

Creative Rationale: *Dino Cousins* Editorial Layout

This document outlines the design decisions behind the editorial layout for the article *Dino Cousins*. The objective of this spread was to present the story in a clear, engaging, and print ready format that reflects the visual standards of a professional magazine feature. In developing the layout, I focused on creating a balanced relationship between imagery, typography, and text structure so that the reader can easily navigate the article while still experiencing a strong visual introduction to the subject. The following sections explain the key design choices related to layout structure, visual hierarchy, typography, and colour.

Layout Strategy

- This spread was designed as the opening two pages of a magazine feature, so my focus was on creating a strong first impression while still keeping the article readable and well organized.
- I used a two page facing layout with a three column grid on each page to give the spread a professional editorial structure and to make it easier to organize text, images, captions, and spacing consistently.
- On the left page, I placed the headline at the top, followed by a short introductory line and then a large feature image. This was intentional because I wanted the first page to introduce the subject visually before moving into the main body text.
- The article text begins at the bottom of the first page in columns, which helps the page feel like the start of a feature story rather than a poster or title page.
- On the right page, I continued the article in the same three column structure and added supporting images to create variety and maintain visual interest.
- I placed the skull image in the upper middle area of the second page so it would act as a secondary focal point and support the scientific content of the article.
- I placed the environmental dinosaur image across the bottom of the second page to anchor the spread visually and give the right page a strong finish that balances the large image on the left.

Use of Hierarchy

- The most important hierarchy choice was making the headline the largest element on the spread so the reader immediately understands the topic.
- The introductory sentence below the headline is smaller and italicized so it reads as supporting information rather than as a second title.
- The feature image on page one is the next strongest visual element, which helps pull the reader into the story before they begin reading the body copy.
- I used drop caps at the beginning of the article sections to clearly signal where reading begins and to reinforce the magazine style of the layout.

- Captions and image credits were kept much smaller so they support the images without competing with the headline or article text.
- I used a thin horizontal rule under the headline as an ornament to separate the title area from the rest of the page and add structure to the composition.

Typography and Paragraph Formatting Choices

- The layout uses a serif typeface throughout to create a classic editorial look and to support readability in columns.
- The font used for the title and content was Minion Pro.
- The introductory line and captions were styled in italic in Garamond to distinguish them from the main body copy.
- The headline was set at a much larger size than the rest of the text so it would establish clear visual priority.
- The body text was arranged in three columns to create a more authentic magazine reading experience and to keep the text from feeling too wide or difficult to follow.
- Captions were set in a smaller size to create contrast and make their function clear.
- Paragraph formatting was kept consistent across the spread so the layout feels cohesive and professional.

Colour Choices

- I kept the overall colour treatment relatively restrained so that the images remained the dominant source of colour in the layout.
- The text colour was black, which gives the spread strong contrast and ensures readability in print.
- The background was kept white, which supports a clean editorial look and allows the images and typography to stand out clearly.
- The horizontal rule ornament was a neutral grey, which gives subtle separation without becoming distracting.
- This limited colour palette was intentional because it allows the natural earthy tones of the dinosaur imagery, including browns, greens, creams, and muted landscape colours, to carry the visual mood of the spread.

Overall Design Intent

- My goal was to present the article in a way that felt credible, engaging, and suitable for print.
- I wanted the spread to feel like the opening of a professionally designed magazine feature, where the layout supports the story rather than overpowering it.

- Every design choice, including the three column grid, image placement, typographic scale, restrained colour use, and use of ornament, was made to create a layout that is visually balanced, readable, and editorially appropriate.

Overall, the intention behind this layout was to present the article in a way that feels polished, visually engaging, and appropriate for a professional editorial publication. The design prioritizes readability while using imagery, typography, and structure to create visual interest and guide the reader through the story. By maintaining a consistent grid, clear hierarchy, and restrained colour palette, the spread supports the content of the article while giving it a strong and cohesive visual presentation suitable for print.