

COLORSNOTEBOOK

CREATED BY THE REST OF THE WORLD

THE TWO VOLUMES OF *COLORS NOTEBOOK* PRESENTED AT TYPOBERLIN 2008

The publishing project includes a CD tie-in, The quick fox and the lazy dog, a musical experimentation on the theme of type design

Ponzano, 31st May 2008. *COLORS* has chosen a prestigious setting, the 13th Internationale Designkonferenz TYPOBerlin 2008, to present its two-volume book *COLORS Notebook* and a CD, *The quick fox and the lazy dog*.

COLORS Notebook is a project launched in 2006 in collaboration with the Pompidou Centre and Reporters Without Borders, to give voice to those who are never heard. Blank copies of *Colors* are regularly sent to the extremes of the earth to give Chinese prison inmates, South African children, astronauts, disabled persons, artists and ordinary people a chance to express themselves without filters or censorship.

The two volumes, *Faces* and *Violence*, are published and distributed around the world by the Swiss publisher Birkhäuser. They contain a selection of the *COLORS Notebooks* sent to *COLORS* from more than 50 world nations. Testimonies, with no filters or censorship, of situations of isolation, hardship, suffering and of surprising creativity and imagination.

The two volumes are further enriched with contributions from and interviews with leading figures in graphics and communication: Milton Glaser and Steven Heller in *Faces*, Rick Poynor and Stefan Sagmeister in *Violence*. For many of the writers, *Notebook* was the first, priceless opportunity for them to make their voice heard. *Faces* is a collection of portraits and self-portraits from people around the world, while *Violence* presents accounts, sometimes very harrowing ones, of injustices which occur all over the world. This is a Fabrica no-profit project; all royalties will be given to Reporters Without Borders.

After the presentation, the members of the audience will be invited to a workshop where they can give free rein to their creativity and produce their own *Notebook*: pencils, stencils, Polaroid cameras, scissors and glue will be available for anyone who wants to make their voice heard and tell their story in any way they like.

TYPOBerlin also provides the opportunity to present *The quick fox and the lazy dog*, a FabricaMusica CD published by Nuova Stradivarius. The CD takes its name from the pangram commonly used for testing typefaces and it draws inspiration from type design. After studying type history, eras and typographers, a young grant-holder working at Fabrica composed a series of electronic-classical rhapsodies with unmistakable allusions to the type that inspired them.

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AGENDA:

Saturday 31 May, 3 pm, TYPOshow, presentation of the *COLORS Notebook Faces and Violence* and of the CD *The quick fox and the lazy dog*

Saturday 31 May, 4 pm, TYPOLab, workshop

TYPOBerlin

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COLORSNOTEBOOK "FACES"

Faces contains a collection of portraits and self-portraits selected from the work of thousands of people who filled the pages of their Notebook with their ideas and feelings about "faces". Then, from the four corners of the earth, they sent their Notebook back to *Colors*. The sentiments expressed in some are highly personal; in others, savagely political.

© **Sfaustina**
Art director, USA

I wanted to be part of a project which reaches out to people's perception and is a documentation of living life. I wanted to share my life at the particular time the Notebook was with me. I documented tidbits of time in the Notebook while working on a photo shoot in Belize and Guatemala. It went everywhere with me until I had to slip it into the white envelope.

© **Cesare Bignotti (alias Useless Idea), 1981**
Student, Italy

I would communicate what I think without filters or fears. My messages are in my work but they aren't obvious. I perceive them as codes, symbols that must be encrypted. What I do is born from a passion and not from a fashion. If I change my attitude, my way of creating, of communicating, it would be like giving up.

© **Diego Beyró, 1984**
Artist, Argentina

We're living in a society where it is hard to express yourself in a sincere manner. Human expressions are fantastic and, obviously, expressive. The working of all the facial muscles together allows for thousands of combinations that say different things. I'm intrigued by facial expressions and seeing how facial muscles synchronize to produce different meanings. I don't know if it's important to show a face, but it's certainly the most honest thing you can do. It's hard to find lies in a face.

© **Juliana Stein, 1970**
Photographer, Brazil

For me, "He, She, It" [the title given to her Notebook] represents the ambiguity presented in life itself – things are hidden and visible at the same time. Where we expect one thing, we get something else.

© **Jacob Schere, 1971**
Artist and photographer, Japan

The idea of creating a magazine from scratch intrigued me. The fact of deciding everything myself without having to bow to the whims of a managing editor. I gathered an ensemble of words and pictures to create a work of realism, *Expressionista*. If all those who open my Notebook see and feel what I see and feel, it means my work as an *Expressionista* was done well.

© **Monika Aichele, 1971**

Illustrator, Germany

My portraits are not really portraits. They are more a prototype of my imagination of a character I have experienced. "Mind portraits" – they are an entire story. Usually the main expression is the face, underlining the body language. But playing with the contrary of the body language and the facial expression can be expressive, too. Neglecting the face or not showing it carries another message. An image without a face can reflect the expression of the viewer, and his facial expression will be the centre of the image.

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COLORSNOTEBOOK "VIOLENCE"

Messages from around the world denouncing violence and bearing witness to contemporary injustice. For many of the authors, this edition of Notebook has become a place where they can express their own desperation, distress and anxiety related to war, violence and the social issues that they entail.

© **Eduardo Bertone, 1977**
Graphic designer, Argentina

In my Notebook I wanted to say everything that I couldn't say in other projects. I also wanted to say lots of things that many people want to say but can't. I focused mainly on consumer society, represented by the USA, because I think it's one of the biggest problems we have. When I made my Notebook I was very annoyed about that issue and felt this was the direction I should take.

© **Bill Clark**
Death row inmate, USA

I need someone who will expose the government and the police corruption that led to my wrongful conviction and death sentence. I need you to write and rally those individuals opposed to the death penalty and particularly opposed to executing an innocent man. I need people all over the world to speak out on my behalf and use their voices and influence to help me become free again.

© **Anasswa Ham, 1970**
Artist, Uganda

Innocent people from my tribe have been killed. My parents, my brothers and sisters were killed while I was looking. They cooked their bodies and forced me to eat their flesh. They stripped them naked and I saw the nakedness of my parents before they were killed. They chopped off their noses, ears and lips and first told my parents to eat them. Then they killed them.

© **Pascal Hachem, 1979**
Artist, Lebanon

I left Lebanon on July 4, 2006 for three months in Zurich. I left everything as if I'd be back in a few days. My things were on the table: my sketchbook, my last notes and my pens, neatly lined up. Everything changed when I received an sms at 14:33, 12.07.06, from a resident of Beirut. Our Notebook is full of blood and our fresh air has the odor of guns. At the moment we have a lot to say. Please just present a blank Notebook in the name of the Lebanese people. I don't know if our voices are heard in the world, but I can't imagine what's happening, either.

© **Isotta Dardilli, 1971**
Art director and artist, Italy

I switch off the kitchen light, pick up the ashtray, switch the light on again. Open the cupboard, open the trashcan, empty the ashtray. Before heading back I think "Have I got everything?" I get back to the bed. Check. Finally lie down... Oh god, don't think about it. I get up, I don't think about it, go back to the kitchen, open the other cupboard without

thinking about it, take the pills, a glass, the bottle of water, I pour some, open my mouth, swallow, then more water, I put down the glass and put the sleeping pills away... this time I've taken them all, the whole box. I switch everything off and go back to the bedroom. I can't sleep. I can't sleep. OK, I'll draw.

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COLORS Notebook is the fruit of a project launched by COLORS Magazine in collaboration with the Pompidou Centre, Paris, and Reporters Without Borders, the association which sustains freedom of speech and defends journalists across the world.

COLORS Notebook is a "special" issue of COLORS; it contains 50 blank pages so whoever receives it can express themselves as they like in any way they want. Since 2006, thousands of *COLORS Notebooks* have been distributed around the world, to give voice to those categories of humanity no one wants to listen to: Chinese prison inmates, people with mental disorders, South African children, artists, astronauts or just ordinary people. Thousands of people, all different yet all alike, who filled and continue to fill their Notebooks with messages of creativity, imagination, desperation, anxiety, oppression.

Each *COLORS Notebook* sent back to COLORS is totally unique. A COLORS issue with no filters, editing or censure. An issue in which anyone is free to tell their story and send a message to the world through their words, drawings or photos. An issue for sharing notes and reflections. A different way of really giving voice to "the rest of the world".

The original *Colors Notebooks* were shown at the "Fabrica: Les Yeux Ouverts" exhibition realized in collaboration with the Pompidou Centre in Paris. In addition to Paris (2006), the exhibition has been hosted by the Milan Triennale, by the Shanghai Art Museum (both 2007) and by the Shiodomeitalia Creative Center, Tokyo (2008).

A number of *COLORS Notebook* were chosen for a two-volume book – *Faces and Violence* – published by Birkhäuser in Spring 2008.

www.colorsmagazine.com/notebook
www.fabrica.it