

COLO**R**AMA

COLO RAMA

From Fuchsia to Midnight Blue



Cruschi form

Prestel
Munich • London • New York

For my parents

© for the original French edition: Gallimard Jeunesse, 2017
Gallimard Jeunesse Giboulées sous la direction de Colline Faure-Poirée et Hélène Quinquin
© for the English edition: Prestel Verlag, Munich • London • New York, 2017
A member of Verlagsgruppe Random House GmbH, Neumarkter Straße 28, 81673 Munich



I

recall
the at-
traction that
certain colors
had on me when I
was a child: the red
poppy tails, both delicate
and strikingly powerful, the
green lichen that covered our
holiday home; the beige herds of
sheep migrating across the Cevennes
mountain range; the yellow, pungent
earth-working equipment that seemed to sing
to us; the violet stained beetroots; the black
licorice candy that my grandfather used to love
so much; the graying blue colors, understated and
hard to explain, that we once used to describe Mediter-
ranean plants... Nowadays, I simply like a color for what
it is and for the memories it brings to me, as well as
the ideas and stories it conjures up. Ultimately,
each color has a history. Subjective and individ-
ual, singular and plural, this story is based
at the same time on our own perceptions.
The world of color is far more complex
than it seems. Perception of colors
fully depends on who we are,
our cultures and what era we
live in. It has to do with
sensitivity and subjec-
tivity. There are no
two people who
see or de-scribe
a shade in
the same
way.





WHITE SNOW

What would the winter be without its white cloak? Once the temperature drops below freezing, the air becomes so cold that the humidity in the clouds transforms itself into tiny little ice crystals. Depending on where

the wind is swaying, these hexagonal, star-shaped crystals merge into flakes that then progressively coat the landscape. With this layer of striking whiteness, a moment of peace has arrived...



MILK

People have been drinking milk since the time when animals first became domesticated. That's about 12,000 years ago. This natural liquid, mainly produced by female mammals for their young, is mostly water.

It owes its color to tiny milk proteins and globules of fatty matter. When these two substances combine, they can reflect light in a way that makes the milk liquid look white.



PEACE SYMBOL

According to the bible, God was disappointed with the world he had created. So he decided to conjure up an almighty deluge. He asked Noah to build him a sailing vessel to save every species of animal. Once the rain finally

came to an end, Noah released a white dove to scout around. The bird later returned with an olive branch announcing the end of the divine wrath. That's how the white dove became an international peace symbol.



ALBINO

Mice and rabbits aren't the only animals that can be albinos. Humans, mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles – all of these can be albinos, too! Extremely rare, they stand out from the crowd with their perfectly

white color, their clear eyes and their pinkish irises. Albinos have an unusual change in their genes that affects their skin. Basically, they're missing a pigment called melanin, which gives normal skin its color.



ALABASTER

Alabaster is a limestone rock used to make small objects and sculptures since ancient times. Usually milky white and sometimes with honey-yellow streaks, this rock is more delicate than marble yet equally as precious.

Alabaster usually contains the mineral calcite or the mineral gypsum. Calcite alabaster was used by the ancient Egyptians, while gypsum alabaster was more common in Europe.



POLAR WHITE

Is it a coincidence that polar bears live in the snow-covered Arctic? Not at all.... According to the English naturalist Charles Darwin, this animal's coat has adapted itself to its environment. Its white fur acts as a perfect

camouflage to help the bear survive. The animal's black skin contrasts with its fur and helps it conserve its body heat. Sadly though, this powerful creature is threatened by climate change through global warming.



COTTON FLOWER

People first grew cotton more than 3,000 years ago. After blossoming, cotton flowers change into cushioned pods of soft, white vegetable fiber. Then, when they burst open to release their seeds, the fiber is picked

and turned into yarn and other woven materials, which can be used to create all types of fabrics. At present, cotton flower is the most worn textile in the world.



BIRCH BARK

The white birch tree primarily grows in North America and Russia. Like the poplar, it has adapted to harsh, cold climates. Its white bark with black speckles acts as a type of protective layer. Birch bark is also strongly

reflective and therefore limits heat absorption and protects the tree against the winter frost. Simply put, white birch bark is the ultimate thermostat!



WHITE MOTH

During the early 1800s, industrial cities in England were swelling with people and factories. Soot from chimneys blackened city trees, and the white peppered moths who lived in these trees could no longer use their

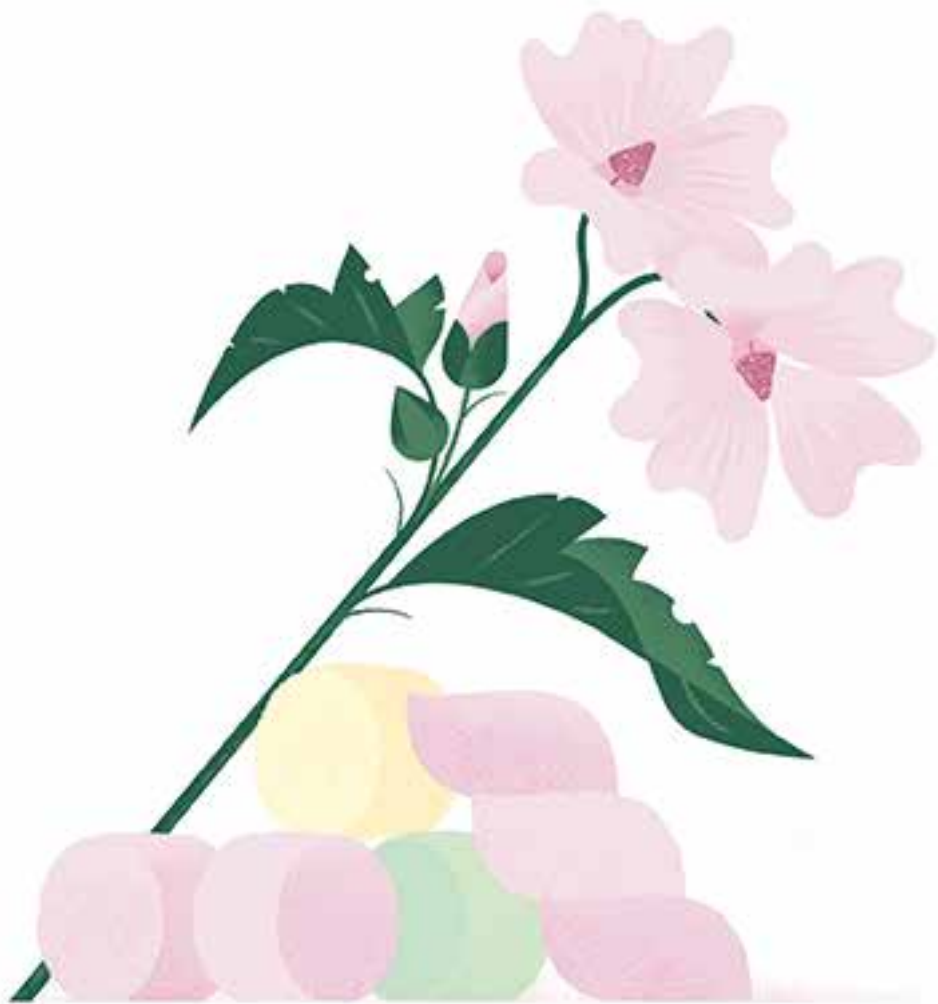
color to hide from predators. Over time, the insects adapted to their new environment by changing their color and becoming black peppered moths!



WHITE POWDER

During the time when France was ruled by kings, French aristocrats, both male and female, delighted in powdering themselves. This whitening was said to give them a genuine mark of distinction! However, in order

to get a face whiter than white, the nobility started to use powders containing white lead. These powders may have been popular, but they were extremely toxic, too!



MARSHMALLOWS

Marshmallows are a sweet candy that the English like to toast when outdoors at a summer evening campfire. They take their name from the root extract of the marshmallow plant, which has an aromatic and

succulent taste. In some countries, this root is also used as a chewing stick, especially for young children and their baby teeth!



COTTON CANDY

How can anyone resist this confectionary treat? Nicknamed “candy floss” by the English and “fairy floss” by the Australians, its soft texture melts when placed below the tongue. Yet, cotton candy is made simply of pigments

and sugar turned into a sweet yarn! It’s very yummy, but not very good for our teeth. An American dentist invented it at the end of the nineteenth century. Maybe he knew it would keep people coming to his office?!