

# COLOUR TRENDS 2016 LOOKING BOTH ◀WAYS▶

**AKZONOBEL**  
GLOBAL  
AESTHETIC  
CENTER

PRESENTS

**COLOUR  
FUTURES  
2016**

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Special thanks to the professionals involved in bringing this book to life.







AKZONOBEL  
GLOBAL AESTHETIC CENTER  
FOREWORD BY  
HELEEN VAN GENT  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR

# 2016 COLOUR TRENDS RESEARCH

## ◀ **ColourFutures: Translating research into a future we all recognise.**

Every year, AkzoNobel's Global Aesthetic Center brings together a group of international experts and trend watchers from across the globe and from various disciplines of design – architecture, textiles, product design, graphics and research. We invite them to discuss what they think will be the major global developments in the coming years, based on global social and design trends. This process allows us to nominate a number of trends, with one overriding idea that captures the mood of the moment; and then consider how this will influence the consumer. From there, developed by the colour experts at AkzoNobel's Global Aesthetic Center, ColourFutures provides content that can be used to engage and inspire our customers and consumers. From the most confident opinion leaders, such as architects and interior designers, to consumers and decorators, our imagery communicates the latest trends and inspires the use of paint in interior design and architecture. It is a process that ensures our research and forecasting is firmly connected to relevant, modern-day trends. By talking with people who are designing for the future in the same way that we are, it is possible to identify long-term, constantly evolving trends; translating theory into a future we all recognise. ▶



RESEARCH

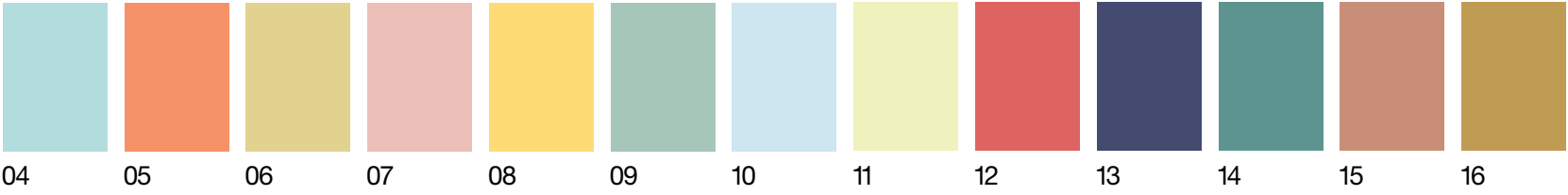
# COLOURS FUTURE

## THE 2016 PALETTE REVEALED

< For 2016 we see a muted and sophisticated palette which centres on soft mid tone shades. The overall feeling continues to be warm, but with even greater subtlety. Bright colours have moved away from primary to something more interesting. Think coral, not orange; ochre not yellow and midnight, not blue. This is a friendly palette but with a dark, mysterious side. >

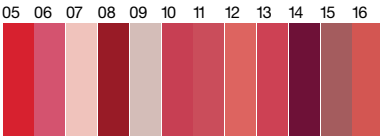


COLOURS OF THE YEAR

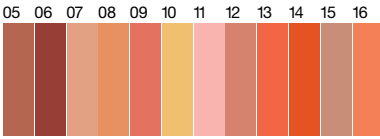


KEY COLOUR STORIES

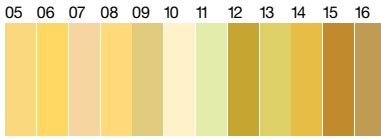
The key colour in each colour family gives a clear direction as to where each hue is moving to and has travelled from. Gold, mustard or lemon: where will this year's yellow take us?



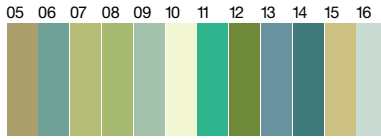
**Reds:** from strawberry to deep damson this is an ever popular colour family. From 2010 onwards their tone has been consistent, with the exception in 2014.



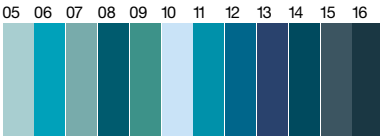
**Oranges:** we see a shift from more yellow oranges in the earlier years to a more red-orangey tone in the last six years.



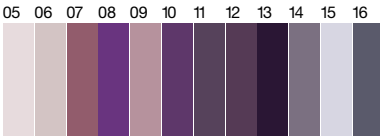
**Yellows:** we have seen yellows travel the full spectrum over the years from fresh citrus to burnt ochre and this year's favourite is a beautiful soft gold.



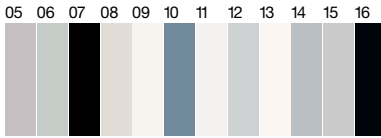
**Greens:** the most diverse of all the colour stories, green has taken us from palest, almost yellow to deep teal and everything in between.



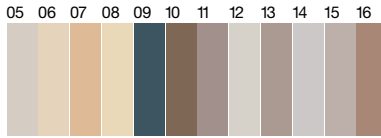
**Blues:** in 2013 indigo made a splash as the colour of the year but since then we have seen deep blues with a green undertone and this year's is even darker.



**Violets:** the violet key colour has been deep, dark and mysterious over the years, but for 2015 it was a pale sugary tone. This year we pick up where we left it in 2014.



**Cool neutrals:** the family of cool neutrals has been "everywhere" in its spectrum. But, after many years of gentle greys we see a dramatic change this year.



**Warm neutrals:** since 2011 we have seen the domination of mid tone and light neutrals with a grey tone, but this year we return to a more traditional warm neutral.

COLOUR EVOLUTION OVER THE YEARS

Each year our colour forecast offers a snapshot of trends for the forthcoming year and it is fascinating to see how tastes have evolved and changed over the years. > indicates the colour of that year.



RESEARCH

COLOURS PAST  
A HISTORY OF  
COLOUR ANALYSIS

< **It all began 15 years ago with the Global Aesthetic Center** inviting people from the design industry mainly to help predict colour palettes that could be relevant in the future. However, on realising the value we could create for our customers and consumers by extending ourselves to focus on the design trends of the future as well, we decided to invest further and build the scale of our activity, and publish our predictions as a book for the benefit of the wider audience. Each year, we identify a total of about 50-60 colours within the palettes for our trends, and nominate one Colour of the Year that we determine to be the most important one for the coming year. As we move into our 13th year of ColourFutures, it is vital for us to examine how these palettes have constantly evolved, influenced by a variety of factors, global trends and shifts in taste. >

RESEARCH  
THE  
OVERRIDING  
TREND FOR 2016  
**LOOKING  
BOTH WAYS**

◀ **This year, we find ourselves at a unique crossroads in time.**

We are at a very interesting point where we can see the advantage both of tradition and also of modern innovation; where the importance of weighing up opposite opinions and views has never been stronger. Digital and modern techniques are here to stay but we look for inspiration from the past to be able to design for the future. This theme of duality is the driving influence for 2016. For instance, we live in overcrowded urban areas where we lack darkness during the night, yet research shows that we need the dark. Similarly we live structured lives but need to escape the grid to remain ourselves, or for example technology is now so much a part of our lives that we enjoy a printed book or pencil and paper. Opposites are seen in all our trends—Heritage and Future, Dark and Light, The Grid and Letting Go and Words and Pictures. ▶

→ NOOLOOK-  
GIVING  
HTOBOTH  
2YAWAYS





# COLOUR OF THE YEAR 2016

## AN OCHRE GOLD

◀ In identifying a colour that would connect with the overall trend of looking both ways, we noted that all the key trends for 2016 had an element of gold in them. It's the 'golden hour' of Dark and Light; it's the gold that appears in Heritage and Future – both in the paintings of old masters and also in modern design trends. Out of the broad palette of yellows we identified, we have carefully selected the one yellow that best represents the golden influence of the coming year's colour trends. **We have selected a gold influenced ochre which is both bright enough to attract attention and combines well with other tones.** Gold and gold tones are being used everywhere in the design world. It is a recurring colour and material at design fairs and in graphic design as well as in architecture, fashion, beauty and interior decorating. We feel that this is a beautiful next step, a natural evolution and transition from the coppery orange that was the colour of the year for 2015. We've designed a colour palette to work beautifully with the Colour of the Year 2016 to create a tonal effect, a relaxed neutral combination or something more surprising. ▶



# **GOLD AND GOLD TONES ARE BEING USED EVERYWHERE IN THE DESIGN WORLD**

**COLOUR OF  
THE YEAR**



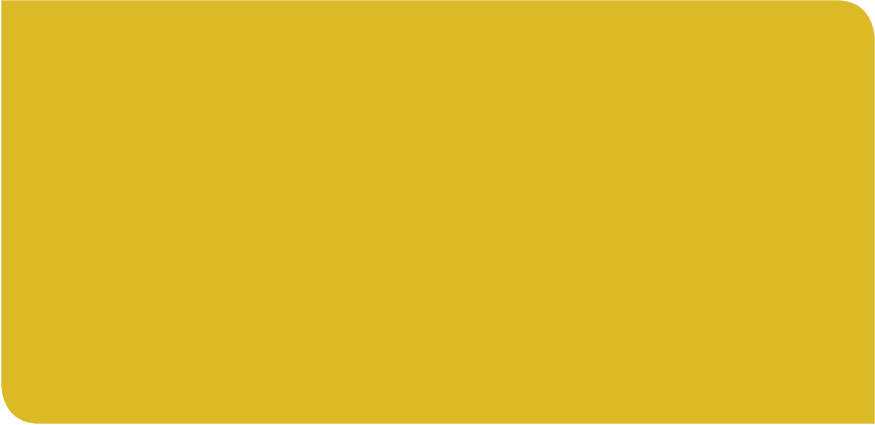




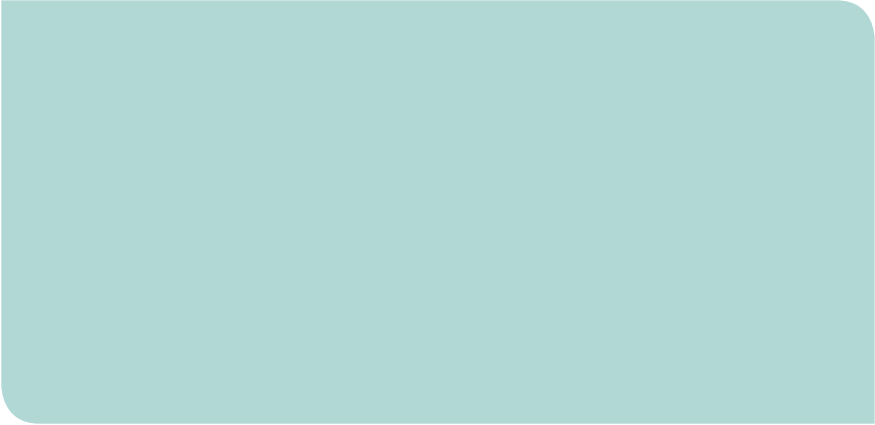


THE  
**COLOUR  
OF THE YEAR**  
20YY 36/370  
F1.34.58

AND THE  
**COLOUR  
OF THE YEAR  
PALETTE**



F4.67.63 | 30YY 41/700



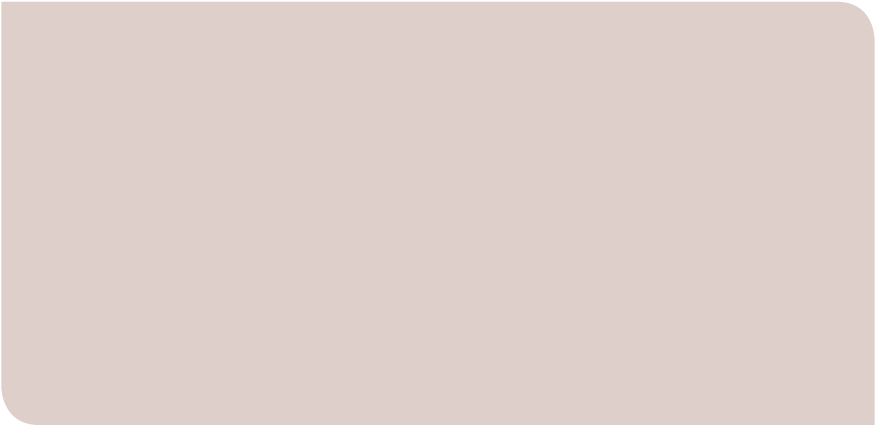
P7.08.76 | 10BG 63/097



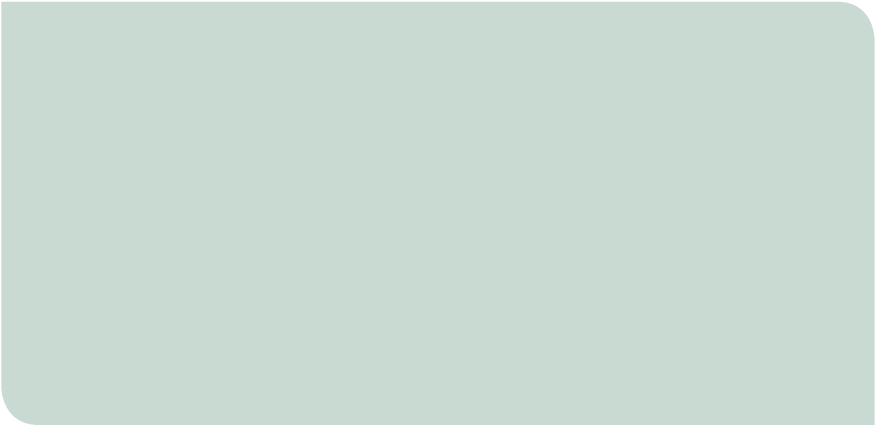
E8.34.50 | 10YY 26/321



G6.04.66 | 70YY 46/053



AN.02.76 | 70RR 64/034



N0.03.77 | 50GG 63/042



E2.17.58 | 90YR 36/203



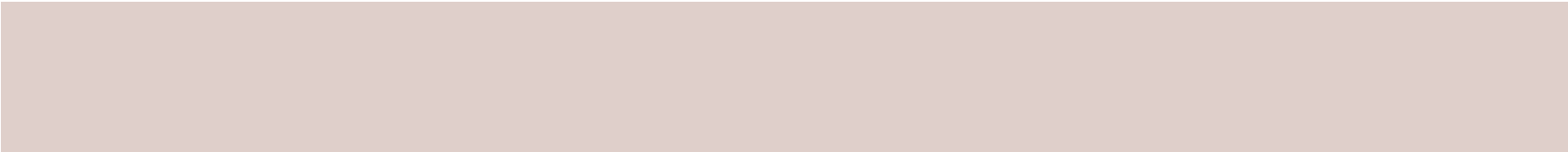
F8.12.71 | 45YY 53/151



E1.15.37 | 90YR 16/129



E5.09.13 | 30YY 05/044



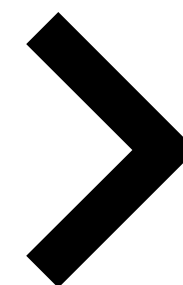








THE TRENDS  
**HERITAGE**&FUTURE  
**WORDS**&PICTURES  
**DARK**&LIGHT  
**THE GRID**&LETTING GO





# HERITAGE & Future

◀ **Driving the foundations of our identity.** The starting point of our CF16 brainstorm was; 'You need to know about your past in order to design for your future.' Today's global brands place great value on exploring and displaying their past history. At the design fair in Milan for example, many of the companies were showing their timelines alongside their future products. Why? Because their heritage lends them an authenticity and credibility that cannot be faked, provides a sense of longevity and also helps to shape their future. By looking both ways, they are able to take inspiration from the past, to demonstrate the foundations of identity, and gain confidence in their next steps forward. Vintage and antique references may be contrasted with—or support—the modern-day; and there is a sense that by appreciating one's history, both as a person or a company, we build value and become more fully shaped and prepared for designing the future. Translated into a colour palette, we see the reds that reflect our rich heritage, but also have a bright contemporary feel that points to the future. ▶







# BY LOOKING AT THE PAST WE ARE ABLE TO DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE

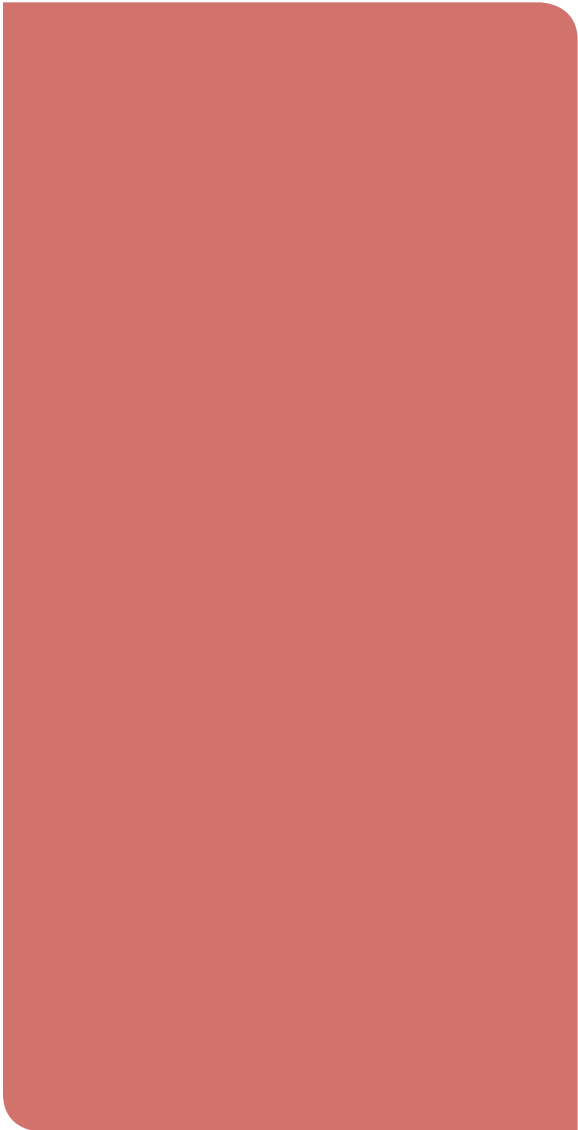
HERITAGE  
& Future



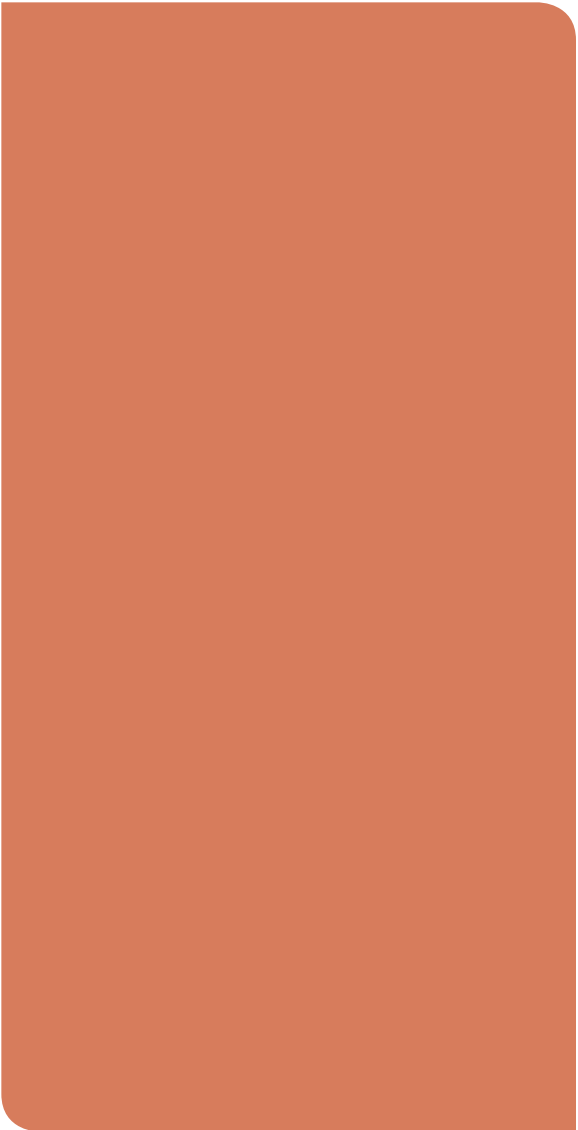
HERITAGE  
&Future



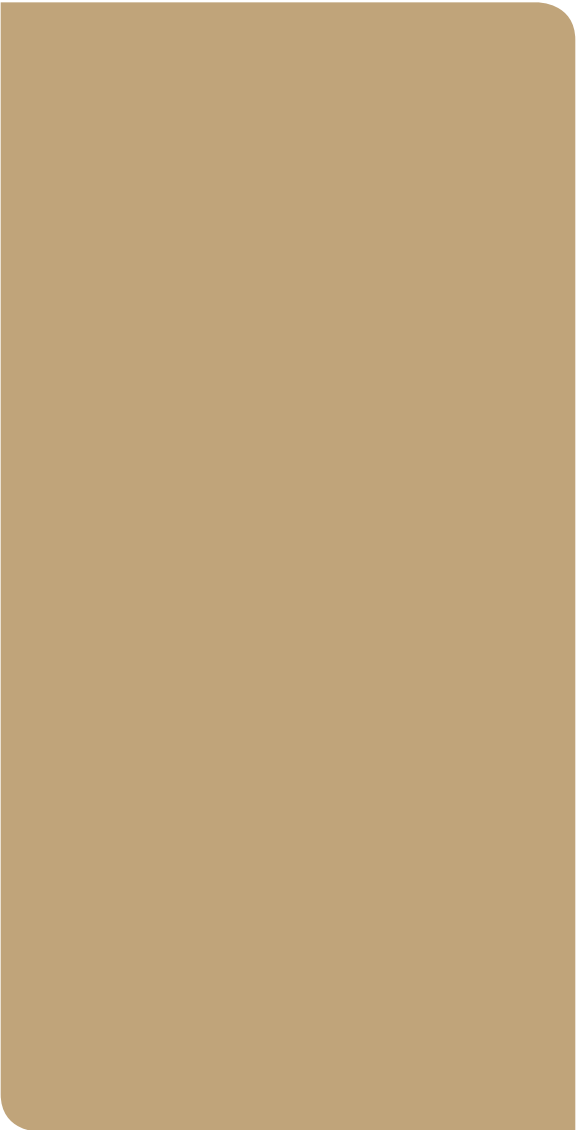
B8.38.44 | 10YR 21/436



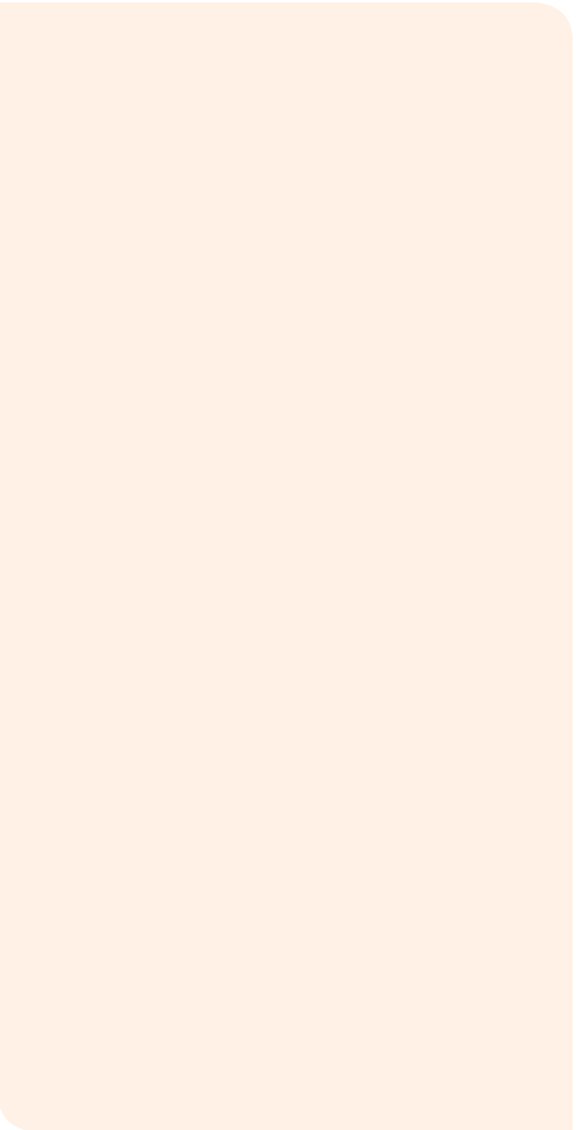
B7.25.50 | 10YR 27/323



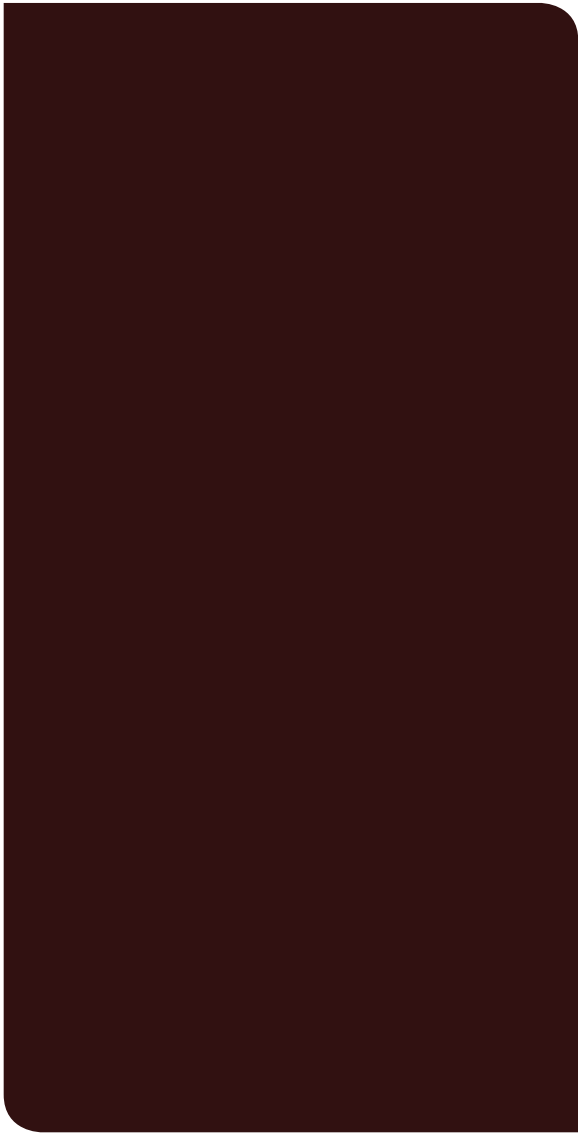
D3.32.55 | 60YR 31/368



F0.20.61 | 20YY 38/225



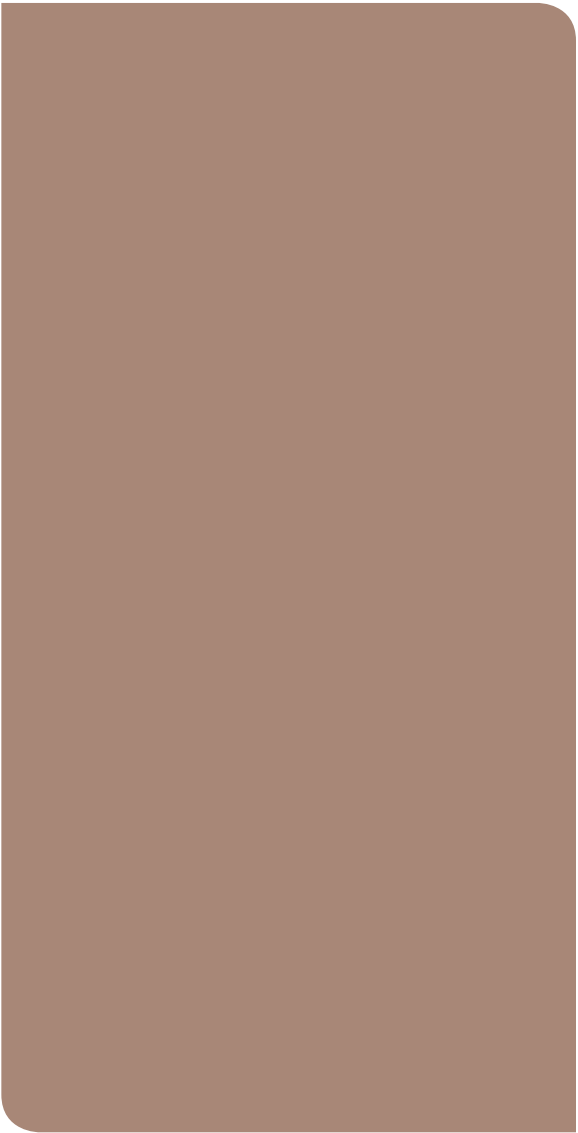
DN.03.86 | 80YR 83/035



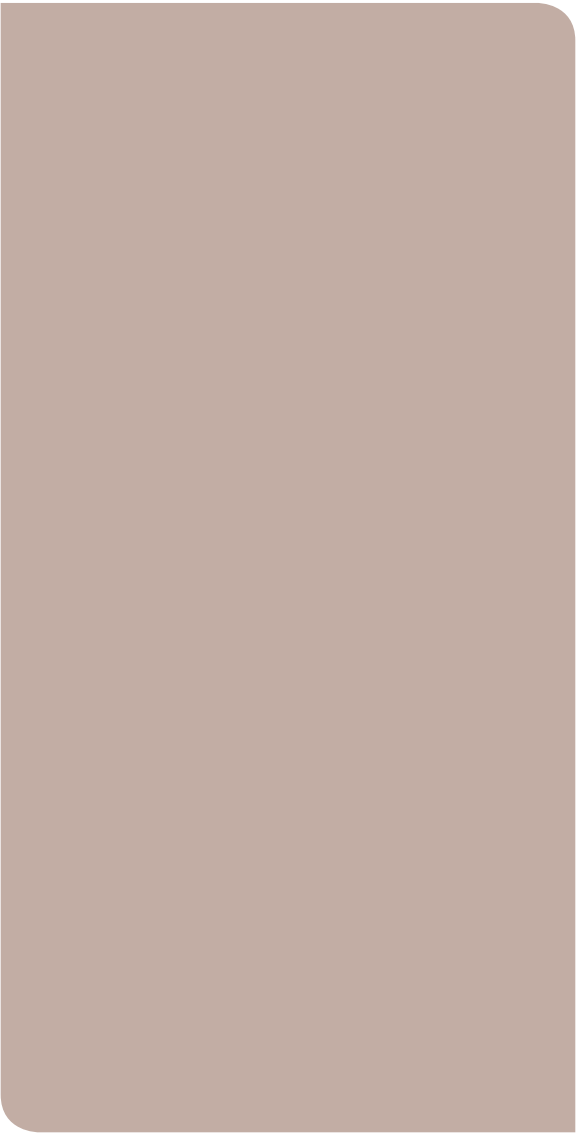
C3.13.14 | 18YR 05/072



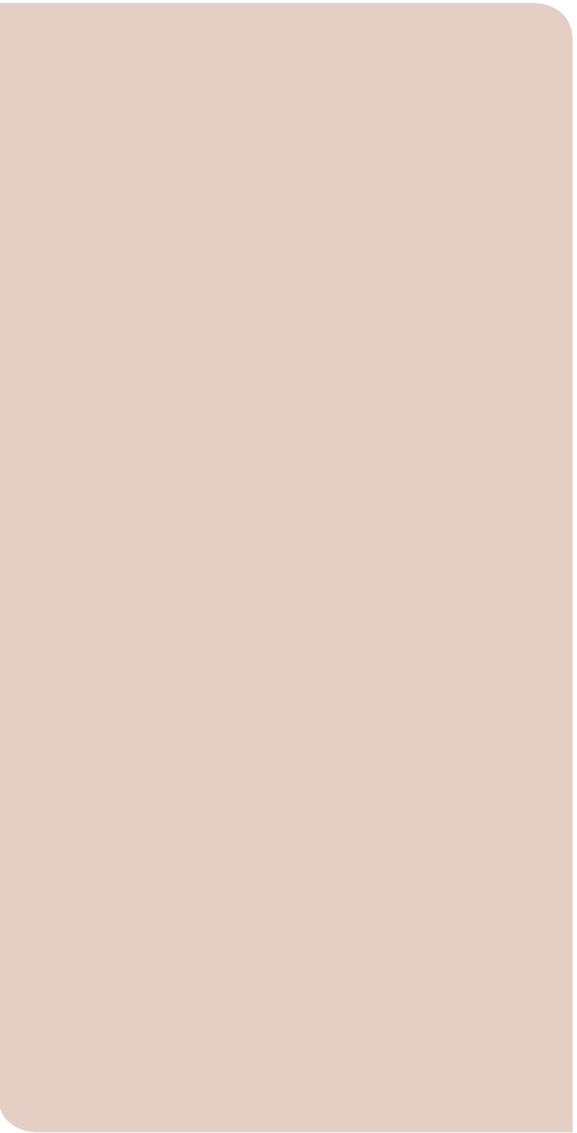
C9.13.37 | 50YR 16/127



D5.12.55 | 70YR 31/135



C8.04.67 | 50YR 47/057



C9.03.77 | 50YR 65/056





Photography: olivierpolmichel.de Architecture: motorlab.de







HERITAGE  
& Future

**ANTICIPATING  
THE FUTURE AND  
APPRECIATING  
THE PAST**









The collage features a newspaper clipping from the "Old Sarum" section, dated "1901". The text discusses the "Old Sarum" election, mentioning "the House of Commons" and "the House of Lords". A photograph of a person is visible in the upper right corner, and a photograph of a person's face is in the lower right corner. The collage is layered with various colors and textures, including a large blue and white abstract shape. A wooden-handled brush is visible in the foreground.

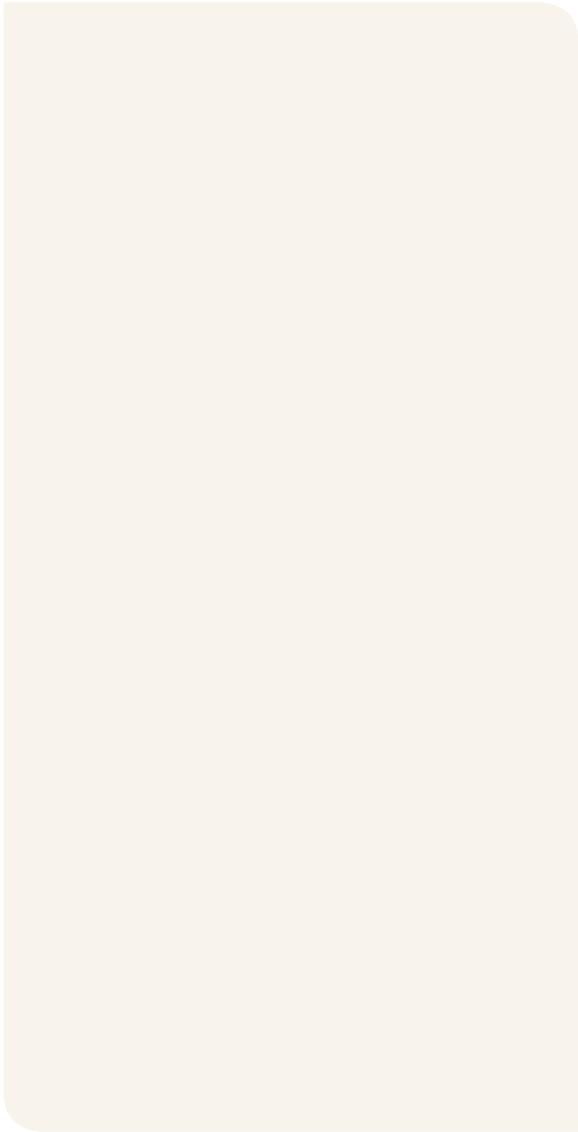
adds the shade of pink and grey, or graphite in contrast to tones familiar with smartphone and social media filters. >







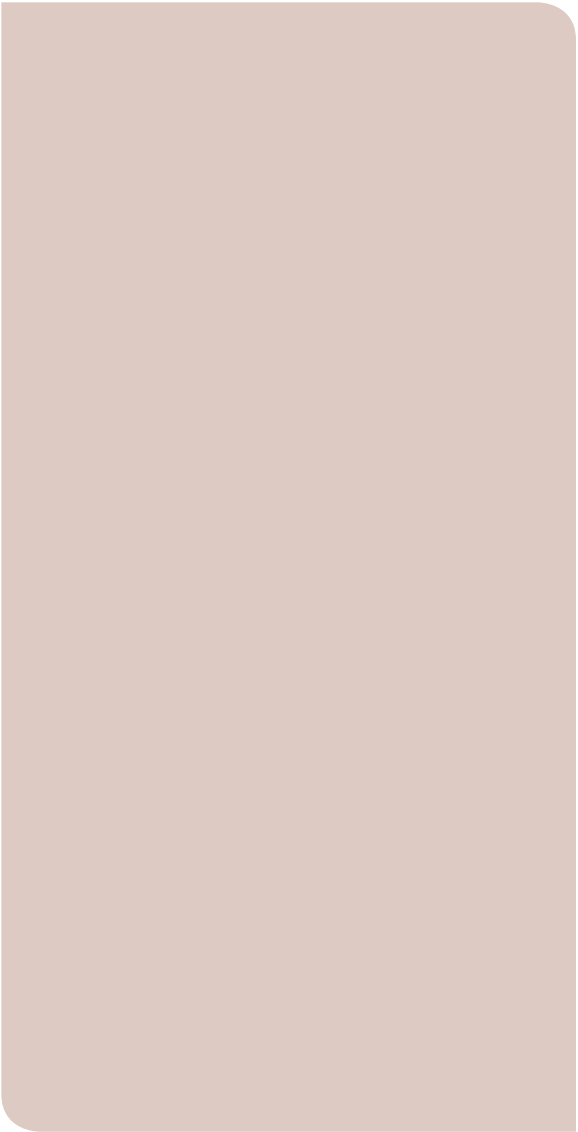
Words &  
PICTURES



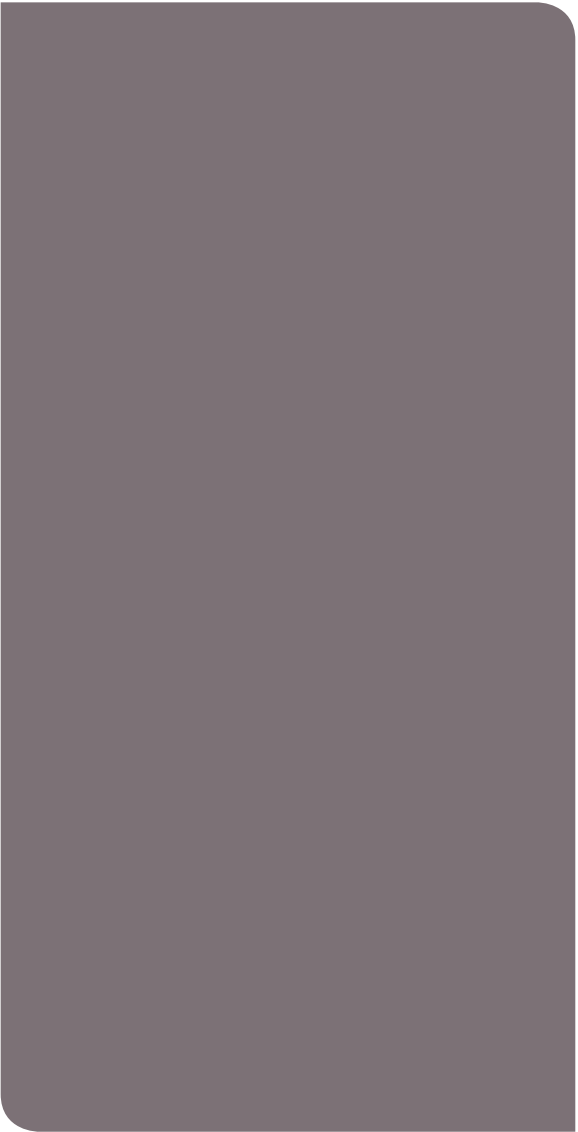
ON.00.88 | 00NN 83/000



V2.04.78 | 90BB 67/069



C0.03.77 | 30YR 64/044



YN.02.45 | 30RR 22/031



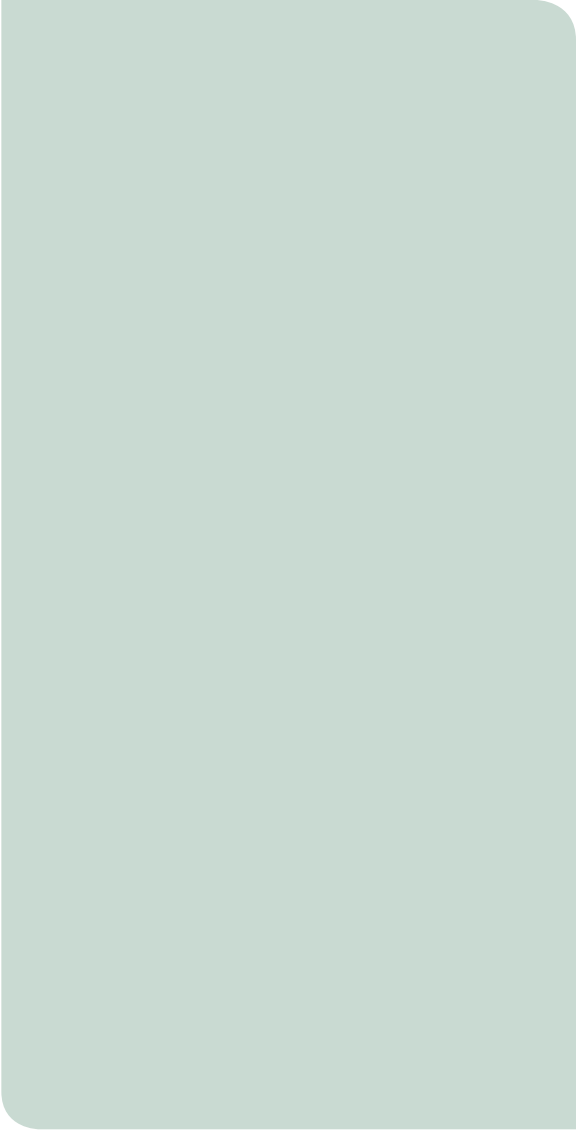
U6.09.35 | 70BB 15/081



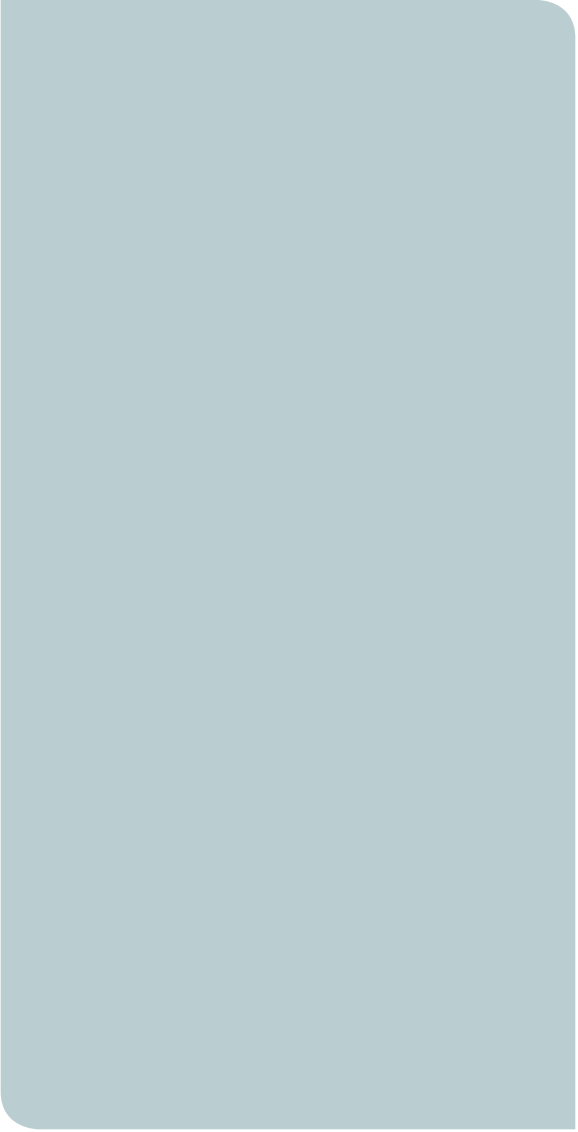
F6.14.78 | 40YY 67/196



G5.07.73 | 70YY 57/098



N0.03.77 | 50GG 63/042

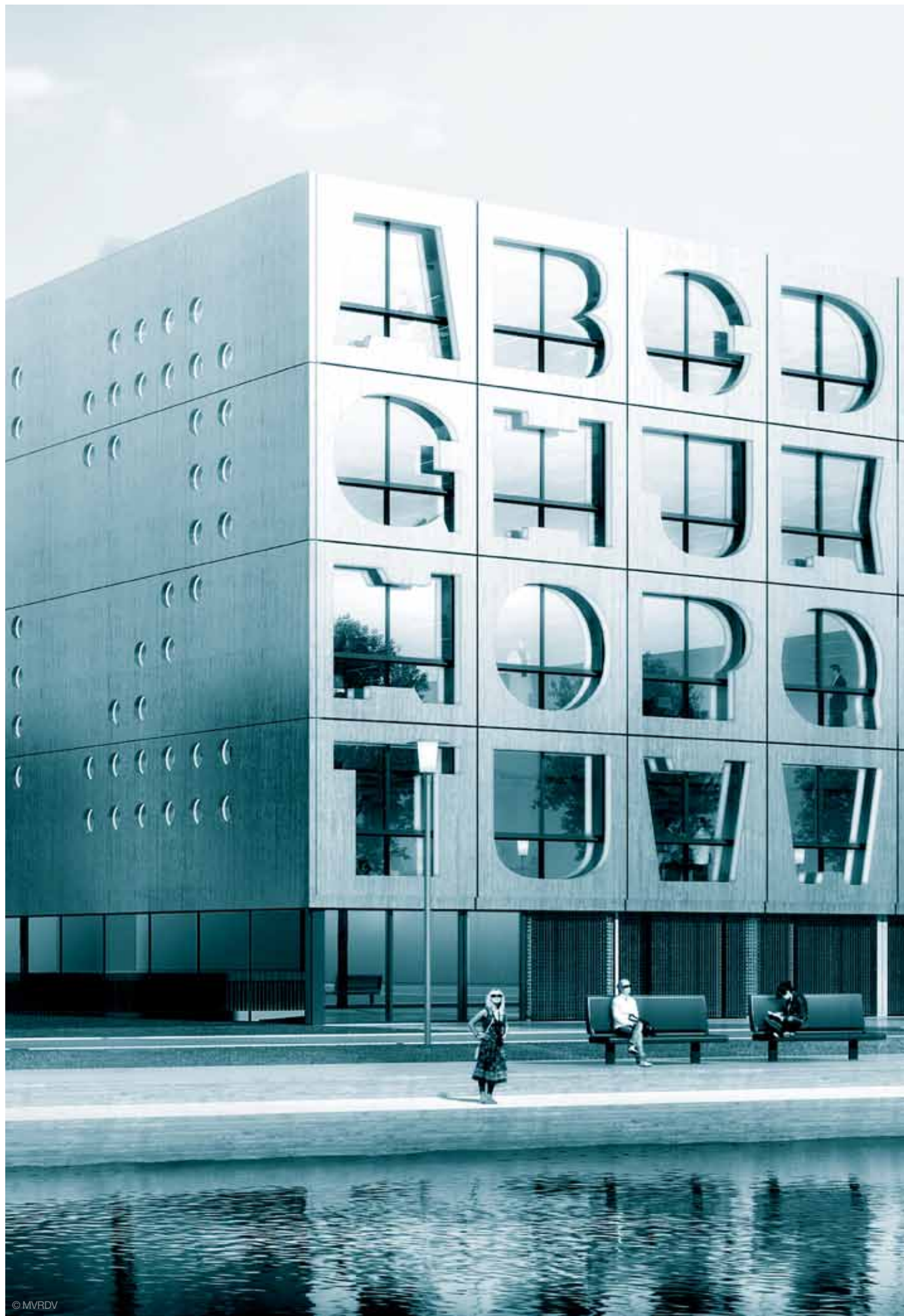


R6.06.73 | 70BG 56/061



S2.11.63 | 90BG 42/106





© MVRDV





Words&  
PICTURES

**A PICTURE MAY PAINT  
A THOUSAND WORDS BUT WITH  
SO MUCH IMAGERY  
OVERLOADING US, DO WE TRUST  
THE WRITTEN WORD MORE?**











# THERE IS A NEW FOUND POWER IN GRAPHICS AND STATEMENTS

Words&  
PICTURES





# DARK &Light

◀ **Celebrating the night.** One of the key trends for 2016 is the importance of darkness. The introduction of Earth Hour – where millions of people around the globe all turn their lights off on the same day, has highlighted how much light pollution effects us all. Research has proven how important it is that we have a restful sleep, to recharge and regroup without the disrupting influence of light. It's not only about humans; research shows that light pollution can also effect the nighttime biological activity of plants and wildlife. Just as we need darkness in order to see the stars in the night sky more clearly, the Dutch masters of the 17th century showed how their techniques at capturing lustre and the play of light was best portrayed in contrast to dark hues. Many of the colours in this palette blend seamlessly together, recalling the tones of both dusk and dawn during the 'golden hour.' ▶





**CELEBRATE THE NIGHT  
BY ENJOYING THE MYSTERY  
AND BEAUTY OF THE DARK**

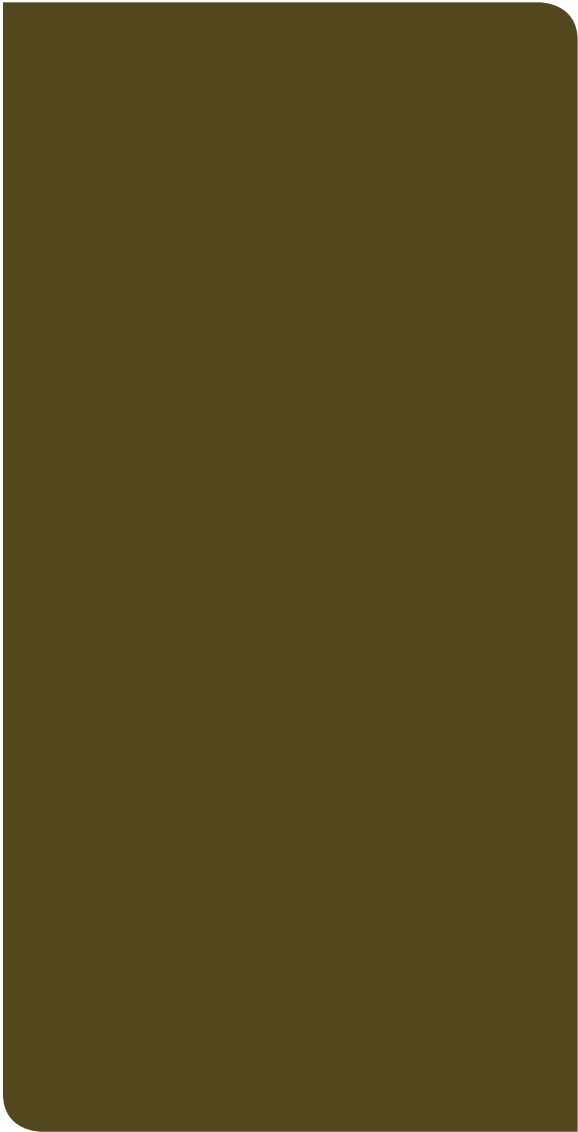
**DARK**  
&Light



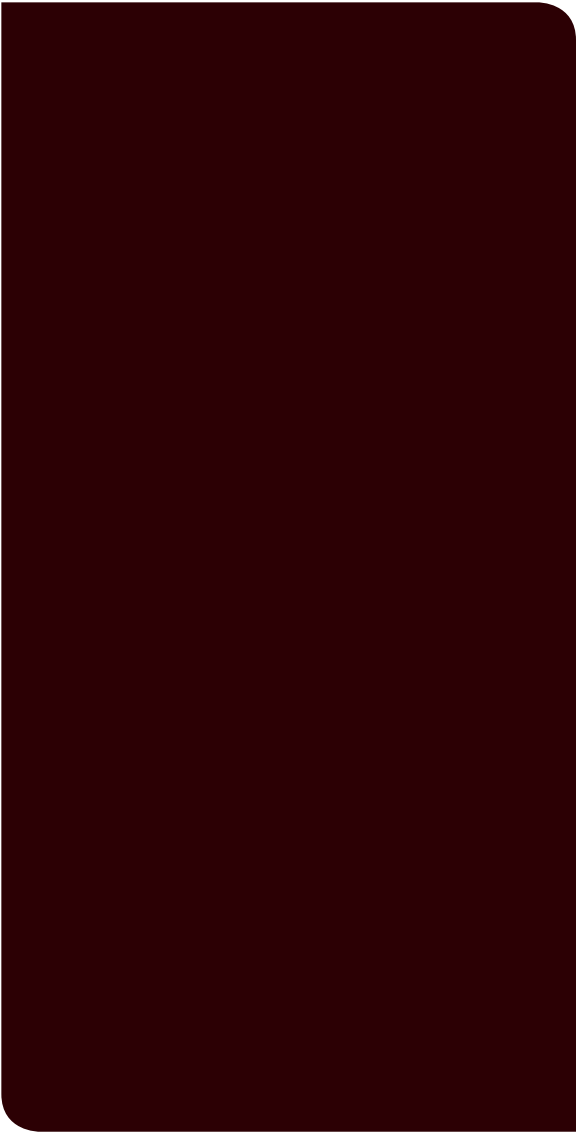
DARK  
&Light



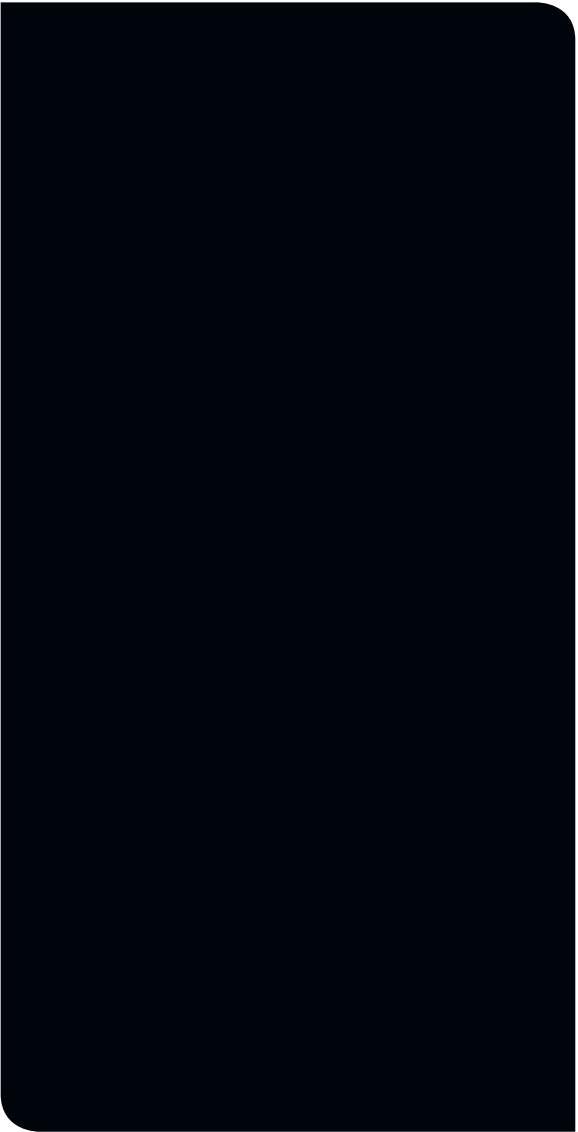
E8.29.46 | 10YY 23/261



F8.37.27 | 45YY 11/200



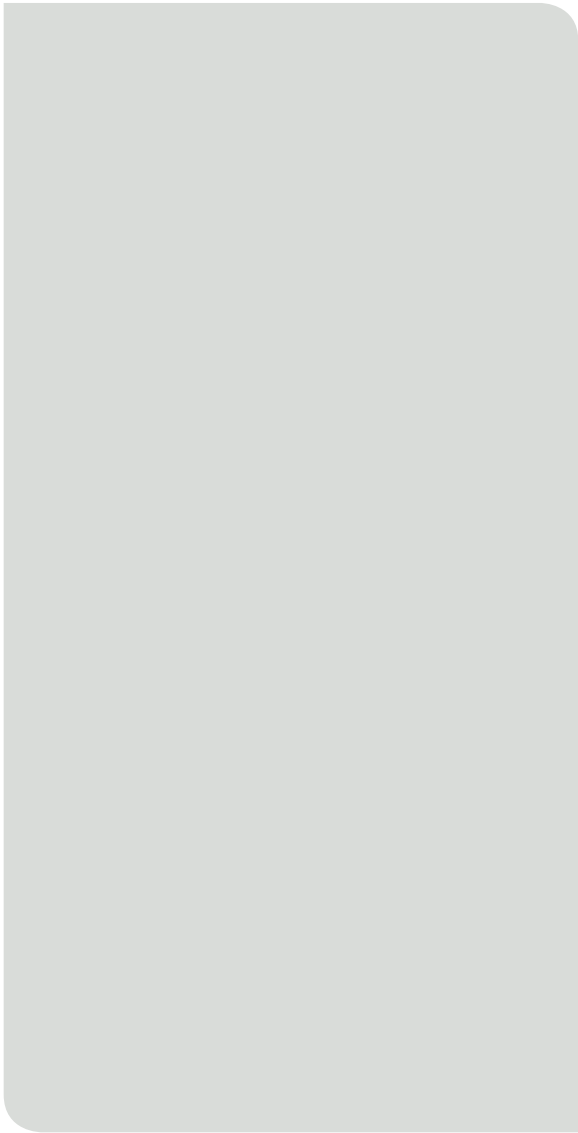
C3.13.14 | 18YR 05/072



T3.04.12 | 30BB 05/022



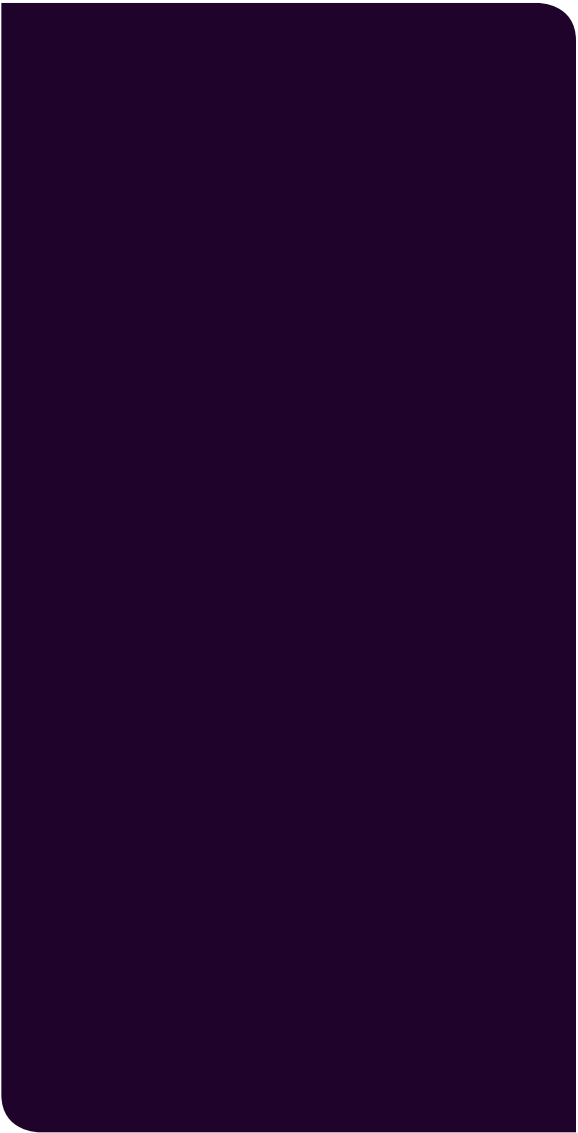
M9.18.13 | 50GG 05/063



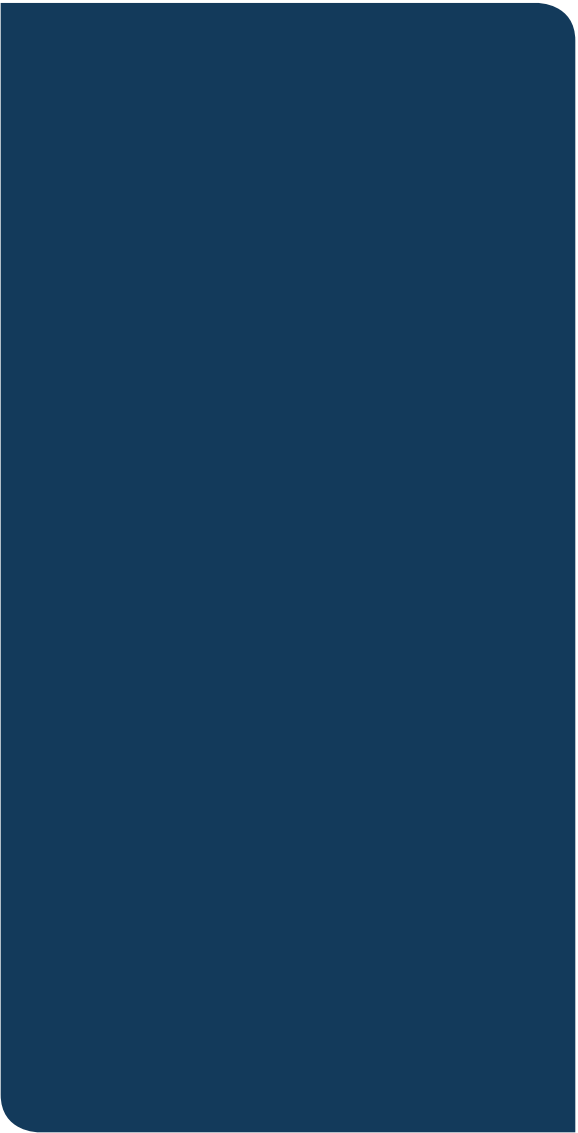
PN.00.81 | 30BG 72/017



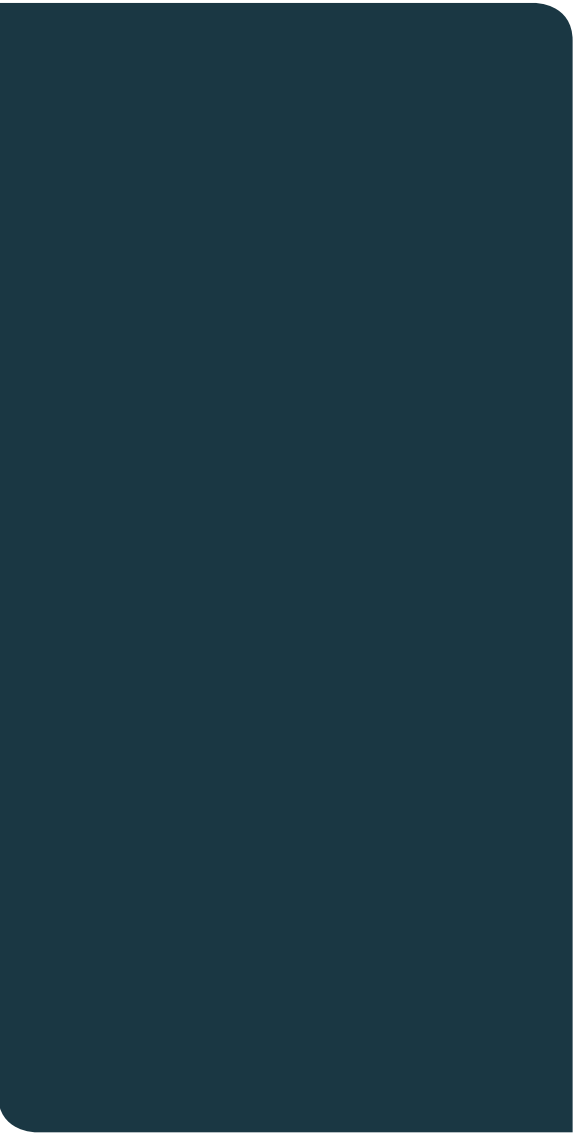
U6.09.35 | 70BB 15/081



W9.10.13 | 46PB 06/074

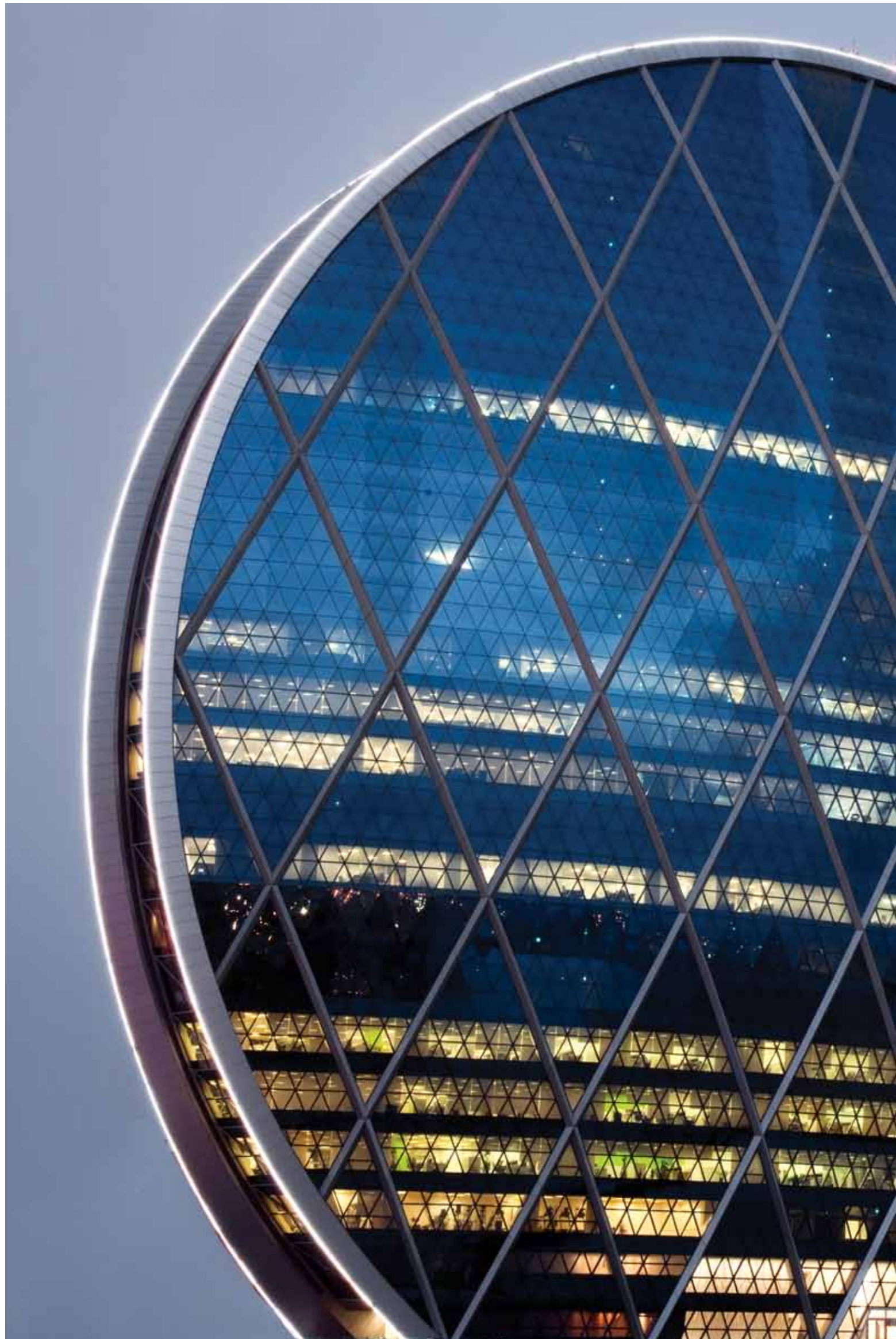
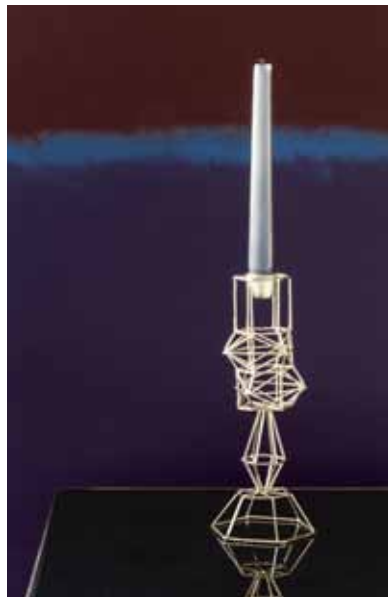


T9.26.21 | 50BB 08/171

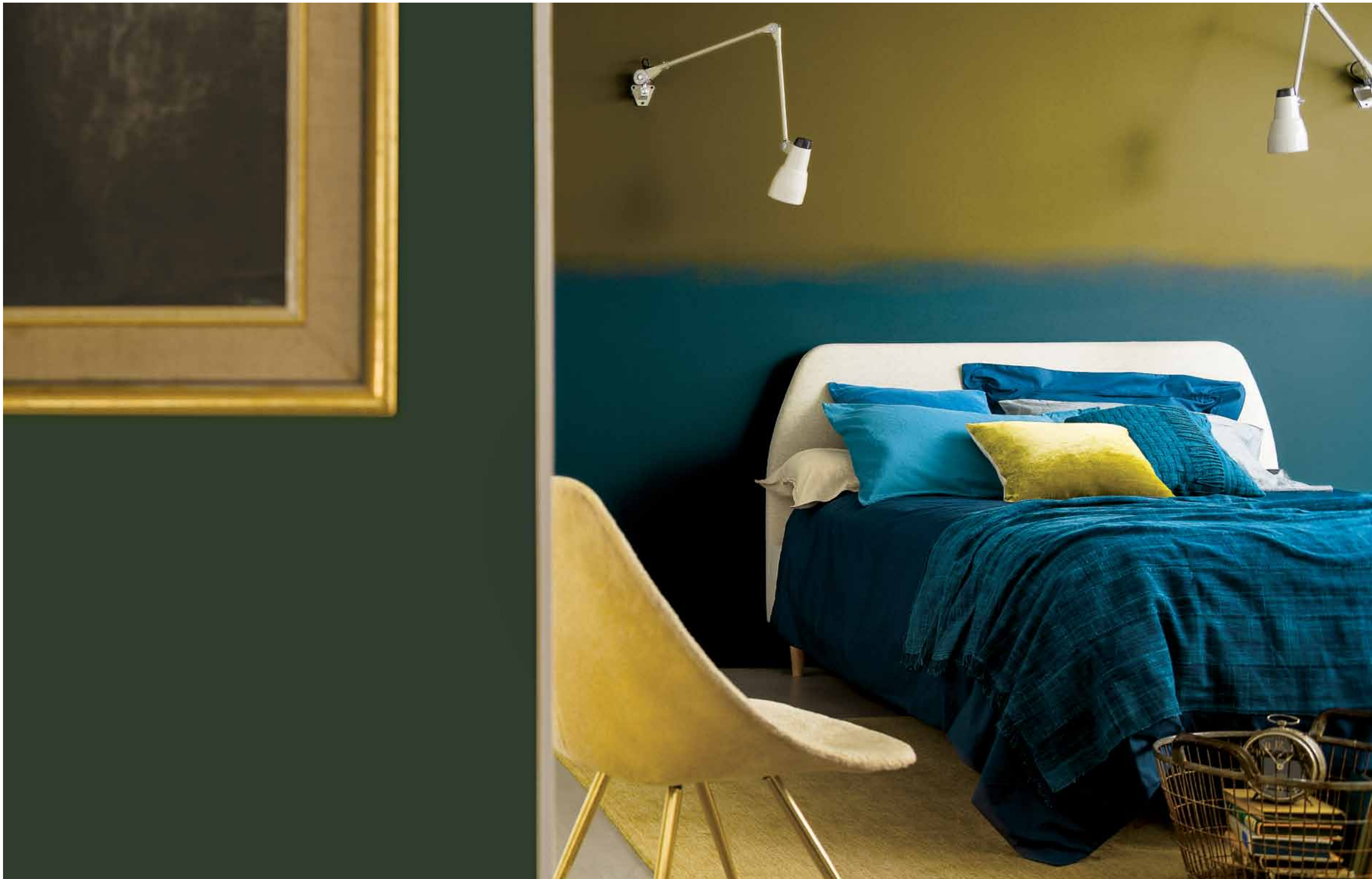


S0.16.22 | 90BG 08/075











**WE HAVE  
LONG BEEN  
OBSESSED  
WITH LIGHT,  
BUT NOW  
REALISE WE  
ALSO NEED  
THE DARK  
FOR A  
HEALTHY,  
WELL  
RESTED  
LIFE**

**DARK**  
&Light



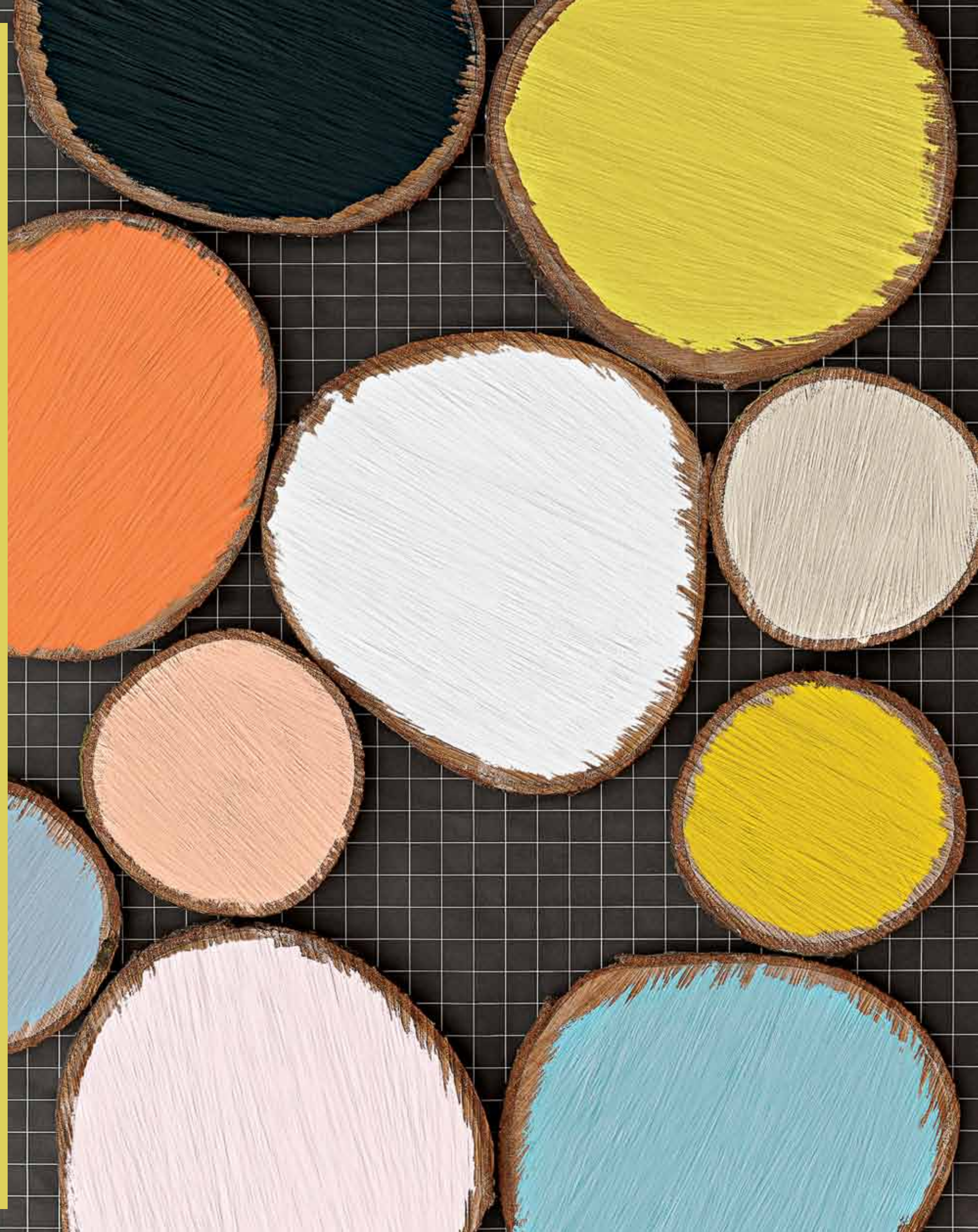






# THE GRID & Letting go

◀ **Freedom within a framework.** We are increasingly seeing the appeal of going 'off grid' in order to find oneself in the modern world. Office workers go to morning dance parties before going to work. Digital agencies organise knitting clubs, valuing the chance to produce something physical and tangible. But it's impossible to talk of going back to the wild and living offline without a frame of reference. We need boundaries in which to live, even if we seek to rebel against them; freedom is only understandable within the context of a framework. Or, to put it another way: you can't break the mould if you don't have a mould in the first place. The Folk Circus in Brooklyn, New York is evidence of how the modern, urban lifestyle yearns for such controlled chaos. The use of organic forms in product design is another case of allowing the imagination to flourish by not feeling bound or restricted by grids. Hence the colours in this palette are vivid and playful, yet still held back by the black and white of the grid. ▶







# URBAN LIFESTYLE YEARNS FOR CONTROLLED CHAOS

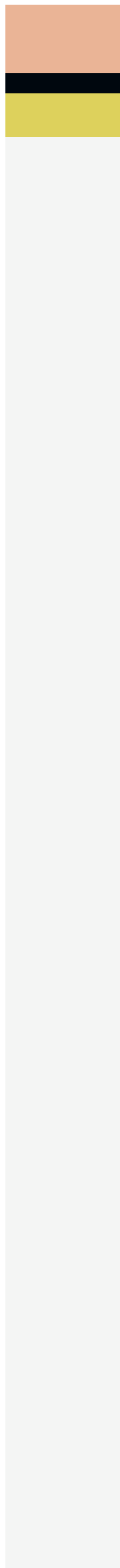
THE GRID  
& Letting go









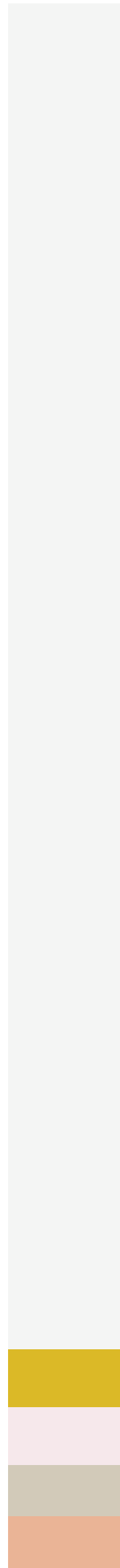






THE GRID  
& Letting go

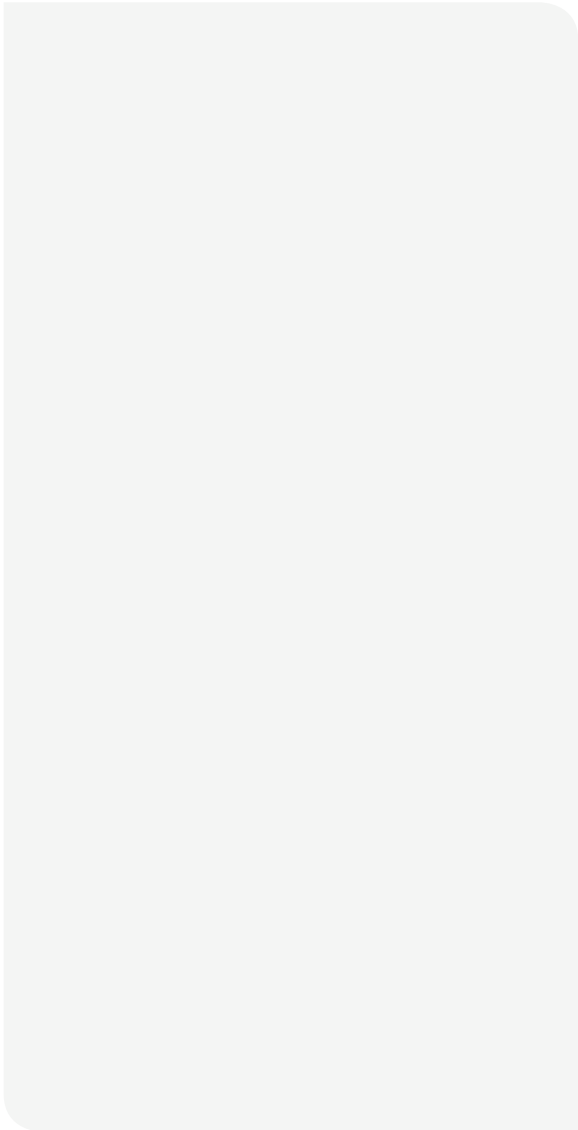
**LACK OF CONTROL  
CAN BE SCARY  
BUT IT'S HOW WE FIND  
OURSELVES**





# THE GRID

& Letting go



SN.01.87 | 10BB 83/017



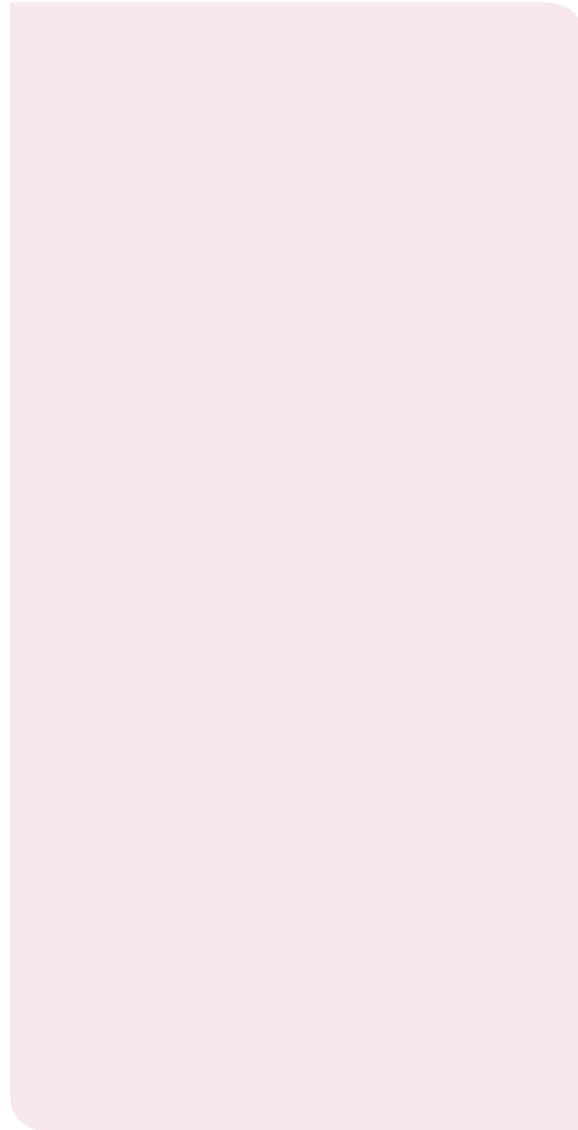
F4.67.63 | 30YY 41/700



D0.39.55 | 50YR 32/460



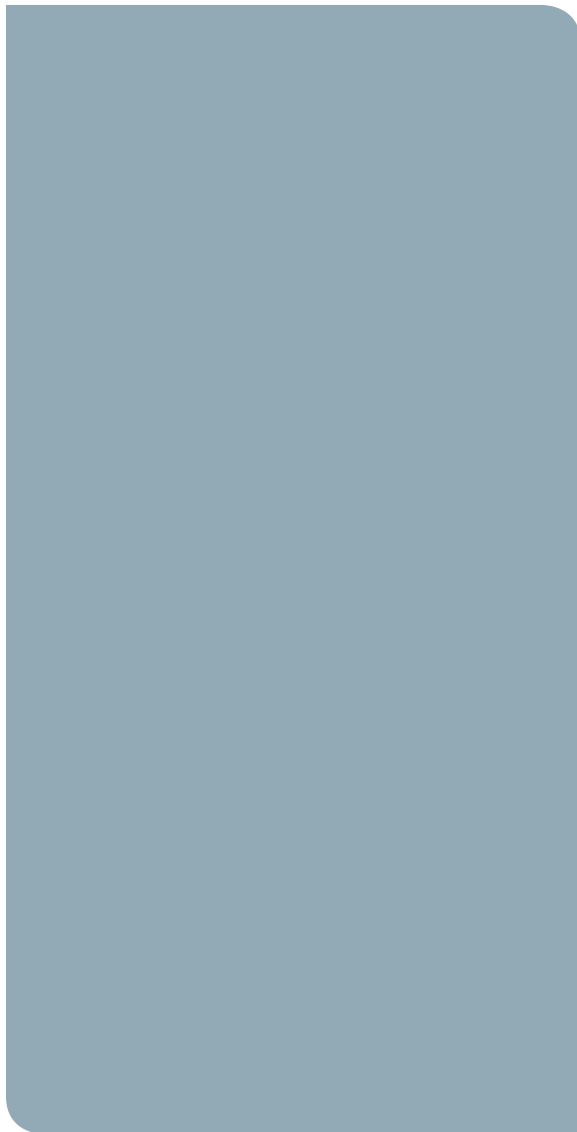
D5.13.72 | 70YR 56/190



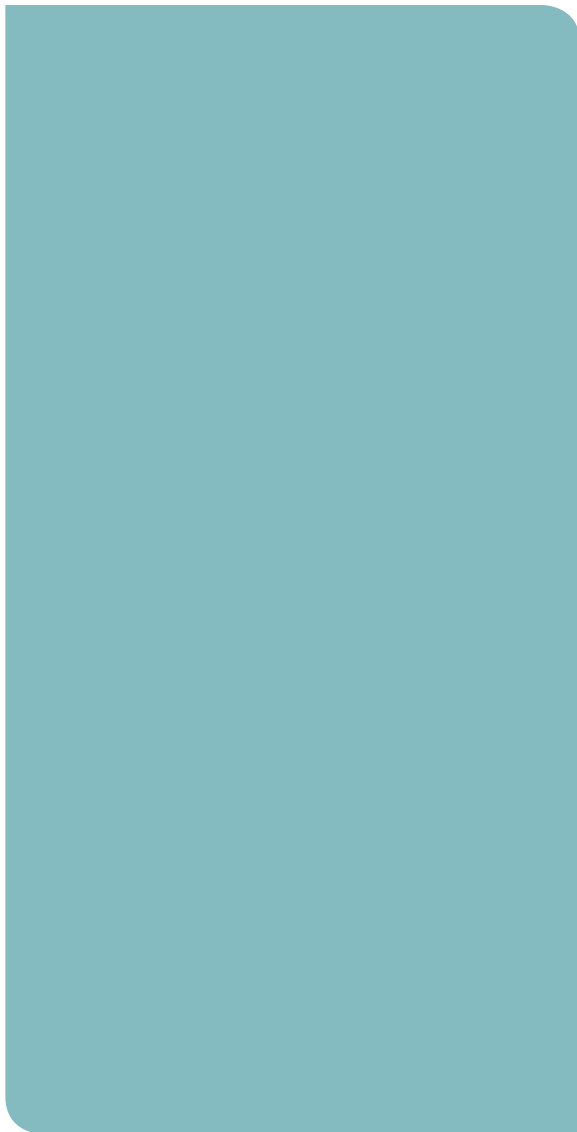
X1.04.83 | 53PB 76/067



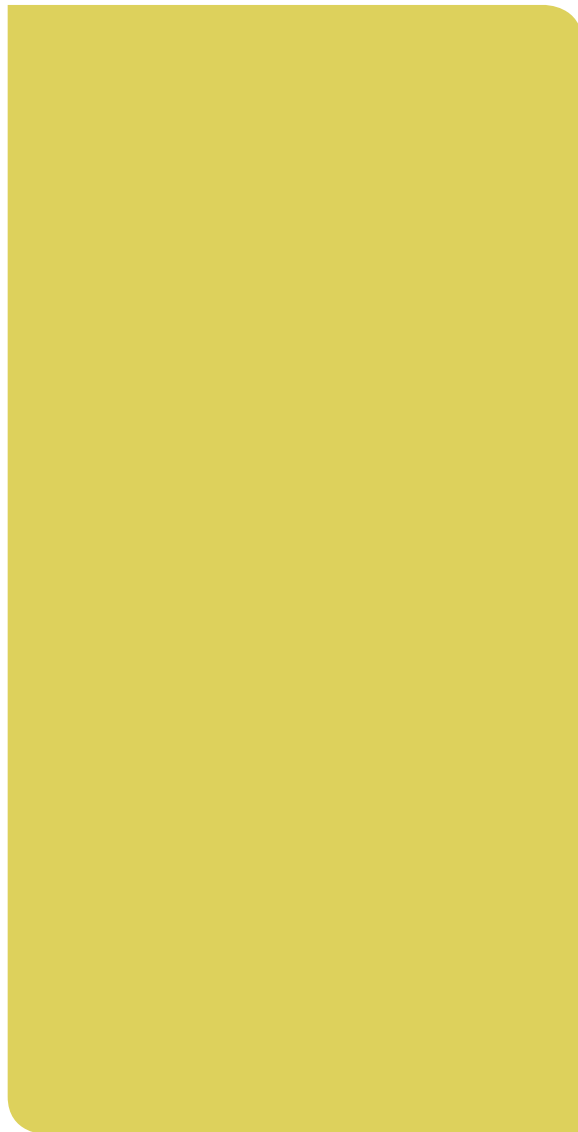
T3.04.12 | 30BB 05/022



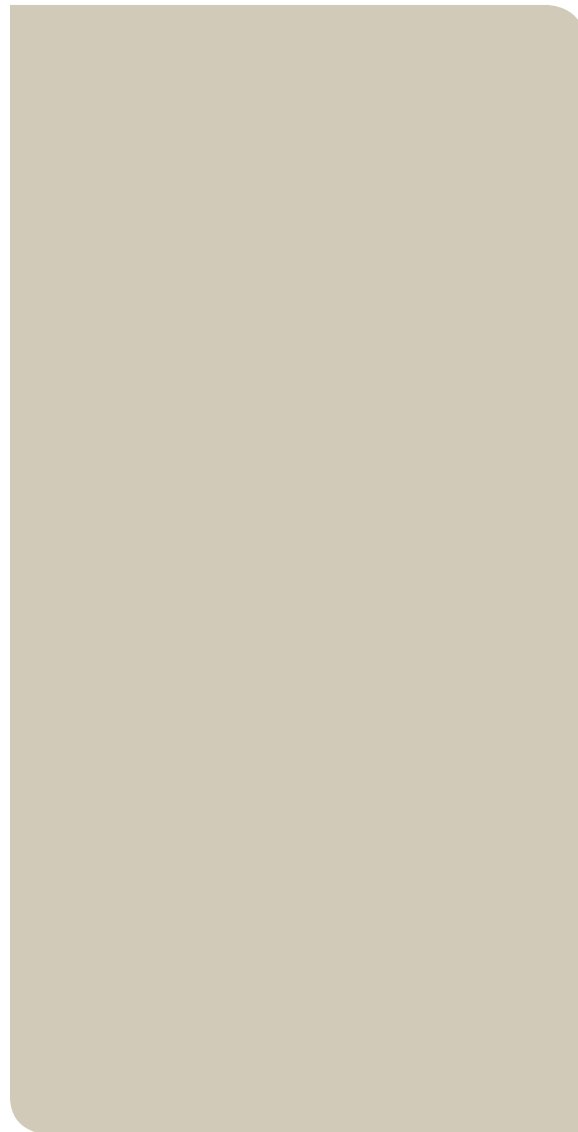
S2.11.63 | 90BG 42/106



Q3.16.65 | 30BG 43/163



G2.41.72 | 60YY 55/504



F4.04.73 | 30YY 56/060



# BEFORE & AFTER IMAGES

Below is a selection of before images which reveal the dramatic effect of paint. For the online version, please go to [colourfutures.com](http://colourfutures.com)

COLOUR OF THE YEAR

CF16-COTY-3-BEFORE

CF16-COTY-3

CF16-COTY-4-BEFORE

CF16-COTY-4

CF16-COTY-6-BEFORE

CF16-COTY-6

CF16-COTY-15-BEFORE

CF16-COTY-15

HERITAGE & FUTURE

CF16-H&F-2-BEFORE

CF16-H&F-2

CF16-H&F-8-BEFORE

CF16-H&F-8

CF16-H&F-10-BEFORE

CF16-H&F-10

WORDS & PICTURES

CF16-W&P-3-BEFORE

CF16-W&P-3

CF16-W&P-5-BEFORE

CF16-W&P-5

CF16-W&P-11-BEFORE

CF16-W&P-11

CF16-W&P-12-BEFORE

CF16-W&P-12

DARK & LIGHT

CF16-D&L-10-BEFORE

CF16-D&L-10

CF16-D&L-11-BEFORE

CF16-D&L-11

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Here you will find an index of the pictures that have been used in this publication. For the online version, please go to [colourfutures.com](http://colourfutures.com)

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CF16-COTY-13



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CF16-TRENDSINTRO-1



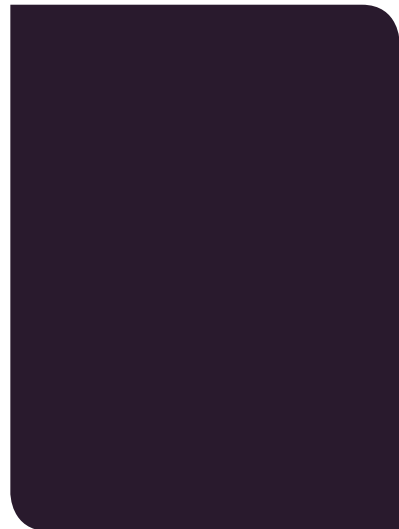
CF16-TRENDSINTRO-9



# CF16

COLOUR FUTURES™ INTERNATIONAL COLOUR TRENDS 2016

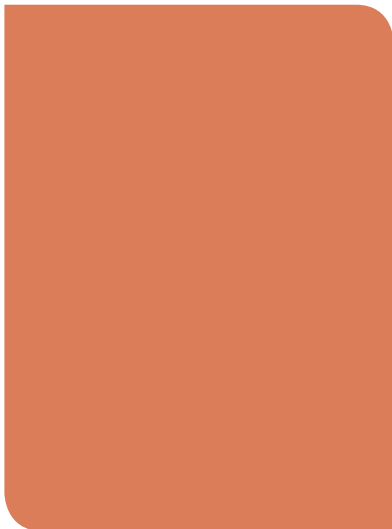
WARMS  
ARE  
DIVERSE  
AND WOULD  
FEEL AT  
HOME ON  
THE AFRICAN  
PLAINS



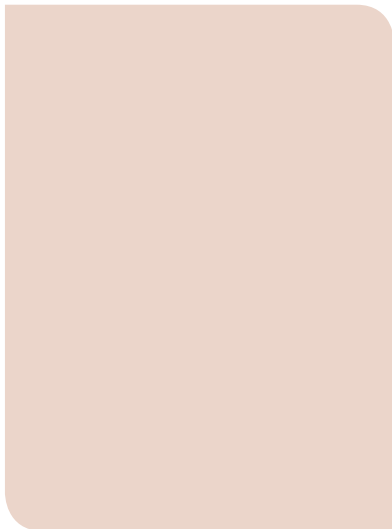
W9.10.13 | 46RB 06/074



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YN.02.45 | 30RR 22/031



C3.13.14 | 18YR 05/072



E1.15.37 | 90YR 16/129

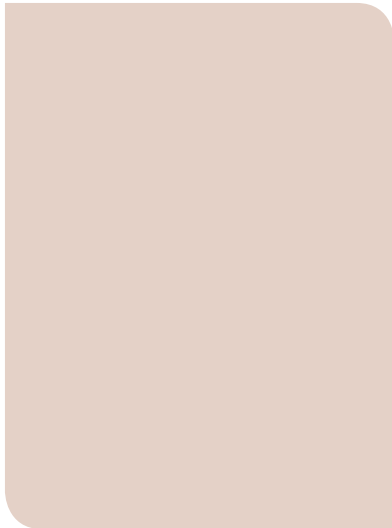
REDS  
WITH A WARM  
ORANGE  
TONE ARE  
BACK.  
EASY TO LIVE  
WITH AND  
GOOD ENOUGH  
TO EAT



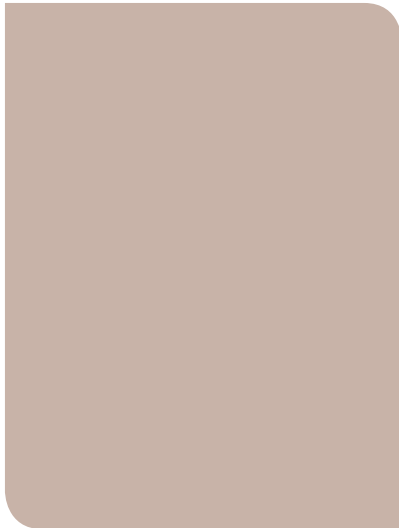
B7.25.50 | 10YR 27/323



D5.13.72 | 70YR 56/190



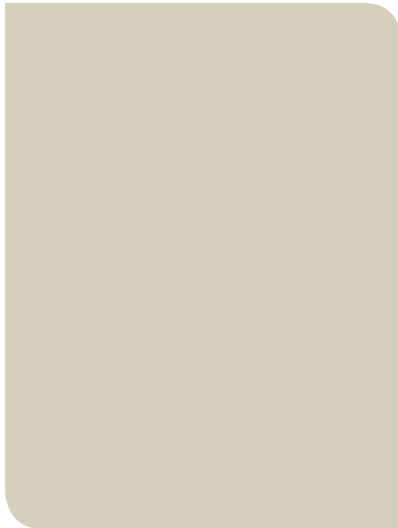
C0.03.77 | 30YR 64/044



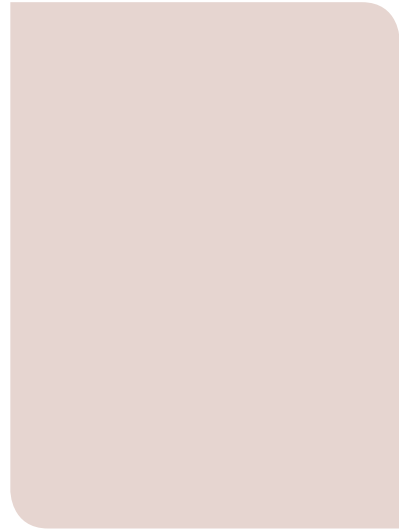
C8.04.67 | 50YR 47/057



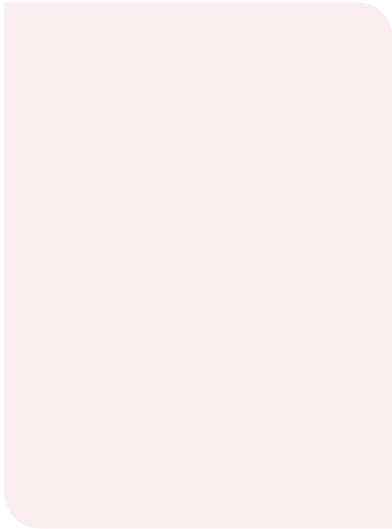
F0.20.61 | 20YY 38/225



F4.04.73 | 30YY 56/060



AN.02.76 | 70RR 64/034



X1.04.83 | 53RB 76/067



DN.03.86 | 80YR 83/035

ORANGES  
ARE  
FRUITY  
AND  
INVITING  
OR SOFT  
AND FLESH  
TONED

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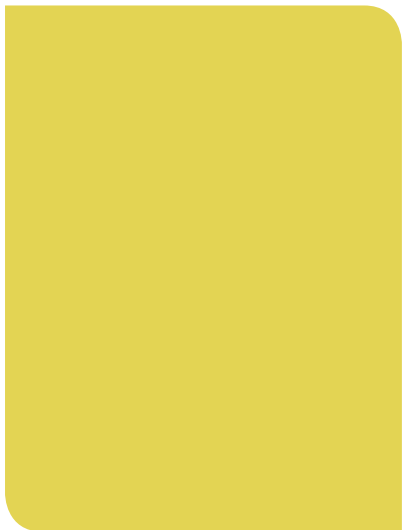
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F4.67.63 | 30YY 41/700



G2.41.72 | 60YY 55/504

**GREENS  
EDGE CLOSER  
TO GREY AND  
TAKE ON A MUTED  
DESERT-LIKE  
TONE**



Q3.16.65 | 30BG 43/163



S0.16.22 | 90BG 08/075



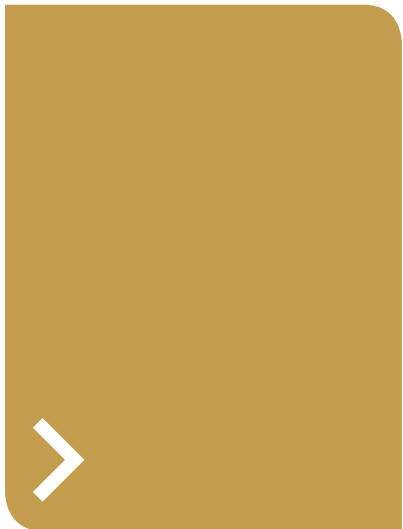
T9.26.21 | 50BB 08/171



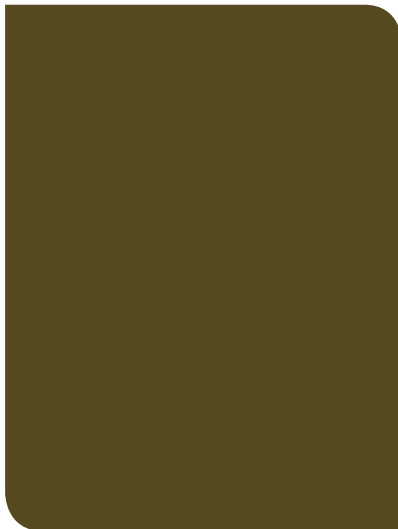
T3.04.12 | 30BB 05/022



E8.29.46 | 10YY 23/261



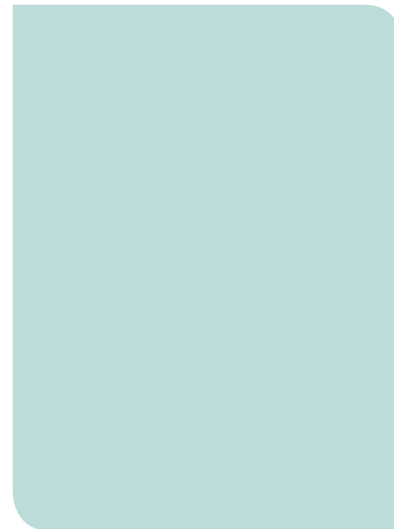
COTY | F1.34.58 | 20YY 36/370



F8.37.27 | 45YY 11/200



M9.18.13 | 50GG 05/063

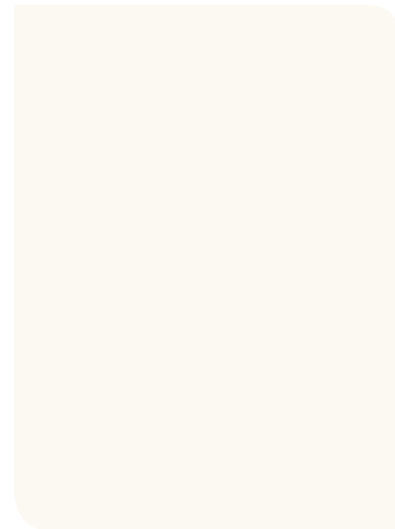


P7.08.76 | 10BG 63/097



S2.11.63 | 90BG 42/106

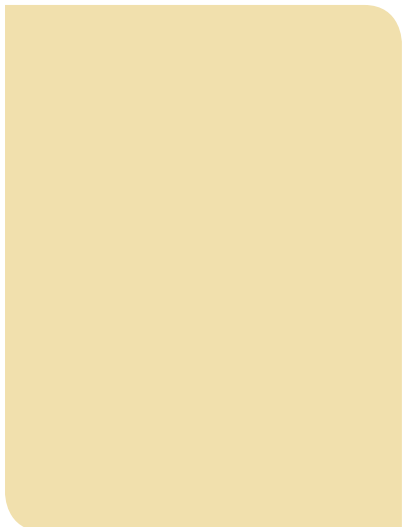
**VIOLETS  
ARE SOFT  
AND  
BLUE BASED,  
GIVING  
THEM A  
SOPHISTICATED  
NEUTRAL  
QUALITY**



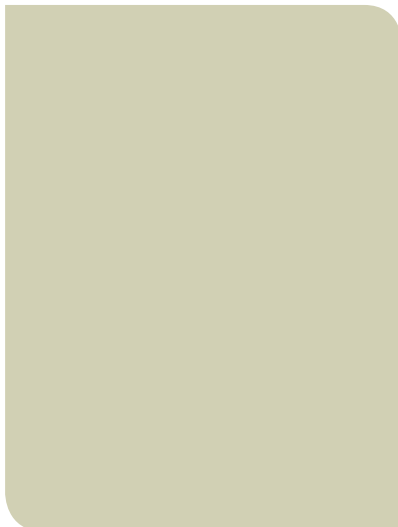
ON.00.88 | 00NN 83/000



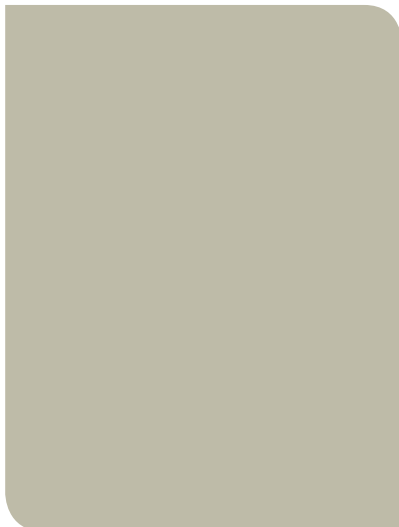
E8.34.50 | 10YY 26/321



F6.14.78 | 40YY 67/196



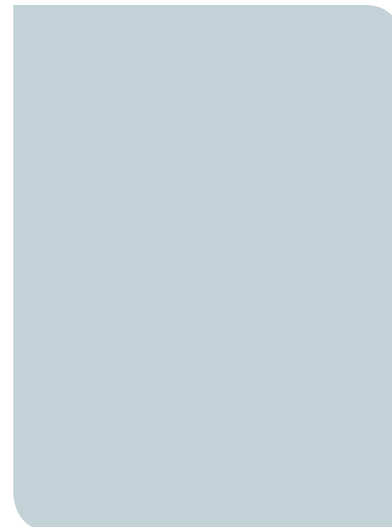
G5.07.73 | 70YY 57/098



G6.04.66 | 70YY 46/053



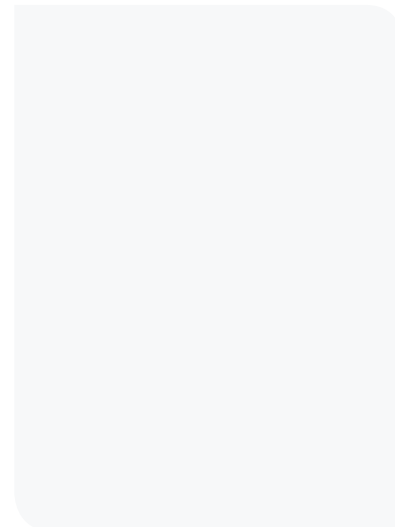
N0.03.77 | 50GG 63/042



R6.06.73 | 70BG 56/061

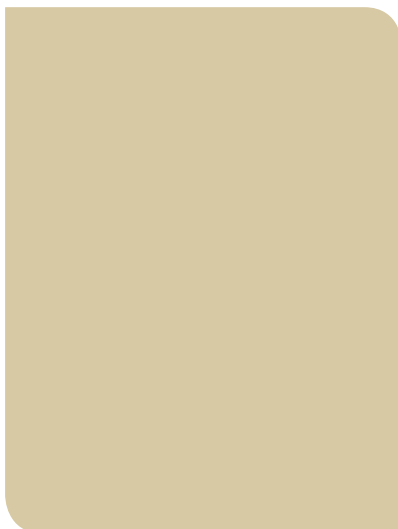


U6.09.35 | 70BB 15/081



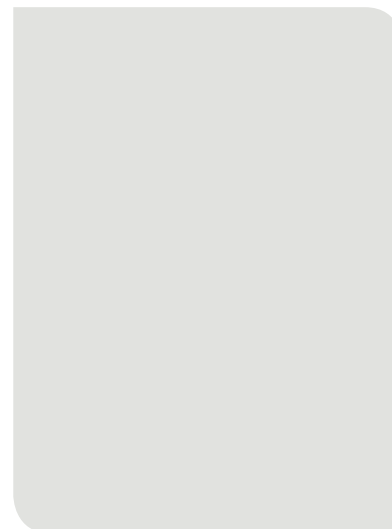
SN.01.87 | 10BB 83/017

**YELLOW  
ARE COMPLEX  
IN CHARACTER  
WITH A  
SLIGHT GREEN EDGE  
OR MUSTARD  
TONE**

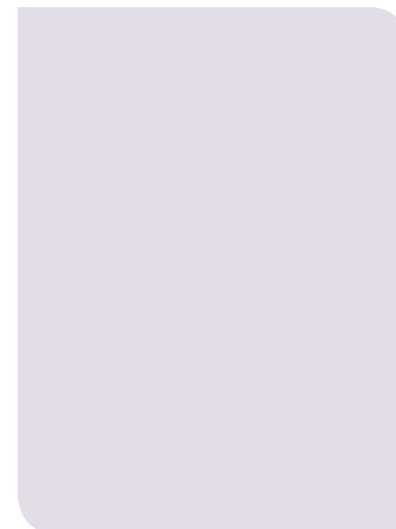


F8.12.71 | 45YY 53/151

**BLUES  
FEEL  
AQUATIC  
AND  
PEACEFUL  
WITH AN  
EASY  
ELEGANCE**



PN.00.81 | 30BG 72/017



V2.04.78 | 90BB 67/069

**COOLS  
ARE VERY  
CLEAN-CUT  
WITH  
AN ALMOST  
PERFECT  
BLACK  
AND WHITE  
PALETTE**





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