

Sign making in a Thai paradise

It's a bit out of the way, but beautiful

By Rob Cooper

About two years ago Puay, my wife, and I moved to Koh Tao, a small island about 60km off the Thai mainland in the Gulf of Thailand. Koh Tao is your typical, tropical paradise island with white sand beaches, coconut trees, jungle and thousands of huge granite boulders. These rocks, and my interest in rock climbing, brought me here in the first place. I fell in love with the place as soon as I saw it, and have found it very difficult to leave.

When we first moved here, we opened a small restaurant—Puay is a wonderful cook and has worked in many restaurants in

Thailand. The first year was busy, but as more and more restaurants opened around us, things slowed down somewhat. That was



Rob's home-based shop



color combos!

750 great-looking, color combinations

great! I don't care for working in a restaurant, and I was flat out painting signs, which left little time to do the things I really like to do—like climbing and exploring in the jungle.

So, about eight months ago we built and moved into a small sign shop/house just up the road, which was a wonderful move. Since then I've been busy painting lots of signs for many of the restaurants and dive shops that are opening on the island. Koh Tao is undergoing quite a boom at the moment, and I have had a five- or six-week waiting list for signs ever since.

We also bought about five acres up in the

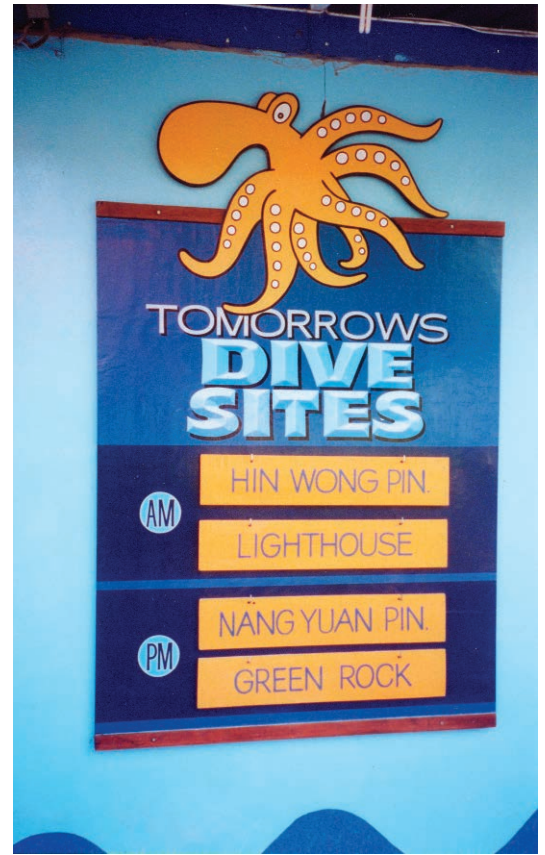


Here you go: a "swipe file" of color combinations! No complex theories about color usage or funky formulas for achieving perfect complementaries—just 750 color combinations to look at, with suggestions on which colors to use for background, copy, shadows, borders and more. The CMYK and RGB formulas are given for every single color you see. This smorgasbord of color ideas is sure to enliven your layouts.

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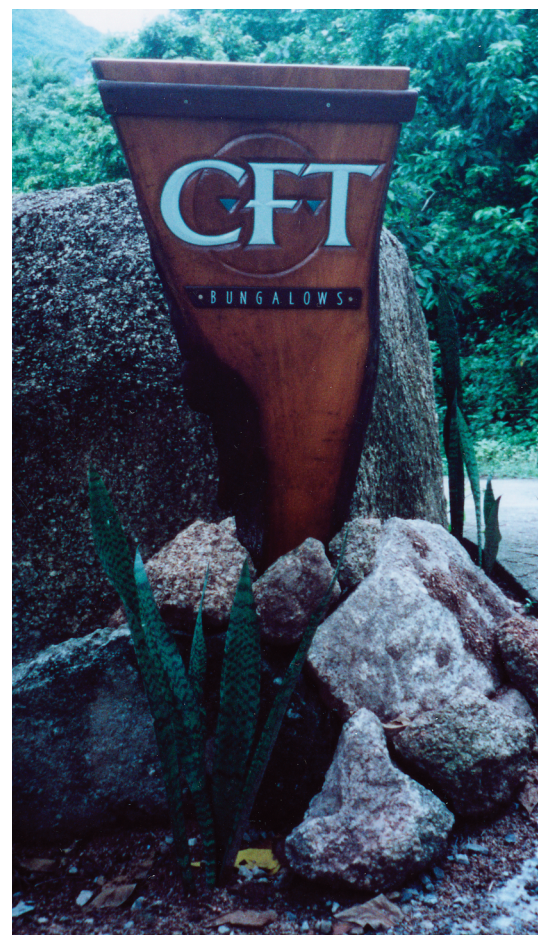
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Puay with a sign for the local veterinarian.

jungle on which we intend to build a house someday. Clearing the land of vines and underbrush has given me a whole new fun thing to do. It's hard work, but incredibly satisfying. I have spent many days working from sunrise to sunset pulling vines and burning. Hmm, maybe that waiting list will get longer!

Anyway, here are some signs I have done recently; they are all on regular plywood and hand lettered with hardware store paint. I don't have a projector or a computer, so everything is laid out with chalk and lettered by hand. Basic, but fun. •S C

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