

## Cover Styles and Costs

*The price list on your right -  
although tongue in cheek -  
really does tell a story ... one  
that you can avoid*

### PRICE LIST

I design everything.....	\$200
I design- & you watch .....	\$400
I design - & you advise.....	\$500
I design - & you help.....	\$600
You design- & I help .....	\$1000
You design - & I advise.....	\$1500
You design - & I watch .....	\$2000
You design everything .....	\$5000

## What determines the cost

As is the case with interior formatting or editing, there are components that determine the cost of a cover. These include:

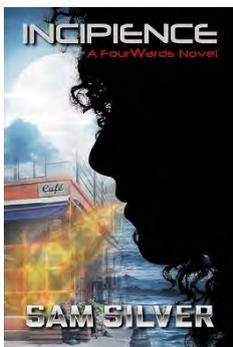
1. The style of design,
2. Design emphasis (**Type centric or Image centric**)
3. How many rounds of 'iterations' (changes) the design requires, and
4. Whether it's an ebook cover only.

Allow us to explain further.

### 1. The Style of Design

A book cover design can be dissected into four essential categories, primarily on how they are created initially:

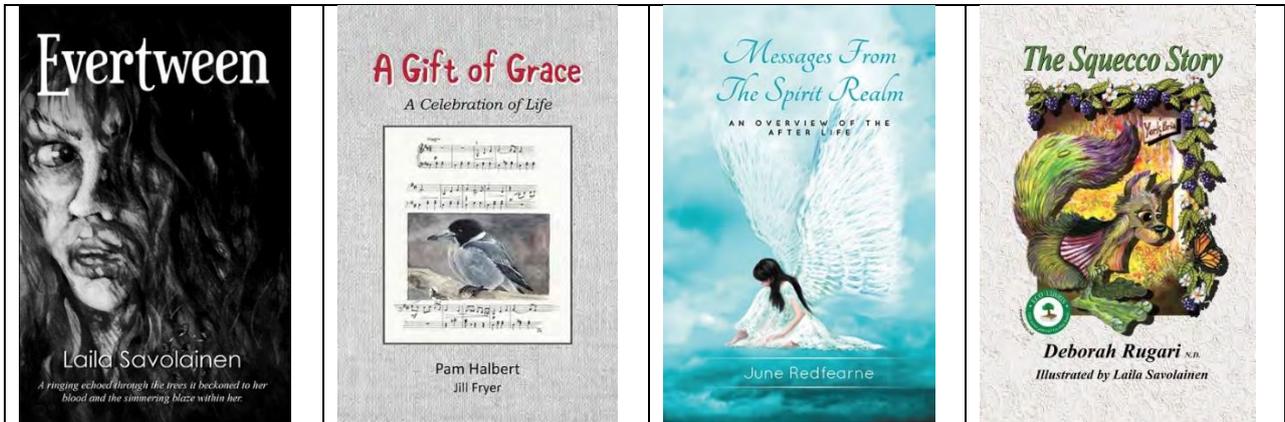
#### A. Stock Photo Manipulation



This is where the cover designer uses **pre-existing images from stock libraries** like Shutterstock, IStock etc. to create a cover. This is the most cost-efficient approach as the designer is not required to create too many elements from scratch. That said, it is often the case that those images can be found on other book titles therefore it is not necessarily unique or original. In the past, book cover designers were limited in their photo options. As mentioned Stock images are too generic and custom images too expensive. However, thanks to smartphone cameras, high-quality images are

easier to capture and more accessible to designers, therefore opening up possibilities for using original photography on cover design. But, you need to consider that the designers time needs to be covered for the original photography too.

## **B. Illustration**



**Hand drawn /Illustrated covers** have exploded in popularity in the past few years, with every genre from children’s literature to crime novels to chick lit to whodunit mysteries embracing the trend. The aesthetic can vary between the simple and the incredibly ornate.

This style of cover requires the designer to spend time illustrating original artwork. As a result, this type of design is often pricier than the stock photo approach mentioned previously.

## **C. Digital Manipulation & Illustration**

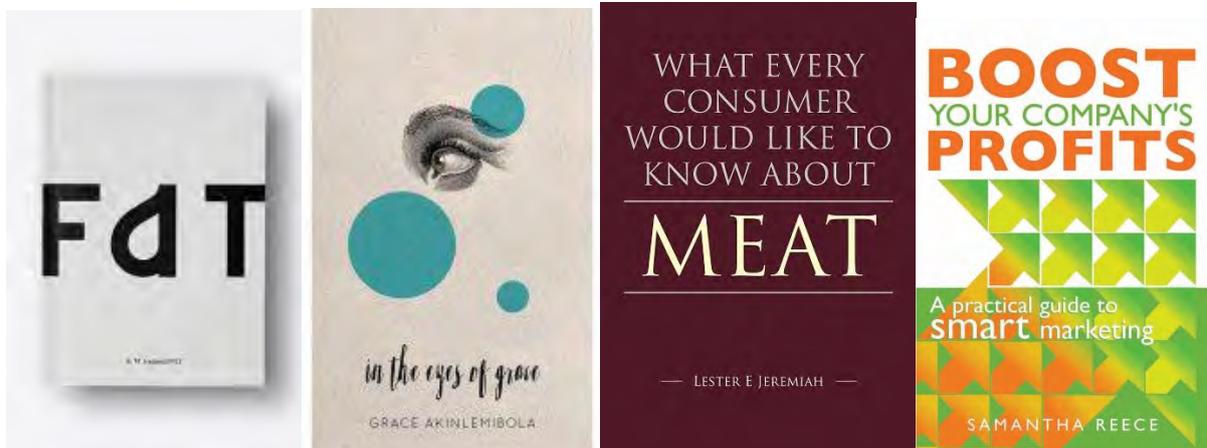
**Mixed media painting digitally altered.** A professional designer brings more than just Photoshop skills to the table. Digital book cover design is a complex balance of original images, text, and information — and you need someone who understands how each of these elements interacts with the others to best sell your book.

Digital designers who specialise in book covers understand how readers respond to layout and typography. They understand the current trends and can see how your cover will compete in the market. Most importantly, they will know how to communicate the right message with your cover. Digitally manipulated design is original and errs on the higher end of the cover generated fees.



## 2. Design Emphasis

**A - Less is more...** Type centric covers err on the side of embracing a minimalistic style, and instead of overwhelming the cover with text, colour, and images, they're choosing one design element as a focal point and giving it the space to shine. White space is our friend.



**B - Keeping it bold...** Bold typography - the kind that jumps off the shelf and grabs the reader - has been a steadily rising trend over the past few years. With the bold typography trend, the majority of the cover is dominated by the title text, drawing in your attention and making a serious statement.

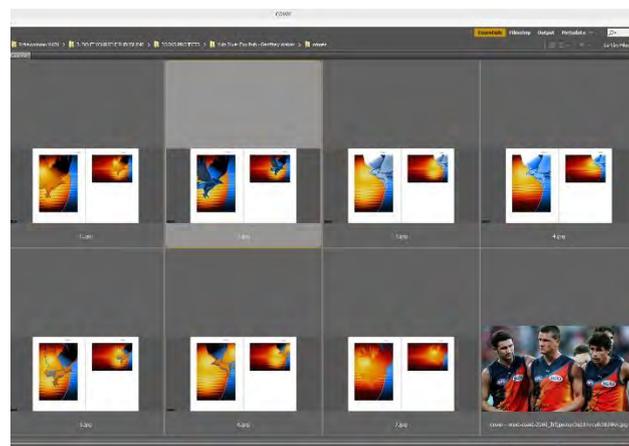


### 3. How many rounds of ‘iterations’ the design requires

It is important to understand that the more time an author expects a designer to work on a project, the more your fees will rise. Usually when you work on the design a number of rounds of changes are suggested and this depends on the level of design you’ve paid for. This could include:

- Concept stages, where the designer presents a range of diverse ideas based on initial instructions, and
- Iterations, where a chosen concept will be tweaked with a range of options and reworked based on the author’s feedback (and according to level chosen – standard, premium or advanced).

Allowing for more rounds of work will give you the freedom to experiment and tinker, but at a cost. Our freelance designers standardly provide two to three rounds of refinements after a concept is chosen. (based also on level of cover chosen).



*Multiple versions of the same design*

### 4. Ebook cover only

Ebooks only require a front cover, which reduces the time it takes to create but also it needs to work as a thumbnail image. So, from a design perspective this sometimes is actually harder

If you’re thinking of a paperback version then a design traditionally will need to incorporate a spine and back cover. The designer will have to make sure the final file is compatible with whatever printing company you’re using, which requires their experience and understanding of trims, bleeds, margins and spine widths.

# Let your designer bring ideas to the table

One of the most ill-advised actions you can take when you hire a book designer is to advise them of and request them to execute a design that you already have in your head.

Professional designers will know what trends are currently working in your genre and can help you create a cover that will sell - but only if you let them show you their concepts.

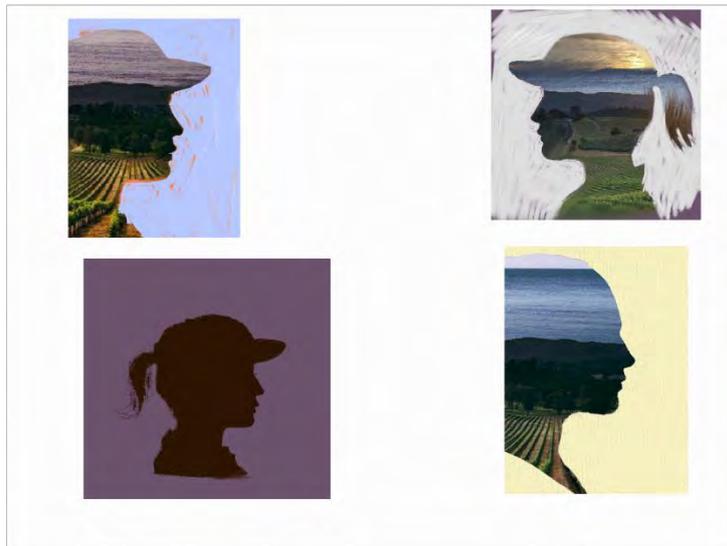
Essentially – if you want them to simply execute your vision, then you will struggle to communicate precisely what you want – and will require many rounds of changes resulting in expensive revisions PLUS you might still end up with a cover you're disappointed with and one that won't sell. Please view the examples to follow.

## Leave it to the professionals

Here are some ADVANCED cover examples of clients who wanted what they wanted – we followed their brief, but as they both said *“You don't know what you don't want, until you see what you don't want”*... ultimately by following their instructions it was a disaster and the client was disappointed. However, once they allowed us to do what we do best – DESIGN we were able to move forward with a professional cover layout and everyone was happier.

# CRUSH

A - Original Authors concepts provided by author.



B - With authors briefs these were created for the front cover (*under duress by the cover artist/cover specialist*)



C - The author then requested a full image of the girl on the cover with the cap, which was important to her. The result was amateurish and still not what the author wanted. (*the cover specialist/artist complied according to her wishes*)

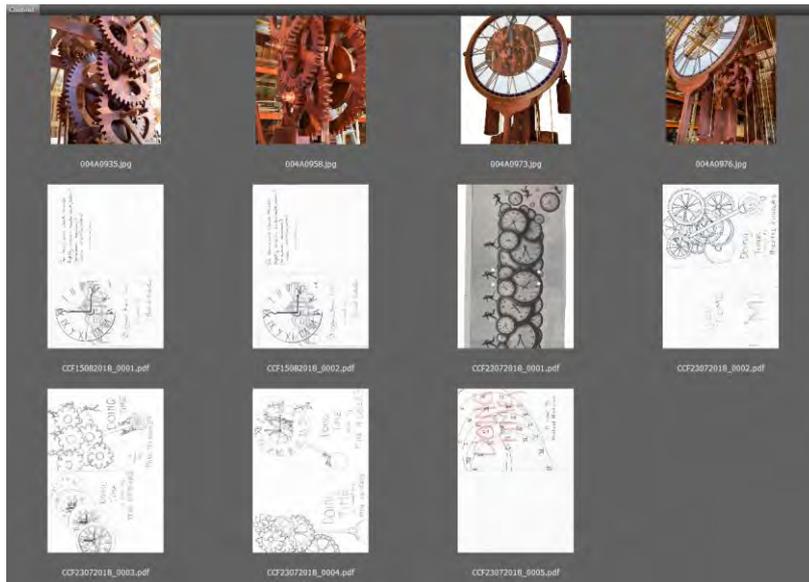


D - We asked that we could present forth our ideas. Our professional cover designer then created a cover based on trends and genre – an award-winning cover was produced.

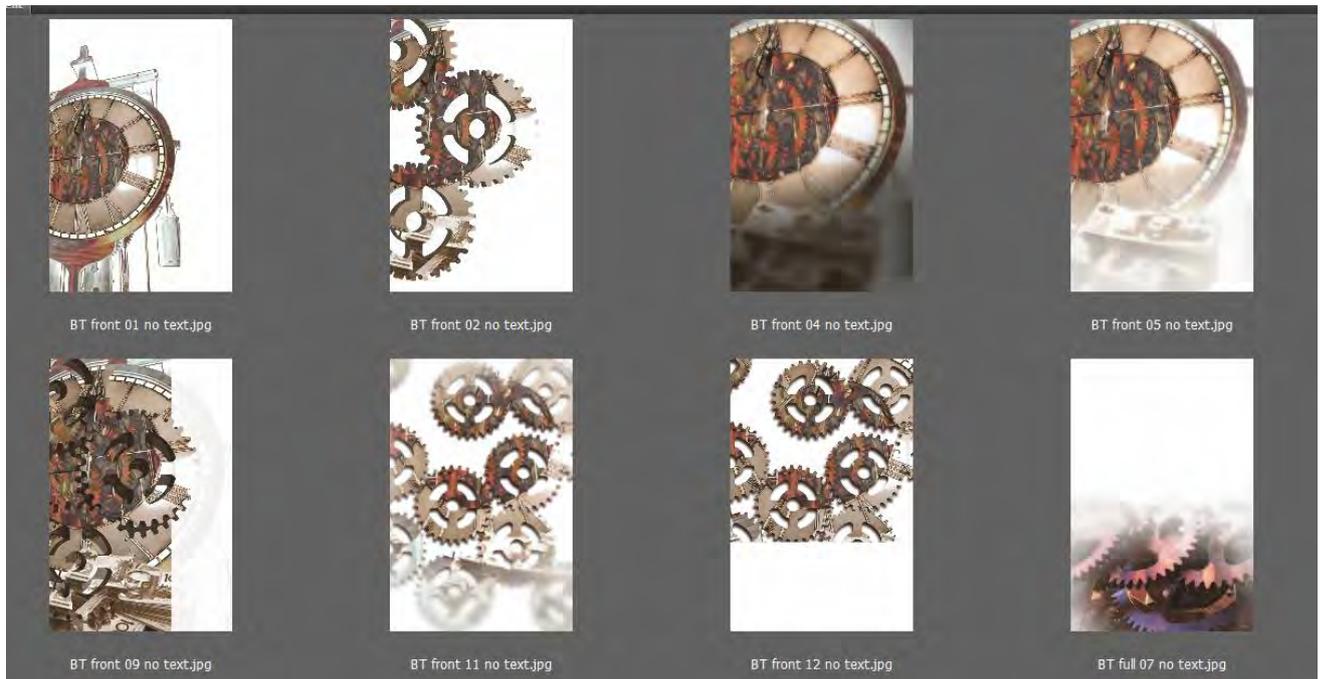


# BIG TIME

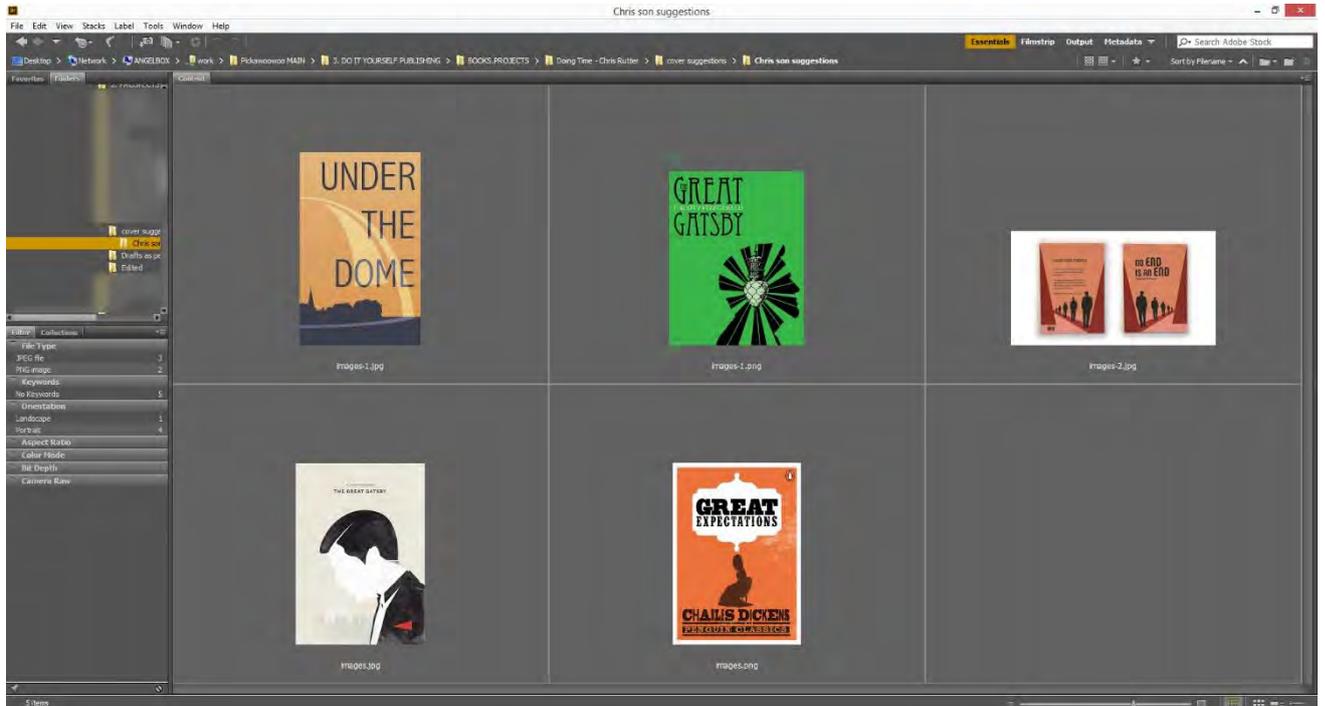
A – Authors original concepts below were provided to our design team.



B – Below you can see we followed examples using digitally manipulated imagery from the original photos and as directed by the author. *(the illustrator and digital artist is an award winning experienced cover designer – but she followed the clients brief)*. Text was also laid out to show how it would work – OR NOT WORK.



C – The client requested another round of changes based further reflections which required a complete style change- simple silhouettes (trending in cover designs at the time).



*All great examples as provided by the client but ...*

**D** - The concepts below were provided – but really, we were not happy with the way it was unfolding but it is always about trying to meet client’s expectations. The images below were provided for review. Keeping simple and silhouette as the focus.



E - At some point however we just have to jump in and say – can we do what we do (and we do it well) which the client was happy for us to undertake. Our professional cover designer then created a number of covers still within the brief and image below (right) was chosen for production. The client has received numerous positive reviews on the cover by his readers and the cover works both as a print book and ebook.

