



White symbolizes hope born of an innocence and purity.



Barbara Grainger uses crystal-lined and translucent beads to create a glistening ice scape in "Willow Winter," as seen in *The Beader's Guide to Color*. Branches drooping under the weight of petals frozen in full bloom, and flecks of iridescent colors hint at life beneath the hush of winter. Peyote and carpet stitch, surface embellishment, and fringe.

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## White Christmas

by Margie Deeb

December 2007

Each year the mansions in the historic district of my town are decorated for the holidays and opened to the public. I toured them, enjoying the beauty of the sounds, scents, and colors.

One of the rooms in a Civil War home was decorated in white: white tree, white wrapping papers, white antique Father Christmas dolls, white flowers, all aglow in candle light. The textures were soft, making gentle what might have felt stark. The lightest shades of ivory and cream softened the overall feel as well.

Colors and candlelight speak so much to the ambience of the holidays. And yet, I find that white touches me deeply during the holidays.

To me white symbolizes hope born of an innocence and purity. As if a promise that from the cold of winter hope is gestating, waiting to arise.

White is the purity of light. It symbolizes the sacred, the divine from which we came. True white light is the greatest luminosity known, holding within it the entire spectrum. Pass white light through a prism and watch it fan out into a peacock tail of rainbow colors.

White makes a clean background from which other hues can shine, and it harmonizes with nearly every color. Vivids look exceptionally vibrant and tints especially charming against white. Low-intensity colors work better with an off-white, one that leans toward another color, like ivory or beige.

The simplest palette of maximum contrast is white and black. For chic sophistication, string together beads of these opposing colors. To avoid clinical starkness, select luxurious finishes or shapes. Lustrous pearls of white and black are far more intriguing than the absolute white and black of opaque or matte finish beads. Color-lined and hex-cuts offer visual interest. Grays (including snowflake obsidian and hematite) also add depth to the white and black duo.

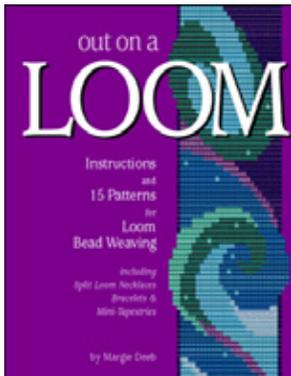
White whispers innocence. Combine it with pink (such as rose quartz) to create a petal-soft, pastry-sweet delicacy. White and red, in tandem, can become either distinct (pearl and garnet) or flashy (snow quartz and scarlet red jasper).

Use white to freshen and lighten a color scheme. Or use it as a fashion statement of refined grace. Nothing says elegance like pearls. Attired solely in white, one is perceived as cool and polished.

White occurs naturally in beads of milky, semi-translucent agate, dolomite, chalcedony, howlite, and trocha and puka shells. Warmer white beads are those of bone hairpipe. The iridescence of mother-of-pearl is a colorful alternative to stark white.

As long as there is light there is white, luminous and bright, bringing its promise of hope.

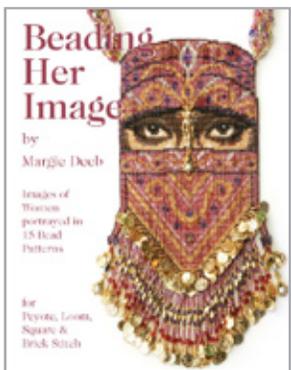
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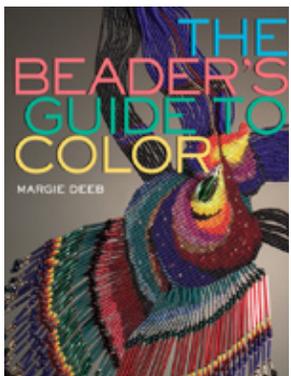
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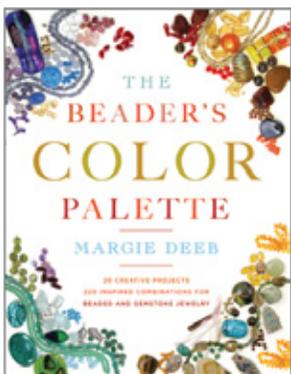
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Artist, designer, musician, and color expert

**Margie Deeb** is the author of several beading books, including the popular *The Beader's Guide to Color* and *The Beader's Color Palette* (Watson-Guptill, 2008).



photo by Marcia Abrams

She teaches color courses for artists, interior designers, and bead artists and her free monthly color column, "Margie's Muse," is available on her website. She produces a free graphically enhanced podcast, "Margie Deeb's Color Celebration," available on iTunes.

Her articles have appeared in *Bead & Button* and *Beadwork* magazines, and she writes a regular color column in *Step-by-Step Beads*. Visit Margie's website for her books, patterns, jewelry, inspiration, and more:

[www.MargieDeeb.com](http://www.MargieDeeb.com)

Also available at [MargieDeeb.com](http://MargieDeeb.com):

- Exquisite **seed bead patterns** in peyote, brick, square stitch, and loom available as downloadable PDFs or hardcopies
- **CMY Color Wheels** (the ones that Margie uses for herself and in her classes)
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