The BAG

JITESH Patel

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JITESH Patel

Laurence King Publishing



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Book Design: Jai Studio www.jaistudio.co.uk Printed in China

Commissioning editor: Helen Rochester Tote bag/cover illustration © 2011 Gemma Correll www.gemmacorrell.com Jitesh Patel has several years' experience in illustration and design, and set up his multi-disciplinary studio, Jai Studio, in Shoreditch, London, in 2007. His clients include British Airways, Christie's the auctioneers, Duck and Cover clothing, The Economist, French Connection, Galaxy chocolate, The Guardian, Publicis & Hal Riney San Francisco, HSBC, Jack Wills, John Lewis, John Murray Publishing, Jury & Co, MTV, Ted Baker, Tesco, TBWA, Tres Generaciones and Vodafone.

In January 2009, Jitesh Patel launched the Tote Prints blog (toteprints.wordpress.com) to celebrate his large collection of tote bags. The idea is to create a platform to bring together artists and tote bag prints and to showcase them to a wider audience.

Jitesh Patel's work has been featured in numerous magazines, newspapers and books, including the book 300% Cotton by Helen Walters (Laurence King Publishing), IdN Magazine and Computer Arts magazine.

www.jiteshpatel.co.uk



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The tote bag is an eco product for this century, destined to replace disposable plastic bags. The canvas bag has become increasingly popular in recent years, as more people have become environmentally conscious, concerned about climate change and aware of the impact of their carbon footprint. The media reminds us all to be more conscious of the world we live in, and environmental issues are inescapable.

I have been a collector of tote bags since they first started to emerge a few years ago. I am drawn to the unique, beautiful and original designs and illustrations that feature on many of them. It was this love that prompted me to start a blog about tote bags and the designers who create them. The blog attracted many visitors interested in the designs and their creators. The next step for me, naturally, was to write a book about tote bags, plotting the journey of totes from their functional roots to their manifestation today as a fashion statement.

The tote bag artworks that are most striking, inventive, ironic and original have formed the basis of this book. I have received many positive and encouraging responses from designers while researching the topic; most have commented that it was a great subject for a book. I hope the readers of this book will share our enthusiasm.

Many of the designers that I interviewed mentioned the fact that people are steadily moving away from using disposable plastic bags and more towards using reusable commodities, as part of a growing trend to reuse and recycle materials. The tote bag, as well as having eco credentials, is also a great artistic opportunity; it offers an amazing blank canvas on which anything can be created, and it is very affordable. Tote bags address our cultural and social needs, and tote bag designers look for fresh, young-minded people to wear them and help them become 'environmental action detonators' – or at least a 'placebo for people's ecological conscience'.























Tote bags have also begun to emerge as an extension of clothing and style. The printed design on a tote bag can be used as a message to communicate someone's personality and display their individuality.

The graphic imagery and messages displayed upon tote bags are becoming increasingly sophisticated and imaginative, as well as displaying the artist's sense of humour. Talented artists and designers are turning their hand to creating prints for tote bags; sometimes to promote their work, but also as commissioned projects from clients.

Artists and designers are using the medium of tote bags to help the world to become more environmentally conscious. But there is a potential pitfall for the tote's admirers: in trying to avoid plastic excess, we may end up owning too many totes! This is a potential threat to ponder while we jump on the bag-for-life bandwagon.

I hope you will enjoy this selection of imaginative and inspiring tote bags from individuals, collectives and design studios and that you may even be inspired to create your own tote bag artwork.

If you are interested in submitting your self-produced or commissioned projects for future editions of this book, please visit the Tote Prints blog (www.toteprints.wordpress.com).

Jitesh Patel, Jai Studio















Aaron D. Carámbula

Objective Subject

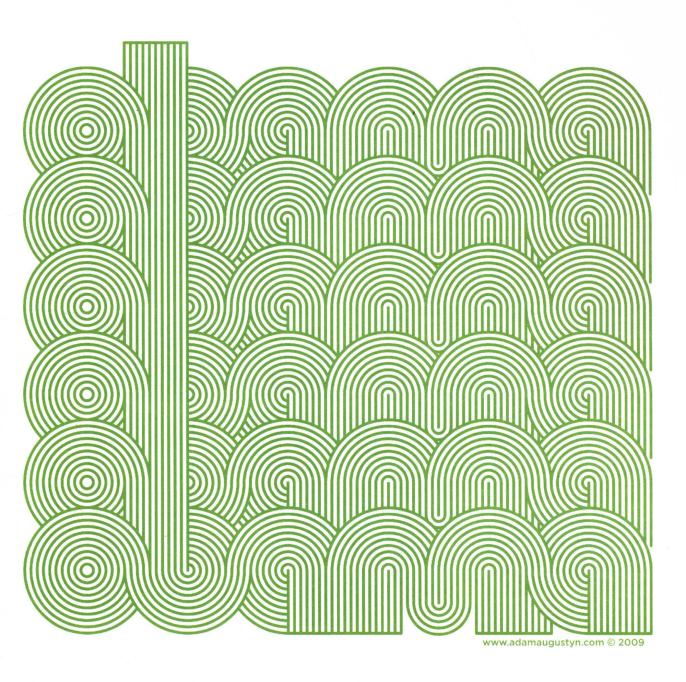
www.objectivesubject.com

Brooklyn, NY, USA

Have you ever heard of the Friends of Type? This is a daily type and lettering sketchbook made by Aaron Carámbula and his friends. His wife Kelly noticed the 'mmmm' design Aaron created for that project, and thought it would make a perfect design for the tote bag you see here.

Aaron runs the studio Objective Subject in Brooklyn, often using type and lettering at the centre of his designs. A declared fan and student of the Basel school, he designed this tote bag print as a gift for the supporters of *Remedy Quarterly* food magazine. 'A tote made conceptual sense – functional at the greenmarket,' he comments. It also serves as a great high-value item, especially for designers, aesthetes and foodies.

Aaron sees the popularity of tote bags in terms of marketing power: a powerful combination between a functional marketing tool and the fashionable green movement.



Adam Augustyn

www.adamaugustyn.com

Brooklyn, NY, USA

Adam Augustyn is a graphic designer and illustrator, a self-declared optimist who enjoys the work he does. In this case, the job was creating an unconventional logo for Obama supporters, in a very bold and graphic style.

Adam Augustyn Design proposed this psychedelic green and white print as something 'utilitarian and reusable,' in harmony with President Obama's politics concerning the environment.

The pattern is made of letterforms that are not quite legible if you view the tote closely, but as you move to a certain distance, the name hidden in the forms becomes clear to the eye. The artist thinks that the symbol is more visually appealing when treated as an image.

Alícia Roselló & Elisa Riera

Sirena con Jersey

www.sirenaconjersey.com

Barcelona, Spain

'Sirena con Jersey' is the Spanish for 'mermaid with sweater'. Why would a mermaid wear a sweater? Because she wants to. Alícia Roselló and Elisa Riera, the women behind Sirena con Jersey, bring us a fresh perspective on creativity and lots of fun from Barcelona, Spain.

Ali and Eli have a unique personal style: 'We design what we would like to wear and that we don't find in stores. The "Mr Moustache" design looks slightly like the face on the Pringles chip tubes, but the resemblance was not intended! "Happy Worms" could be worms, fingers or whatever you like, and "Whale" is based on our love of whales and dolphins.'

Designing a tote bag seemed appealing to the young artists; 'it is unisex, is easy, is useful and we could do it ourselves,' they say.











Andre Weier

Nalindesign

www.nalindesign.com

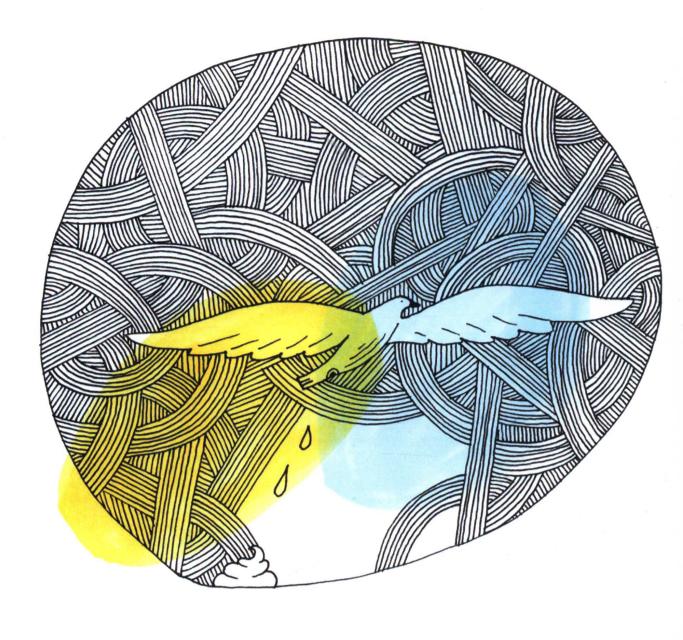
Neuenrade, Germany

Simple black and white graphics define Andre Weier's design style when it comes to tote prints. His studio, Nalindesign, started to produce totes to fulfill personal needs: 'I and friends of mine just couldn't find great tote bags — so I started creating them myself,' he explains.

An admirer of street art, graffiti and urban style, Andre features various styles in his work, from typographic to urban. His love of stencils, spray paint and markers is also apparent in these totes. Andre says he is inspired by 'everything that surrounds me,' but mostly by human expressions. Upside down, smiling, grinning, his face tote bags are mainly used as giveaways for friends and clients.

Andre believes that the popularity of tote bags is due to their usefulness and their effectiveness in 'go green' campaigns. He thinks everybody needs one.





Andrea Forgacs

www.andreaforgacs.de

London, UK

If you think tote bags are a way of displaying design in everyday life, then you share an aesthetic vibe with illustrator Andrea Forgacs. She loves totes, owns more than twenty of them, and also makes them herself.

Her illustrations can't be pinned down to any one style, but Andrea suggests they are 'mostly innocent, with a little bit of black humour.'

