

Colour of the year

With Pantone's choice regarded as a swing and a miss, we asked our team for their predictions on what's going to be hot next year.

2026

Musings on *Cloud dancer white*

Like many other artists and designers we're disappointed with Pantone's colour of the year choice. It's a nice neutral accent (just 'nice' is a term we hate) and fine as an accent or background. But choosing such a muted shade when so many vivid, inspiring colours exist feels disappointingly safe. Pantone have presented Cloud Dancer as signifier of a great cultural reboot. A calm, liminal space in an era of AI-driven acceleration and digital overstimulation.

The soft white is described with poetic optimism- fresh starts, a new page, rebooted simplicity. It's marketed as a signal of calm, clarity, and a collective desire for a fresh start. But calling white "the colour of the year" in 2026 isn't defining a new era. It's just... white. And the distance between Pantone's prediction and what people actually want has never been more obvious.



1

Celedon Green.

My choice for a colour of the year echoes the ideals of Pantone's choice- simplicity, fresh beginnings, reflection, serenity- but with more character.

Celedon is a gentle evolution from the whimsical pistachio palettes of Wes Anderson towards nature- quieter, more soothing, more subtle. Its ethereal green tones recall ancient craft traditions- translucent, glassy glazes with depth and complexity that shift in the light.

Celedon wraps spaces in a quiet, inviting calm in an age of permacrisis. Whether appearing as a mist-like wash of colour or as a diaphanous material catching the light, it offers respite: a breath, a pause, and a subtle reminder of balance.

Andrea Robinett

DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE & STRATEGY



2

Erudite Indigo.

Monochromatic steel and white have ruled for far too long; it's time for a surge of rich vibrancy. Colour carries emotion, culture and meaning, and its deeply human resonance is what drives this shift.

Enter what I've coined, 'Erudite Indigo', a luxuriously enrobing blue that nods to Japanese selvedge, and the elemental dye traditions of West Africa. Drawn from the alchemical intelligence of the Yoruba, Hausa and Tuareg, this deep blue embodies wealth, protection and spirituality.

I love this colour for the way it cloaks everything in velvety twilight, it's transcendent, otherworldly and almost atmospherically regal. It radiates a discerning confidence born from the vibrant, textural process that creates it.

Josh Knox

ASSOCIATE CREATIVE DIRECTOR





3

Dune.

My defining hue for 2026 steps away from the ubiquitous digital sphere and occupies a more human, material realm. While I agree with Pantone's hypothesis; the cross-cultural desire for detox and the resulting pull towards airy, achromatic shades like Cloud Dancer, I find resolution lies in Earthly depth, notably: Dune.

A rich, nuanced caramel meets terracotta brown that serves as a powerful analogue counterpoint to the ever-encroaching AI landscape and all that it brings.

Its an intentional embrace of Terra Firma and human authenticity; a colour that provides visual weight and tactile warmth.

Akin to the comforting heft of hand-thrown clay, the organic texture of natural fibre, or the patina of sepia photography. 'Dune' is a grounding shade that anchors spaces and designs in craftsmanship and an enduring, earthy humanity.

Rosie Preston-Carr
SENIOR BRAND DESIGNER



4

Jimteal™.

Teal hues have long been a favourite we're drawn to. From turquoise to cyan, the teal end of the spectrum is loved and consistently chimes in a global favourite. The colour exudes a sense of calm and tranquillity, yet combines the richness of earthen tones and energy of the ocean. I've named this colour Jimteal™ because it is a go to shade for me, with its timeless appeal and stands out in every category.

James Wesson
SENIOR 3D DESIGNER



5

Embered Sienna.

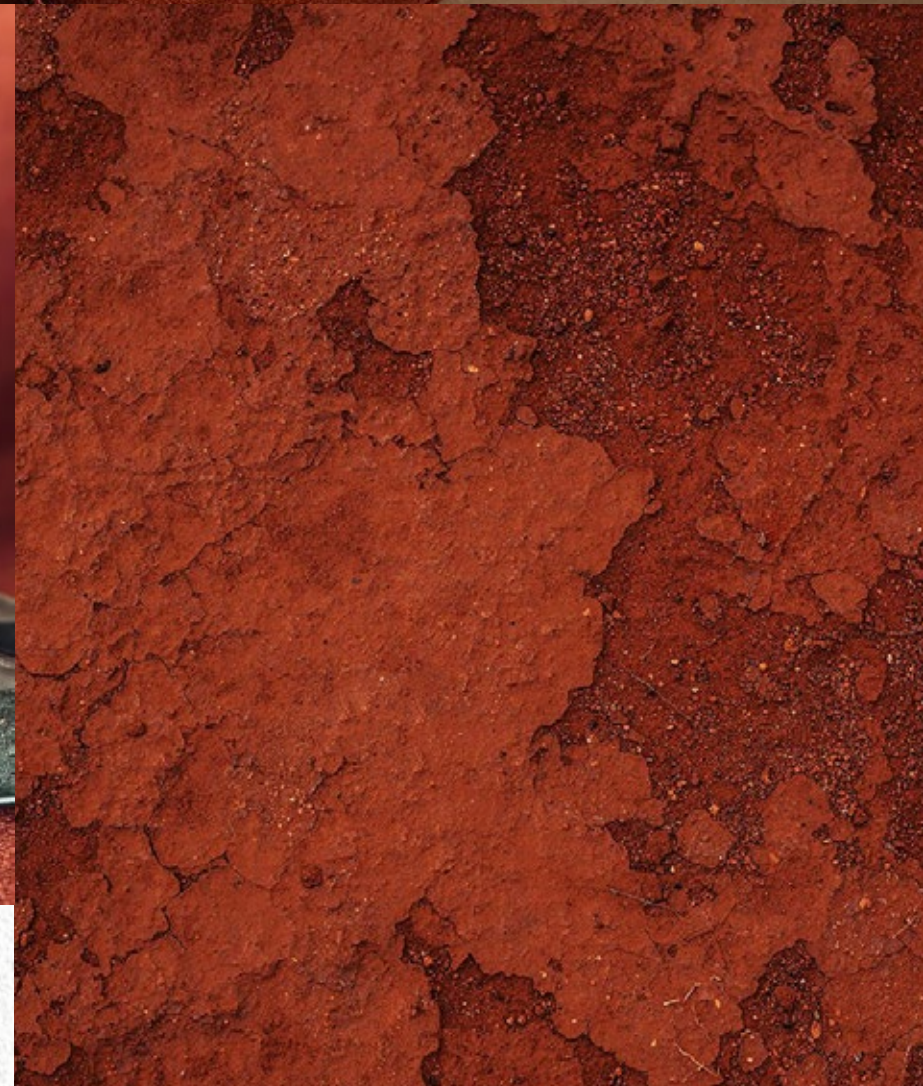
A slow-burning ember of a colour, where burnt orange, russet red and earthen brown fuse into a single, smouldering tone.

The world is increasingly shaped by frictionless automation, but Ember Sienna is unapologetically tactile. It feels like sun-warmed clay, oxidised metal left to weather beautifully, or the resinous glow of polished timber. There's a primal familiarity to it for me; a colour that makes me recall camp-fires at dusk, desert stone, and the honest labour of hand-worked materials.

Expressive yet grounded, evocative yet sophisticated, Ember Sienna radiates an elemental warmth that lingers, it's my choice because it feels connecting memory, materiality and an enduring sense of something human.

Katie Askew

3D DESIGNER



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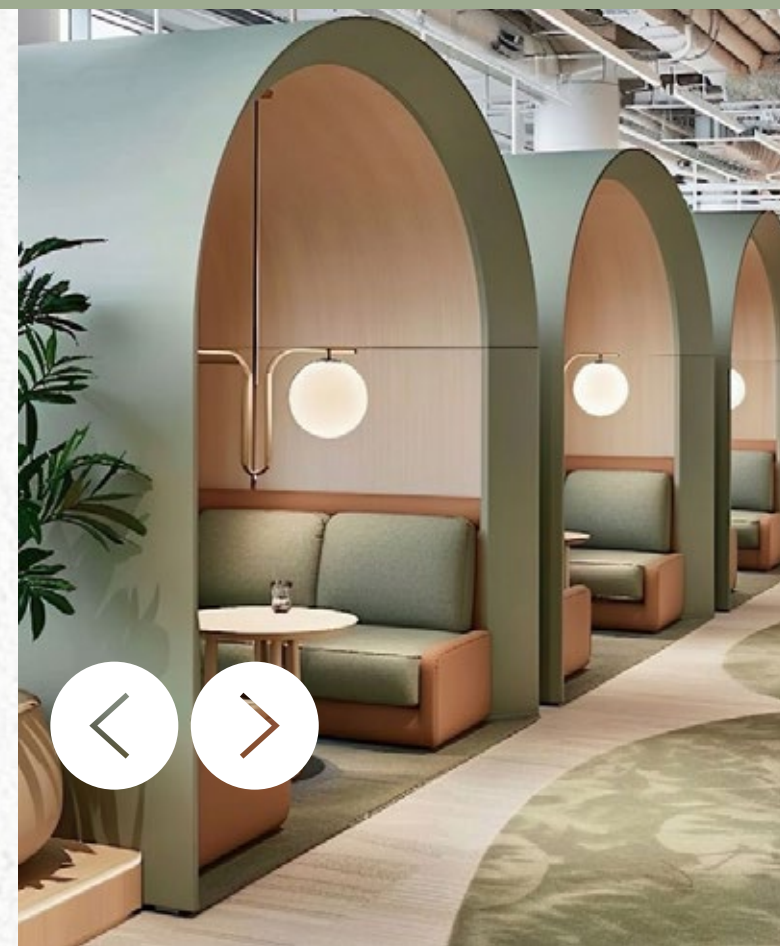
Sea Foam.

Sea Foam is a luminous blue-green that for me feels as weightless as salt spray and as calm as a still horizon. It holds a soft sense of movement without urgency, the cool hush after a breaking wave, the fleeting translucence of water before it settles.

I love how fresh and quietly cleansing it is, it evokes release and openness, bringing a serene, optimistic clarity.

Light seems to drift through it, giving the colour an airy buoyancy that's both rejuvenating and subtly ethereal. It's delicate yet confident, Sea Foam embodies nature's gentler rhythms, carrying you forward with its cool, crystalline refreshment.

Molly Jarvis
RETAIL DESIGNER



7

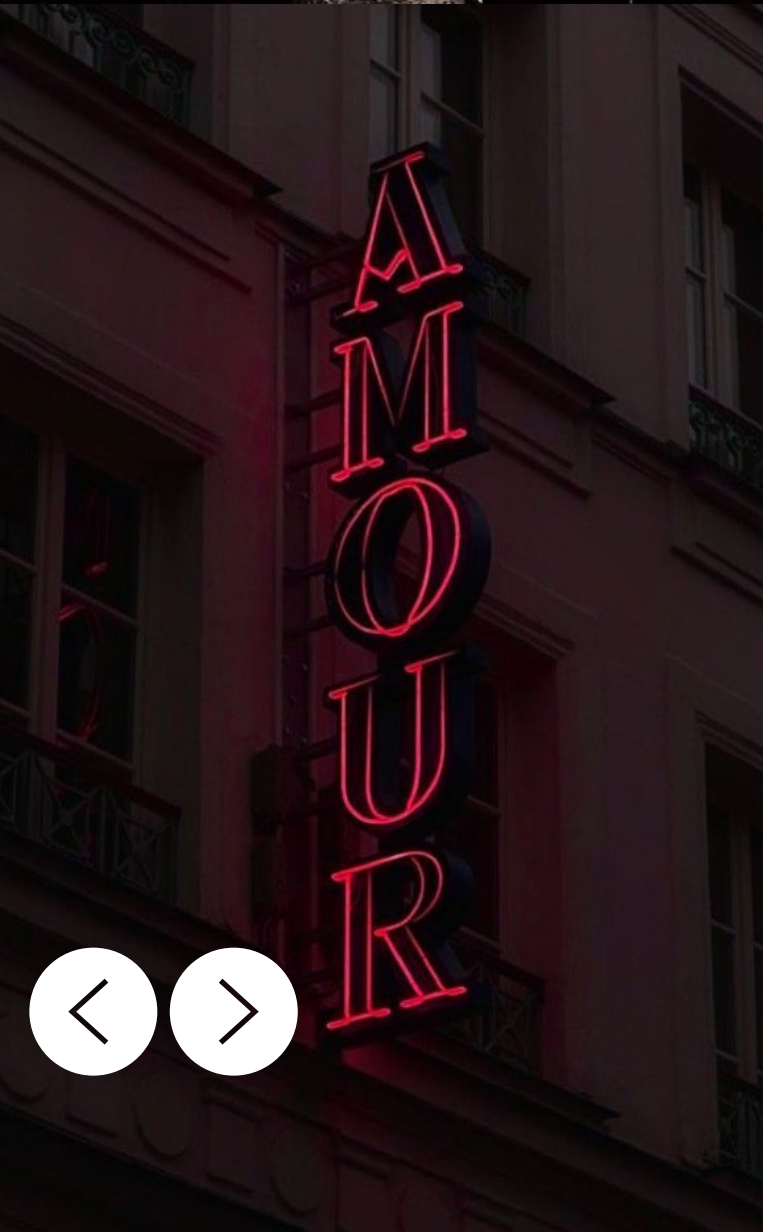
Gilded Noir.

A saturated, slow-burning burgundy with the aura of darkness brushed by warmth, tones of a deep red wine, cacao, and shadowed florals fuse into a quietly commanding presence.

For me it carries the weight of quiet luxury, evoking dimly lit rooms with shadows that behave like velvet, and confidence that moves without sound. This colour doesn't announce itself; it really pulls, creating an atmosphere that's just so magnetic, intimate, and subtly dangerous, the visual equivalent of a held stare.

It's refined yet primal, romantic without sweetness, and unmistakably built for spaces and silhouettes that want to feel both grounded and irresistibly compelling.

Ashley Roberts
RETAIL DESIGNER



7

Solstice Orange.

A vivid, fire-born burst of colour, Solstice Orange is the incandescent glow of a sun dipping toward the horizon , warm, kinetic, and unapologetically radiant.

It's the colour of heat made visible: flaring sunrays, torn citrus rind, and the electric edge of daylight at its most dramatic. Emotionally, it's to me it feels like pure ignition, sparking creativity, lifting the mood, and filling space with an optimistic hum. Bold yet never harsh, it glows with juicy warmth and effortless vibrancy

Solstice Orange is luminous, courageous, and full of promise, the kind of colour that makes a fishing trip feel perfect... even when you don't catch a single fish.

Mohamad al awad

3D CREATIVE INTERN



8

Grimoire green.

I love this colour. To me it feels comfortable; if feeling like you're going to be spirited away at any moment is anyone else's idea of comfortable.

Like many people this year, I'm sure I'm not alone in feeling the primal urge to get lost in some kind of deep, misty forest and get spirited away. Surly I'm not alone!?

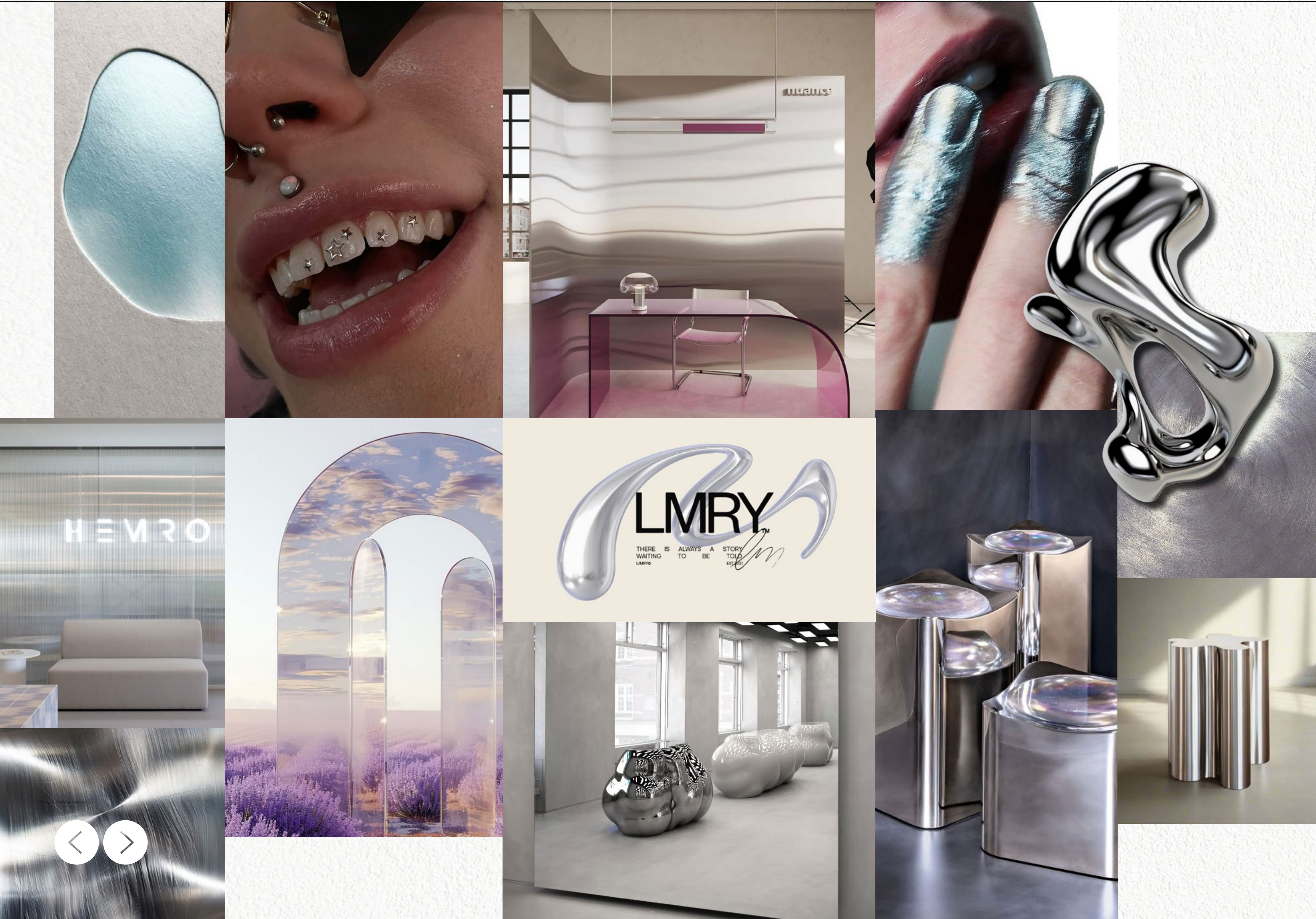
'Grimoire green' is like looking at an old abandoned barn house in the deep British country side, reclaimed by nature and has me thinking 'God, I wish i was there'.

I want that moment of running through a kind of mysteriously misty moor, having a proper Jane Eyre moment, but with a 2000's TV series 'Charmed' twist.

If I hear my name called from the Appalachian mountains I'm following it. Is that so much to ask for?

Tia Hayes

MOTION GRAPHICS & DIGITAL DESIGNER



9

Future Chrome.

I am just obsessed with this shade we're calling 'Future Chrome'; it is just so cool, and I think it absolutely embodies this whole new Y3K aesthetic, bringing in that distinct Matrix, sci-fi futuristic vibe.

I'm noticing face and tooth gems becoming way more popular, along with tons of chunky silver rings, which feels very 'me' and perfectly channels that new Y3K look we're moving into, which, yes, I'm hoping means I'm trendy! It's not just fashion; seeing more stainless steel integrated into design is a significant signal, which I think is a really good direction.

I've noticed that tonally, chrome by itself doesn't always give off the same strong future vibe as it does when it's paired with a subtle pop of colour; that touch of colour, as you can see from the mood board, is what adds that trendy edge that makes the whole look feel truly future forward in my opinion.

Jasmin Sprake

MARKETING ASSISTANT



10

Midnight current.

A deep natural tone which captures hues of blue and green, Midnight current teal serves as a beacon, signifying ingenuity, energy and growth. nature at its simplest and most powerful.

'Midnight Current' colour rooted in nature, reflects a wider more conscious shift towards transformation. An energetic expression of evolution, a luxe teal that vividly lifts any space with serene tones replicating the calming hues of the natural world.

Sanjay Mistry
DEVELOPMENT DESIGNER



Meet the contributors.

Our multidisciplinary creative studio team is made up of trend-hunters, experts and innovators. We're constantly immersed in the worlds of retail, brand, and hospitality design, ensuring our output is forward thinking and relevant.



Josh Knox
ASSOCIATE
CREATIVE DIRECTOR



Andrea Robinett
DIRECTOR OF
CREATIVE & STRATEGY



Rosie Preston-Cary
SENIOR 2D
& BRAND DESIGNER



Jasmin Sprake
MARKETING ASSISTANT



James Wesson
SENIOR
DESIGNER



Sanjay Mistry
DEVELOPMENT
DESIGNER



Katie Askew
DESIGNER



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Molly Jarvis
RETAIL DESIGNER



Ashley Roberts
3D DESIGNER



Tia Hayes
DIGITAL
DESIGNER

Thank you for reading.

From all of us at D4R, we remain excited by the endless possibilities of colour. In the year ahead, we look forward to seeing where the chromatic spectrum trends shift, and we promise to do our creative part in making the world a more imaginative place.

Let's talk.