued: 5 October 2012 (SG MS3181)
Face value: €0.62 (x 2), 70 (x 1), 90 (x 1)
Jigsaw puzzle stamp sheetlet

Multi-Sensory Stamps

Hong Kong. Children’s Stamps. Five Senses
Issued: 18 July 2017 (SG 2103–2107)
Face value: HK$1.70 Hearing- thermography; HK$2.90 (smell- peach- scented); HK$3.70 (taste- vanilla-flavoured); HK$5 (touch- thermochromatic)
Jersey. Man of Steel  
Issued: 7 June 2013 (SG 1757-1762)  
Face value: £0.45, 0.55, 0.60, 0.80, 0.80, 0.85  
£0.45 (scanned with smartphone Smartsy App, trigger augmented reality revealing information about stamps and film); £0.55 (self-adhesive, transparent stamp when peeled from backing paper); £0.60 (printed on silver foiling); £0.80 (printed with thermochromatic ink; when warmth is applied to face of stamp, image of Earth revealed beneath the Man of Steel); £0.80 (crushed granite from a Beauport Bay pebble); £0.88 (message from Man of Steel’s father, in phosphor ink visible under UV light)

Ireland. The Five Senses  
Issued: 10 September 2015 (SG 2287–2291)  
Face value: €0.70, 1.05, 1.25, 1.70, 2.80  
Multi-sensory stamps: €0.70 (taste- strawberry-flavoured adhesive gum); €1.05 (touch- thermochromatic ink causes stamp to change colour when warmed by touch); €1.25 (sight- image of eye, printed on peelable transparent paper), €1.70 (hearing- embedded clear crystal particles produce a noise when rubbed); €2.80 (smell- mint fragrance)