

In late 2013 Erik Spiekermann announced he would be stepping down as chairman at Edenspiekermann in May 2014 (on his 67th birthday) and joining the supervisory board. He has prepared plenty to do afterwards: At the beginning of 2014 Spiekermann installed his printing press in a beautiful white room in a former girls' art school in the back courtyard of a house in Potsdamer Straße, directly opposite Edenspiekermann. It is called Galerie P98a after its street and house number.

There are six proofing presses by FAG, Korrex, and Grafix; one Heidelberger platen press, various Boston platen presses, cutting and creasing machines, eyelet punches, a lot of wooden poster type, and even more lead type. There is also a polymer making machine, a digital Risograph printer, plus everything else one might need for printing and typesetting using old or new methods.

Soon the legendary Rixdorfer printers' workshop will be added to the collection. The Rixdorfer book and poster artists gave their whole workshop to Spiekermann on condition it be reassembled in its new home on Potsdamer Straße – a pleasure and a responsibility at the same time.

Spiekermann and partner Jan Gassel want to see how the old printing methods can be mixed with digital tools. A few wooden fonts are being worked on; starting in summer there will be workshops on hand composition and letterpress. And, in collaboration with Jena University, large poster fonts will be made using 3D printing.

To finance the venture they sell signed prints in small editions. The ›SpiekerDigest‹ with collections of interesting texts by Spiekermann and colleagues is going to be printed on the Riso, and many other books and prints will follow.

P98a is a bit ›back to the future‹ for Spiekermann. It closes the big circle of his professional life, which began with metal type and a platen press and led him into the wide world of design and typography, ending back in Berlin at almost the exact same spot where he once learnt to compose type and print as a schoolboy. Spiekermann will keep busy, since being idle does not interest him. He will continue to dabble with all things analog and digital. And should there be a little spare time left, there are plenty of personal dreams and desires to fulfill. He talks about these on page 288.



Spiekermann in his printing and typesetting workshop. The traditional compositor's apron protects from printer's ink, machine grease, and dust from the old type cases.