

[CONTENT]

6 INTRO

European COLOR

66

64/0/100/0

179**...** 35 **...**

50

77/20/14/0

American COLOR

0/59/100/0

Spain France Italy Germany Austria

Switzerland Holland Scotland

The Designer's Guide to Global Color Combinations © 2001 by Leslie Cabarga. Manufactured in Singapore.

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NC997 .C338 2001 701'.85—dc21

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114

45/56/100/30

117 **9**3 **1**70

African COLOR

Ethiopia

Egypt Guinee

Mali Senegal Ghana

COLOR

Latin American

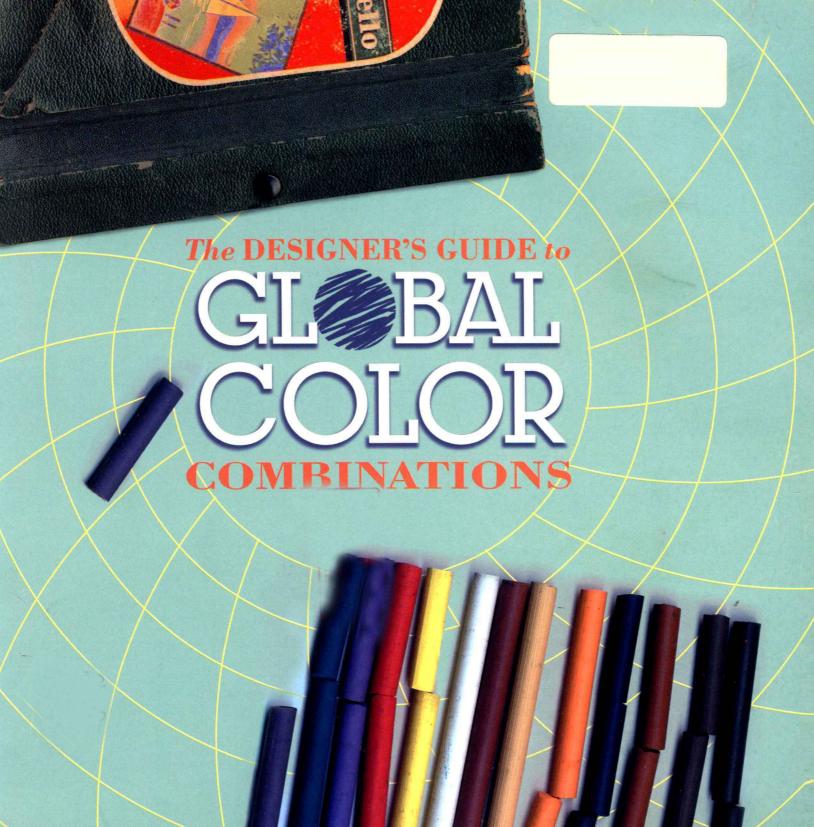
Mexico

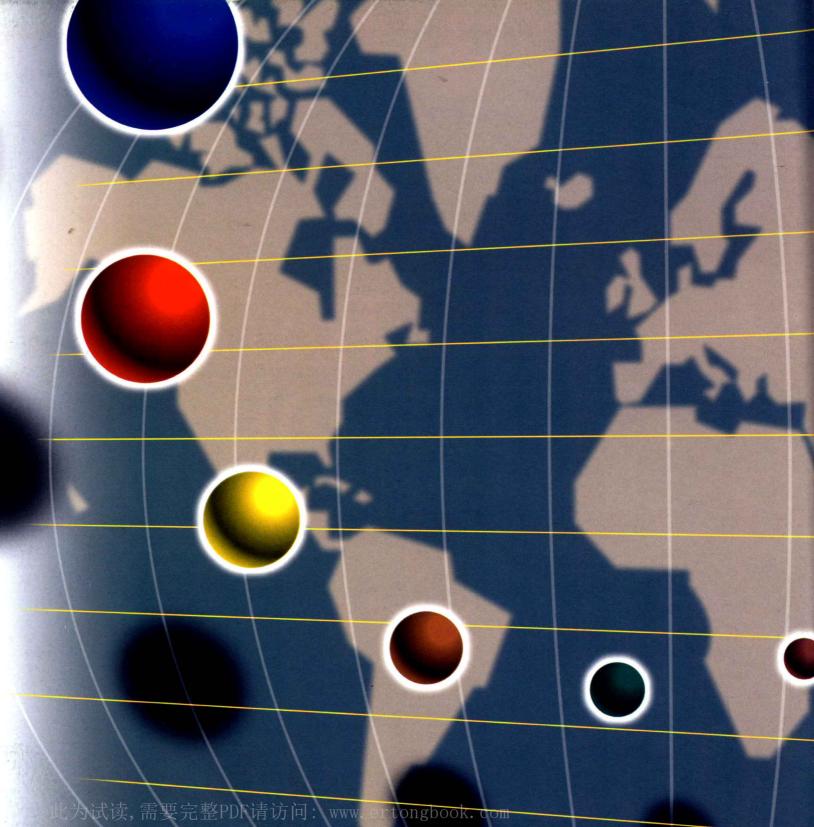
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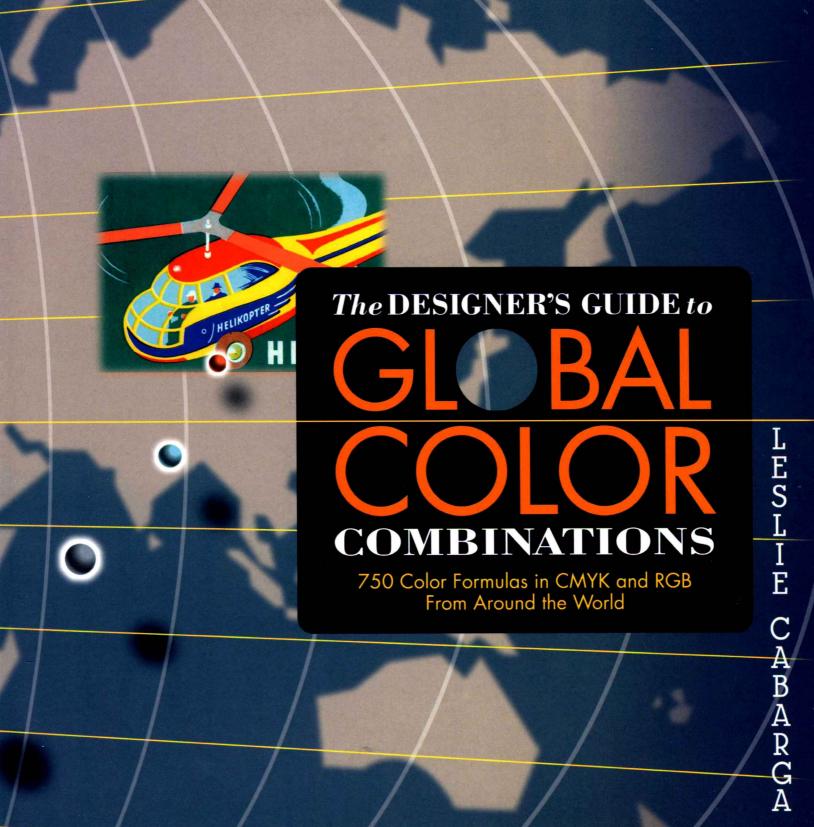
Guatamala

Brazil

Argentina







[CONTENT]

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European COLOR

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64/0/100/0

179**...** 35 **...**

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77/20/14/0

American COLOR

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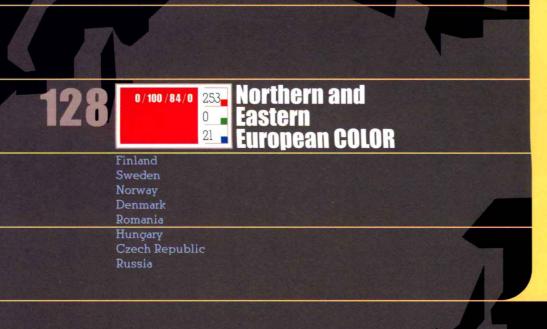
Mexico

Peru

Guatamala

Brazil

Argentina



Thanks: to color consultants Marga and Anna for the sage advice and the warm nights. Thanks also to Will Ryan, Denise Hagopian, Noel Norwick, Brandel France deBravo, Mario Bravo, and all the other colorful people in the world.

Disclaimer: It was only with the greatest respect and admiration for everybody on earth that the author undertook this project, and he wishes to apologize for any factual or grammatical errors, such as sentences ending in prepositions, misplaced or neglected diacriticals, botched translations, outrageous generalizations, or any careless or off-the-cuff commentary that might be construed as offensive. In addition, every effort has been made to trace and acknowledge all copyright holders. HOW Design Books and the author would like to apologize if any credit omissions have been inadvertently made.

The color combinations from this book are available on CD rom from flashfonts.com.

16

168



Middle Eastern COLOR

Iran

Palestine Armenia 0/20/100/0 255 Asia 204 COLO

China

Japan Korea Vietnam Tibet India

Pakistan

Island COLOR

152

25/58/0/0 187

Bali Java Hawaii Tahiti Haiti Cuba Bahamas

1/6 DIRECTORY

INTRO

A designer in SELECT LOCATION \$\(\) fires up her new computer to design a spectacular SELECT PROJECT \$\(\). She scans her mind for colors for the project, unaware of the influences her cultural heritage and personal experiences play in this selection process. The colors that spring to mind are tan and black—like the saddle blanket on her favorite yak, a pet from childhood. She contrasts these colors with a light golden color, like the steaming fresh yak milk she coaxed from recalcitrant udders on those blustery winter mornings before trekking 14 kilometers (8.7 miles) to the Jesuit mission schoolhouse with its doors of flaming red.

Another designer in SELECT LOCATION \$
carries with him the imbedded color memory of the navy blue and depression-green sign urging the purchase of some now-defunct brand of motor oil at the old Flying-A station somewhere near Fulton Street that was







demolished years before Taki 183 ever raised a marker to the glossy, off-white surface of a New York subway tile.

Still another designer takes an easy color route, selecting from the 2l6-fits-all, Websafe color palette. Or, meandering through the Web, she discovers a Web site that is particularly intriguing and decides to appropriate the colors straight off of it. The colors she copies could have been designed in SELECT LOCATION \$\Displays \text{Thus, trends in color nowadays are less "Detroit school"}

10/10/25/0 229 221 179 or "Moscow style" than "Earth style now." Thankfully, the color police have gone the way of the KGB and Doc Marten's hightops. No one's dictating colors anymore and nobody has a clue what tomorrow's colors will be...except maybe, you.

GOOD DESIGNERS, DIRTY COLORS

The dirty little secret behind THE DESIGNER'S GUIDE TO GLOBAL COLOR COMBINATIONS is that it matters little what color combination comes from what country or era. The reason for this book is not necessarily to help you make a "French-colored" design. Even if you should want to style your work for an overseas client, it might be futile since that client probably hired you to get your style. The reason for this book is to open our eyes to new worlds of color and to combinations that we've perhaps never imagined before. For instance, if I'd never been to Bulgaria, I might have never heard music played in the asymmetrical 7/16 time signature that I found so fascinating, yet confounding to my Western sense of 4/4 timing.

On the other hand, if you are trying to design in imitation of a specific country, then we've certainly got what you're looking for. In general, if it works for you, any color combination you choose out of this book is as valid as any other, regardless of race, creed or...color.

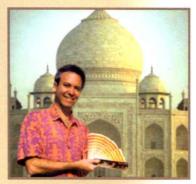
AROUND THE WORLD FOR 176 PAGES

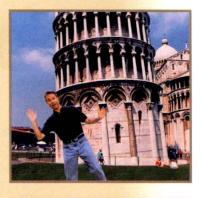
I've just returned from flying around the world and boy, are my arms tired! No, not from flapping, silly. My mouse hand is killing me, and the other arm is aching from lugging around my Macintosh G4 Powerbook (www.apple.com) retrofitted with oversized swaybars and Iskendarian racing cams (www.iskycams.com). Man, how that thing hugs the bezier curves, but it's a hard start-up on cold mornings, especially at high altitudes. I got some suspicious looks at border crossings, but it's amazing what a fistful of rupees will do to sort of smooth things over. My little souped-up traveling design studio, powered by a portable photovoltaic module (www.realgoods.com), worked swell until I hit Finland halfway through one of its four-month-long winter dark snaps and had to switch over to hydro. Fortunately, there was a dam power station nearby and they had an adapter. It was incredible to be able to rush back to my various hotel rooms with arms full of local candy wrappers, magazines, books, menus, prints, clothing items and all manner of printed ephemera and what-nots, and then input the colors of the place while still in its milieu.

GIVE PUCE A CHANCE

The experiences I had on my world voyage and the people I encountered, from Manhattan to Madagascar to Malmö, will remain









The author in search of color: in Egypt at the tail end of the Sphinx; checking colors in India at the Taj Mahal; clowning in Italy at the Leaning Tower; checking colors in China at the Great Wall.





80/74/0/35

Bonus Palette L

DEADLY 0/55/61/0 252 COLOR

0/55/61/0 252

Trauma Coral

36/38/62/20 130

65

178

151

54

122

109

225

12

77

170

172

Putre-Taupe

63/52/50/100

Black

124

28/45/6/3

Livor Lavender 174 3/40/76/0 246

N. W. - C. - C. - L. I.

61/25/66/35

Livor Verdigris

51/29/39/15 107

Livor Gray

10 / 87 / 100 / 3

Trauma Red

5/16/51/0

Cadaver Yellow

31/85/85/53

Cavity Maroon

70/7/20/0

Viscera Cyan

EXHAUSTIVE STUDY OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF ACCIDENT VICTIMS AND CADAVERS, LED DESIGNER DAVID LINCOLN BROOKS TO DEVELOP THIS DEADLY COLOR PALETTE OF **BODY PARTS IN VARIOUS** STATES OF DECOMPOSITION. TIME AND AGAIN, HE WAS ABLE TO CORROBORATE THAT SIMILAR STATES OF BODY MORBIDITY IN DIFFERENT SUBJECTS YIELDED IDENTICAL COLORS. THE PALETTE PRODUCES A DISTURBING VISCERAL REACTION —IT IS MILDY SICKENING—LENDING CREDENCE TO HIS CLAIM OF AUTHENTICITY.

- 1. Trauma Coral: color of skin surrounding a stab wound.
 2. Putre-Taupe: mushroomy color of skin and tissues in advanced putrefaction; the last color before turning black.
 3. Black: color of total and utter putrefaction of human tissues.
 4. Livor Lavender: color of very early putrefaction seen one to two days after death.
 5. Adipic Gold: color of human intermediately under the chip.
- 5. Adipic Gold: color of human fat immediately under the skin, and surrounding the viscera.
- 6. Livor Verdigris: gray-green of livor mortis; the color of skin in advanced putrefaction.
- 7. Livor Gray: blue-gray of earliest livor mortis, occuring before livor verdigris, above.
- 8. Trauma Red: the color of fresh, oxygenated blood.
- 9. Cadaver Yellow: human skin after the blood has left it.
- 10. Cavity Maroon: the color of unoxygenated blood and tissue deep within the body cavity.
 11. Viscera Cyan: the amazing (basic) color of healthy human lungs and intestines.

fond memories even long after I'm too old to remember anything. As an American, it's too easy to forget that we enjoy the world's highest standard of living, after Kuwait. It takes an experience like the one I had high up in the Verkhoyansk mountain range of Central Siberia to remind me that not everyone has a 21-inch (53.3-centimeter) color monitor at home, as I have. In a small waddle-and-daub hut, huddled together with several farm animals to keep us warm, my hosts Dudinka and Potapovo proudly displayed the small, MS-DOS-era computer and green-screen monitor with which they surfed the Net looking for porno. Painstakingly, they had created dozens of transparent screen overlays consisting of hand-cut bits of colored cellophane to correspond to the images found on their favorite sites, thereby introducing a dash of color into their humdrum lives. This is how important color is to people!

In Bali—one of the few places I found, besides Tibet, where people seem to live their religion by example and not by rote—I was gratified by the willingness of many Balinese to whisk off their sarongs so I might make scans (www.microtek.com), in situ, from these multicolored marvels of the batiker's art. Everywhere I went, I was touched by the humanity of the people I met and by their willingness to share colors and/or a meal with me, a perfect stranger. Vast cultural differences, lack of ability to communicate well and resentments over past American military adventures (to make the world safe for Exxon, Coca Cola and Marlboro) seemed to melt away into irrelevancy as we sat peacefully together, crosslegged on a profusion of hand-loomed rugs, drinking coffee so strong it would melt titanium. For hours, my hosts patiently indulged me while I asked such probing questions as, "Okay, so like, why green?"

Time and again I had pause to reflect upon the words of Dwight D. Eisenhower who once said, "People want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of the way and let them have it."

IF IT'S TUESDAY THIS MUST BE MAGENTA

Having spent eighteen months traversing the globe collecting color samples from over forty-eight countries, I can truly say the book you are holding in your hands is a colossal failure. How could it be otherwise? It would take many years and thou-

sands of pages, at the very least, to begin to do justice to the subject; to truly, accurately and completely summarize indigenous color trends from every corner of the globe. I feel almost heartbroken as I recall the endless combinations of amazing colors I encountered and the hopelessness of attempting to present them thoroughly. Just as I was really getting into a country's colors, I'd run out of pages and have to hop on yet another plane. My final color choices were based upon only the most critical and objective criteria: Whenever I encountered a color scheme that made me say "Wow!" it made the cut. Ultimately, the higher-profile countries—Japan, France, China, Russia—are better represented in this book than other lesserknown (at least to Americans) countries. Hopefully, my readers will not infer any preferential biases in my selection of certain countries over others.

The contents of this book evolved something like that famous sign PLAN AHEAD as I got carried away in the earlier chapters and had to cut back on later ones. The colors of the African continent alone would have filled this book and still yielded combinations every bit as diverse as the book presently has. The real reasons certain countries were omitted are that flights to more popular airports are generally cheaper, the typical price of a camel caravan has risen steeply (thanks to GATT and MTV) and publishing budgets aren't what they used to be. Apologies to the designers of Qatar, Palau, Djibouti, Maldives, Tuvalu, Liechtenstein, etc., for missing your countries. And there were many other, less obscure nations that I, with reluctance, was forced to omit. One very large, northern country in particular couldn't get its act together in time to make my deadline. It would be imprudent to mention its name, but suffice it to say, your prime minister will be hearing "aboot" it, eh?

The Designer's Guide's inadequacies aside, there are enough color combinations here to keep us all busy until the final book in the trilogy (The Designer's Guide to Intergalactic Color Combinations) is eventually released (encoded hologramistically on pure methane effluvia).

IT'S A MALL WORLD, AFTER ALL

Today, ever-expanding "world trade" and the "global marketplace" translate to a search for the next "sucker." That is, untapped markets of naïve customers just aching for the Bonus Palette 2



COLORS TAKEN FROM A CAMOUFLAGE MANUAL. THIS PALETTE IS USEFUL FOR PROTECTING YOUR GRAPHIC DESIGN FROM SNIPERS IN A HOSTILE FOREST ENVIRONMENT. THESE COLORS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PRODUCING EYE-CATCHING LAYOUTS (SEE ABOVE).

	30/4
	light gr
	70/4
晋	
	dark gre
	dark åre
	0/
	sand
	10/
	field dra
	60/9
	00/3
	earth br
	earth Di
	0/
	earth ye
	71/9
	loam
	40
	*"

0/100/30 38 0/100/50 40 / 70 / 20 35/60/25 0 / 100 / 15 own 50/85/20 llow 4/100/30 80/90/0 42 earth red 45/56/100/30 62 olive drab

SIGNALGRAU Bonus Palette 3 0/0/0/100 155 39/5/11/0 0 204 203 249 93/26/46/11 20 102 102

Forest Weekend 19/30/77/6 100/0/0/0 160 50s Cand M 50 198 4/0/20/0 245 240 0/100/0/0 2 251 127 203 Baby Blues 252 247 3/39/94/0 205 Summer Day 204 16 206 255 203 204 227 17 207 153 40/5/11/0 207 205 52 변 28/94/54/16 204 40/5/36/0 152 207 15 Retro Chic

203

16

255

16/95/95/4

0/0/0/0

Bauhaus

35/24/50/8

16/33/94/4

103

19

Signalgrau's Dirk Uhlenbrock indulged us in a little free association by coming up with some personal favorite colors and their significance. The CMV skull logo, left, and the bull, below, are examples of Dirk's clever spot art. More of Signalgrau's work can be found on pages 86 and 87.

10

opportunity to purchase products they've never heard of before, can barely afford, and now can't live without. I'm reminded of the two-roomed, mudfloored home I visited in Indonesia in which the enshrined photo of General Suharto vied for attention with the new television set. The homeowner complained about his youngest son, who refused to work the rice fields as the family had for millennia

and instead spent his time watching soap operas, commercials and rock videos. But how ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm, to paraphrase an old song, after they've seen TV?

The positive side to declining trade barriers—the media explosion and the Internet—is the resulting exposure to new ideas, new methods and even new colors—at least for those fortunate enough to be plugged in. That is why modern design from Pakistan, for example, doesn't look much different than contemporary designs from any other part of the world. The Pakistani designer may have been inspired by a Ukrainian Web site he visited or a French magazine he read. I personally hope that the information age will bring not just news of the latest items for purchase, but greater awareness of the insidiousness of government and corporate propaganda, which have increasingly become so inseparable.

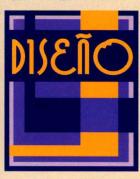
Because of the current melting pot of global design, I selected many color combinations from the past. These can be more representative of a particular country's traditional color taste than newer works, which may have been influenced by the design of American CD covers. Old-fashioned colors are no less useful, anyhow. There is a current trend among many designers toward the muted, subtler, grayed-down colors such as those used in olden times. Resurrected in modern layouts, they can convey a richness and elegance and lend a feeling of long-established importance to our designs. When breaking down ancient and modern designs for their colors, I was often surprised that, in many countries, great similarities existed between the old and new.



19/12/58/0 206	19/12/34/0 207	16/62/93/4 205	18/79/93/4 199	29/39/93/4 173	40/14/31/8 141
207	207	87	48	129	170
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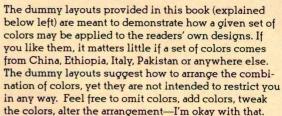
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK



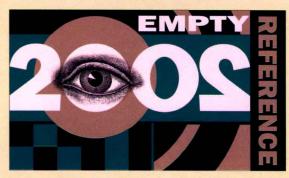




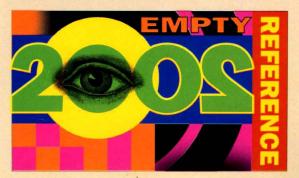










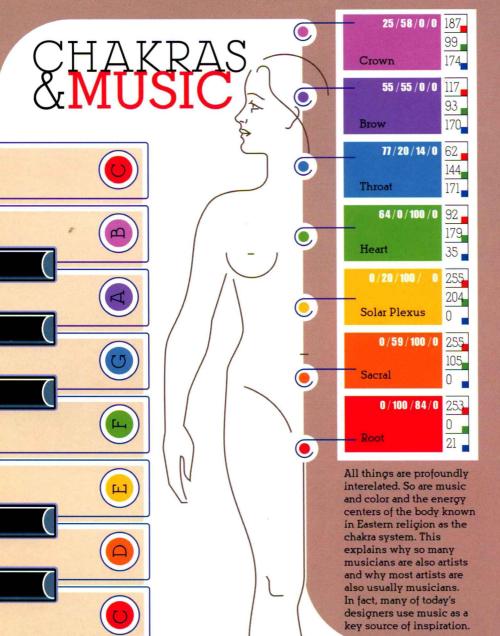


In this book you will not find complex theories of color harmony, or formulas for achieving perfect color complements. This is a color swipe file, providing some of the world's most interesting color combinations for you to steal. The difference between this and most other color swatch books is that accompanying all of the swatch sets are simple, dummy layouts that suggest how to use the swatches.

You'll see which colors to use on typical design elements such as type, drop shadows, backgrounds, boxes for additional type and sidebars, and borders and accents. The dummy layouts suggest how to accentuate certain colors and subordinate others to achieve a certain effect. The point of the dummy layouts is to show that it's not only about which colors you choose, but also about how the colors are arranged that makes the design successful. You are free, of course, to shuffle, add, subtract and tweak the color examples to your heart's content. The only rule is that there are no rules in color usage. It's whatever feels right.

HOW THIS BOOK IS ARRANGED

Each page contains one provocatively-colored design example from the subject country. Below it are two dummy layouts displaying colors selected from the design. In the layout on the left, the colors are placed in an hierarchical arrangement similar to that of the design. The designs were frequently too complex to allow perfect imitation and many were too colorful, so only the eight most important colors were selected for the swatches.



In the second layout, the colors are arranged in a completely different way to demonstrate how this can totally alter the feeling of a design.

In the center of each spread are eight dummy layouts with colors derived from other sources from each subject country. The color sources for these include: fabrics, posters, advertisements, tiles, Web sites, ceramics, rave flyers, signage, packaging labels and myriad other items that I discovered on my color trip around the world. Though these additional layouts are mostly unattributed, they combine to form an eclectic, though hopefully faithful, representation of the colors and tastes of each country.

As you search for appropriate color combinations through the many pages of dummy layouts in this book, I suggest you try to look at each layout individually. Otherwise, you might reject a viable color combination due to the influence of neighboring schemes. You can avoid this problem by cutting a 2-inch (5-centimeter), by 2.25-inch (7-centimeter) hole out of a piece of white and/or black paper in order to "mask out" the rest of the page.

If music were color, what colors would it be? If nations were colors, what color would each nation be? What colors are artists? Decades of the twentieth century? The following are my purely personal opinions on this topic. Note: The lists are not intended to relate to one another.

				AND DESCRIPTION OF		THE PERSON NAMED AND POST OF THE PARTY OF
	AUSTRALIA		MICHELANGELO	1960s	1990s	THE BEATLES
t	AFRICA		REMBRANDT	1890s		MOZART
	No. AMERICA		MAXFIELD PARRISH	1940s		DUKE ELLINGTON
	EUROPE		PAUL KLEE	1910s	1930s	BILL MONROE
3	ASIA /		JOAN MIRÓ	1900s		GEORGE JONES
South AMERICA		CA	ALFONS MUCHA	1920s	1970s	EDITH PIAF
E . EUDODE		-	TIDID & WARTE	1000	1000	A STRUCTURE A STRUCTURE A



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0 87 16 55 | 85 13 42 39 90 28 11 138 21 88 18171145 10 30 0 8 209 160 196



100 0 51 43 0 84 71 710 68 31 50 120 66 116 164 44 **25 0 50 10** 172 206 114

POLY-MO NO-TONE

Four-color printing is becoming the standard, even for "cheap" jobs like newspapers and business cards. For those who miss one- and two-color printing, here are Jean Tuttle's suggestions as to how you can capture (and punch up) the look of old, limited-color, monotone printing in today's glorious polychrome publishing environment.

WEB-SAFE FOR YOUR PROTECTION

Web publishing takes publishing out of the hands of printing firms and gives us illuminated manuscripts every time by virtue of our color monitors. Our only concern, then, is whether other people's monitors will display our colors exactly as we've created them.

For this reason, the 216 Web-safe colors were invented by somebody. I don't believe in Velveeta cheese. fluoride toothpaste or Web-safe colors. The Pantone Matching System (containing thousands of printing ink colors) has been around for thirty years and very few of their colors are nice, yet here comes the Websafe palette and it's full of beautiful colors. One could almost stay with Web-safe colors and be a happy designer. Either the Web-safe developers tapped into some sacred geometry of color to achieve such a lovely spectrum, or it's all a ruse. I do believe that there is a universal relationship of colors to numbers, musical notes, the chakras and even astrology. I once had a dream in which my hands were poised over my piano keyboard while another hand pointed out the relationship of musical notes to color. When I awoke, I forgot the whole thing.

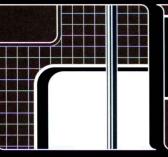
Of course, there are ugly colors among the 216, too. (Go to any amateur Web site.) And there are, of course,

many ugly ways to combine otherwise attractive colors from the Web-safe palette (and "ugly" is subjective). Web-safe colors are advocated because many people are still using older monitors on which colors other than Web-safe ones may not reproduce well. But on older, cheaper monitors, all colors the user sees—not just web colors—will look pixelated.

I suggest that using Web-safe colors isn't necessary. Whether your monitor is high-end or low-end, no two monitors will display colors the same anyway, so no designer is guaranteed that his vision will survive the Web. But more importantly, I believe that however our colors end up, other computer users will never know the difference. That's why there are no Web-safe colors specified in this book. That and because it would have been too much work. If you insist on being Web-safe, many programs like Adobe Photoshop and Macromedia Flash will snap colors to Web-safe (though that will cause most colors to radically change).

SEE, EM? WHY, KAY!

Sitting on a mountain in Brazil, high above the din of buzz saws hacking down precious rain forest, I had an epiphany. Why must CMYK percentages always be listed as 10, 20, 30, and so on? Percentages like 11, 22,



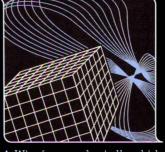
Lines, lines, lines.



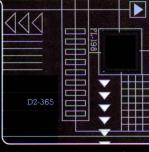
2. Lines and rounded-corner boxes.



3. Type within lines, grids & rounded-corner boxes.



4. Wire frame and spirally whirls 5. Profusion of meaningless



lines, boxes, arrows, numbers

HOW TO BE A

People are always e-mailing me the question: "Mr. Cabarga, how can I stay current with modern design trends and become a big-time designer like yourself?" After making some obligatorily self-effacing statement and taking a credit card number, I usually send out the following twenty essentials—the only twenty design tips you'll need to become a hip and edgy designer, like everybody else. Pay attention, take notes and have fun. Remember, in 2010, when we look back at rounded-corner boxes and blurry backgrounds, we'll all shudder and want to puke.

and 33 are faster to type. For that matter, 9 percent is easier for users to key in than 10 percent. The difference of one or two percentage points can hardly matter. There's always a plus/minus 5 to 10 percent ink density factor in commercial printing anyway, and the inconsistencies of color monitors has been adequately covered here.

In precomputer days, print shop cameramen were stuck with halftone screens in increments of 10 percent. Now we can key in any weird percentage we want. After all, RGB formulations are without rhyme or reason and are completely counterintuitive. Since when did mixing red and green make yellow? Note: just as color intensity can noticeably diminish when converting an RGB image to CMVK, the RGB formulas in this book will appear somewhat brighter when typed into an Adobe Photoshop RGB file.

Despite certain limitations of CMVK—the cyan, magenta, yellow and K for black process color inks used in most four-color printing—working on this book has made me newly appreciative of the system's versatility. Admittedly, some colors like fluorescent green, certain shades of light or bright orange and many kinds of blue cannot be captured well in CMYK. Otherwise, CMYK does a good job, especially when we are not limited to rounded-off percentages in tens, as mentioned earlier.

In selecting individual colors for the combinations in this book, I first looked for designs with an evenly stepped spectrum of light-to-dark colors. This usually allows good contrast between colors, enabling almost any two to touch without seeming to visually blend. Contrast between colors allows for legibility when type is placed in a design. When colors were too close together in value, I used the standard designer's

l. Fat-stroke ellipse tool grafix equiring no drawing skill.

12. Glowing outlines and pop-art halftone dot halos. 13. Big dot comic blowups.

14. Anything indecipherably Asian.

15. Graffiti, "tribal" and fuzzy black drop shadows.









