

*The making of a
Nature cover*

nature

Kelly Krause / Creative director

Part 1

Introduction



The best journal covers (1) tell a story that represents the research accurately, (2) creatively, but without misleading elements, (3) into one aesthetically-pleasing visual.



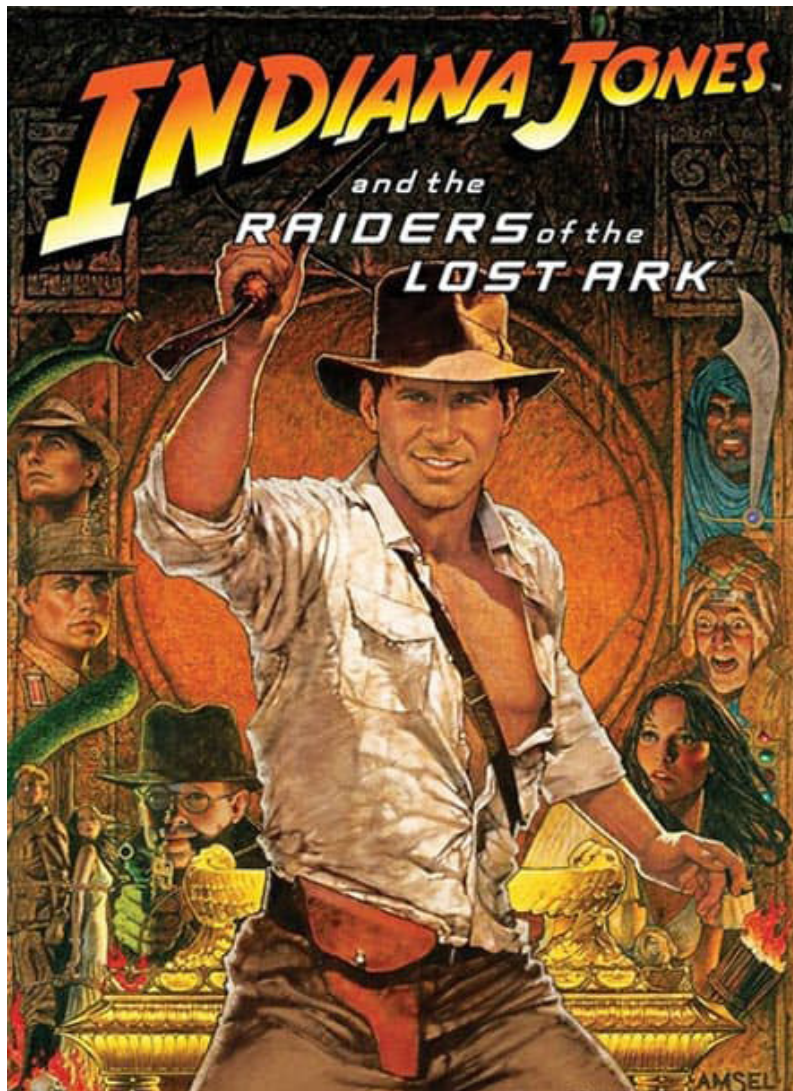
Covers are a perfect blend of science and art. The two things work together. First, there must be a clear concept (based on the science), and then it must be well executed (the art).



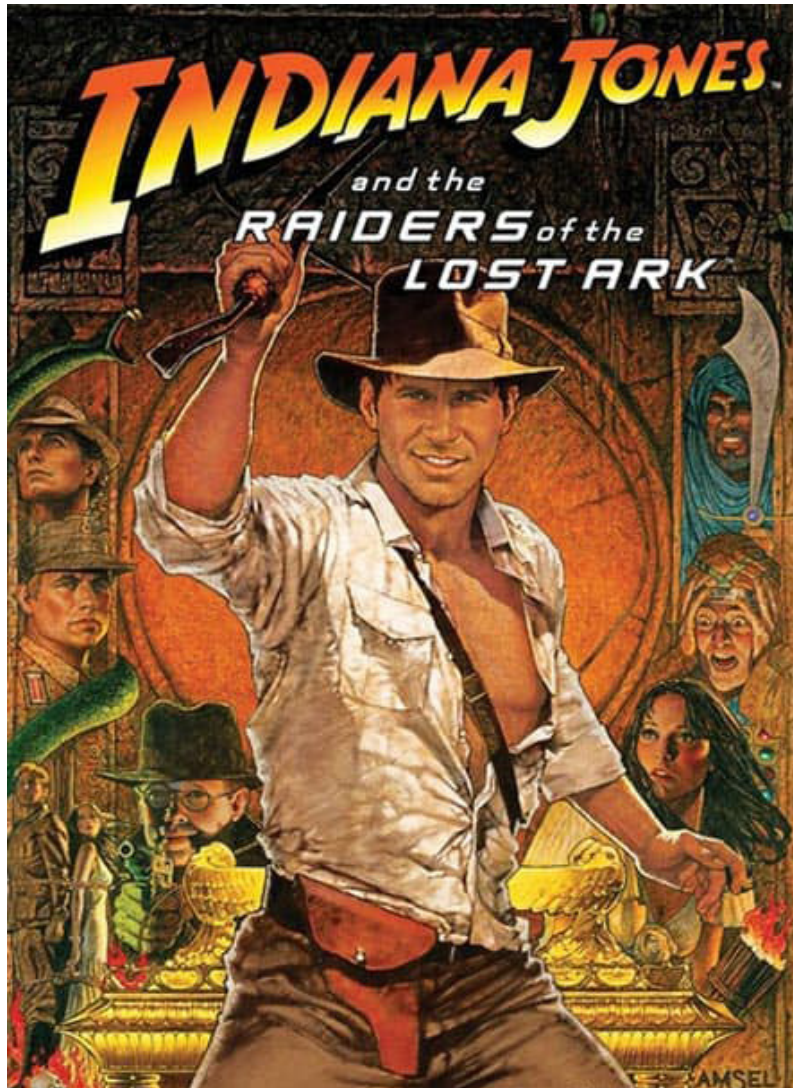
Covers are a bit like movie posters.



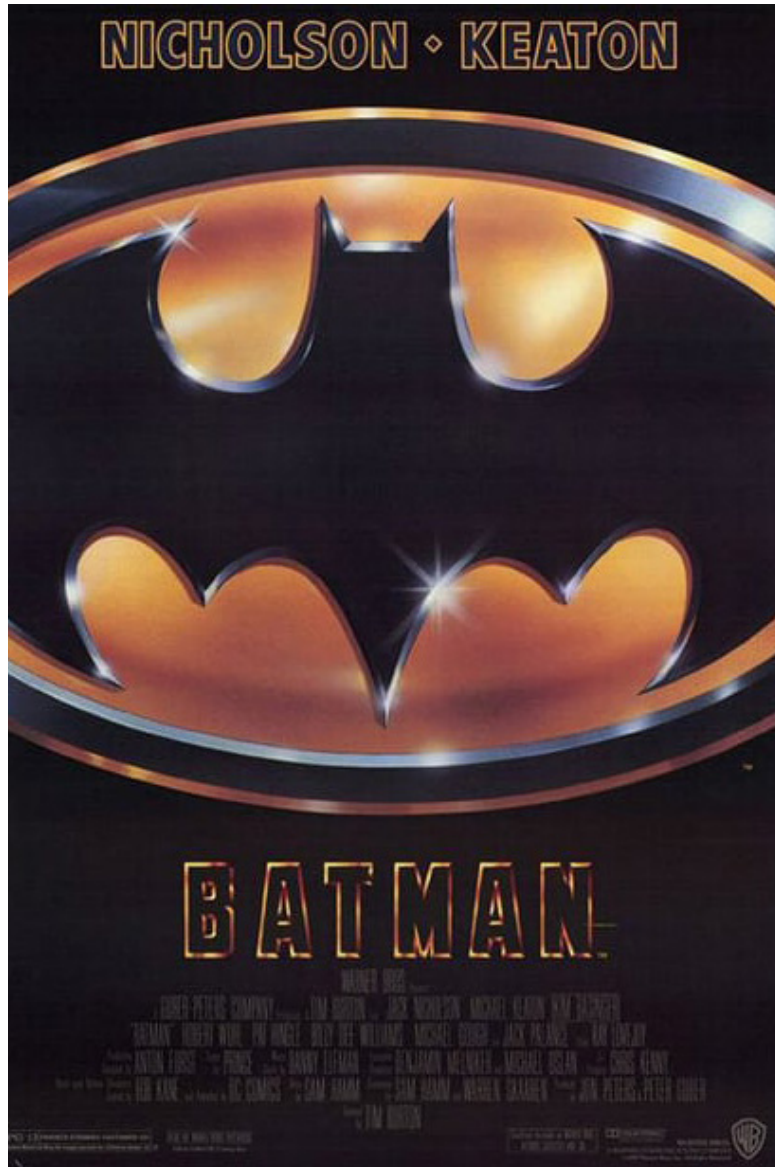
Covers are a bit like movie posters.



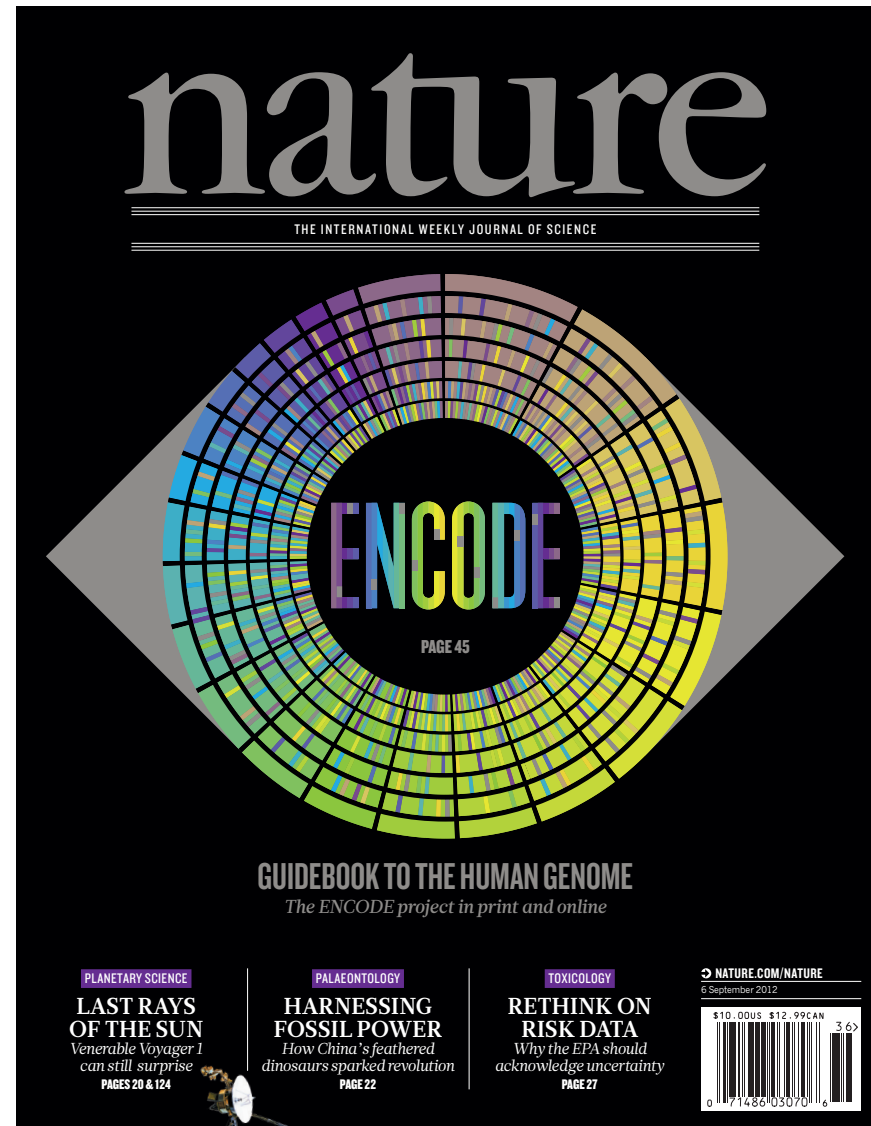
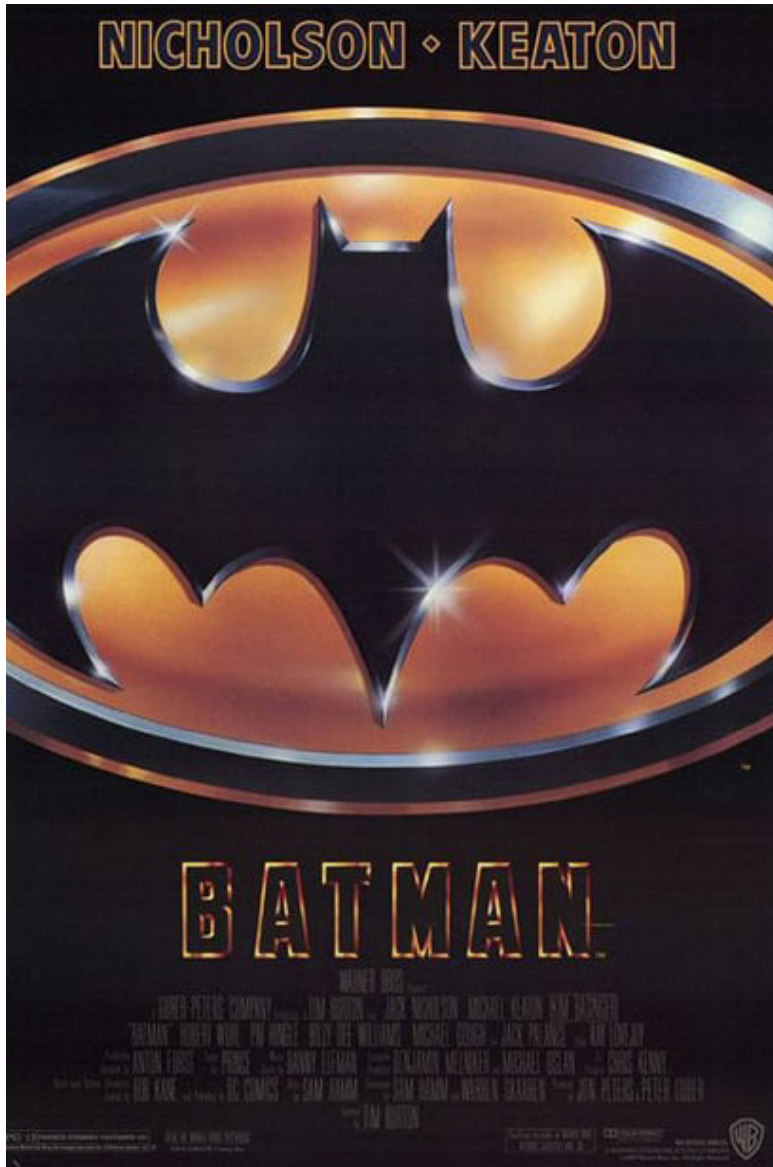
Covers are a bit like movie posters.



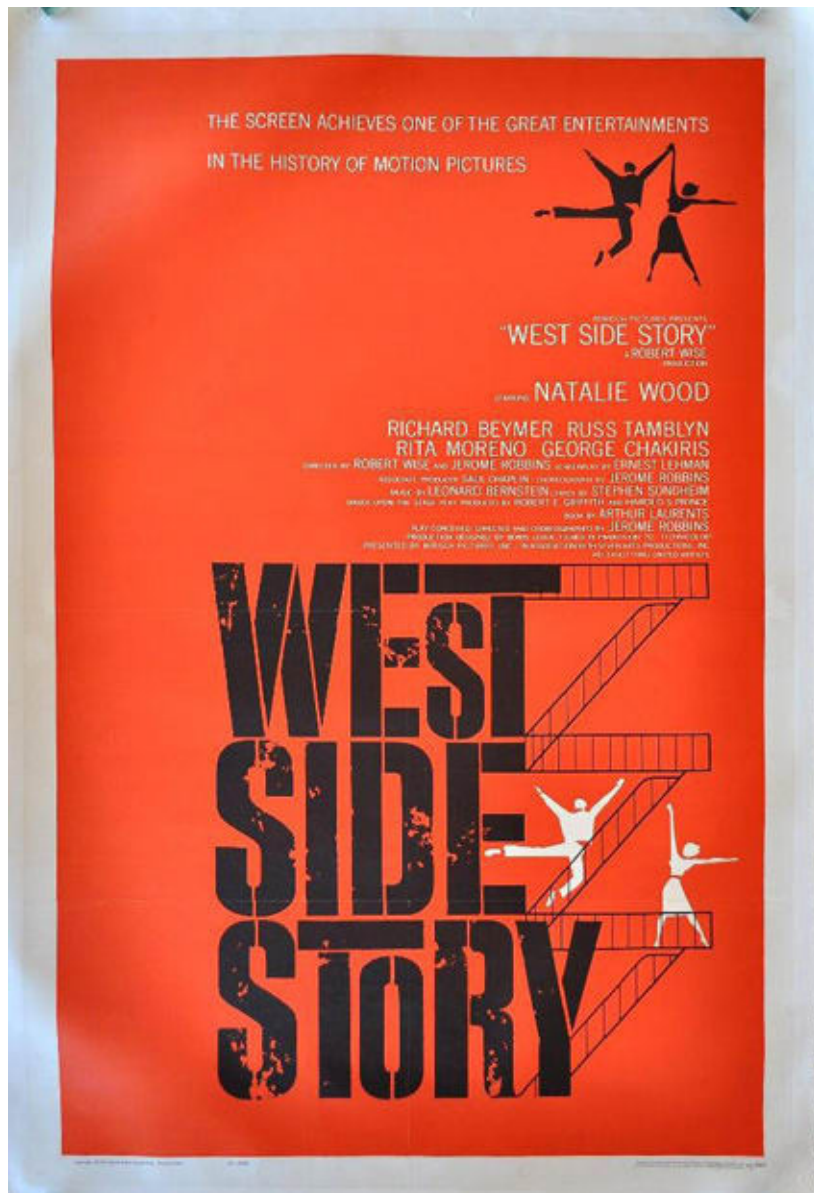
Covers are a bit like movie posters.



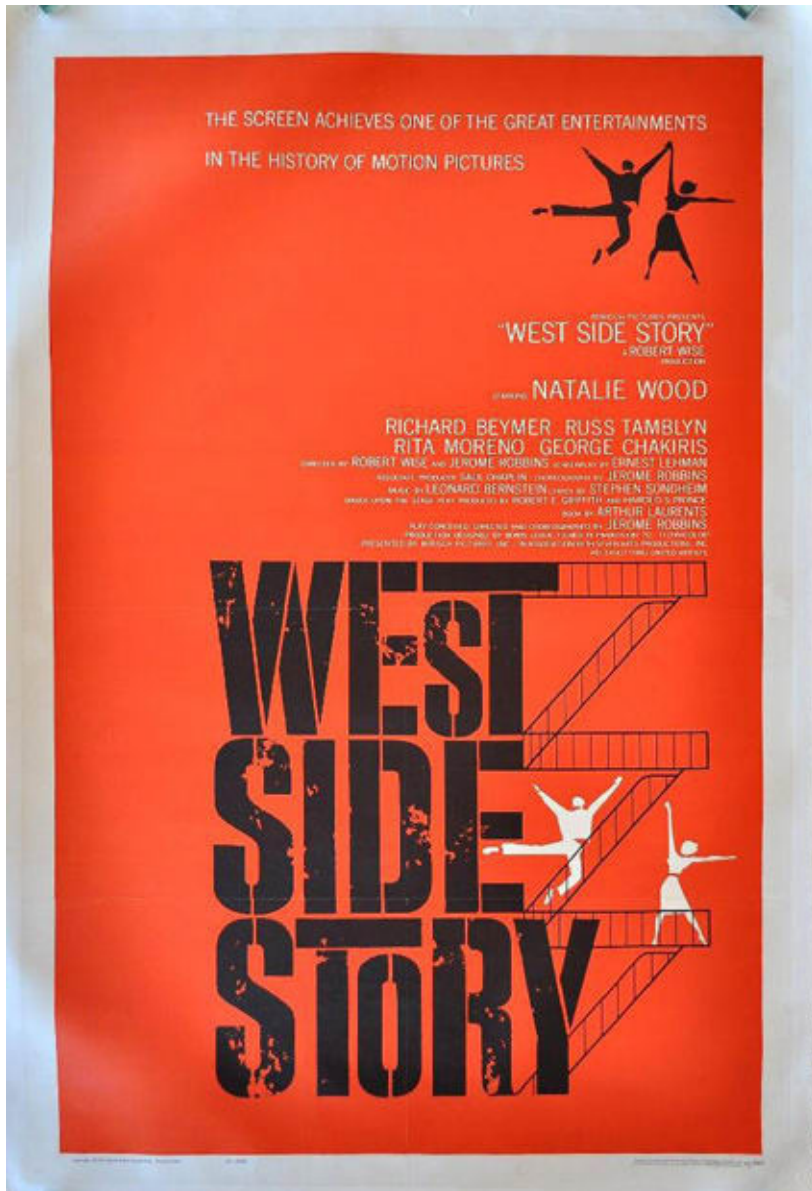
Covers are a bit like movie posters.



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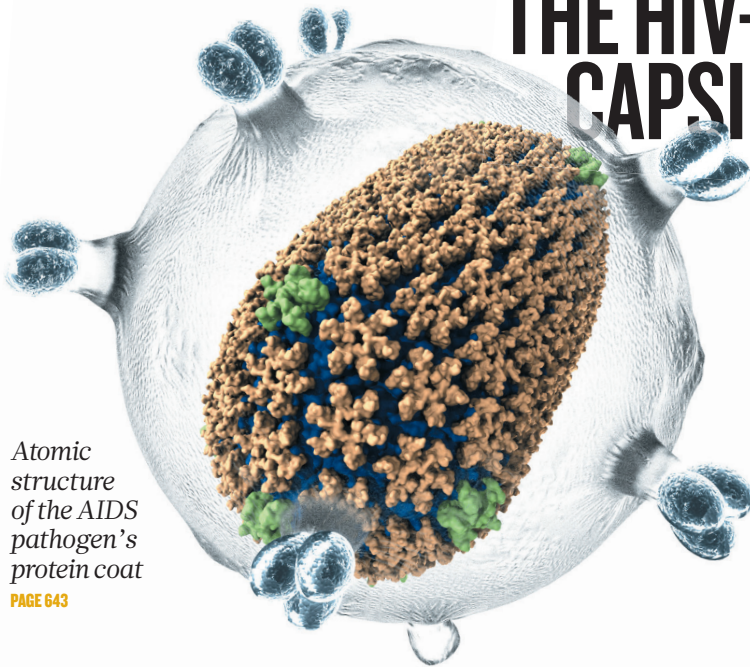
Part 2

Concepts: objects and metaphors

nature

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE

THE HIV-1 CAPSID



Atomic
structure
of the AIDS
pathogen's
protein coat

PAGE 643

▶ COSMOLOGY

THE FIRST LIGHT

In pursuit of the most
distant galaxies

PAGE 554

▶ CITATION

CROSSING THE BORDERS

International collaborations
make the most impact

PAGE 557

▶ ANTICANCER DRUGS

A SITTING TARGET

An indirect hit on
'undruggable' KRAS protein

PAGES 577 & 630

▶ NATURE.COM/NATURE

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Vol. 497, No. 7451



Concept: easy

Some things are easier to visualise than others. Things (cells, planets, qubits) are easier to show than phenomena or processes (quantumness, signalling).

nature

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE

HOW TO KEEP A SECRET

Quantum cryptography, randomness and human cunning can outfox the snoopers
PAGE XXX

NEWS FEATURE

**TWO LINE
TEASER HEERE**
Two-line explanation goes
in here too
PAGE XXX

BIOMEDICINE

**MAKING MICE
MODELS WORK**
Engineering rodents to
ape human diseases
PAGE XXX

QUANTUM PHYSICS

**THE NATURE
OF NOW**
Why the present moment
is all about me
PAGE XXX

NATURE.COM/NATURE

27 March 2014 #10

Vol. 507, No. 7499

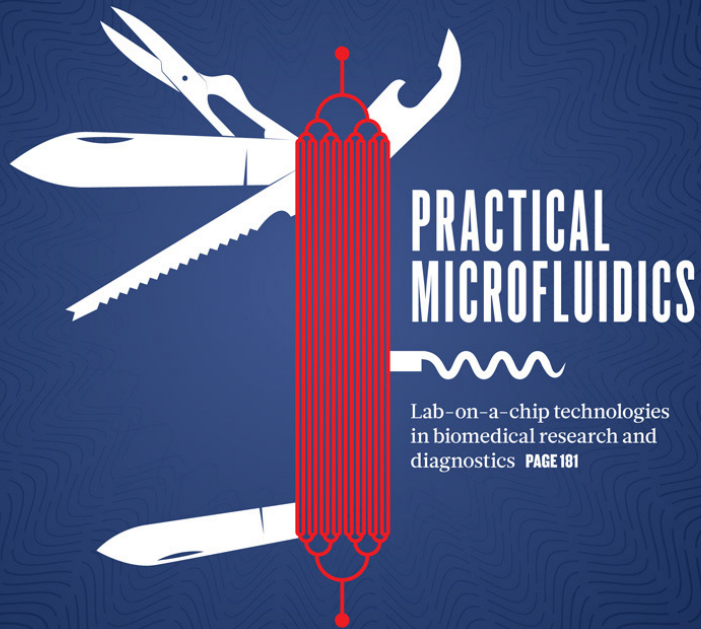


However, not all research can be visually summed up by showing relevant objects. If that is the case, visual metaphors must be employed.

Concept: not so easy

nature

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE



PRACTICAL MICROFLUIDICS

Lab-on-a-chip technologies
in biomedical research and
diagnostics **PAGE 181**

UTILITIES

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

*Microgrids bring electricity
to neglected millions*

PAGE 154

PHYSICS

FOUND IN TRANSLATION

*The surprising prescience of
medieval cosmology*

PAGE 161

EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

HOW SUPER IS A SUPERGENE?

*The butterfly gene behind
sex-specific mimicry*

PAGES 172 & 229

NATURE.COM/NATURE

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Vol. 507, No. 7491



**We use symbols
and metaphors
instinctively
to visually
communicate
ideas.**

nature

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE



GMOs

The promise. The reality.

PAGE 21

OPTICS

LOOK AROUND YOU

Digital cameras with
an insect-eye view

PAGES 47 & 95



RISK ANALYSIS

RECIPE FOR DISASTER

Today's global networks
are programmed to fail

PAGE 51

CAREERS

MONEY FROM THE MASSES

How to make the most
of crowdfunding

PAGE 147

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We use symbols
and metaphors
instinctively
to visually
communicate
ideas.



Some visual metaphors have become clichéd. They are overused, lack impact, and are to be avoided.

Common clichés: question mark, puzzle pieces, chess, scissors

Part 3

*From concept to image:
executing the art*



Covers should have:

- (1) technical quality
- (2) aesthetic value or 'beauty'

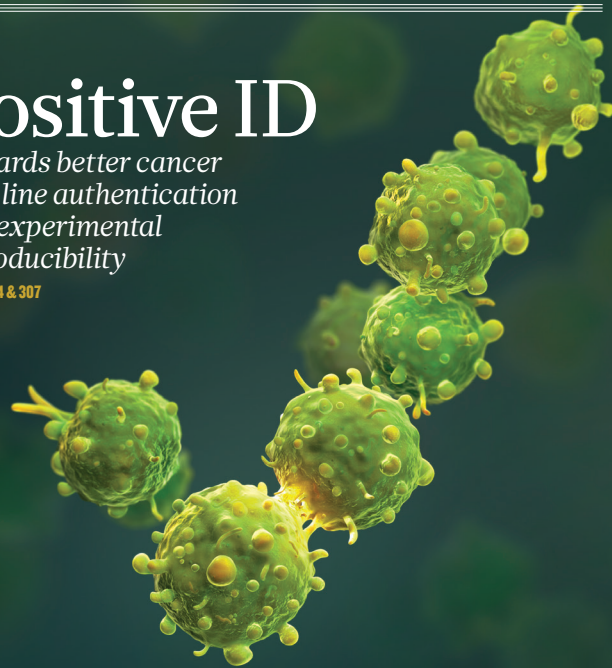
nature

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Positive ID

Towards better cancer cell-line authentication and experimental reproducibility

PAGES 264 & 307



HUBBLE AT 25

STAR PERFORMER

The space telescope is a tough act to follow

PAGES 202 & 207

CANCER THERAPY

TARGET SELECTION

Druggable Ras and precision care in sight

PAGES 270 & 290

PLANETARY SCIENCE

A TOUCH OF MERCURY

The missing ingredient in Earth's mantle

PAGES 299 & 337

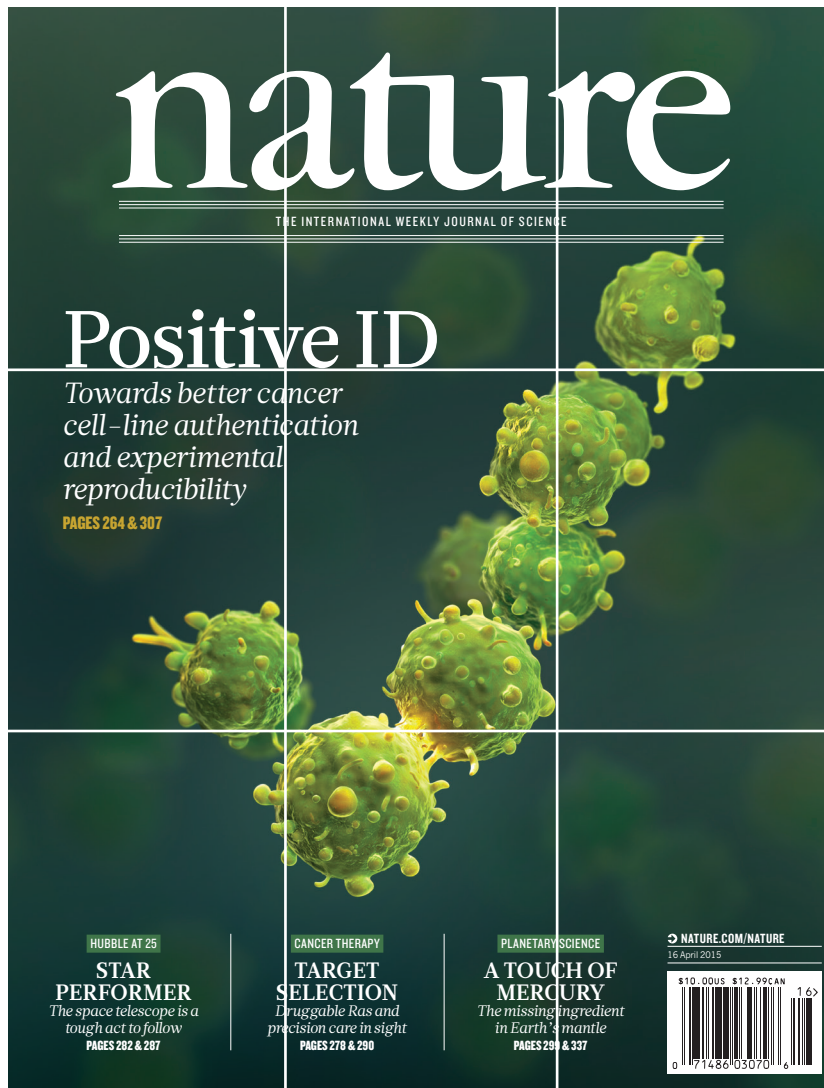
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16 April 2015



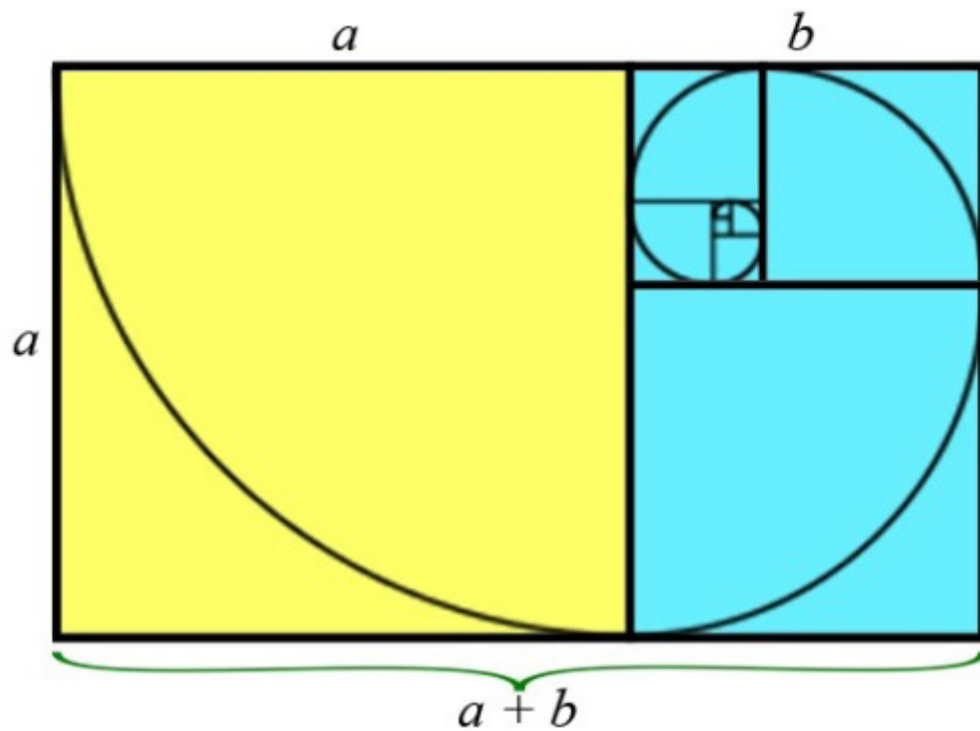
**Breaking that
down into basics:**
(1) composition;
(2) image quality,
such as clarity and
resolution; and
(3) colour.



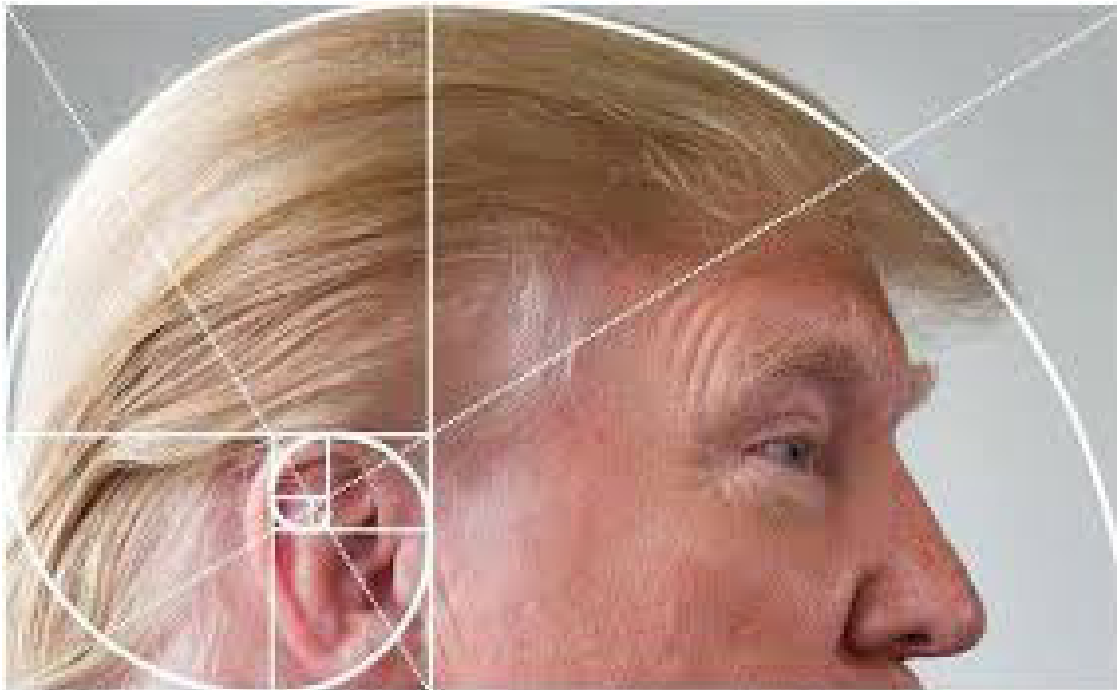
Composition: the rule of thirds



Composition: the rule of thirds



Composition: the golden ratio



Composition: the golden ratio



Composition: simplicity




nature

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENCE

MOTION PICTURE
 Crystallography captures lipid bilayer in the throes of rocking calcium pump **PAGES 162 & 193**

<p>BIOTECHNOLOGY</p> <p>FAKES IN THE LABORATORY Counterfeit reagents hamper Chinese research PAGE 148</p>	<p>HYDROLOGY</p> <p>MELTING IN THE HEAT Asia's glaciers are key water source during dry spells PAGES 161 & 169</p>	<p>PLURIPOTENCY</p> <p>CANCER WARNING Mutations seen in cultured human embryonic stem cells PAGES 160 & 229</p>
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 9 770028 083095

Composition: simplicity



Quality: clarity and resolution – starts in the lab



Quality: colour blindness – avoid red and green combo



**The is no ‘best’
artistic media.**
Quality and
composition can
come from classic
techniques like painting
and drawing to
electronic forms like
3D rendering,
microscopy or digital
photography.

Drawing



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photography.

**Digital illustration and
photography**



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and drawing to
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microscopy or digital
photography.

3D rendering



**The is no ‘best’
artistic media.**

Quality and composition can come from classic techniques like painting and drawing to electronic forms like 3D rendering, microscopy or digital photography.

**Bespoke modelling
software**

nature

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE

THREE TRILLION AND COUNTING

Mapping tree density at a global scale PAGES 168 & 201

[NATURE.COM/NATURE](https://www.nature.com/nature)

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Moving image:
the future will
be animated.

Thank you

naturegraphics.tumblr.com

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