

Graphic Exchange

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PUBLISHER'S NOTES

I'm starin' at my screen but I'm still blind in Texas



GOT MY LIGHTS DOWN LOW, GOT MY BOTTLE OF VISINE HANDY, GOT MY GOOD EYE trained on those 16 million colors on my monitor, and I'm holding my color proof in my hand. With barely enough light from the screen to see my proof, I squint and stare, trying to guess if I can trust that the colors I see on my monitor are what I'll see on my final printed job. But the business of maintaining color integrity from phosphors all the way to ink on paper isn't easy — yet.

Desktop color management still leaves me blind in Texas, feeling blue.

Some years ago, the famous philosopher/psychiatrist Karl Jung noticed that there was a strange recurrence of certain colors and symbols in the dreams and paintings of his patients. About 1930, he happened to stumble upon some old texts on alchemy, and as he delved deeper into this subject, he discovered that the ancient search for a magical way to turn base metal into gold had parallels with his own work. Jung found that the underlying base of the alchemists' dream was the purification and transformation of the self, and that color played a central role in the processes of alchemy. He used these insights to find patterns in human behaviour which became part of his theories of the collective unconscious.

The spectrum of the alchemist is black, white, red, green and gold: black, the starting point of the additive color model and the absence of RGB; white, where the subtractive color model begins, the absence of CMYK; red, green and gold (or yellow), the colors in which the world around us is displayed — and the colors where the creative process begins.

The transmutations of substances in the alchemist's vessel involved changes in hue, each of which symbolized a stage in personal spiritual transformation. Jung found parallels between the alchemist's palette and the the pattern of growth through which his patients regained their mental well-being.

For hundreds of years, printers have performed their own brand of alchemy, turning inks, chemicals, water and paper into finished printing. And for almost all that time, this special brand of alchemy has been a closed world, where only those who had been inducted through the long painstaking process of apprenticeship and experience could claim genuine tribal status.

But too often the printer's alchemy works in reverse; we send our golden artwork to press only to see it converted to a dull facsimile of itself.

Yet we used to be satisfied to get print of any kind, and we were constantly reminded that the process was long and expensive and difficult. We had no right to complain if the mechanics of this process had limitations, if the vivid hues in our imaginations, the rich colors of our art, could never be perfectly and faithfully reproduced the way we wanted them to be.

But technologies have changed our expectations, and not only because of the availability of software for improving the desktop color workflow. Today we also have the Internet, where, on our monitors, we see a wide color gamut — and we expect to see the same thing when we go to press. But we can't. So naturally, we want to see how close we can get.

Writer-philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was fascinated by the study of color. In 1790, Goethe looked at a white wall through a prism he had borrowed.

CONTINUED

A Unique Blend of Science and Common Sense



Digital Magazine Advertising
Canadian Specifications

You've probably noticed that more magazines are accepting advertising in digital formats.

Did you also realize that film-based ads will eventually be fully replaced by strictly digital file delivery?

That's why we're developing new Canadian standards for the preparation and transmission of advertising materials. These specifications will deal with such issues as colour management, digital proofing and preflighting, while providing you with a comprehensive guide to preparing files that meet industry expectations.

Get into the mix!

You'll find yourself in very good company. Check out the **dMACS** Initiative website for details on the program and see who's already involved. (www.dMACS.org)

Conducted under the aegis of



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Familiar as he was with Sir Isaac Newton's work on color, he expected to see a spectrum of colors appear. But much to his surprise, the wall continued to maintain its white appearance.

Goethe immediately concluded that Newton's theories on light and the visible spectrum were flawed and spent the next twenty years experimenting with color. He developed his own model of a color wheel which was comprised of what he viewed as three natural color pairs: yellow and blue, red and green, orange and violet. He also believed colors should be employed according to their effects on the mind, dividing them into "plus" colors which evoke energetic, excited feelings — such as red and yellow — and "minus" colors — blue and green tones — which create feelings of restlessness and anxiety.

Goethe is best remembered for his literary classic *Faust*. Yet when he finally published his enormous tract *Farbenlehre* (Color Theory) in 1810, he considered it his greatest work.

In many respects, today's designer is a modern day Karl Jung; the artist a twenty-first century Johann Goethe. Just as Jung sought to learn how color affects the mind, designers must use color to influence the mood and attitude of an audience. And just as Goethe looked for a system of color harmony, so the artist seeks to find a balance in the hues of his or her creative efforts. And both ultimately look through their prisms with the hope that the white wall will, indeed, remain white.

This issue carries the theme of color, from our Hexachrome front cover to *COLOR COORDINATED* (page 14), wherein we take a general look at the state of color integrity in a digital workflow. Lorne Cherry addresses the current crop of color printers on page 22 — and finds that *THE ARGUMENT FOR COLOR IS FINALLY BLACK & WHITE*.

With Seybold Boston now behind us, it's apparent that the fight between Adobe and Quark has just begun. Check our *SEYBOLD REPORT (ADOBE STRIKES AT QUARK'S FOUNDATION)*, page 34.

As always, *FoolProof* king Gary Shilling has a different perspective on the world of creativity, which he shares with us in *IN YOUR FACE DESIGN* (PAGE 64). On page 27, Ben Willmore continues with his very useful tips on using curves in *PHOTOSHOP 5 STUDIO TECHNIQUES*. And *Homegurrrr!* Lynda Weinman looks inside a favorite website of hers, @tlas.com. an *OUTSTANDING WEB MAGAZINE*.

Don't miss Ron Giddings' iconoclastic look at MetaCreations' new *KPT5* on page 50; and likewise for photographers, Bob Connolly's description of the new Be Here Panoramic Lens (page 60). Rounding out the reviews this time are Peter Dudar's analysis of the new *Canvas 6* (page 52), and Shane Steinman's discourse on using Pantone's *HexWrench* (page 58).

But wait! I have finally seen the light. Life's spectrum runs from the bright highlights of creative energy to the deep dark shadows of disappointing press sheets.

Last one out, turn off the lights...(fade to black)...*

YOUR COMMENTS TO THE PUBLISHER ARE WELCOME — PLEASE E-MAIL DAN@GXO.COM.