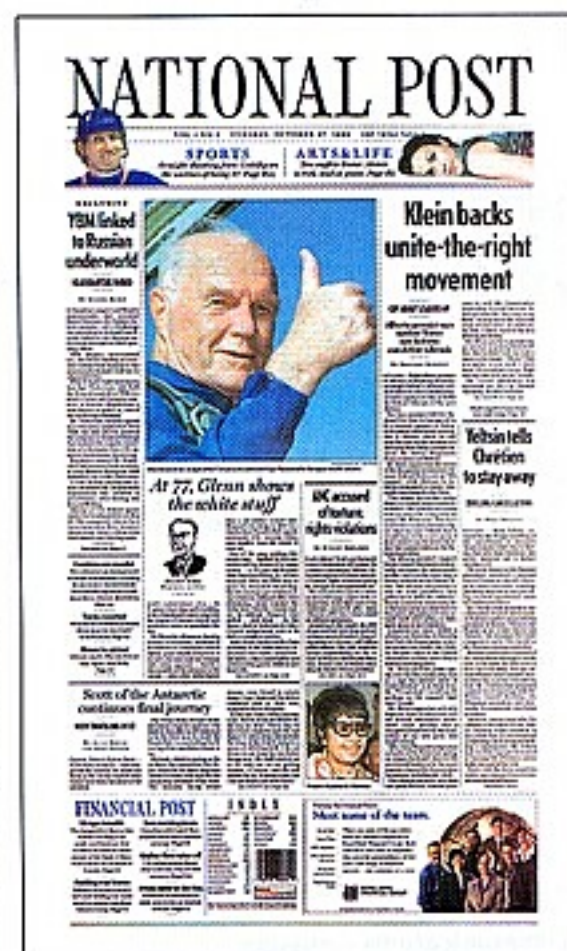


Full Court Press

One country. Two national newspapers.

How their distinct design strategies aim to score with readers

by ANITA LAHEY



What do you do when some blasted upstart threatens to kick you off your cherished pedestal? You go color.

At least, that's what *The Globe and Mail* did.

While rumors were circulating last year about Conrad Black's plans to launch a new national newspaper, *Globe* editor-in-chief William Thorsell turned to Robert Lockwood, the co-founder of the International Society for Newspaper Design, and famous for his revolutionary art direction at the Allentown, Penn., *Morning Call* in the late '70s (he made the *Call* look radically different each day, depending on what was in the news). Thorsell wanted Lockwood's advice on adding color to the "Old Grey Lady."

Sounds almost trivial, unless you know *The Globe and Mail*: traditional, steadfast and unapologetically grey, grey, grey. The *Globe*, Canada's sole national paper until then, was sure to be the chief rival of Southam-Hollinger's newborn. The country was on the verge of a real, fist-clenching, old-fashioned newspaper war, and color had become the weapon of first choice.

Lockwood, an articulate man who works out of his winterized cottage in rural Maine, immediately impressed upon Thorsell that simply adding a dash of color here and there would not do: "It would look patchy." Thorsell was sold, and Lockwood, who had recently redesigned the *Bangkok Post* and the *Berliner Zeitung*, began to outline a fullscale overhaul. The *Globe* soon hired two new art directors: Carl Neustadter from *The Ottawa Citizen*, and David Pratt from the *Bangkok Post* (who had worked with Lockwood on the *Bangkok* redesign). The three would work closely with Thorsell—a design buff himself—to prepare the grey lady for its contender.

Meanwhile, the as-yet-unnamed *National Post* employed eminent Montreal designer Lucie Lacava. Lacava had intimate knowledge of the makings of most Canadian papers—she'd redesigned two dozen of them herself—making her well suited to give the new paper the distinctive look its management team was looking for. She also knew Lockwood's work, and could confidently predict the style he would employ at the *Globe*.

On July 9, 1998 a new *Globe* was tossed onto readers' doorsteps. Three-and-a-half months later, on October 27, the *National Post* hit the streets. What is remarkable, given that they're both courting a similar national audience—an intelligent, sophisticated, upscale reader—is that the two papers, placed side-by-side, look absolutely nothing alike. One is sober, distinguished, analytical, the other serious but playful, more about hard news than soul-searching.

Designing a newspaper is a finicky business—it has to be eye-catching enough to look exciting day after day, and yet readable enough to keep people's attention. Lacava and Lockwood each used a carefully thought out bag of typographical tricks to create two vastly different products. Here's how they did it.

To Lockwood, the real test is how readers feel inside his creation. Was he able to combine 1,000 details into a cohesive whole? "People should feel good in this place without articulating why. They don't say, 'I like the Walbaum you've used.'"

THE NATIONAL POST: For the first couple of months after the launch of the *Post*, Lucie Lacava made nightly rounds in the production department, coaching staff on how to fit the day's news into her design template. It was no picnic. "People here came from papers all over the world," she says. "Getting everyone to work the same way was a challenge."

Sounds tense. But newspaper launches are hardly smooth, calm processes. Halfway through Lacava's contract, she saw her target readership change significantly, with the purchase of the *Financial Post*. "We went from a middle market, between the (Toronto) *Star* and the *Globe*, to an upscale readership." Also, she worked closely with editor Ken Whyte, whom she describes, not disparagingly, as demanding. He'd say, 'I don't like that, I don't know why,' leaving Lacava to figure it out.

But ultimately, all this tension was conducive to her goal of giving the paper an edgier look. Aiming at a reader just slightly different from the *Globe's*—a bit younger, a bit more worldly—

Lacava wanted an elegant but electric look that wasn't "static or predictable." Above all, it had to be 100 per cent unique.

Her first strategy: a sans serif headline font, uncommon in Canada, to give the *Post* a harder edge and set it apart, particularly from its Southam siblings. She avoided the "typical" sans font, Franklin Gothic, and commissioned California type designer Jim Parkinson to custom-design a new typeface.

Dubbed "Post Sans," this slim dark font is used—in conjunction with Miller, the text typeface—in a variety of shapes and sizes. For example, hard news heads appear in Post Sans, features in Miller Light, columns in Miller Light Italic, and lesser news in Post Sans Light. The treatment stands out: most Canadian papers use a single weight and size for headlines.

Combined with stacked heads and decks—the head in Post Sans, "deck one" in all caps, "deck two" in Miller—the mix is a way of breaking up a page without using images. "To give it a more *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* type of feel," says Lacava. "The tendency in a mid-market paper is to throw in a picture. We're doing it with words."

A narrow, six-column grid, with stories starting at various points along the columns, provides movement. It also establishes story hierarchy, and accommodates Lacava's preference for

FINANCIAL POST

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1994


Top obstacle to bank mergers: credit cards

Former YBM officer tied to Russian crime boss

U.S. officials have Canadian chip on their shoulder

Loblaw seen in lineup for Oshawa

The largest emerald in all of China



Income Plus Fund. The Right Investment Balance.



REVIEW

NATIONAL POST, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1994


PROFILE
Black Panther William Lee Brown's wrong side. Page B1

DISCOVERY
What would happen if modern experts assumed Christ's world? Page B11

William Johnson goes for brush

When Swaziland's maidens start the Reed Dance, the tiny nation's contradictions are forgotten

All the King's Virgins



A woman under the influence

U.S. officials have Canadian chip on their shoulder

The National Post, section fronts, Financial Post and Review (above) and Weekend Post (right)

hairlines. She uses lines liberally, in triples to separate stories, in singles between columns. "I'm not a big fan of boxes. That reputation precedes me wherever I go." Why not? A box creates balance problems. It can pull your eyes away from more important items, and it jars against vertical lines.

Still, the vertical and horizontal can and should be played against each other, according to Lacava. Inside, a horizontal "attic," filled with briefs or a short piece, runs along the tops of pages, a trick Lacava picked up from some European papers. "You have this horizontal emphasis across the top, and then this vertical stress below."

But Lacava also wanted the readers to have an immediate comfort level with the paper, so she chose Miller for the body text. "Its elements of Century and Times Roman are familiar to most Canadians." Other points in its favor: it's quite distinct from Poynter, used by many other Southern papers; it had the right density and height for narrow columns; its quirky italics were irresistible. "It's probably more appropriate for book publishing," says Lacava. Some italicized caps were so flowery, they had to be toned down.

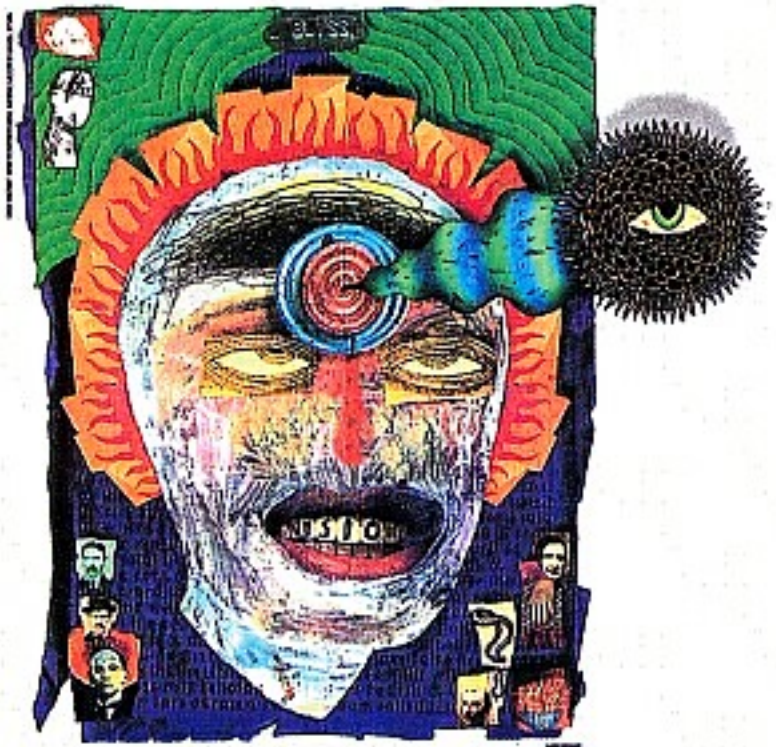
There's nothing flowery about the bold nameplate. To create it, she fiddled with Miller, stretching and narrowing, widening the serifs, then sent it off to Parkinson. The final result is a clean,

tall banner. Inside section heads were given the same treatment, only colored in *Financial Post* blue—the one style point over which Lacava had no say.

In the end, much stemmed from what Lacava surmised about the *Globe*. It would never drop its serif heads, she predicted. It wouldn't adopt illustrations for its columnists. (The *Post's*, drawn by in-house illustrator Leanne Shapton, need fine-tuning—not all look quite like their subjects—but Lacava is adamant that they beat photography for instant identification of a column.) Nor would the *Globe* ditch its page one briefs. So Lacava put hers on page two, and found other techniques for the front: "Chinese turns" (teasers that throw to the full story inside) and "reefers" (photos which jut into the nameplate).

She was utterly dismayed when the *Globe* added "sky boxes," its own blurbs and photos across the top of A1, after the *Post* was launched. "I don't think it's a good idea for the papers to start looking similar."

Indeed, what she likes best about the *Post* is that no one can find another paper like it. "I've done a lot of redesigns and usually people will immediately say, 'It looks like this paper, it looks like that paper.' Not this time. This one has its own unique personality. That's what we were hoping for." ❖



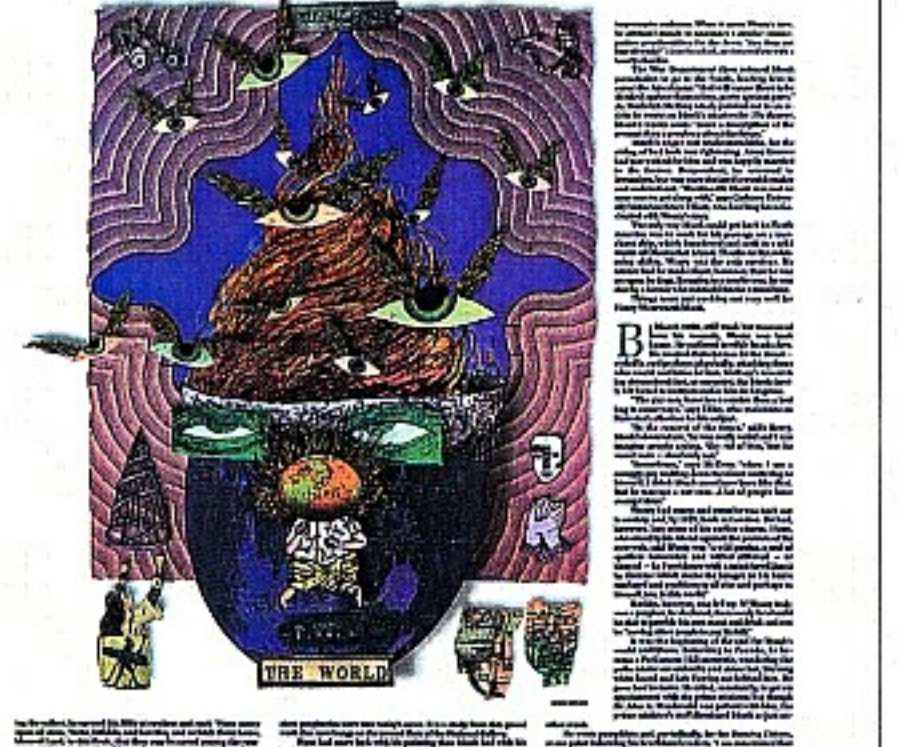
Canada's own visionary

Mistaken for a beggar, locked up as mad, Henry Wentworth Monk had predicted flying machines, millenium anxiety, and a Jewish homeland

They

As a child of Providence who has seen his name misspelled in the pages of the *Financial Post*, Monk has a reputation for being a visionary. He predicted flying machines, millenium anxiety, and a Jewish homeland. Monk was born in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1818. He was a child prodigy, and his predictions were remarkably accurate. He was a seer, a prophet, a visionary. He was a man of his time, and his predictions were a reflection of the world he lived in. He was a man of his time, and his predictions were a reflection of the world he lived in. He was a man of his time, and his predictions were a reflection of the world he lived in.

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The world

The world is a complex and ever-changing place. It is a place of many wonders and mysteries. It is a place where we live and breathe, and where we strive to make a better life for ourselves and for the world we live in. The world is a place of many wonders and mysteries. It is a place where we live and breathe, and where we strive to make a better life for ourselves and for the world we live in.



Charles Darwin, Oscar Wilde, and Abraham Lincoln