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The Anatomy of Color: The Story of Heritage Paints & Pigments

Patrick Baty

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The history of paint and color in interior design, spanning a period of three centuries

Why were primary colors popular in postwar kitchens? Why did the Art Deco era prefer clean lines and pastel shades? This comprehensive illustrated history of the use of color and paint in interior decoration answers these questions and many more.

Drawing on his huge specialist archive, historian and paint expert Patrick Baty traces the evolution of pigments and paint colors together with color systems and standards, and he examines their impact on the color palettes used in interiors from the 1650s to the 1960s. He charts the creation in paint of the common and expensive colors made from traditional earth pigments between 1650 and 1799. He then explores the emergence of color systems and standards and their influence on paint colors together with the effect of industrialized production on the texture and durability of paints. Finally, Baty turns his attention to twentieth-century color standards. Woven throughout the authoritative and revealing text are specially commissioned photographs of pages from rare color reference books.

Reproductions of interiors from home decor books, dating from every era, are included throughout, highlighting the distinctive color trends and styles of painting particular to each period.

1100 illustrations, 1000 in color

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