

STEPPING OUT WITH INDESIGN

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InDesign I

MARTHA WADE

Martha Wade is a painter and muralist, and has been for a very long time. She actually kind of fell into mural painting—while broke and newly living in San Francisco, she came across an article in the Chronicle about a mural painting company that was taking off. The article included a photo of a piece done for a French casino. She looked at the photo and thought, “I can do that!” She worked for that company until she married and moved to Sonoma County in 1995, where she started her own business, and proceeded to have three children.

She loves to paint, to cook, to make things, to read. She likes science fiction and certain videogames, and these things boost her prestige considerably with her children. Although with her husband...less so.

And she is really enjoying playing around with InDesign.

You can see Ms. Wade’s mural work at:
www.marthawadedesign.com

She currently has paintings hanging at Graton Gallery

FEATURE SET

- ☒ text and graphic frames
- ☒ master pages
- ☒ leading
- ☒ paragraph styles
- ☒ gradient feather
- ☒ drop shadow
- ☒ eyedropper
- ☒ outer glow
- ☒ character formatting
- ☒ text wrap
- ☒ guides
- ☒ line tool
- ☒ threaded text
- ☒ paragraph rules
- ☒ layers
- ☒ transparency
- ☒ drop caps
- ☒ bevel and emboss



WHAT IS INDESIGN?

InDesign is a wonderfully powerful professional design and layout program. As part of the Adobe Creative Suite, (which includes Illustrator, Photoshop, Dreamweaver and Acrobat, among others) InDesign provides the place to gather and arrange all of the disparate elements you need to create your desired document.

WHAT CAN YOU MAKE?

What *can't* you make? InDesign provides the tools to put together just about any kind of visual display you can think of, whether it be print or virtual. A few examples include brochures, business cards, flyers, books, presentations, magazines, newspapers, signs, and ads.

A SAMPLE WORKFLOW

The first thing is to decide the intended output for the project you're beginning. Print or Web? Single pages? Double? Margins? Bleed? Once you have these basic parameters covered you can move on to the fun stuff. At this point, I generally pull in some text and images, and set them aside on the pasteboard, where I can see them and let them percolate. If there are obvious Master Page elements like a background, numbering, or column guides, I put those in. I place the text and images in one arrangement and then another until I start to see the shape of something I want. This is when the control freak perfectionist aspect of my personality sets in, and I can spend hours making tiny adjustments to character and paragraph styles and

color, adding and subtracting special effects, and tweaking everything just...*the teensiest.. little...bit.*

THIS IS TRICKY!

The trickiest thing? Paragraph formatting and styles! I get all turned around because there are so many ways to get to the same place. As a Photoshop user, I know about character formatting, but I rarely work with much text, and when I do, I waste loads of time manually tweaking and placing everything. The paragraph styles function is amazing, but I keep finding myself hopelessly confused by what trumps what, and how to get from point A to point B in the simplest and most effective way.

NEW TO INDESIGN?

Give yourself a lot of time, and remind yourself that InDesign is an enormously complex program. You won't absorb everything right off the bat. The best thing to do is to practice, practice, practice. Be determined, try new things, keep at it, and you will go far!

HERE'S MY STORY

I've been on the look out for a good layout program for a long time. I briefly worked at a very early desktop publishing company in the 1980's, when Pagemaker was the main show. Although my career veered away from graphic design, I have still always done my own promotional materials, and once Pagemaker went the way of the dinosaur I began using Photoshop as a temporary stand in. Photoshop is a brilliant image editing program, but for layout? Not so much. I can't tell you what a thrill it was, when I started this class, to find myself using a program that is entirely dedicated to layout and design. I love being able to pull material from all over the place and assemble it neatly in one place, where it can be pulled apart and reassembled in an infinite number of ways. I don't have the program mastered, of course, but I do feel comfortable using it. I'm at a point where the program is a tool, a vehicle for what I'm trying to do, rather than a barrier. Ultimately, I would like to do some graphic design professionally to supplement my mural and painting work. Anyone out there interested?

