



A Colourful Tail

Robbie Shaw takes a look at the colourful world of British Airways tail schemes.

UNLIKE THE early days of airline travel when a simple cheatline was usually sufficient as a form of identity, airlines have in recent years paid a great deal of money to designers and public relations companies to come up with a new 'look'. In 1995 British Airways decided it was time for a new image, having

last changed its livery in 1984 to a design produced by Landor Associates in California. This time, Newell and Sorrell, a firm of corporate identity consultants based in London, was selected from a short-list of four to come up with some new ideas. This firm's proposal was given formal go-ahead by the British

Airways board in August 1996, with the implementation date being June 1997. That may sound like a long timespan, but it is important to remember that the new concept is not just applied to aircraft, it also affects stationery, check-in desks, vehicles and a myriad of other items featuring the name British Airways.

1 • ANIMALS and TREES/Kg' ocoan hee naka hiian thee e; BOTSWANA
EMB145, RJ100, B737-200, B737-400, B757-200, B777-200ER, B747-400.

A painting of wild jackals resting under a tree by an oasis in the Kalahari Desert painted by Cgoise, an artist of the Ncoakhoe tribe. It was one of the first schemes to be unveiled and is widely used throughout the fleet.

2 • AVIGNON; GERMANY
B737-300.

One of the zaniest schemes to date is by Berlin artist Jim Avignon. It apparently shows two-dimensional figures under a Berlin night sky. So far this scheme is restricted to Deutsche BA aircraft. This carrier also allocates individual names to aircraft, with Kosmopolit, Metropolis, Paradiesvogel and Phantasia bearing this livery, and allocated to D-ADBU, BA, BQ and BI respectively.

3 • BLUE POOLE; ENGLAND
PA-38, ATP, B737-200, B737-500, B737-400, B757-200, B747-200.

This painting by Sally Tuffin of Poole features dolphins and seagulls. Such scenes are normally seen on items manufactured by Poole Pottery. Two Boeing 757s (G-BIKA, CPEM) have recently had this scheme applied and, whether by accident or design, one is a much lighter shade than the other.

4 • BENYHONE/MOUNTAIN of the BIRDS; SCOTLAND

PA-38, BN-2, SF-340A, SD360, ATP, ATR-72, DHC-8-300, BAe 146-200, B737-200, B737-400, A320-100, B727-200, B757-200, B767-300ER, B777-200ER, B747-400.

This red and black tartan pattern has proved to be one of the most popular so far and appears on 16 different types, ranging from PA-38 and Islander to the B747-400. A Saab SF-340 leased from Business Air also appears in this scheme.

This pattern was designed by weaver Peter McDonald.

5 • BLOMSTERANG/FLOWER FIELDS; SWEDEN

J31, B737-400, B757-200, B767-300ER, B747-200.

This Swedish design of hearts and flowers by Ulrica Hydman-Vallien normally decorates glass bowls, and first appeared on a B757.

6 • BAVARIA; GERMANY
B737-300.

Another scheme so far restricted solely to Deutsche BA is Bavaria. This flamboyant scheme replicates quill embroidery used to decorate leather belts and handbags in the Bavarian region. Aircraft bearing this colourful pattern include; D-ADBC, BF, BG and BH, which are named Enzian, Windrose, Edelweiss and Bavaria respectively.

7 • CALLIGRAPHY; GERMANY
B737-300.

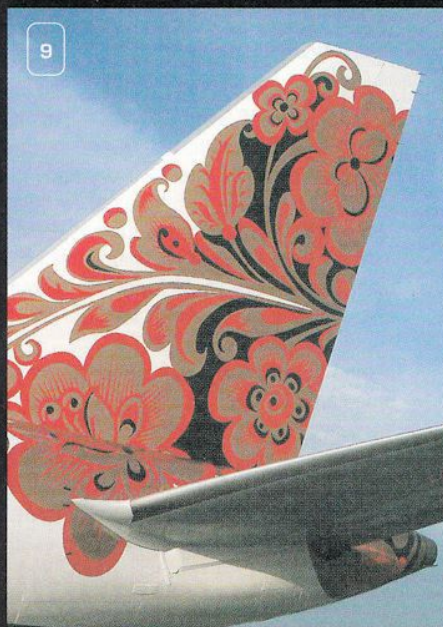
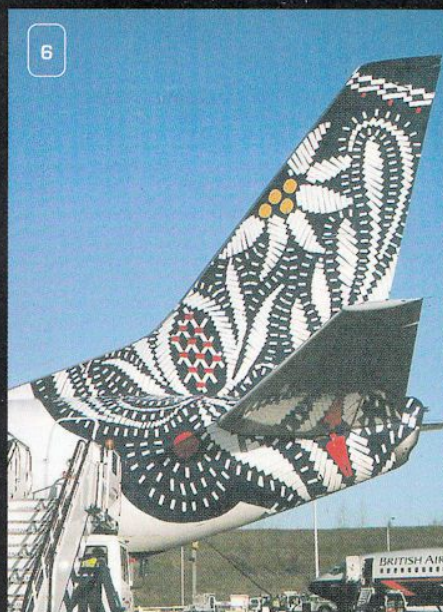
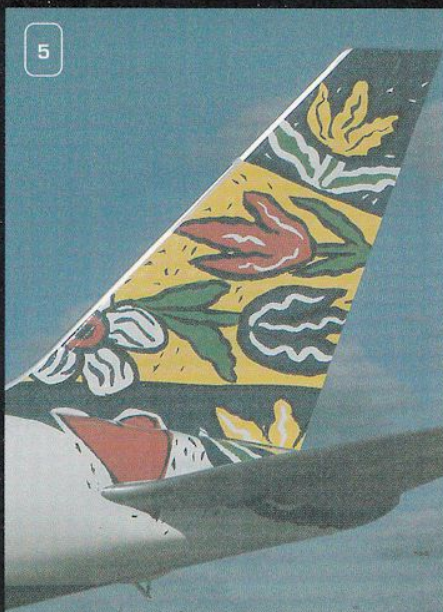
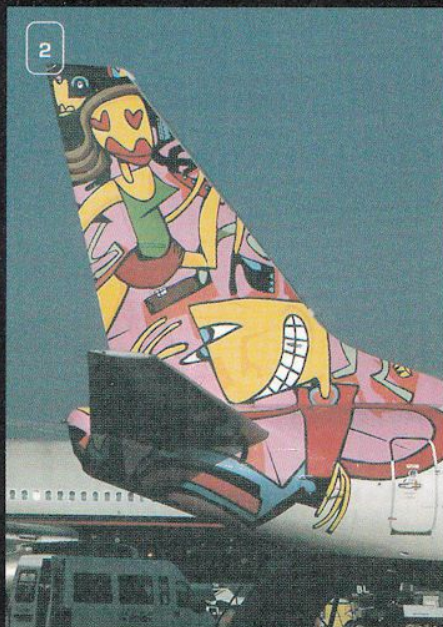
This scheme features an old Gothic script and was created by Professor Gottfried Pott. At first it was

thought this scheme was named Schriftanz (Letter Dance), but it transpired this was the individual name for Deutsche BA B737-300 D-ADBM. Other names include Federtraum, Himmelsbrief and Wolkenschreiber, allocated to D-ADBP, BO and BP respectively. This scheme is only applied to Deutsche BA aircraft.

8 • CHELSEA ROSE; ENGLAND
DHC-8-300, ATR-72, RJ100, B737-400, B757-200, B767-300ER, B777-200ER, B747-200, B747-400. One of the most recent schemes, yet fast becoming a favourite. This textile design of a single red rose by Pierce Casey was judged the winner in a competition run by British Airways and The Sunday Times newspaper. Along with Benyhone and Colum, Chelsea Rose is fast becoming one of the most widespread images.

9 • GOLDEN KHOKHLOMA/KUDRINA FROM SEMINOV; RUSSIA

B737-300, B757-200, B767-300ER. This interesting Russian scheme first appeared in mid-1998 on B757 G-BIKH. The pattern represents a Khokhloma folk art design of flowers and fruit applied to wooden utensils in the mid Volga region. The scheme displayed here was designed by Taisia Akimovna Belyantzeva, the most respected artist at a factory in the village of Seminov. This factory is the largest producer of Khokhloma ware in Russia. The Golden Khokhloma name on the nose of the aircraft given this scheme has recently been changed to Kudrina from Seminov.



10 • NALANJI DREAMING; AUSTRALIA
B757-200, B747-400.

Nalanji Dreaming is the third of the Australian designs to be introduced. This kaleidoscopic creation features flowers, fish and turtles on a blue and turquoise background. This scheme was first applied all over a Qantas B747-300 in 1995.

11 • NGAPA JUKURRPA/WATER DREAMING; AUSTRALIA
EMB145, B737-200, A320-00, B757-200, B747-400.

This Aboriginal mosaic of dots was created by Clifford Possum, a member of the Anmatyerre people from Tjapaltjarri, in Australia's Northern Territory. It represents a dream in visual format, with the complex series of dots helping to obscure sacred symbols from the uninitiated. The circles represent water holes, and the wavy and straight lines footpaths.

12 • PAITHANI; INDIA
B757-200, B747-200.

Textile artist Meera Mehta produced this scheme from designs used in hand woven saris. To date only two aircraft have been applied with this design which features shrub motifs on a rich gold background. The background colour appears to change in hue with differing light conditions.

13 • EMMY MASANABO/NDEBELE; SOUTH AFRICA

B757-200, B767-300ER, B747-400.

Emmy is one of two sisters of the Ndebele people of Southern Africa chosen to display their work on a Jumbo Jet tail. The Ndebele women paint their homes and decorate objects in bold geometric patterns, inspired by the intricate beadwork used in traditional dress. One of the first schemes unveiled, it looks virtually identical to that of her sister Martha's, but look closely.

14 • COLOUR DOWN the SIDE; ENGLAND
DHC-8-300.

Terry Frost's (now Sir Terry Frost) painting was inspired by the light and landscape of Cornwall. One of the first designs unveiled, it has been used very sparingly to date, adorning just one DHC-8 of Brymon Airways. The scheme is, however, also used on some items aboard Concorde.

15 • GRAND UNION; ENGLAND
EMB145, B737-300, B737-400, B757-200.

Another winner in a competition sponsored by British Airways and judged by The Sunday Times is Grand Union. It was designed by Christine Bass and based on similar schemes worn by narrow boats on the Grand Union Canal. This is one of the author's favourite designs, and in the right light conditions looks absolutely stunning.

16 • KOGUTKI LOWICKIE/COCKEREL of LOWICZ; POLAND
DHC-8, EMB145, B737-200, A320-100, B757-

200, B747-400.

Danuta Wojda produced this stunning image. Using shears, she has created intricate designs in a circular form, incorporating the motifs of cockerels, peacocks and flowers in symmetrical designs. This scheme appears on several aircraft, whereas her Mazowieckie Kwiatki design appears on just one aircraft.

17 • KWIATKI LOWICKIE/FLOWERS OF LOWICZ; POLAND
B737-400.

Another of Danuta Wojda's schemes which, even at close quarters, seems to differ only very slightly from that shown above.

18 • COLUM/DOVE; IRELAND

PA-28, BN-2, J31, SD360, DHC-8-300, ATP, EMB145, RJ100, B737-200, B737-500, B737-300, B727-200, B757-200, B767-300ER, B777-200ER, B747-400.

Irish calligrapher Timothy O'Neill has produced this colourful and complicated-looking design Colum, the Gaelic for Dove. This has proved a popular design indeed, and is noticeably different on some of the various tails it adorns. The most recent adaptations, on B737-400 G-DOCX and B767-300ER G-BNWK, feature more white than earlier renditions.



Above • Aircraft chosen to be adorned with a poppy and 'Pause to Remember' titling in honour of Remembrance Day 1998 was B737-400 G-BVNM. The aircraft stands out well against an impending thunderstorm.

Below • Gatwick based B737s display four different schemes and demonstrate just how colourful a British Airways ramp can be.

In preparation for the change a number of aircraft, mainly Boeing 747-400s, plus a few others such as Avro RJ100s and Boeing 737s, received an interim livery early in the year. The reason for this was twofold. It takes five days to paint a Jumbo. Using an interim scheme, which primarily left just the tail to paint, saved a considerable amount of time so that, come the 'launch' day, this could be done the night before. It also helped to keep the new livery secret until the time came to show it to the world. The interim scheme mainly comprised a white fuselage with a blue underside, a few shades lighter than the scheme then in use. The 'Fly to Serve' coat of arms and old tail markings were also applied on the interim scheme. One of the first appearances was on Deutsche BA Boeing 737s, although here the underbelly colour is black, the same as

in the German flag.

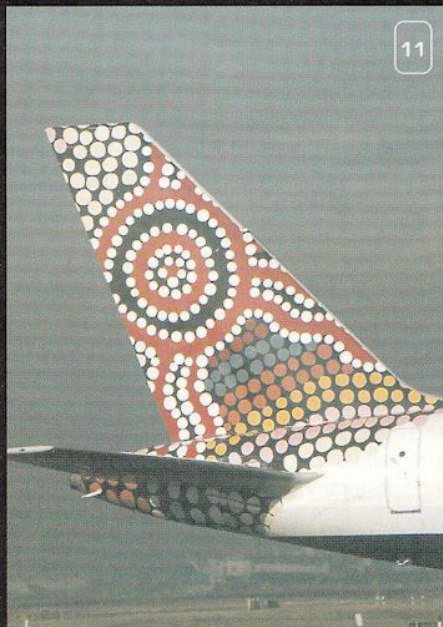
During their research into the new scheme, Newell & Sorrell found that an amazing 60% of the airline's passengers originated from overseas, and that the current scheme was perceived by some to be stuffy and arrogant. It was decided that what was needed was a livery which was both global and caring. The new look features, amongst other things, images based on works of art from some of the many areas of the world served by the airline – within the company the undertaking was sometimes referred to as Project Utopia, although this is now denied in certain circles! Over 50 such images were originally planned for use, though I understand that the airline may in fact reduce that number.

Some aspects of the then current livery were retained but given subtle 'tweaks'; the main colours were white instead of grey for





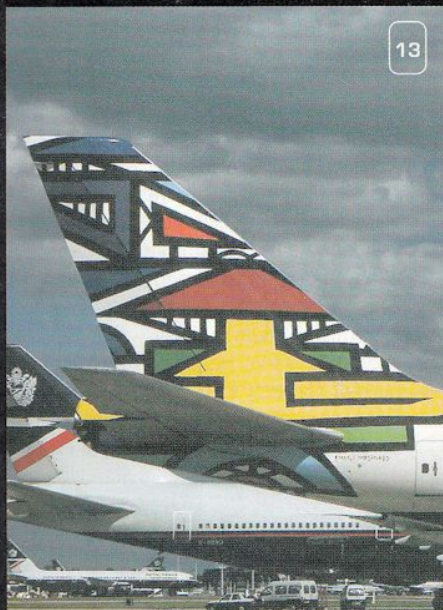
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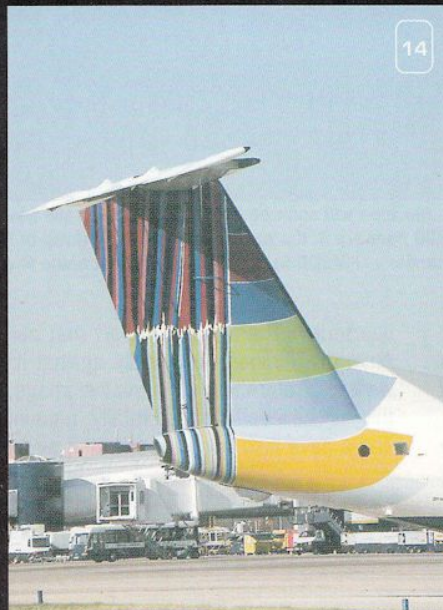
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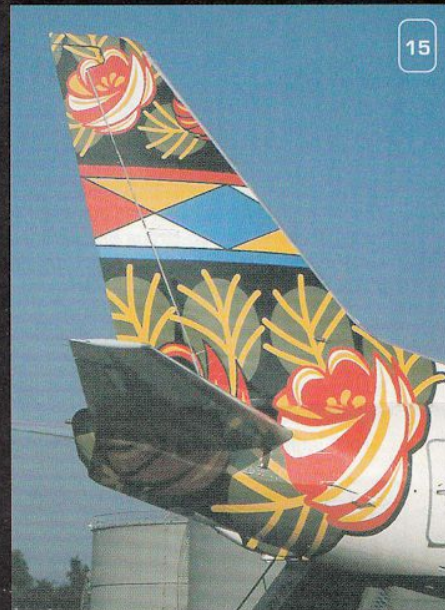
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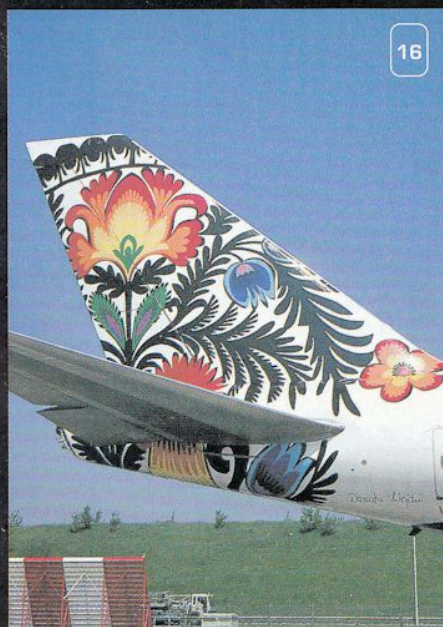
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the upper surfaces and a lighter shade of blue underneath. The titling was retained, but with softer and smaller letters. The 'speedwing' logo readily identified British Airways, but was replaced with a redesigned version known as the 'speedmarque' featuring a flowing curve. The main difference, however, would be the tail, and initially all that was revealed was that there would be a number of different designs. In March 1997 groups of designers made numerous visits to the airline's paint shop at Heathrow. Using masking tape and paper cut-out shapes they tried out the various designs for size and effect. As the 'O' date of 12:00 on June 10, 1997, approached some of the air-

world, occurring simultaneously in over 60 locations and in a number of these one or more aircraft were present wearing the new livery. The worldwide response to the unveiling was 'WOW!' No airline had ever introduced such a stunning and controversial scheme. Naturally it had its critics, though mainly in the UK – the response overseas was generally very positive, which should signify that the airline had achieved its aim.

The main detractors appeared to be the UK media, and of course former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher who disliked it so much that she covered the tail of a model Jumbo with a handkerchief. The aviation enthusiast fraternity worldwide has accepted it whole-

controllers do not like it because it causes confusion, but there is no truth in that either. The vast majority of controllers at Gatwick and Heathrow find that, if anything it helps them. They, and the crews have their own pet names for various schemes, and there is less confusion in saying "follow the Chinese takeaway 737" (Rendezvous) than "follow the fourth BA 737 from your left".

At the introduction ceremony 15 images were unveiled, and there are now almost 40 different designs. The airline has said that ultimately there will be some 50 designs, and it will take about three years to complete the painting of all the aircraft. Currently there are well over 200 aircraft painted, including those of the franchise carriers. Deutsche BA has four schemes, three of which are so far unique to it. In October 1998 Air Liberté introduced the first two of four planned schemes. It is likely that there will be more franchise carriers in the future, and some of these may have dedicated schemes. The franchise carriers currently sporting the new images are: Air Liberté, British Mediterranean, British Regional, Brymon, CityFlyer, Comair, Deutsche BA, GB Airways, Loganair, Maersk Air (UK) and Sun Air. In March 1999 it was announced that Base Business Airlines based at Eindhoven will become the latest franchise carrier. The carrier's fleet of Jetstream 31 and EMB-120 Brasília aircraft will no doubt in time appear in British Airways livery, and the airline intends to serve Heathrow in addition to its current Gatwick slots. The British Airways flying club at Wycombe Air Park has even applied the schemes to its fleet of PA-28 and



Thanks to the recent order for the A320 family, the type will soon be a common sight in the new BA livery. Three of the ten-strong British Airways A320 fleet are in the new livery, as are all three of franchise carrier British Mediterranean. The latter carrier's G-MEDD in Crossing Borders scheme is seen about to land at Heathrow.

line's work force attended briefings about the new schemes – often referred to as 'World Images' – but only after they had signed a vow of secrecy!

The launch itself was seen around the

heartedly. There was a report that partner American Airlines was wholly against it and wanted a return to a conservative image, but this is believed to be totally unfounded. There have also been reports that air traffic

19 • MARTHA MASANABO/NDEBELE;

SOUTH AFRICA

PA-28, J41, B737-200, B737-300, B737-400, B757-200, B747-400.

Martha is the sister of Emmly from the Ndebele people of Southern Africa. Her scheme, however, features on the tail of seven different aircraft types, compared to the three of Emmly's. This shot shows the scheme on a B737-300 and B737-200 – note the subtle differences. This emphasises how, despite being adorned in the same image, each aircraft can look different from another.

20 • MAZOWIECKIE KWIATKI/FLOWERS from MAZOWSZE; POLAND

B737-300.

The second design by Poland's Danuta Wojda is featured on just one aircraft; GB Airways B737-300 G-OGBC. This scheme, on which peacock tail feathers are clearly visible, is just as colourful, if not more so than the previous one.

21 • NAMI TSURU/WAVES and CRANES;

JAPAN

PA-28, ATR-72, B737-200, B737-300, B737-400, A320-200, B767-300ER, B777-200ER, B747-400.

This painting by Japanese artist Kayama Matazo features silver coloured cranes in-flight over waves represented by black and white stripes. In certain light conditions the cranes appear almost invisible, but if conditions are right they really stand out. One of the first batch of schemes to be intro-

duced, Nami Tsuru has proved a popular one and is featured on nine different types, with three 747-400s so adorned.

22 • L'ESPRIT LIBERTE; FRANCE

F-100, MD-83, DC-10.

Air Liberté unveiled the first two of four new schemes on October 6, 1998. This scheme features part of the text of the declaration of human rights.

23 • CROSSING BORDERS; EGYPT

CRJ, A320-200, B737-300, B737-400, B757-200.

This Egyptian image by Cairo resident Chant Avedissian was influenced by wall hangings which decorate the inside of tents. To date this scheme appears on only four aircraft but, when comparing that which appears on the Boeings to that on the A320, one could be forgiven for concluding they are different designs. This reiterates that you have to imagine that each aircraft tail design comes from a different portion of a picture or wallpaper.

24 • DELFTBLAUWE DAGERAAD/DELFTBLUE DAYBREAK; THE NETHERLANDS

RJ100, B737-200, B737-500, B737-300, B727-200, B757-200, B767-300ER, B777-200ER, B747-400.

Artist Hugo Kaagman's image is based on traditional Delft ceramics. This is another scheme which, if you look closely, can differ quite a bit from aircraft to aircraft. Look for the windmills and

bicycles. Hugo has come a long way since he started spraying graffiti in Amsterdam's city centre!

25 • LA PYRAMIDE DU LOUVRE; FRANCE

F-100, MD-83.

The glass pyramid in the Louvre, one of the largest museums in the world, is reproduced here. It first adorned an Air Liberté MD-83, followed later by a Fokker F-100.

26 • RENDEZVOUS; CHINA

PA-28, J31, DHC-8, ATP, B737-200, B737-300, B737-400, A320-200, B737-500, B757-200, B767-300ER, B777-200, B747-400.

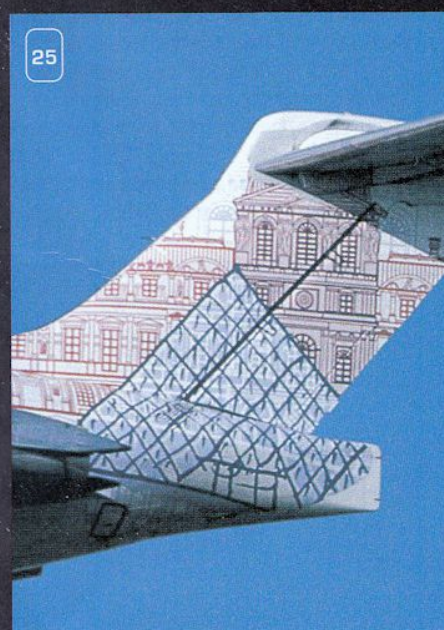
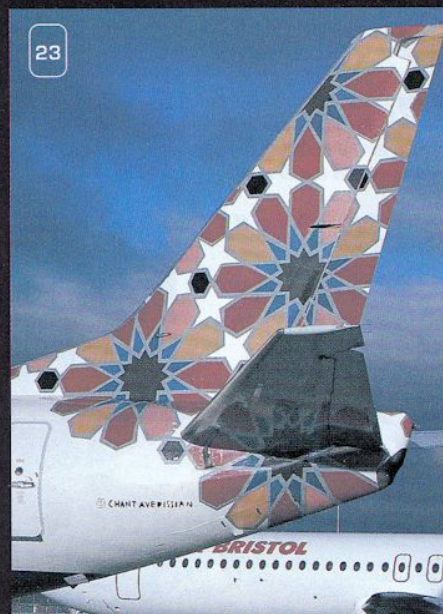
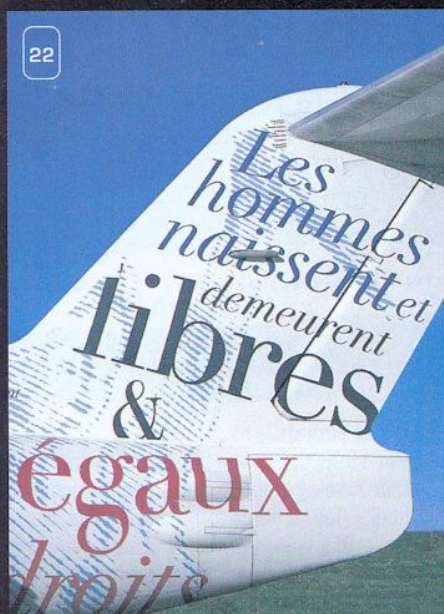
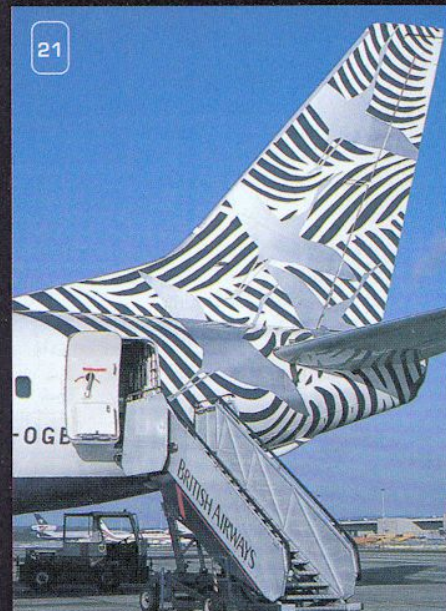
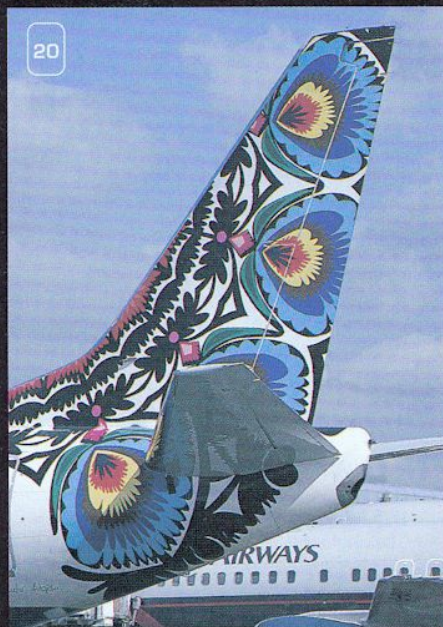
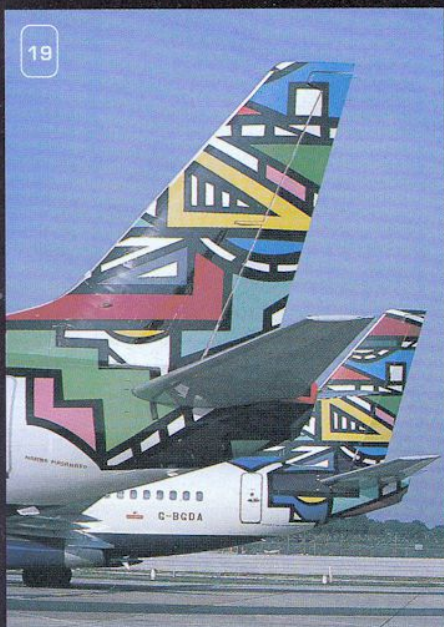
Hong Kong calligrapher Yip Man-Yam produced this design which is a poem about a Chinese tea ceremony. One of the first designs unveiled, it has been reproduced widely throughout the fleet. One B757 features the design on a cream background instead of white.

27 • STERN TALER/FAIRY TALE;

GERMANY (Also referred to as Bauhaus)

EMB145, CRJ, B737-200, B737-300, A320-200, B757-200.

This Bauhaus-inspired geometric design by artist Antje Bruggemann was the first Deutsche BA design to be released. Unlike the other three designs produced for the German carrier, Stern Taler is used on mainline BA aircraft, but has yet to be applied to any wide-bodied types.



28 • PRIMAVERA/SPRING; ROMANIA
B757-200.

This scheme by Morag Dumitru was a winner in a British Airways staff competition to design a tailfin, a competition which attracted over 400 entries. The design represents a traditional floral tablecloth given to visitors as a present. To date it appears on just one B757, G-BIKY.

29 • VINGER/WINGS; DENMARK

PA-28, J31, J41, CRJ, ATP, B737-400, A320-200, B757-200, B767-300ER, B777-200ER, B747-400. Danish artist Per Arnoldi's abstract painting depicts seagulls in flight. This scheme is used extensively by Danish franchise carrier Sun Air, but is also widely used within the British Airways fleet. The design was used on two consecutively-built new B757s (G-CPER, ES) based at Gatwick. This was a cost-saving measure as Boeing charges a lot of money to apply an image to the tail.

30 • WAVES of the CITY;

USA

PA-38, DHC-8, EMB145, RJ100, B737-400, B737-500, B757-200, B767-300ER, B777-200ER, B747-400.

New York artist Jenifer Kobylarz produced this modern abstract of sinuous organic lines. It was one of the batch of 15 unveiled on day one,

and is extensively used throughout both the British Airways mainline fleet and that of the franchise carriers.

31 • WHALE RIDER; CANADA

PA-38, ATR-72, B737-200, B737-500, A320-200, B757-200, B777-200ER, B747-400.

This artistic painting of a wooden carving called Whale Rider is the work of Joe David of the Tia O Qui Aht people of the Pacific Northwest coast of Canada. It features a whale and mythological creatures, although the full effect is not always obvious on smaller aircraft. The full picture is represented better on large aircraft like the 747.

32 • WHALE RIDER;

A variant of the Whale Rider scheme.

33 • WUNALA DREAMING;

AUSTRALIA

B757-200, B747-400.

The bright red Wunala Dreaming (Kangaroo) scheme entirely covers a Qantas B747-400, and made its first appearance at the SBAC Farnborough Air Show to coincide with a replica Vickers Vimy re-enacting a flight to Australia. To mark BA's alliance with Qantas this vibrant livery was applied to the tail of B747-400 G-BNLS, and has since been applied to a B757.

34 • YUUM AL-SUQ/MARKET DAY;

SAUDI ARABIA

B737-400.

The latest scheme to be unveiled is from an abstract painting by Shadia Alem. It represents a visit to the market by the Qahtani Tihamah, the last tribe in the region of Asir which retains its traditional identity. It currently appears on only one B737-400 G-GBTA.

35 • SYDNEY 2000

'TEAMING UP FOR BRITAIN'

In support of the British Olympic Team, the airline has adopted this scheme. It was briefly used on B737-200 G-BKYG, and is currently displayed on A320 G-BUSC and B757 G-BMRC

36 • UNION FLAG;

UNITED KINGDOM
CONCORDE.

This stylised rippling version of the Union Flag should appease those who have complained about the lack of the Union Jack on British Airways aircraft. The Union Flag incorporates the cross of St Andrew, St George and St Patrick. This design is based on a flag from the Flag Loft in Chatham Royal Dockyard in Kent, and is applied exclusively to the Concorde fleet.

Right • Some of the early recipients of the new tail logos were Birmingham, Gatwick and Manchester B737-200s. Not all of the type received the new scheme, as the type is being progressively withdrawn, and a number were disposed of in 1998. Seen in September 1997 soon after the application of Sterntaler logo is Gatwick-based G-BGDE.

Below • Brymon Airways is increasing its DHC-8 fleet with the acquisition of a batch of new-build machines. The aircraft featured here, G-BRYS Waves of the City was built in 1991 and acquired in 1997.

Below Right • B777s continue to join the fleet at a steady rate, and at the time of writing 21 have been delivered. The first five aircraft, all series -200s are Heathrow based, while the -200ER fleet is split fairly evenly between Gatwick and Heathrow. Climbing out of the former is -200ER G-VIIN Whale Rider.



PA-38 aircraft.

In 1998 the airline started to paint, on the rear fuselage, the country from which a particular tail scheme originates. For a short while this was dropped, but has since been re-introduced, even larger than it was previously. Some aircraft, such as new Boeing 747s and 777s delivered shortly before the introduction of the new livery, will not be repainted until they are due for a major service. It is understood that some aircraft already featuring the new images will, at some stage, have a different image painted on the tail. The message for the aircraft spotters, and those who have a keen interest in the new images is be aware, and don't assume.

Readers will note that some schemes, such as Benyhone and Colum appear on many different aircraft, while others such as Colour Down the Side are used sparingly. It must be remembered that a number of schemes differ slightly from aircraft to aircraft. This is due not just to the size of the tail fin but other factors as well; for example, a number of schemes are from paintings, and the scheme on aircraft A, may for example be from the top right hand corner, and on aircraft B from a different portion, therefore there will be differences – all of which provides even more variations for the 'spotter'.





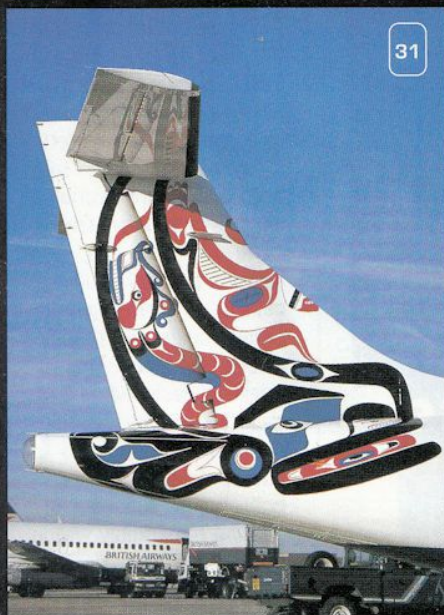
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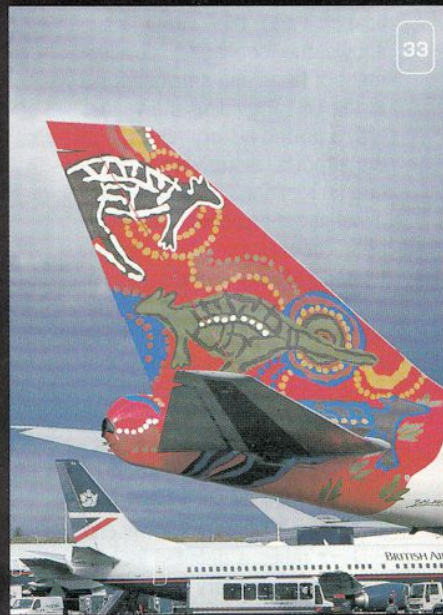
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