TYPE & COLOR

A Handbook of Creative Combinations

BY
ALTON COOK
&
ROBERT FLEURY

TYPE & COLOR

On the following five pages, Yellow is the constant on each page, and Magenta varies.

The progression from these warm vibrant reds and oranges to the cool peach and violet reds on Page 70 is particularly beautiful. This series suggests the many colors seen at sunrise and sunset.

100% MAGENTA, 90% YELLOW

80% MAGENTA, 90% YELLOW

60% MAGENTA, 90% YELLOW

40% MAGENTA, 90% YELLOW

SIMILAR TO 45% MAGENTA, 100% CYAN

Typography

Typography

Typography

Typography

Typography, Color & Design are three

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Typography, Color & Design are three

Typography, Color & Design are three

YELLOW 5%

MAGENTA 5%

50% CYAN OVERALL

10%
20%
30%
40%

MAGENTA 5%

YELLOW 5%

10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%

TOYO PINK

25% BLACK

10% BLACK

5% BLACK

OVER 800,000 TYPE & COLOR COMBINATIONS

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A BOOK AND A TOOL!

DESIGN WITH TYPE AND COLOR
MORE ACCURATELY AND
QUICKLY THAN EVER BEFORE
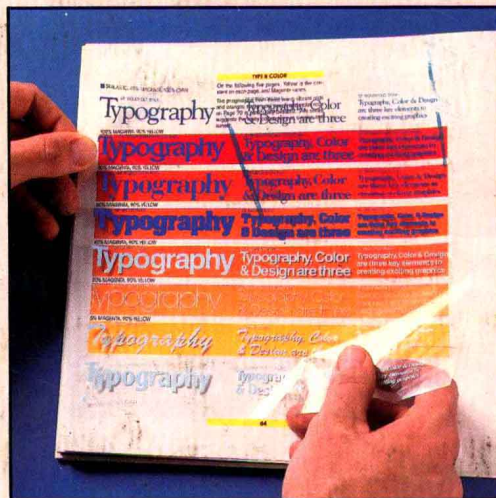
Indispensable to the designer working with type

- 100 PAGE PROCESS COLOR SELECTOR, 600 DIFFERENT COLOR BACKGROUNDS WITH PROCESS INK FORMULAS

- REMOVABLE COLOR TYPE ACETATE OVERLAYS FEATURING TWENTY DIFFERENT COLORS

- OVER 800,000 POSSIBLE COLOR TYPE COMBINATIONS

- USE WITH YOUR OWN COLOR MATCHING SYSTEM OR ARTWORK FOR UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

- ESSAYS BY: **ALLAN HALEY**
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR, U&lc MAGAZINE

GEORGE CAWTHORN
GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND COLOR CONSULTANT, LOS ANGELES

ALAN PECKOLICK
PRESIDENT, PECKOLICK + PARTNERS DESIGN, NEW YORK

- THEORIES, IDEAS AND SAMPLES OF THE BEST RECENT APPLICATIONS OF COLOR TYPE DESIGN

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DEDICATION

To EDITH WALKER, a high school art teacher whose patience and genius came at just the right time in a young artist's life.

And to JEREMY ("The Wiz") JOHN, a type director and mentor who will be sorely missed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our effort here is the work of a great many people...
in fact, some who may not have even realized their contributions at the time. And we want to say that we appreciate and value their help.

First, thanks to those professionals whose assistance and ideas went a long way to making TYPE & COLOR the fine piece of work it is:

ALLAN HALEY, for his essay on the fine art of fine type

GEORGE CAWTHORN, for his insightful essay and consultation on color theory

ALAN PECKOLICK, for his synthesis of color and type design

SCOTT ROSS, whose illustrations help to add color to our introduction

SKIP GANDY and his photographic staff

ROBERT MATSON and his team at We Copy

And thanks again to the designers and their companies for the splendid work we've been allowed to display here. Their credits accompany their work.

Finally, nobody does a good job at the office without forebearance and encouragement on the home front. Therefore, we'd be remiss in not expressing our gratitude for the help we've received from our families and our good friends, as we worked to invent this book.

STAFF & CONTRIBUTORS

EDITOR	ROBERT FLEURY
DESIGNER/ART DIRECTOR	ALTON COOK
ART ASSISTANT	HEATHER K. MANNING
COLOR CONSULTANTS	GEORGE CAWTHORN
	ROBERT TERRI
PHOTOGRAPHY	GANDY PHOTOGRAPHY
	TAMPA, FLORIDA
TYPESETTING	CONWAY TYPOGRAPHERS
	TAMPA, FLORIDA

COVER PHOTO: ROBERT BOVA
ILLUSTRATIONS: SCOTT ROSS

Contents

Harmonies between
typography and color offer
us limitless opportunity
to bring vitality, interest and
variety to the printed
message.

Introduction

Color is a curious thing. It can be measured, quantified and classified in the laboratory; it can be turned into a fine engineering tool or recording device; it can help us measure a molecule or a galaxy, but to the human eye, color has always been much more than just a case of "this frequency or that". Color is information…instantaneous, reliable and exact. It's communication, rich, subtle and complete. In fact, it's about the only true language we have other than music that doesn't require words.

And what a language it is. Why does red mean "STOP!"? Perhaps because it reminds us of FIRE. …DANGER! Or maybe just because in a world of tree-lined avenues, red was easy to see. How visible, by comparison, are the red stoplights against the Las Vegas night? Fire trucks all used to be painted red, until chartreuse was deemed more visible. And since visibility is really important in an emergency vehicle, it's hard to argue such a point.

Identification. Visibility. Communication. Three jobs color does better and more quickly than anything else. But…

WHAT IS COLOR, ANYWAY?

Color is nothing but light of a particular wave length, or frequency. The higher the frequency (the shorter the wave), the more energetic the light. Red light carries less energy; blue light, more. X-rays and gamma rays even more still. But in the narrow sense, they're all colors. Color is at the heart of light, and light, simply put, is what you see.

Like light, color has a form that can be described by physics and mathematics, but it exists also in a far more subtle manifestation…that of perception.

Light is the messenger; color is the message, the internal variation within the arriving stream of energy…in how much energy each photon carries. As these particles arrive with various levels of energy, they are also carrying information. This is the language of light. This is what we see as color.

And in terms of color, what we see is a great deal more than what we get. Light arrives in literally millions of colors, but our brains are organized to deal with only four of them. The millions of colors we think we see are really only a blend of red,

blue, green and yellow. That's all our optic hardware can deal with. Though the actual colors used are different, all printing, and in fact motion pictures and television, all depend on an analogous system of building a rainbow from only four colors. We really do live in a four-color world, and this simple, if surprising, point is exactly what a large part of this book is all about.

About 1450, the printmaking enterprises of Johann Gutenberg and others created a revolution in communications unmatched until the introduction of television. Movable type gave us countless Bibles, dictionaries, almanacs, road maps, math books, newspapers and so on. More recently, television has given us more of the same, only it now comes to us faster and cheaper, and it's more fun to look at. The revolutionary effect of TV was probably similar to that experienced in 15th Century Europe when publishing was being invented.

While, thanks to TV, we may be becoming less "literate", we are at the same time becoming more design-conscious and, consequently, more communication-sophisticated , if only because the visual message and the design requirements that go with it are now so much greater a part of our world. Communication may need "words", but we are learning that a word is more than just a string of letters that we've seen before.

Today, nobody serious about mass communications would dare ignore the importance of two questions… What's the Good Word? and What Color Is It?

We now have in our drawing-board arsenal the capability to deliver our message in whole spectra, entire rainbows, veritable riots of glorious color.

But legibility must come first. If they can't read it, you've failed. If they CAN read it, but won't, you're no better off. If your message is legible, but lost in the clutter of the competiton, you still lose. Not all colors are easy to read; in fact, some can be downright hard on the eyes. And when legibility suffers, type's whole reason-to-be is compromised.

The safe way is, of course, to stick with Helvetica in black on a white background. But that's not right. We *WANT* to use color, and use it effectively. We want it to increase our client's sales, visibility and influence; yet we also want it to turn out as a great piece of commercial art if only for our own professional satisfaction. If it's in print, it's frequently in color. If it's on TV, it's almost always in color. So the designing mass-communicator had better know how to use color and type effectively, and into the bargain, know how to put these two birds together and make them sing.

Taste is one thing, but color selection in commercial art is quite another. Where your client's sales are concerned, the wrong colors can kill. It's up to you to select color combinations that are: arresting, appealing, evocative, and effective. A tall order, but now there's a simple way to manage all the factors, to reduce the guesswork, to arrive quickly at the right answer. Test it with your own eye.

SUBJECTIVE COLOR

Almost everybody has had, at one time or another, a "favorite" color. This is usually expressed during childhood, but though a more adult version might be along the lines of "This color goes well with that", color preferences tend to stay with us pretty much throughout our lives.

Now, in trying to appeal to a large market segment through color, you quickly become aware how much is riding on your ability to read the public's mind. Of course, some guesswork will always be part of the job, but there are a few things you can do to help yourself arrive at an answer that will sell the product, look good, and make you look good. Remember, color is a subjective thing because for each of us the past is a different set of memories, and memory is jogged by color, just as it is by an old song, a familiar voice or maybe the smell of burning leaves. This, it seems, would only make your job harder, but it needn't be that way.

By and large, people tend to like the same broad categories of things. Sunny days, fireworks, cool clear streams, festivals, fur parkas…well, you get the idea. And that's where a little creative connection-making on your part will help get you past the first, most critical part of putting color to work for you. For example, if you're working on a label for a bottler of natural mineral water, what color family comes first to mind? Or what about a fire extinguisher ad? See the difference? The guidelines are usually there, but the creativity has to come from you.

The purpose of this book is to help you take the creative concept through production; but remember, color in marketing is a subjective thing. It's a tool to help the talented artist speak to the market, in words of no language that add power and richness to any language. This is why it is so important to be able to work quickly and confidently with color, to understand and use typography's disciplines and possibilities, and to put the two together. This is the foundation, of all design.

Technically, color theory
must remain just that, only
theory, until sound design
principles, from A to Z, are
understood and applied.
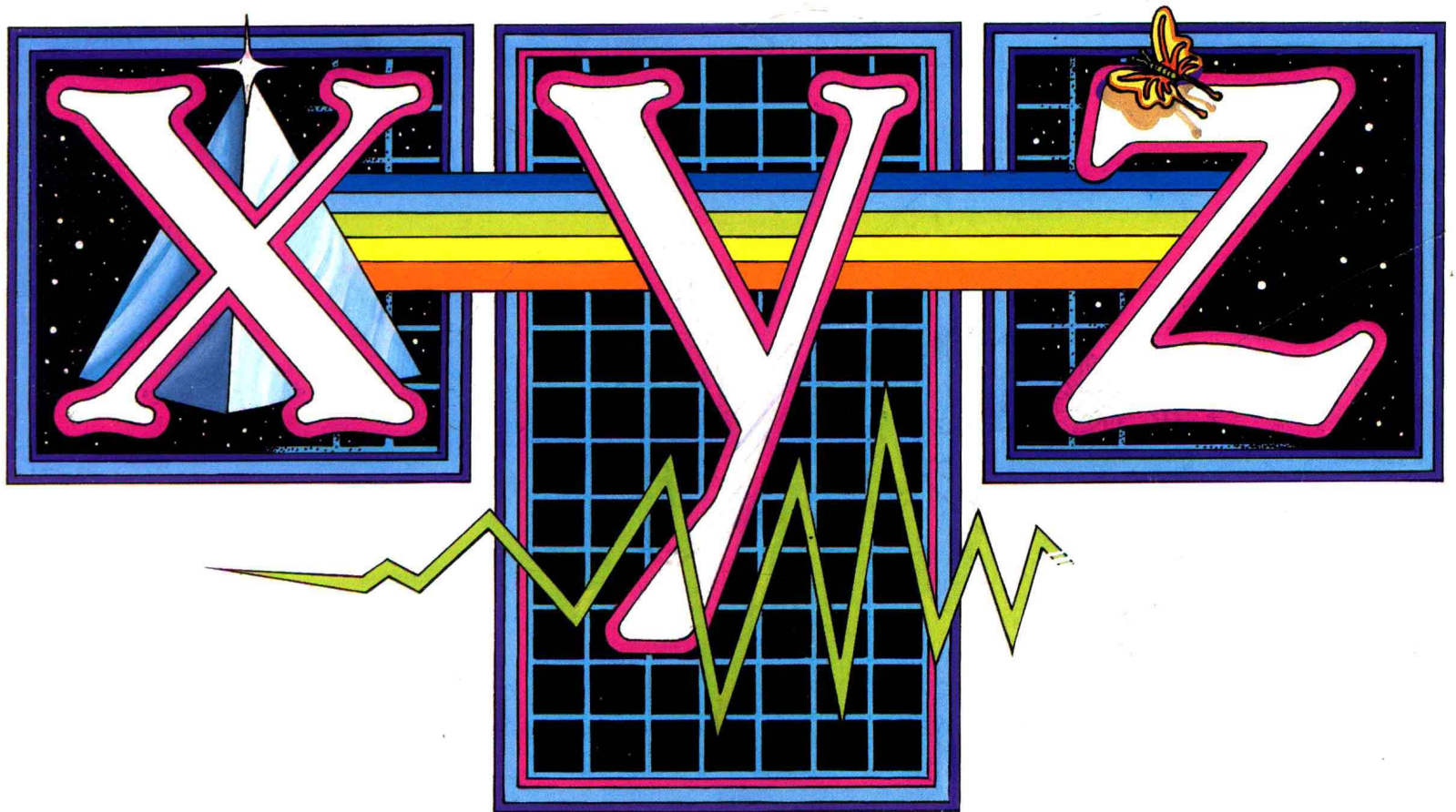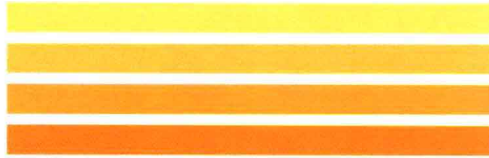
More than just a reference manual,
this is a hands-on laboratory where creative color type combinations
can readily be invented, tested and refined.
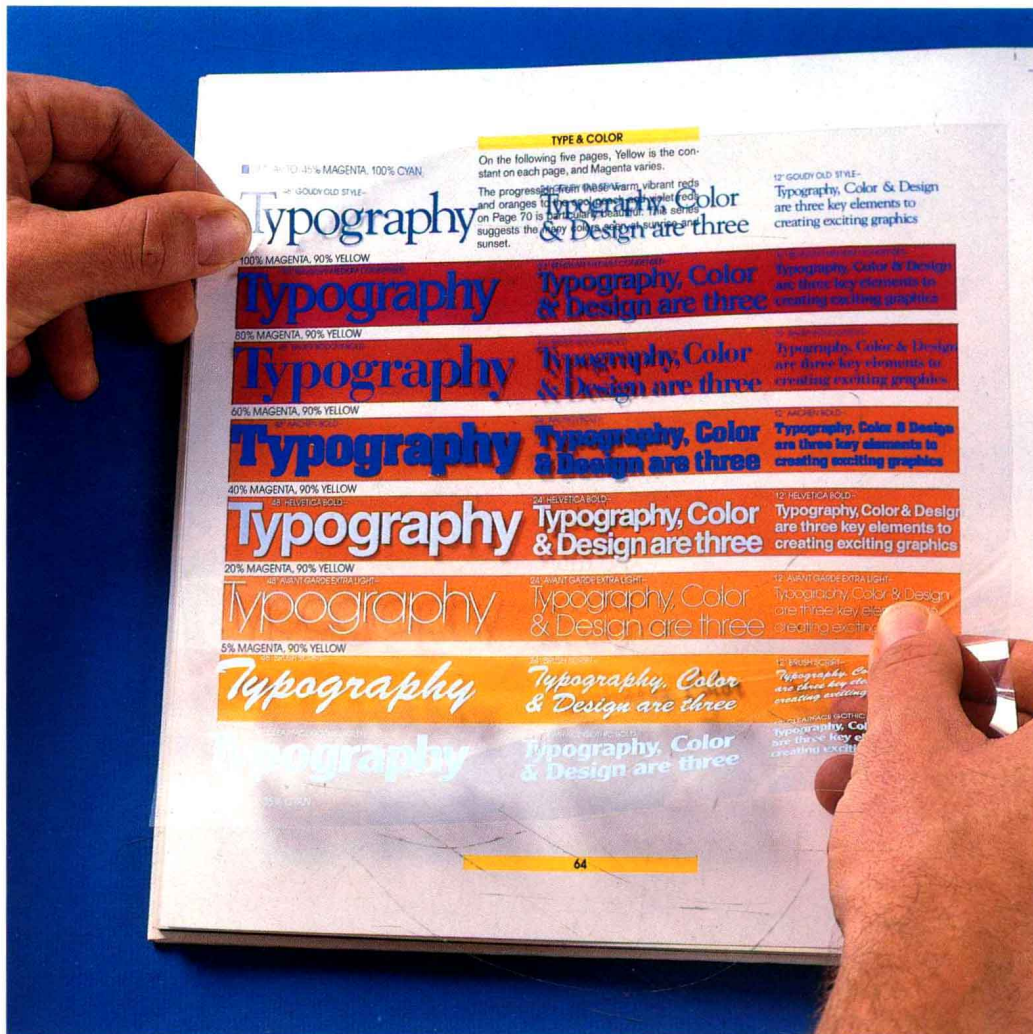
How to Use this Book

TYPE & COLOR, as you are by now aware, is both a book and a tool. While it is neatly divided into the book part and the tool part, (the Color Selector with Acetate Type Overlays), each section is an integral part of a single unified designers handbook.

The first fifty pages cover the theories and techniques necessary to effective use of color and typography. Use these sections as reference, since much of the material contained in the three essays and in Great Combinations, and Theories & Ideas pertains directly to how efficiently you'll be able to use the Color Selector.

The Color Selector, beginning on page 52, is the hard-working part of the book. This consists of 100 pages of carefully selected color bands...600 in all...and a package of 10 clear type chart overlays. Each overlay is printed with eight typefaces in three sizes, and each acetate is printed in two different colors. In all there are 18 colors, plus black and white, and a six-level gray scale. By placing an acetate over any of the 600 color bands, you can see instantly how a particular type/color combination will look,

and, using the gray scale, you can add an appropriate amount of black. For this reason, none of the color bands includes a density for black ink.

As you can see, this selector is based on four-color process rather than any particular ink-matching system. The ink "recipes" are called out on each color to make creating combinations quicker and simpler. Naturally, there are more than 600 colors in our world to choose from, and we have had to select from the entire visible spectrum this relatively small number for reasons of space. But even so, these pages and overlays allow for more than 800,000 different color combinations, type faces and sizes.

In addition, the acetate overlays work very well with whatever color-matching system you wish to use. This alone should allow you a virtually unlimited range of combinations. Likewise, we encourage you to bring your own actual photography and artwork into the equation. In short, no matter what your design requirements, TYPE & COLOR should be able to make arriving at the best solution a simpler, faster, more efficient process.