Magazine Prints Issue Using Ink and HIV-Positive Blood

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German men’s magazine Vangardist is printed in Vienna.

To raise HIV/AIDS awareness and fight stigma, German men’s magazine Vangardist printed 3,000 copies of its latest issue using ink that contains blood of three HIV-positive people, reports CBS news.

The magazine, which is printed in English and German, is based in Vienna, Austria. The magazine timed the special issue with the city’s annual Life Ball, a lavish HIV/AIDS fundraiser held May 16 at Vienna City Hall.

The Vangardist special issue highlights the stories of HIV-positive heroes, according to a press release from Saatchi & Saatchi Switzerland, which helped design the issue.

The three people who donated blood for the project are among the heroes profiled in the magazine. Their blood was pasteurized before being added to ink at a specialty printer. Although the magazine is totally safe for people to handle, it has caused controversy. It arrives in a clear plastic wrapper that reads, “Break the seal and help break the stigma.”

CBS reports that in the opening pages of the magazine, Vangardist’s publisher and CEO Julian Wiehl writes, “If you’re holding the ‘infected’ print edition in your hands right now, you’ll get into contact with HIV like never before.... It will make you reflect on HIV and you will think differently afterward. Because now the issue is in your hands.”

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