

Styling Design for 2018 Gold Wing

– Coloring –

Midori KATSURAGAWA¹

ABSTRACT

For the 2018 Gold Wing exterior design, the coloring design was carried out involving materials and surface treatment as well as the colors themselves, pursuing to create a “presence like no other” in its design. In the creation of the new red color, deep color saturation yet having clearness, and shadow falling to intense darkness were employed to represent a dramatic hue. In the expression of metallic feel of lower area on the vehicle body, the method, in which metallic expression is explicitly enhanced by exposed metal parts partially arranged within the whole area mainly outfitted in black color, was applied. By using those methods, the coloring design that represents the “presence like no other” deserving for the flagship model was successfully materialized.

1. Introduction

This is the first full-model change version in 17 years for the Gold Wing, the flagship model in Honda’s motorcycle lineup (Fig. 1). The theme for the development was set as “The Honda Premium Tourer-More exciting and fulfilling riding experiences for rider and passenger” with the aim to continue its legacy as an attractive long-range



The Gold Wing Tour DCT Airbag (2018)

Fig. 1 Appearance of 2018 Gold Wing Tour

tourer while gaining ownership from new age groups such as Generation X. Also things set forth at the time were weight reduction, size reduction, and having advanced features that would place the model at the forefront of motorcycles, among others⁽¹⁾.

Product appeal is mostly and generally recognized first through visual information, and thus the appearance design, including the colors, is an influential factor. The coloring in particular speaks directly to one’s soul and has the effect of immediately conveying the model’s concept to customers.

To manage the entire Color, Material, and Finish (CMF) scheme for the Gold Wing, a study was done on non-visual aspects of design such as presence and stance. The coloring expressions that move one’s soul on first glance, and creating a new feel for metal, were among what was covered by its theme.

The details of the individual efforts are illustrated hereafter with examples.

2. Color Lineup of the Gold Wing Series

The entire color lineup for all the Gold Wing 2018 models will be first introduced. The colors to be made available in the various regions in the world will be selected from this lineup.

The 2018 model has two versions: the Gold Wing Tour

¹ Motorcycle R&D Center

equipped with a standard rear trunk, and the Gold Wing without the trunk.

The Gold Wing Tour, with the rear trunk, has three color variations (Fig. 2). Its top trim version with an airbag system offers two color options, one of them with an exclusive graphic design (Fig. 3).

The standard Gold Wing without the rear trunk has three color options (Fig. 4).

3. Setting the Coloring Theme

3.1. The Gold Wing's Message in the Past

Many product groups these days are often referred to as being in a “mature market.” In such market situation, it is important not only to simply enhance product functions and performances but the philosophy and intention of those making the products. The product can be established as



Fig. 2 Color lineup of the Gold Wing Tour



Fig. 3 Color lineup of the Gold Wing Tour (airbag-equipped model)



Fig. 4 Color lineup of the Gold Wing

brand only after striking chord with customers.

In order to determine the coloring design for the full model change, the intention and message that we wish to communicate to the users had to be set. For this purpose, the messages communicated in the past were revisited. The messages from the respective periods are shown in Table 1.

As shown here, the Gold Wing's message has gone through changes with time. Through realizing what the messages communicate, the Gold Wing has gained popularity and established itself as a motorcycle model like no other (Fig. 5).

The coloring design is an important factor in making the next generation of the Gold Wing customers' time with the motorcycle a special one. As such, the coloring theme was to have a message from a coloring design perspective.

3.2. "Presence Like No Other" and Coloring Theme

The presence of the Gold Wings is one of the reasons why the series has been the "one and only." With this iteration, the Gold Wing is going further to become a "Presence like no other" through a new coloring method. The aim was to have the Gold Wing a stance that can exude the model's dignity.

It is said that only when the visual and superficial (such as color and shape) as well as the sensory aspects are present and affecting each other can one recognize the presence and stance of something. As such, it was imperative to have an integrated approach to manage not only the paint colors, but also the part materials, textures, and the finishes, and the feel that the product gives. Expanding the definition of the role that the coloring design has, the team chose "Amazes,

Table 1 List of messages appeared in past catalogs

	Period	Message of catalog copy writing
1	1975-1979	King of motorcycles
2	1980-1983	The Interstate of the ART
3	1984-1987	Leading where no one can follow
4	1988-2000	An Extraordinary touring performance
5	2001-2017	Gold Wing is the gold standard of touring

excites, and deeply moves you the second you touch, feel and straddle it" as the coloring theme.

4. Gearing Up to Implementing Coloring Theme

4.1. Integrated Color Management

Due to the approach to manage the entire coloring scheme in an integrated manner, the parts were to be given textures to meet their respective roles.

Most of the parts used in the Gold Wing are developed for exclusive use, allowing for expressions and surface treatments of parts to be optimized for the model. These are luxuries that can only be commanded by the Gold Wing, the one and only. Specifically on the upper half of the body comprised of many colored parts, much care and detailed attention were to be given to the texture, feel and color of the parts where people would touch, in addition to using high-quality paints.

For the lower part of the motorcycle comprised



Fig. 5 Precursors of the Gold Wing

mainly of mechanical parts, the focus was on accentuating the presence of each part that supports the function and performance, creating a functional beauty that is distinctively the Gold Wing. The contrast between the upper and lower areas in appearance itself creates a high-quality feel of a flagship model, as well as the “Presence like no other” targeted (Fig. 6).

4.2. CMF

A study was done also on color expressions, as well as materials and finishes that would take one’s breath away at first glance.

For coloring expression, colors that exude quality have been developed for the Gold Wings in the past. With this development, however, the envelope had to be pushed further to make the coloring design to have a “Presence like no other.” The coloring must leave a deep impression on those who see the model at first glance. The coloring itself must be able to evoke an emotional response.

Going beyond the coloring, much attention was to be given to the materials and finishes as well.

The seat surface skin should be supple and soft, high in quality and beautiful in color, with a texture pleasant to touch, leaving an impression by its color and feel.

The metal parts should be given various treatments from buffed to plated, even clear-coated for depth in paint color. These differences in finishing would contribute to creating the feel of quality and style that cannot be created by hues alone.

In this development, the coloring theme was executed from an integrated CMF perspective.

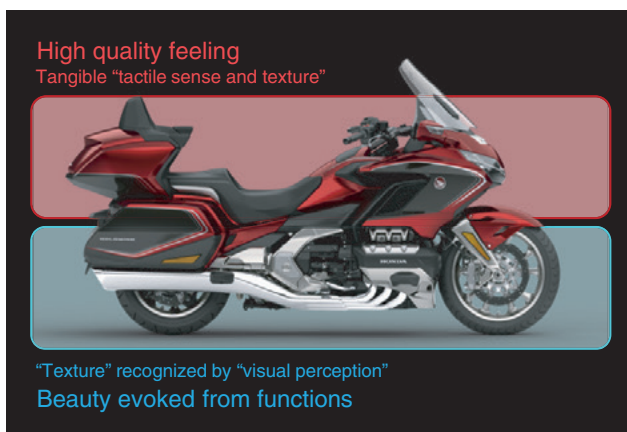


Fig. 6 Defining characteristics clearly separated in expressions of exterior color arrangements

5. Specifics of Methods Applied

To think of hues that give dramatic impressions, the team first looked into the movements and body postures specific to motorcycle. Motorcycles are often seen tilted,

such as when going round a curve or when parked on the roadside using the side stand. The coloring itself needed to create a “Presence like no other” so as to immediately give those who look at it a vision of a scene with the motorcycle.

5.1. Creating Dramatic Impression Through Paint Surface Expression

For the development of paints to be used on the Gold Wing, an in-depth study was carried out on how the paint surface expressions can make each and every scene involving the motorcycle a dramatic one.

Ideally, a paint color should have a wet-like depth, a high-saturation brilliance almost like a highlight, and a shade that dips deep down. The look shifts, the paint surface expression even changing dramatically, by the shape of the part or vehicle movement. This would accentuate the three-dimensionality of the motorcycle’s body to give a dramatic impression.

Based on this concept, two new colors were developed exclusively for the Gold Wing: CANDY ARDENT RED and PEARL STALLION BROWN. The details are illustrated below.

5.1.1. Development of new color CANDY ARDENT RED

(1) Meaning and target of color red

Red is an essential color to Honda whose history has been built from sport, passion and challenge. In this development of making the flagship for a new era, the objective was to develop a red that goes beyond the reds of the past. The color must be a red that is high quality and alluring that would deeply move a person the moment it is seen. The hue was to be the reddest of red, not leaning towards yellow nor blue.

(2) Creating expression through paint structure

The current trend in the metal flakes used in high-end automobiles are mostly using relatively small particles, not large particles that dazzle, for its effect of giving the product a delicate, high-quality feel. With this development of the Gold Wing, the aim was to apply the same approach to create dramatic yet elegant colors.

To accentuate the variety of stylized forms and shapes, a clear cover coat was to be applied to maintain the saturation level and show the smooth shift in color value of the painted surfaces. With the shaded surfaces that the light would not reach, the color value should dramatically drop to show the beautiful contrasts the three-dimensional shapes make. These requirements were to be satisfied by a triple-layer candy paint application for adding depth to the color and give a high-end feel suitable for a flagship model (Fig. 7). Under this color design, color-mixing was done while using new pigments and metal flakes. The “candy paint” refers to the painting specification of a base color with metallic flakes with a clear cover coating.

(3) Confirmation and evaluation

The color in the process of mixing was applied to

mockup models for confirmation of appearance on vehicle. Paint colors vary in appearance by the area and shape of application and therefore it is essential to do a confirmation by applying to models having the actual size and shape of the motorcycle. This three-dimensional verification was carried out repeatedly to check if the coloring design was able to best show the new styling of the model and create the “Presence like no other.” As such, there was also the need of verifying whether the color expression can leave a dramatic impression on people who see the model from a distance.

At the last phase of color mixing, other styling designers were invited to a confirmation with a mockup model placed outside. Their first reaction upon seeing the new red was a very vocal “wow,” facial expressions being that of a surprise. The surprise immediately turned to a smile with words such as “good.” Seeing such changes in facial expressions was a confirmation that we were able to create the targeted “Presence like no other.” Figure 8 shows the conventional candy color, and Fig. 9 the newly developed red.

(4) Specification and effect of finalized paint

To the base coat, next-generation high-brilliance tinted aluminum flakes were added for their thin, smooth surfaces and high reflecting power to realize a stronger, sharper brilliance. The transparency of the clear cover coat was enhanced by applying nano-pigment particles, dramatically increasing the amount of light reaching the base coat (Fig. 7). By applying these materials, the red was able to have a highly saturated transparency for a defined bright highlight and deep shade which could not be achieved with the previous candy paint.

These technologies created a wet-like depth of color and highly defined three-dimensional appearance through the strong contrast, giving the Gold Wing the “Presence like no other” befitting the premier tourer. We believe that a red that is high in quality, alluring, and having a dramatic impression that would excite and deeply move

a person at first glance was successfully developed (Figs. 10, 11, and 12).

5.1.2. Development of new color PEARL STALLION BROWN

PEARL STALLION BROWN is the other new color with an agile and light image, developed for exclusive use for the Gold Wing model without the trunk. The image envisioned in preparation for the development was that of the dynamic beauty of a thoroughbred horse dashing under the sun, its body shimmering with every movement.

Motorcycles are often referred to as iron horses for their

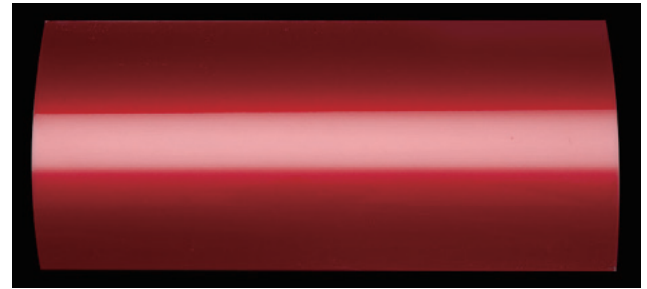


Fig. 8 Conventional candy color

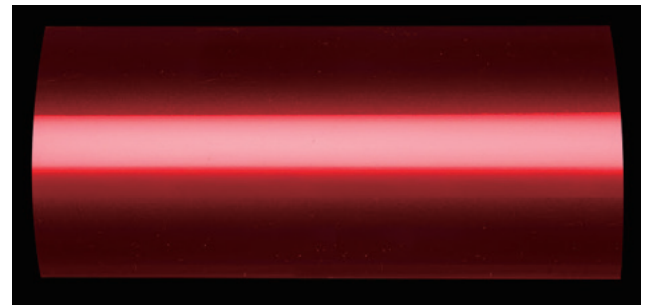


Fig. 9 Developed “CANDY ARDENT RED”

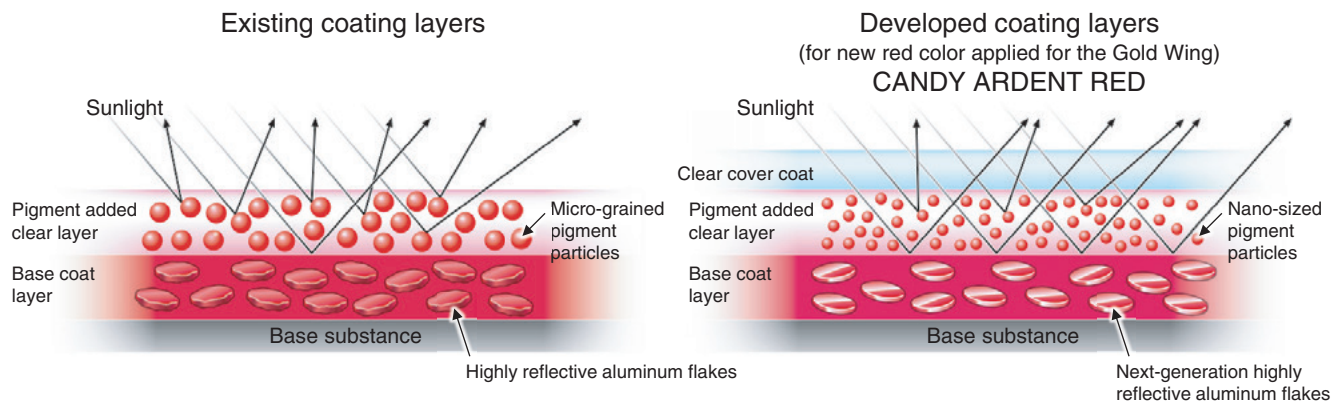


Fig. 7 Schematic drawings of paint layers comparing existing method and developed method applied for CANDY ARDENT RED

similarities with the thoroughbred racing horses. Looking at their lean bodies, it is easy to imagine their performance in a race. The color was mixed to look like the beautiful coat of a stallion, moving and shining as the powerful muscles move under its skin.



Fig. 10 CANDY ARDENT RED in rider's view



Fig. 11 CANDY ARDENT RED in front diagonal view



Fig. 12 CANDY ARDENT RED applied on trunk

The approach taken to develop CANDY ARDENT RED was also applied here: the color should be a dramatic, high-saturation and deeply shaded one. Small-particle metal flakes were chosen to create a feel of high quality through a continuous and smooth color transition.

The trunk-less Gold Wing also uses dark colors in the frame and suspension areas for sportiness and powerfulness. The details on this portion will be described in Chapter 6.

The overall vehicle color management made it possible to strongly differentiate the two Gold Wing variations (Figs. 13 and 14).

5.1.3. Development of two-tone graphics

The Gold Wing's top grade model with an airbag was given a two-tone finish of the Gold Wing exclusive CANDY ARDENT RED and a black metallic color with depth, giving the model the stylish, luxurious presence that it deserves. The added pin stripe graphics highlight the distinctive lines and forms to showcase the beauty of the model.

The Gold Wing is a flagship model and therefore must have a feel of an unparalleled quality and presence, and also embodying the model's legacy while also being new, and this was the case even for the added exclusive graphics.



Fig. 13 PEARL STALLION BROWN



Fig. 14 Looks of PEARL STALLION BROWN in driving scene

However, the initial trial of drawing stripe lines along the ridges of the character lines did not yield the result initially envisioned.

The role of the graphics such as stripes is to accentuate the beauty of the body's shape and add value to it. To identify the ideal keyline for the model's styling, the team turned off the lights of the studio to project light directly onto the clay model. The light source was moved slowly, changing the way the clay model is shone, to observe how and when the line's appearance changes.

The observation was this: the strongest light condenses not on the ridgeline projecting out the most (Line 1), which the team believed as being the main character, but rather on the depression in the deep end of a downward-looking surface (Line 2) (Fig. 15). Based on this finding, Line 2 was defined as the keyline and sketches were reworked (Fig. 16).

With the implementation of this, the graphics design was able to further accentuate the model's styling and express the beautiful fluidity of its proportion. This meant that we were able to realize the stylish and luxurious presence that was the graphic design theme worthy of a top-grade motorcycle (Figs. 17 and 18).

For the pinstripes of the model, a 53 μm -thin stripe sheet was used. Compared to the usual materials with thicknesses of 80-135 μm , this extremely thin material makes it hardly

noticeable when touched, giving it a feel of being well integrated into the body.

5.2. Expression through Materials and Finishes

5.2.1. Development of seat surface skin with enhanced quality and feel – Study of skin emboss design –

A feel of high quality is another important factor of making a "Presence like no other." In this development, in order to realize a high quality touch suitable for the Gold Wing, there was no compromise made even for the plastic parts and emboss design of the seat surface skin.

A new texture pattern was developed for the seat surface skin with a particular consideration to the feel of it, such as suppleness and the temperature felt by the hand, in addition to having a new look. Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) material was chosen as with many other motorcycles, and the above-mentioned quality enhancement with an excellent feel to the touch were to be made.

The seats of the Gold Wings in the past often used large embossed patterns on the surface skin (Fig. 19). The current trend, however, is using mid-sized embossed patterns for a more elegant feel (Fig. 20). For this model, a new seat surface skin emboss design with a high quality



Fig. 15 Deliberation in pursuit for effective key-line



Fig. 16 Defined key-lines for decorative graphics



Fig. 17 Fixed key-line for decorative graphic on middle cowling



Fig. 18 Appearance with finalized decorative graphics

feel was considered to meet the current trend.

A seat surface's feel of quality changes by the suppleness and the temperature felt by the hand. Since this is mainly due to the way the hand comes in contact with the fine unevenness created by the texture on the surface, an effort was made to optimize the emboss pattern for a quality feel.

Whether or not a seat surface skin is high in quality also largely depends on the visual information. Even if genuine leather is used, when the polish level is excessively high, it would be perceived as a cheap vinyl product though our vision. It is therefore necessary to have a surface treatment to create a more matte, elegant appearance.

Motorcycles are used outdoors, therefore the seat is exposed to the elements and used in various, if not severe, weather and usage conditions. Since the surfaces are bound to become damaged at various levels through normal use, it is ideal to have a seat surface skin that would make scratches as unnoticeable as possible. Full matte would not achieve this goal. The team created a new skin texture

design after repeating the cycle of detailed adjustments of polish level and texture pattern design size as well as how it feels to the touch, while also meeting the conditions mentioned earlier (Fig. 21). The result was the completion of a seat surface skin that is high in quality and elegant in appearance, which could become the standard for future high-end products.

5.2.2. Expression of functional beauty in lower body area

This clause explains the surface treatments and other finishes applied to the lower area of the vehicle body where the model's functional beauty is displayed.

The first study was on how to show the metallic texture. The lower body is quite complex, having the engine and many other parts using various materials such as metal and plastics. From the perspective of color management, the team chose to give this area a cohesive look with metallic look.

In the following process of identifying the best method to achieve this, various products other than motorcycles were studied. In this group of objects was a certain high-end single-reflex lens (SRL) camera which caught the eye. It was predominantly black, but metallic finishes were used effectively in some areas of the body and parts. Although metal was only partially used, metal had a stronger presence compared to products showing metal overall. This experience gave a realization that a precise management of the relative placements of black and metal creates the visual effect of accentuating the metal. Meticulous attention was given on what placement of metallic materials would be most effective, down to a bolt placed in a black area. The area ratio of black and silver was also determined based on above observations. The decision on how to do styling



Fig. 19 Large texture design of leather applied for the previous Gold Wings



Fig. 20 Medium-sized texture design of leather that makes the elegance of the current trend



Fig. 21 PVC seat leather with grain patterns developed this time

design for the lower vehicle body was made: the method as explained above would be used (Fig. 22).

5.2.3. Styling design for new horizontally opposed 6-cylinder engine

To showcase the new, smaller engine, a study was carried out on how to make its head cover, the most prominent feature in terms of appearance, can be shown most beautifully. The conventional surface treatment method is “buff clear” with a look of chrome plating, but for this model it was going to be finished with satin-buffed hairline treatment (Fig. 23).

Previous models had plated parts all over for a gorgeous, luxe look. In contrast, this model was to have a styling design meeting the design preferences of new customer groups such as Generation X and following the current trends. The surrounding parts, such as the frame and suspensions, would have a matte and subtle metallic look to show their functional beauty. Further, these were to be treated with a finish evoking the image of artisanal hand work, such as satin-buffed hairline finish, to give customers another reason to love the product.



Fig. 22 Lower area of vehicle body with coloring design having intention to make metallic feel stand out



Fig. 23 Head cover with hairline treatment

6. Differentiating Images by Character Differences

As touched on in Clause 5.1.2., development of new color PEARL STALLION BROWN, the Gold Wing series being developed at this time has a version that does not come equipped with a rear trunk. Also as mentioned earlier, the trunk-less Gold Wing looks light and agile and styled to stress its sportiness. This version was given a different CMF and coloring approach to create a visible difference from the other, even with the functional parts such as the frame and suspension parts.

For this version, most of the parts in the lower vehicle body area were designed to be in dark metallic gray or blacks with different textures, with minimal accent coming only from the metal of bolts and caps. The finished look is a combination of dark, low-contrast color tone with matte textures, enhancing the powerful styling of the product. Figure 24 shows the difference between the two versions with their own distinctive finishes in the vehicle's lower body area.



Fig. 24 The Gold Wing Tour and the Gold Wing



Fig. 25 Precious time spent with the Gold Wing

It is our hope that these two versions would resonate with the various customer groups (Fig. 25).

7. Summary

This paper gives the overview on the concept set forth for the coloring design and the actual development and application process for the Gold Wing, a motorcycle going through its first full-model change in 17 years. In this process, the colors, materials and finishes were developed and applied after considering the quality of appearance for the overall vehicle, even attempting at visually creating the presence that the product has. The coloring design was created so it would appeal to all senses, portraying the “Presence like no other.”

It is my sincere wish that the coloring design with the intention mentioned above would make the moment a person and the Gold Wing meets to be a special one, leading to deeply moving road trips, and the time the rider spends with the Gold Wing an even more enriching one.

Reference

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■ Author ■



Midori KATSURAGAWA