

Let's take a brief look at how to think about submitting your photographs as potential cover art in their presentations.

The first thing that's essential is for you to study the journal layout to which you are submitting your image, how they might be placed in a particular cover format.

Most covers these days are full bleeds.

That is, the image takes up the whole cover and is therefore vertical.

Some of them still have, let's say, rectangle places within the larger vertical format.

But most of them are bleeds at this point.

So you have to think about that when you do submit an idea for a cover.

Think about where the journal's logo is placed, where additional text might be dropped.

You have to take all these things into consideration to help the art director decide whether or not the image is good enough for a cover.

But I do suggest not submitting a cover idea with the journal logo.

Just let the folks at the journal use their imaginations.

Let's start with something I did fairly recently.

Here I was given a number of samples of material.

They're all fabricated pieces that respond differently to pressure.

Trying to think of how in the world I was going to come up with an interesting cover design.

So I decided to play around with the shapes.

Here I'm using my flatbed scanner, and I'm adding a few pieces here and there and finally wound up with this composition, which I thought had the potential of being considered for this particular journal cover.

And I did digitally add a gradient to the background, as you can see.

In the end, yes, it did make a cover, which is always nice.

But do keep in mind, it's not just the image that will get you on the cover.

It's the science in the article that informs the journal's selection, maybe some other things as well, which none of us are privy to.

So it's not just the aesthetics, mostly about the importance of the research, which should be the case.

Here's another example, which you've seen before, showing the flexible circuitry imprinted on transparent material.

And again, we were delighted to get the cover of the journal, probably because of the importance of the science.

And by the way, that journal now has another format, where the cover art takes a completely different shape than what you're seeing here.

So again, it's very important to match your image's format with the journal's format.

For this image, another one that you've seen before, it still is one of my favorites after all these years, a bit unusual because I don't usually like old stuff.

But they used it for the cover of a textbook in chemistry.

After all, this is very, very much about chemistry.

And notice how they cropped the image to fit the format.

And of course, I gave the publisher permission to do that.

And here, this image was made by the researchers hundreds of miles from my studio.

But we communicated closely through email with my making suggestions on how to photograph and light the work.

In this next image, the researchers shined a laser onto the container with no additional room light, and we see new material showing up.

We couldn't see it before because those balls have the same index of refraction as the solution in which they were floating.

That's the point of this research.

The researchers wanted to show this image with a hand in place, suggesting that the laser is turned off ready to be turned on.

And I said, no, please, no hands.

I believe that hands generally distract and detract from the rest of the image.

It's just another distraction.

Please don't use hands.

So I suggested starting with the container under a lamp as before and then take another picture with just the laser shining through the lower part of the image to see the hidden material.

So this is the first image, and this is the second image.

I selected the lower part of the second image, copied it and pasted it onto the first image.

So that we have a sort of photo illustration, which you're going to see more of next week, in that we will show what it is without the laser and what it is with the laser side by side comparing the two with the information in the caption.

The idea was to make the cover, and we did, which was nice.

I think it worked well.

You know, some images look even better when they are made into covers with the addition of text.

They might not be spectacular on their own, but often, in my opinion, are enhanced with well-placed text, as what happens here.

This is not a very exciting image that I made.

It's a detail of equipment that's used in this particular lab.

I was delighted that they liked the abstract quality of the image and used it well, in fact, with good placement of text.

In this image, I was working on some print material for what was then called the DuPont MIT Alliance, which funded research about bioinspired material.

I made a picture of a sea urchin, which is a fascinating story in itself.

I made it straight on.

I also tried it with the flatbed scanner.

In the end, the very talented graphic designer, he created a pretty stunning brochure, placed the scanner image on the cover, and it worked well in terms of the whole design of the brochure.

And in this image, which was also part of the same project, a bioreactor where liver cells grow in three-dimensional space, I did like the picture as I made it.

But once again, the graphic designer took it to another level, using the image as is and also associating it on the page with a drawing of the same reactor.

A very interesting way of reinforcing the structure.

For our book No Small Matter, I made a photograph of beer.

The idea was to consider the molecular or nanostructure of bubbles.

Now, notice that I included the wall of the rectangular container in the image on the right.

The final cover wrapped the image around the full book and used the container area as the front book flap, which I think is kind of cool.

Here's an image you've seen before, and here it's used in the title page of the Chinese version of our book No Small Matter.

And here's the American title page, again just showing you how photographs can be used with text.

Once again, dropping text, I think, can make an OK image, (which this is, of bubbles), into a more interesting cover.

The left side is the back cover of this booklet.

I think that worked pretty well.

And this photograph is a straight, highly documentary image showing the presence of material in an assay.

And I simply used the image in a more expanded idea for a cover illustratively giving more information about the

material.

I don't use Illustrator very often, but in this case, it seemed to work.

And finally, here's another image you've seen before, used both as a cover and back cover for an MIT publication.

I was quite pleased that the image I made 15 years ago still had a life, frankly because of the importance of nanocrystal, or quantum dot science.

Yeah, the picture was good, but the science is even better.

If you are lucky to work with researchers whose work is timeless, then your photographs might become timeless as well, if you are lucky.