

June 2021

# RUG NEWS and Design



Rug News Magazine  
POB 441  
Morris, NJ 07960

# Creativity is in Residence



With summer, my thoughts return home to the mountains of Western North Carolina. Here, the blue morning mists wrap the mountains in mystery, and the afternoon thunder roars through the atmosphere as the heat of mid-day rolls up from the deep valleys to the cool of the mountain tops. God lives here.

That is why the Penland School of Craft became a magnet for creative people. The locus for creativity is present 24/7. Alicia Keshishian gave an intense one week course called Color Confidence at Penland several years ago. That course is the genesis of the article, The Art of Color Communication, in this issue.

This issue has been one of the most exciting and yet most difficult for me to put together, because of the authors of two articles: Alicia Keshishian and Montaha Hidefi who wrote Color Trends and The Impact of Covid-19. Their minds and their enthusiasm for language of color is nuanced and extraordinarily developed. They are both bold and artful. Both ladies live color and speak its language. They attempted to take me far into intellectual depths of color. I, a mere mortal, have spent a lifetime using mundane words to describe normal events. On the other hand, for these ladies, color is at the core of their beings.

Montaha Hidefi is color archeologist, writer and public speaker. With the language of color, Montaha Hidefi lectures virtually and in-person about color and has presented at conferences, color seminars, universities, and

trade shows. Her personal story is one whereby following her passion for color from from Venezuela to Syria, by way of the United Arab Emirates and The Netherlands to Canada, color lifted her up and sent her on a path of color. She is the author of Groping for Truth - My Uphill Struggle for Respect (2018), The Role of Color in Design (2019), and co-author of Colour Design: Theories and Applications (2012, 2017). Currently she is VP Color Forecasting at Color Marketing Group and VP at Canadian Freelance Guild.

There is no doubt about it, Alisha Keshishian has confidence in color. Currently, She designs custom carpets and comes from a long line of oriental rug collectors. She says, "Studying or teaching at Penland is gift. Spending a concentrated time immersed in a subject is a great way to learn. A group of people gathered together all focused on the same thing is powerful! I love to learn in that setting and love to teach that way. After years and years of designing everything from magazines to rugs, I find sharing my design and color experience completely rewarding. Teaching and learning from experience are priceless."

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'K. Bingham'.

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**Cover:** By Montaha Hidefi. This yellow door situated in the middle of a field at the Terre Bleu Lavender Farm near Toronto, Canada, attracts many tourists and is well-photographed. The farm owners explain, "Our yellow door is very meaningful to us. It is so easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of everyday life, but when you visit Terre Bleu, it is our goal to help you release from that. When you visit us, we truly hope that you can live in the moment and truly experience the wonder of the world around you."

# Color Trends and The Impact of Covid-19

**By Montaha Hidefi, Color Archeologist,  
VP Color Forecasting at Color Marketing Group  
and VP at Canadian Freelance Guild**

Often, I find myself having to justify the importance of color in our lives. While the explanation is simple to me, it appears questionable to so many. Not because they suffer from monochromacy - also called color blindness, but perhaps because they pay less attention to color in their surroundings.

Imagine, for a short moment, if we perceived our world only in a gray scale. What emotions would that impart on us? How would we deal with our environments? Would we enjoy a colorless sunset over a gloomy sky? Would we be amazed by darkened petals, or tantalized by dimmed feathers? Would we cheer up by wearing an ashy sweater, or a drab pair of shoes? Would we be able to identify spoiled meat and rotten milk?

Color plays a crucial role in humans' lives and in the animal kingdom alike. Birds, bees, and other species would not continue to exist if it weren't for their ability to perceive color, although in the ultraviolet light spectrum.

For us humans, besides its functionality in allowing us to distinguish things visually, and its aesthetical role in beautifying the environments, color has a psychological power to affect our moods. Color can make us feel happy or sad, calm, or annoyed. Color can help us live in harmony or in total chaos. But how to go about deciding on color? Notably, how to forecast color? And why certain colors become trends?

## Color forecasting and color trends

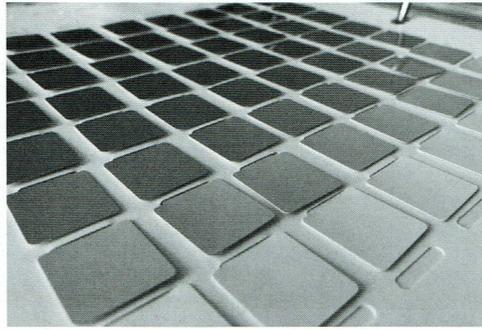
The boundaries between color forecasting and color trends are not as simple and clear as they may appear. While it all depends on color preferences, some may argue, the progression of color depends on the speed in which some industries adopt the forecast, and the lifecycle of the trend in each industry. For instance, while the fashion industry has a fast trend cycle, the automotive industry has a much slower cycle. The architectural industry has a long-winded cycle and colors do not change that often in exterior building settings.

Color forecasting is a step-by-step process that predicts the evolution of color into the future. Color trends is the present time manifestation of color forecast. To forecast for the future, we must understand the present. Though, because the trends follow a direction in time, we also need to examine the past tendencies.

At the Color Marketing Group® (CMG), an international, not-for-profit association that has been providing color forecast information to members for almost 60 years, our members come together at virtual and in-person, local and international workshops, to interpret, create, forecast, and select colors, with the goal of enhancing manufactured goods. The forecast is launched two years in advance. This means that for 2021, the forecast was established in 2019. Later this year, CMG will be launching the forecast for 2023.



Montaha Hidefi



As after 9/11, when a nation was grieving, monochromatic, dimmed, neutral tones make us feel invisible, not targeted.

Color forecasting entails understanding people's psychology during a certain period. What affects our behavior now will translate into the future. The external drivers, whether social, economic, political, and technological, will be influencing our color preferences.

Typically, the external drivers may be clustered regionally, which is the reason why certain colors are used predominantly in certain regions and not in others. However, when global events unfold affecting many of us in a similar way, we witness a global driving force impacting color preferences on a global scale.

We can find examples of such impacts in recent history. This occurred in the aftermath of 9/11 events in the US. Similar influences transpired in many countries of the world after the 2008 economic crisis. Most recently, the pandemic lockdowns affected color preferences almost everywhere.

#### **The impact of global events on color forecasting and color trends**

Post 9/11, we went through a darkening and dimming phase of color consumption. Because the nation was in grief and people feared being targeted, we opted for neutral, dimmed, monochromatic tones to support our state of mind, grounding us and making us feel invisible, not targeted.

After the 2008 economic crisis, people from most affected countries in the world opted for purple and yellow in varying tones and saturation. Purple cycles back every time there is an economic slowdown or a period of turmoil because of its soothing effects. Yellow is also a color well suited for difficult times because it has the power to cheer us up and trigger ideas for recovery.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a much extensive impact on color trends because of its global reach. It affected everyone on the planet in the same way, at the same time. In addition, the rampant expansion of digitalization and virtual-everything during the pandemic, from working to learning, and staying connected with others, has triggered a global

phenomenon, and established the grounds for mega color trends.

For instance, in Ireland, where many rural areas got connected for the first time to the internet during the pandemic, designers got more information about colors from Europe and other regions of the world. This has sparked two new paths to the traditional, vibrant, Irish green. Irish green has branched into two distinct directions: a modern green olive with yellow influences, and a teal green with blue influences. This would not have happened without digitalization. The color trends evolution in Ireland has just started.

Likewise, we are noticing colors trending simultaneously in all countries and regions of North America. Similar colors are also trending in other parts of the world. With the elimination of geographical boundaries in a digital world, colors are crossing regional border lines with the speed of a click on the on-off button, and many colors have merited to be called "global colors".

#### **The impact of the pandemic on global color trends**

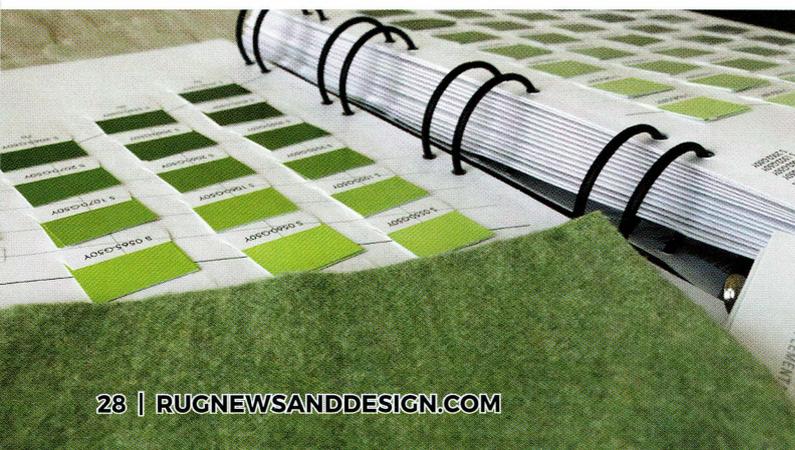
Due to the psychological influences of the pandemic, two trend directions have surged in parallel. They are not singularized to one market segment or one country, but they have crossed industry, geography, and culture frontiers.

The first direction calls for discreet, muted, pastel-like neutral tones that ground us and meet the need for calmness, respite, and relaxation after the turbulent state of anxiety, and in many cases depression, caused by the pandemic. This trend includes pale yellow, beige, soft blue, as well as olive and moss greens.

The second trend, manifested in an opposite way and consists of vibrant, saturated hues that scream to be noticed. They stimulate happiness and improve our moods. They make us feel blossoming as we slowly get out of the cocoons and start dealing with the outside world again, after the long stay-at-home orders. This trend incorporates electric green, dazzling blue, bright yellow, shiny orange, tempting fuchsia and vivid red.

CMG predicted similar color directions two years ago. CMG Key Colors, Mist for North America, Raison d'Être for Europe, Renacer for Latin America, and Uni-Coral for Asia Pacific uphold and substantiate these trends. CMG members around the world are constantly observing the trending colors in their industries to corroborate the forecast. CMG issues a monthly Color Alert® feature that highlights one color from the CMG World Color Forecas™ to validate the color predictions in the market. The feature is available through CMG community, website, and social media handles.

#### **Color forecasting and its application in various industries**





What a Color Marketing Group planning session looks like.

Each November, during its International Summit, CMG reveals the World Color Forecast™, which is an aggregate of 64 colors, carefully curated by an international color forecasting committee, following several ChromaZone® forecasting workshops in North America, Latin America, Europe, and the Asia Pacific.

The color forecast is then applied by members of CMG in their various market sectors such as consumer goods, automotive, textiles, wall coverings, floorings, paints and coatings, visual communications, and others.

During the product development stage, designers, and lab technicians in any industry, are not only exploring the materials and the finishes; they also value understanding what colors will be in demand when the new products hit the markets. Many studies have shown that over 80% of consumer purchasing decision making are unconsciously based on color.

In interior decoration, designers, homeowners, and consumers typically decide on a color palette based on different parameters which may incorporate their knowledge of color forecasts and color trends.

However, a color makeover excludes in many cases, ceilings, and pricey, luxurious floor coverings.

There is no reason why ceilings must be left in traditional white color. Ceilings may well benefit from color to create impacting aesthetic effects to a space, such as having the impression that the room is larger, smaller, darker, or even cozier, depending on the desired effect.

In the rugs and carpets industry, it is noticeable that mass produced, affordable pieces may come in a variety of colors and do follow color trends. Yet, the pieces that have a much-extended lifecycle may not follow consumer color trends. Due to their value, quality, longevity, and historical significance they rather adhere to another set of rules, such as personal color preferences or conventionally used neutral colors for permanency purposes. This, by no means, suggests that trending or forecasted colors cannot, and should not, find a place in high quality rugs and carpets. Certain colors may be integrated in combination with traditional colors to create harmonic color palettes and induce different moods and emotions from the ground up.

CMG 2021+ KEY COLOR

**Renacer**

WEAVING THE  
LANDSCAPE  
WITH MULTIPLE  
CULTURES, RENACER  
TRANSLATES  
TO A STORY OF  
DEPTH AND COMPASSION

CMG 2021+ KEY COLOR

**Raison d'Être**

RAISON D'ÊTRE  
IS A WARM NEUTRAL  
WITH A RED UNDERTONE  
THAT SUGGESTS  
BOTH THE NATURAL AND  
ARTIFICIAL WORLDS

CMG 2021+ KEY COLOR

**Mist**

MIST WILL  
FIRST VEIL,  
THEN CLEANSE,  
AND FINALLY  
ELEVATE THE  
MINDSET THROUGH  
DIFFICULT TIMES

CMG 2021+ KEY COLOR

**Uni-Coral**

UNI-CORAL COLORS  
THE WORLD AS ITS VIRTUAL  
PLAYGROUND  
THIS VIBRANT RED BUZZES  
WITH THOUGHTS  
OF LEISURE TIME AND  
ENGAGEMENT

