

## **Designing The Cover Of The Fantasy Novel ‘Alpheratz Chronicle: Guide To An Uprising’ To Fit The Market**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The illustrations in the book or the cover in the book have the intention to explain the contents of the book. Popular fantasy novels like *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, have illustrations from book covers to book contents. The novel 'Alpheratz Chronicle: Guide to an Uprising' is one of the novels inspired by popular fantasy novels. But 'Alpheratz Chronicle: Guide to an Uprising' does not yet have a visual for the book to be marketable. Therefore, in order for the original novel 'Alpheratz Chronicle: Guide to an Uprising' to be more acceptable and attractive in the eyes of readers, a visualization design for the cover and contents of the novel 'Alpheratz Chronicle: Guide to an Uprising' was made using art style that determined by research over the topic. This study uses questionnaires and interviews with expert users who are proficient in this field and extreme users who frequently consume the product. The results of the questionnaires and interviews will determine what artstyle makes the original fantasy novel more interesting and whether the resulting prototype from the design meets the criteria to be a marketable book or not. Therefore, it is hoped that the results of the visualization design of the original novel 'Alpheratz Chronicle: Guide to an Uprising' are expected.

Keywords: illustration, fantasy, character, cover, novel

### **INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, there are many writers who are just starting to create novels or short stories that they will publish to online platforms. However, writers who want to publish online or in print, cannot make their novels marketable without a cover visualization for their work. Many writers who only focus on writing without any experience in illustration or design but want their written work to have a face for the book.

The cover plays a very important role in attracting the reader's attention. With the guidance of these visual elements, a novel cover can be formed that can provide an overview of the contents of the book and its main idea. According to (Sutanto, 2017), illustrations in novel book covers can be used as showing the content or genre of the book, describing the target consumer of the book, setting the mood of the book through the use of images of character objects, scenery or creating assets that can bring the mood of the book genre, providing credibility and arousing readers' appetite to read the book (Klimchuk, Marianne. & Krasovec. Sandra A. 2007 in Sutanto, 2017).

The problem faced by this novel is that the novel does not have a cover, where the cover is very important in becoming the face of a novel. According to Abrahams, 1981:61 in Nurgiyantoro 1995, The term fiction in the sense of imaginary narrative is a fictional or imaginary story. Therefore, a work of fiction is a work that tells something that does not exist or does not really happen or is imaginary, so works of fiction do not need to be searched for the truth in the real world. According to Altenbernd and Lewis (1966: 14), fiction can be defined as "narrative prose that is imaginative, but usually plausible and contains truths that dramatize human relationships. The author argues that it is based on his experiences and observations of life. This is because fiction is a narrative work whose content does not contain historical truth. In novels, fiction presents an imaginative world, an idealized life, which is built through elements in the novel such as plot, characters, events, settings, and others, all of which are based on imaginative nature. The similarity that this design will bring is that the depiction of the imaginative work that the author brings in 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an Uprising' can succeed in visualizing the contents of the novel elements such as plot, character, setting, and others in accordance with the author's description of the contents of the novel 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an Uprising'.

For readers to understand the genre of the book in just a cursory glance. With 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an Uprising' it has a fantasy genre. The use of illustrations on the cover is very important in describing the essence of magic in the book using only one image, namely the cover of the book. Because illustrations

can make shapes or pictures from explanations in books. Such as character clothing designs, character expressions, magic illustration assets. The use of illustration is to explain something or make something clearer in the process of describing something. According to Michael Fleishmen (Michael Fleishmen, 2004 in Indiria, 2016) said that illustration is able to explain the purpose of something. With the medium or form in the form of cartoon or imaginative drawings, realist or photographic images. In the book 'Illustration' by Indiria Maharsi, according to Drs. RM. Soenarto said that illustration is an image or the result of a graphic process that helps decorate, accompany or clarify a sentence from a text in direct understanding for the reader. In this design, illustrations are used in the explanation in fiction books so that readers are easier to understand and visualize a character according to the author. The choice of drawing style is also determined through research on drawing styles that are easily accepted by people aged 17-27.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Based on the explanation of the data and facts above, the problem formulation of this design is: How to design the cover to fit the market of the novel 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an Uprising'. In this research data collection will be using primary and secondary.

Interviews with expert and extreme users as well as surveys of target populations that correspond to the 'Alpheratz Chronicle: Guide to an Uprising' target market will be used to gather primary data. There are two categories of expert users that will be interviewed, An illustration expert users and writer expert users. In the secondary data will be using Questionnaires as the media. Questionnaires are able to collect responses from several people in different locations for getting a more diverse answer. And this makes the questionnaire method the important and secondary source for obtaining research data (Rowley, 2014; Zohrabi, 2013). The selection in these two categories was chosen from the balance in the interview results from the illustration side who was more proficient in visuals such as color, image composition, etc. and the writer side where the author of the book was more proficient for book layout and text placement.

### **Primary Data**

An expert user in 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an uprising' is someone who has the ability and knowledge in book layouts or can be called a writer and illustrator who has studied and is an expert in this field. There are two types of experts that will be interviewed. Illustrator expert users and Writer expert users. Below are the two illustrator experts who will be interviewed for their advice and critics:

1. **Tisa Ashifa**, As a illustration expert user
2. **Dhia Ayu Shabrina Soewandi**, As a illustration expert user

Below are the two writer experts who will be interviewed for their advice and critics:

1. **Adi Suryo** or the author's name Misaka Takashi, As a writer expert user
2. **Dhia Ayu Shabrina Soewandi**, As a writer expert user

After the introduction of expert users who will help with this project, next it's three extreme users who will be interviewed over the eyes of the target audience. An extreme user in 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an uprising' is someone who has a hobby of reading novels and has read fantasy novels as well as novels that have illustrations in the book. The following are three extreme users who will be interviewed:

1. **Aisha Nabila Fauzi**, Age 21
2. **Lintang Ruhil Hidayah**, Age 22
3. **Daigo Tanu Saputra**, Age 22

### **Secondary Data**

The most appropriate data collection technique for 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an uprising' is to use a questionnaire via a Google form aimed at respondents aged 17 - 27 and have read novels or illustrated books.

## Result



Figure 2.1 Research results “Jika anda melihat cover novel fantasi seperti dibawah ini, apakah anda tertarik untuk membacanya?”  
source: author's documentation

The questionnaire results show that the prototype cover that has been made looks attractive and 92% of respondents feel that it makes them interested in reading the novel. But 8% of the 43 respondents felt that it was not suitable and there was one respondent who felt that it still did not look fantasy but still looked real.

Dari ilustrasi dibawah ini, mana art style yang paling cocok untuk novel genre fantasi ?

43 jawaban

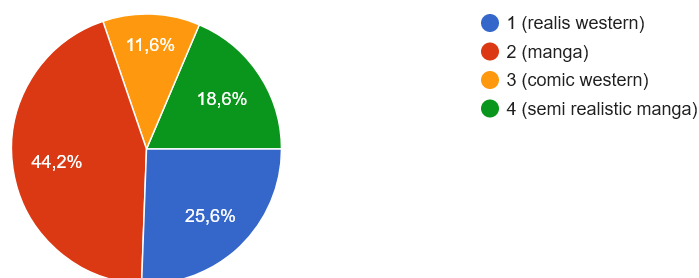


Figure 2.2 Research results “Dari ilustrasi dibawah ini, mana art style yang paling cocok untuk novel genre fantasi?”  
source: author's documentation

The questionnaire showed that the most suitable art style for the cover of a fantasy novel is Manga. With 44.2% of the 43 respondents feeling that manga is a suitable art style for this novel. It tells the story and shows the nature and portrayal of the characters in the novel. With number two there is a western realist art style because many well-known fantasy novels use this art style like Harry Potter, Percy Jackson and other well known novel fantasy.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Fantasy**

Prose in the literary sense can also be called fiction, narrative text or imaginary narrative. The term fiction in the sense of imaginary narrative is fiction or imaginary stories. This is because fiction is a narrative work whose content does not contain historical truth (Abrahams, 1981:61 in Nurgiyantoro 1995). Therefore, a work of fiction is a work that tells something that does not exist or does not really happen or is imaginary, so that works of fiction do not need to seek the truth in the real world.

According to Altenberg and Lewis (1966: 14), fiction can be interpreted as "narrative prose that is imaginative in nature, but usually makes sense and contains truth that dramatizes human relations. The author suggests this based on his experiences and observations of life. However, this is done selectively and is shaped according to its purpose which at the same time incorporates elements of entertainment and information into the experience of human life." Fiction is an imaginative work that is based on observations from the author's life in terms of interaction, environment and interaction with oneself as well as intense contemplation of determining the aspect of creativity as a work of art that contains imaginative works.

The similarity that will be brought by this design is that the depiction of imaginative works that the author presents in 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an Uprising' can succeed in visualizing the contents of novel elements such as plot, characters, setting, setting and others according to the author's description. from the contents of the novel 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an Uprising'.

## **Illustration**

The definition of illustration is different for each expert because the definition of illustration will be different if it is related to the field studied by each expert. However, although the definition of illustration varies from the dictionary definition, an illustration is a picture, diagram or map used to explain or decorate something, especially the written part of a printed work such as a book. So the use of illustration is to explain something or make something clearer in the process of describing something. According to Michael Fleishmen (Michael Fleishmen, 2004 in Indiria, 2016) it is said that illustration is able to explain the meaning of something. In this project, illustrations are used in explanations in fiction books to make it easier for readers to understand and visualize a character according to the author's design. The media used in this design is digital media. The use of digital media makes it easier to achieve texture in illustrations and color if they are to be printed.

## **Cover**

The cover has a very important role in attracting the reader's attention. With the guidance of these visual elements, a novel cover can be formed which can provide an overview of the contents of the book and its main ideas. The visual signs that need to be considered for making a novel cover are composition, color and typography. With a combination of visual arrangements, an attractive book cover is created from the reader. Using colors that match the content and genre of the book will make the book easier to digest and more interesting. According to (Sutanto, 2017), illustrations on novel book covers can be used to show the content or genre of the book, describe the book's target consumers, set the mood of the book through the use of images of character objects, landscapes or create assets that can carry the mood of the book genre, providing credibility and arousing readers' appetite to read the book (Klimchuk, Marianne. & Krasovec. Sandra A. 2007 in Sutanto, 2017). Thus, the topic of the cover will help in designing the visualization in the cover of the novel 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an Uprising' in describing the contents of the novel's story, setting the mood, increasing the

credibility of the book and making readers more interested in reading the book because of the attractive cover.

### Design Style Concept

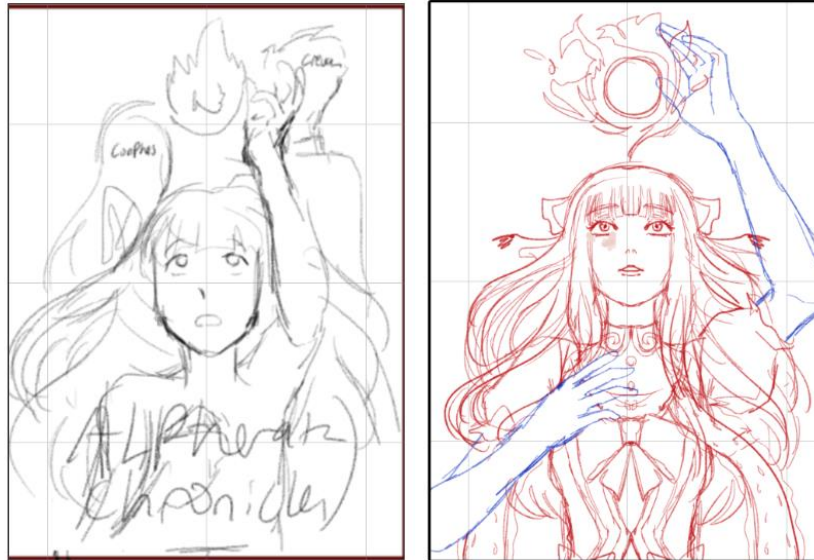


Figure 2.3 Cover Visual Sketch  
source: author's documentation

The visual style raised is a manga with a medieval genre. The choice of Manga drawing style was because the results of the initial research questionnaire showed that respondents liked the manga drawing style for illustrated fantasy novels. Mentioned by (Enlivena IRM, 2013), if the manga phenomenon is capable of acculturation of manga styles to local drawing styles in the world that occur from parts of Europe, Asia, to America. Therefore, the manga drawing style has proven acceptable locally and internationally. The choice of drawing style is not limited to research, but the author of 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an uprising' is already fond of media - media that use the manga drawing style. One of the novel references is the game Final Fantasy by Hironobu Sakaguchi, manga and games from .Hack//G.U developed by CyberConnect2 and others. So the selection of manga drawing styles has been determined from research and author confirmation.



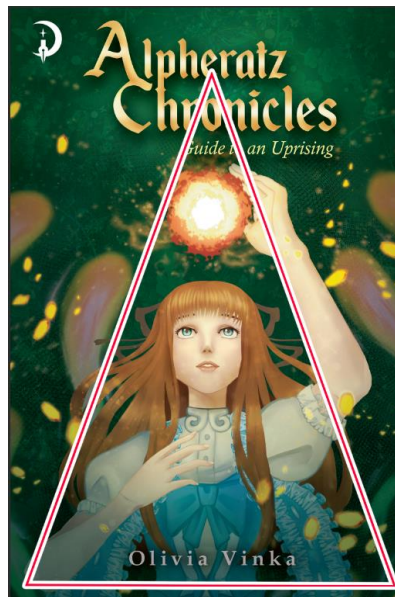


Figure 2.4 Cover Visual Composition  
source: author's documentation

The character's pose is to reach one of the powers he wants in the novel which is called the element sphere. The choice of pose was chosen because it describes the main goal of the main character in the novel, which is to have power. The use of triangular composition makes the cover have stability and become the focus of the subject in the image. With the image focused in the middle forming a triangular shape, the cover also has a well-balanced composition. The use of triangular composition can also be found in the famous painting, namely Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.



Figure 2.5 Logo Design Changes  
source: author's documentation

Gothic or Blackletter according to (Putra, 2010) are types of letters based on ornamental style writing. With the characteristic style of the letter which is dominated by vertical lines that form an ornament suitable for making initials. The choice of font in the first logo shows that it uses a font that is too decorative which makes the logo hard to read. The novel logo has been replaced from before as it is less readable and too decorative. Using the Enchanted Land typeface makes the logo easier to read and looks elegant while still getting a medieval Gothic font accent.



Figure 2.6 Logo Early Draft  
source: author's documentation

With the letters 'A' and 'C' connecting so that the logo looks unified and the logo assets can be used as the initials of the book. Because if you separate the logo, it looks like it doesn't blend together and it doesn't look like a book title. The use of gold to symbolize the royalty of the main character and depicts a medieval fantasy theme.



Figure 2.7 Color Palette  
source: author's documentation

After discussing the typeface and visual style. Next we will talk about the color tone of the project. The color palette specified for the cover of the book uses warm tones and seems dark. Because the cover wants to give a mysterious feel but not too dark or like a horror mystery.

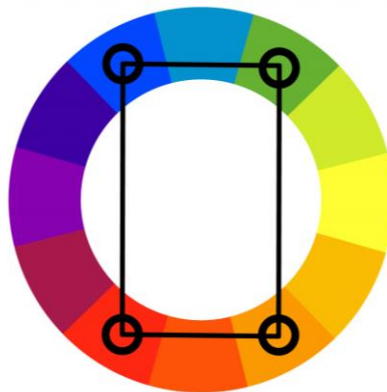


Figure 2.8 Color Theory  
source: Color-meanings.com

By using tetradic color theory. Tetradic color or other designation as rectangle color is a combination of two complementary colors that are used simultaneously, this combination produces a very contrasting color from warm tones and cool tones (Meilani, 2013). The use of warm tone colors explains the purpose and nature of the main characters on the cover in reaching what is depicted as an element sphere according to the contents of the novel's story. And the use of cool tone colors shows that many mysteries will be revealed during the journey of the characters in the novel.

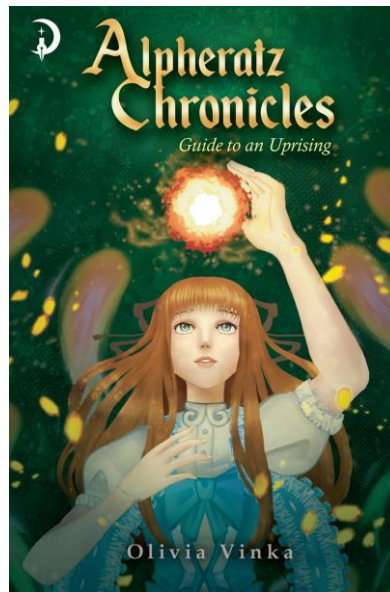


Figure 2.9 Cover Visual  
source: author's documentation

With all that combined, The results found are as shown above. The use of the fireball illustration asset behind the character forms a deeper triangular composition and makes the cover more visible in focus. The selection of colors that are balanced between warm and cold tones that make the whole look comfortable on the eyes. The gold logo gives a fancy touch on the cover and shows that the novel story is about kingdoms and fantasy.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

All data collected from the pilot design work is presented in this section. Before being presented, the data is classified based on its type and the design components discussed. This classification will be very useful for design revision purposes.

### 1. Illustration Expert Users

According to the two writer experts, the covers are too dark. It just needs a little tweak to make it a little brighter, but for others they are sufficient. But other than that, the experts think that the color is nice with using a natural tone with magical effects showing. By using tetradic color theory. Tetradic color or other designation of rectangle color is a combination of two complementary colors that are used

simultaneously, this combination produces a very contrasting color of warm tone and cool tone (Meilani, 2013).

## 2. Writer Expert Users

According to the two writer experts, It's interesting, but there are drawbacks where the font for the author's name is also lacking problems mostly about the layout text and some of the writing errors. Other than that they do agree that the cover illustration novel makes readers more interested to read. As one of the experts says that "it is unique, even i wanted to read it". Gothic or Blackletter according to (Putra, 2010) is a typeface based on ornament style writing. It is said that it's great for describing that the novel is about royalty and magic. The use of gold color to symbolize the royalty of the main character and illustrate the fantasy medieval theme.

After collecting data from experts and extreme users, the following is a graphical result of the results of the Prototype Testing on Market questionnaire which has been answered by 43 respondents.

- + 97% of respondents like the art style and it becomes easy to imagine the contents of the novel because it is helped by the illustrations in the book
- - 3% of respondents felt the cover looks less attractive to put on a bookshelf

## CONCLUSION

There are many fantasy genre novel books that depict the words in the novel which make it difficult for the reader to understand what the author means in the story. Visual is one of the most important human senses, in our daily life we use visual images to help us in our daily lives. Like seeing what color we like, or determining the character we like from their physique. The manga drawing style is also proven to make people interested in knowing more about the contents of the book. Especially if they like the style and shape of the character. The visualization design of 'Alpheratz Chronicles: Guide to an uprising' shows that if the characters are drawn full of the emotions they say from the story, it will make the reader really understand not only from reading but also from feelings. The romance story in the book which is visualized in the contents of the book also makes the relationship between characters feel more alive. The conclusion from the results of this design

is that visualization in fantasy genre novels with manga drawing style can help readers to get more feelings and understand the story more deeply. And covers with visuals that explain the contents of the story also make the book more marketable.

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