

Visual Communication Design

Practice Notes

Design of Visual Book “Tag” by Graffiti Artists in Yogyakarta as Archiving Media

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Abstract: Yogyakarta has various arts and cultural activities and is dubbed as the city of arts and culture. Various arts exist in this city, from fine arts, music, performing arts, and other arts. One other form of art in the city of Yogyakarta is graffiti art. Historically, the basic form of graffiti itself is a tag or tagging. Where every graffiti artist in Yogyakarta also has tagging as their own identity. However, graffiti artists in Yogyakarta have a problem, namely they do not realize the potential for their tagging documentation to be archived. Where the archives of this tagging can be accessed at any time and used as a reference. In addition, in Indonesia itself there are still very few books that discuss graffiti and tagging, especially tagging graffiti artists in Yogyakarta where archiving books are very important. To overcome this problem, a visual book is designed that contains a collection of tagging archives from graffiti artists in Yogyakarta. The design of this visual book itself not only displays the tagging of each graffiti artist in Yogyakarta. But also discusses changes in tagging style, background and references from each graffiti artist. The tagging discussed is tagging made by graffiti artists in Yogyakarta who are still actively doing graffiti from 2000 to 2020. In the process, the author uses a layout with a Mondrian layout pattern so that the contents of the book are interesting to read. The author uses this Mondrian layout pattern as a basic form of arranging illustrations (photos) and text on each page of the book so that it looks harmonious and balanced. In addition, the author uses Serif and Sans Serif fonts with the consideration that this book can provide reading comfort for its readers and can be read clearly.

Keywords: visual books, graffiti, tagging, Yogyakarta

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INTRODUCTION

Yogyakarta is famous for its nickname as the city of art and culture, various arts certainly exist in this city, from fine arts, music, performing arts, and other arts. One of the other forms of art in Yogyakarta is graffiti art. Yogyakarta is like a heaven for graffiti artists, this can be seen from the graffiti artists' handwriting in every corner of the public space of Yogyakarta which is proof of the presence of graffiti art and its artists (urbancult, 2014)

Graffiti comes from the Italian word "graffito-graffiti" (plural) with the meaning of scribbles or drawings scratched on walls or any surface. Historically, graffiti art is seen as a form of vandalism in New York City between the 1970s and 1980s. The aesthetic and specific forms of graffiti are tags, graphic forms, letters, styles and applications of spray paint at certain locations (Lewisohn, 2008:18). Where the basic form of graffiti itself is a tag or tagging.



Tagging is the root of graffiti and is a quick way to mark an area (Bowen, 1999:24) which contains exploration of typography and letters to become an identity (signatures) for graffiti artists (Gomez, 1993:645). All graffiti artists have tagging, because tagging is an important identity for graffiti artists to show their existence in an area. This is also done by graffiti artists in the city of Yogyakarta.

Graffiti artists in the city of Yogyakarta have tagging that is their respective identities. This tagging was created from explorations carried out over the years. They explore and change the form of their tagging until they feel that the tagging suits their character. Based on interviews conducted by the author with graffiti artists Muck, Trasher, and Tuyuloveme, it is known that graffiti artists in the city of Yogyakarta have changed their tagging at least three times or more. The tagging replacement itself was done when they found new ideas and references that could be used to replace the old tagging (Muck, Trasher, and Tuyulove, graffiti artists, Bantul, Yogyakarta, in a personal interview on February 7, 2021).

On that occasion they also showed photo documentation of the tagging changes they had made. From that documentation the author realized that each graffiti artist only kept the tagging documentation they had made as personal documentation. Where the documentation has the potential to be archived. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), an archive is a written document (letter, deed, and so on), oral (speeches, lectures, and so on), or pictorial (photos, films, and so on) from the past, stored in written media (paper), electronic (cassette tape, video tape, computer diskette, and so on), which is usually issued by an official agency, stored and maintained in a special place for reference. Archiving activities are a process or way to archive. The archiving problem faced by graffiti artists in Yogyakarta is that they are not aware of the potential for the tagging documentation they have to be archived. Where the archives from this tagging can be accessed at any time and used as a reference. Starting from this problem, the author wants to collect the tagging of each graffiti artist in Yogyakarta in a visual book where this book becomes an archiving medium that can be accessed by graffiti artists and the general public.

Another thing that drives the author's desire to design a visual book containing a collection of graffiti artist tagging in Yogyakarta as an archiving medium is because based on the author's research, the book that the author will design has never existed in Indonesia. This was also expressed by Muck, Trasher, and Tuyuloveme, where they highlighted the lack of books that discuss graffiti and the absence of books that archive tagging for graffiti artists in Yogyakarta. Most of the existing graffiti books discuss graffiti styles such as throw-ups, simple pieces, and pieces along with examples of their perpetrators. Tagging itself is not the main topic in these books. This is most likely because throw-ups, simple pieces, and pieces are larger in size and are considered more aesthetic in public spaces (better known by the general public as graffiti itself) compared to tagging which is smaller in size and is often interpreted as "unclear" scribbles.

In "Arsipelago: Archival Work and Archiving of Art and Culture in Indonesia" (Wardani, et al., 2014:14-18), two important meanings of archiving are explained in the framework of political economy and as a cultural strategy, namely politics of claim and politics of access. Politics of claim emphasizes the importance of archiving as a supporter of arguments for claims of ownership, while politics of access emphasizes the importance of maintaining the uniqueness of the nation's art and cultural assets. Thus, the visual book contains archives of documentation of important art and cultural products to be realized, such as tagging graffiti artists in Yogyakarta.

From the background which includes: (1) the potential for documentation of tagging graffiti artists in Yogyakarta in the form of books as an archiving medium; (2) the lack of Indonesian books that discuss graffiti and the absence of books that archive tagging graffiti artists in Yogyakarta; and (3) the importance of archiving in book form, the author wants to design a visual book containing a collection of tagging archives from graffiti artists in Yogyakarta as an archiving medium. The design of this visual book not only displays the tagging of each graffiti artist in Yogyakarta. But also discusses changes in tagging style, background and references from each graffiti artist. The tagging discussed is tagging made by graffiti artists in Yogyakarta who are still actively doing graffiti from 2000 to 2020. It is hoped that this visual book can archive the tagging of graffiti artists in Yogyakarta so that graffiti artists have one archive documentation that can be accessed by graffiti lovers and actors, young people, and the wider community with informative content as well as an attractive appearance to read.

METHODS

This research applies a qualitative-descriptive approach with a design-based research method to develop a visual book that archives the tagging of graffiti artists in Yogyakarta. The process of data collection, analysis, and design development.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The process of designing this visual book begins with collecting data that has a relationship and information related to the tagging of graffiti artists in Yogyakarta. The data collection includes collecting the names of graffiti artists in Yogyakarta, the work of each graffiti artist in public spaces, the tagging work of graffiti artists, and conducting interviews with each graffiti artist. The next stage is the stage of designing each page of the visual book. Each data material that has been obtained begins to be arranged and arranged into the layout of the book pages. All applications are carried out using Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Adobe Indesign software. The function of using Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator software is as a tool to edit light and details so that photos appear clearer. While the function of Adobe Indesign is as a tool to arrange the layout of the visual book.

After going through the entire design process, the master file is then printed in dummy form as a presentation material or experiment to see the final result of the visual book. So that when there are deficiencies in the dummy, improvements can be made. This visual book is printed digitally. The size of the book is 14.8 x 21 cm. The type of paper used is for the book cover using 280 gram art paper with a matte finish, while for the contents of the book using 80 gram HVS paper.

The final stage after correcting the dummy is printing the final results of the visual book. The printing process uses the CMYK format. After the entire printing process is complete, the next thing is to cut the paper according to the size of 14.8 x 21 cm which is then finished with the binding process. In the design of this visual book, there is information on the title of the book, the subtitle of the book, and the name of the author. The illustration used on the background of the cover is in the form of tagging from words related to the world of graffiti.



Figure 1. Selected cover designs.
Source: (Donovan, 2021)

The layout of the book's contents page is designed using the Mondrian layout pattern. Where this pattern uses a different proportion pattern arrangement but is arranged parallel so that the layout is balanced and provides reading comfort. The following is the result of the realization of the book's contents page layout design.



Figure 2. Book page content layout design.
Source: (Donovan, 2021)

The font types used in designing this visual book are Serif and Sans Serif. The function of using these two types of fonts is that readers feel comfortable when reading while considering the clarity of the text. Sans Serif fonts are used as the title, subtitles, and captions of the book. For the type and size of each font, the title uses the Open Sans font measuring 22 pt, the subtitle uses the Merriweather font measuring 16 pt, and the caption uses the Open Sans font measuring 8 pt and 6 pt. While for the Serif font type used as the body text of the book's contents is Merriweather with a size of 8 pt. The spacing on the body text is multiple or 1.15 pt.

Open Sans

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890-='~!@#\$%^&*()_+{}[]";',./<>?

Merriweather

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890-='~!@#\$%^&*()_+{}[]";',./<>?

Merriweather

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890-='~!@#\$%^&*()_+{}[]";',./<>?

Figure 3. Type of font used.
Source: (Donovan, 2021)

The colors used in the design of this visual book are bright, vibrant colors and are derived from the colors often used by graffiti artists in their work. Where those colors will be used and converted into CMYK format. These colors include:

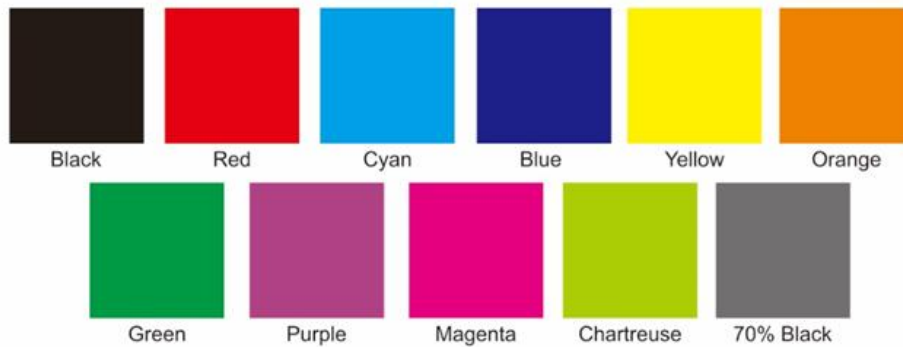


Figure 4. Colors used in the book.

Source: (Donovan, 2021)

The following is the final result of the visual book design “Street Coretan Jalanan: Kumpulan TaggingSeniman Graffiti Yogyakarta” including Front Cover, Inside Cover, Foreword, Table of Contents, Book Contents, Conclusion, Author Profile, and Back Cover.



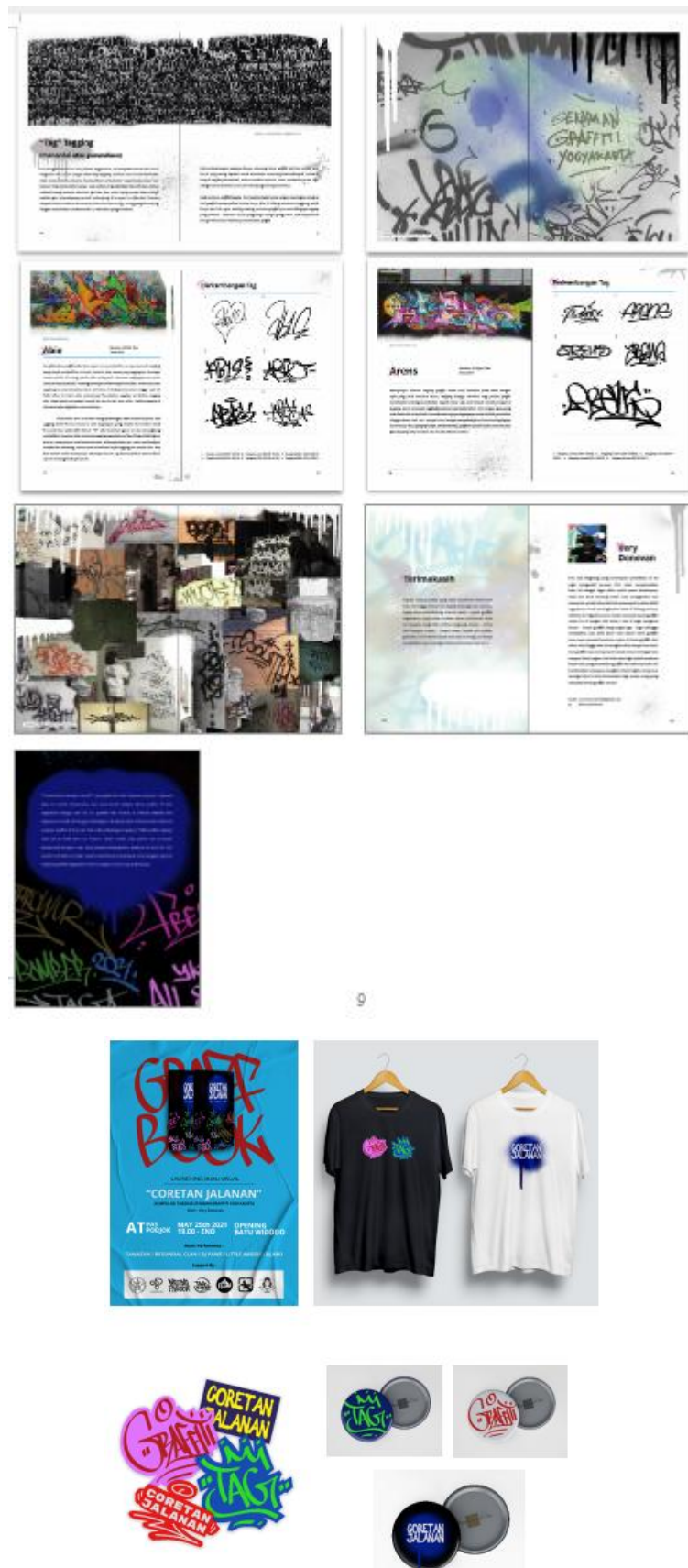


Figure 5. Final design.
Source: (Donovan, 2021)

CONCLUSION

Starting from the problem of how to design a book of graffiti artists' tagging collection in Yogyakarta as an archiving medium that is rich in information and visually attractive to read, the author designed a visual book that functions as an archiving medium entitled "Street Coretan Jalanan: Kumpulan Tagging Seniman Graffiti Yogyakarta". In the process, the author used a layout with a Mondrian layout pattern so that the contents of the book were interesting to read. The author used this Mondrian layout pattern as a basic form of arranging illustrations (photos) and text on each page of the book so that it looks harmonious and balanced. In addition, the author used Serif and Sans Serif fonts with the consideration that this book could provide reading comfort for its readers and be read clearly. So that the design of the visual book "Street Coretan Jalanan: Kumpulan Tagging Seniman Graffiti Yogyakarta" can fulfill the initial purpose of this book, namely to be an archiving medium as well as informative literature about the tagging of graffiti artists in Yogyakarta. During the process, the author realized that exploring graffiti was something new for the author personally. And this is not an easy thing, considering the various activities of each graffiti artist. However, it was from this process that the author gained new insights regarding tagging and graffiti from each graffiti artist.

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