## Week 5 Discussion: Give specific examples of how art history currently effects color usage today?

List, describe or ATTACH examples of how art history and classic color theory are still actively working and alive and well today in our modern world!

Post your analysis of this week's reading, lesson activity, film or otherwise. Sharing your impressions for the class.

Please reply to one other student's post as well.
In this week's reading of "Color" by Zelanski and Pat Fisher we can see how the classic color wheel first devised by Isaac Newton is still now a days the main color wheel used by both artists and designers worldwide.


Further, within Itten's presentation, we see how the same principles followed today within color theory where already implemented throughout history in works of arts which are still
considered extraordinary and revered by millions (which doesn't mean that these are the only principals which are now days followed or that these are the right ones!) - for example, the contrast of Hues seen in Van Gogh paintings and later on in Miro's:



Not only the contrast of Hue usage but contrast in light and dark, warm and cool, complementary, "simultaneous", saturation and proportion.

For this week's readings what struck me/ intrigued me the most was the reading of "A brief history of color in art" and how throughout history (before the scientific advances where made possible to make synthetic colors) substances where mixed to create color. I wonder how people thought to mix certain things to create color! Even more the determination to create color that made these people experiment - even with toxic materials - enabling them to come up with it. I found this article fascinating!

Another point which I really liked and helped me better understand color and it's different characteristics has been the "Munsell Color System" - the pictorial diagram really outlines how value, hue and chroma work for each color in the color wheel:


Art History influences how color is used today as people are inspired by the color palettes and treatments used by famous painters. These artists are still studied because they understood color and how to use it affectively. Studying the color combinations used in their paintings can help modern-day artists see how to apply color theory in their own work. It makes color theory easier to grasp. Knowing that blue and orange are complementary colors is different than being able to apply that relationship in your work and convey the message you are trying to get across. The famous painting below by Monet, Sunset in Venice, is a great example of using complementary colors to effectively create contrast. There is a sense of vibrancy and strength that comes from the complementary colors without looking childish or commercialized as complementary colors can sometimes look.


The Dutch Masters were known for their ability to play with lightness and darkness. In Rembrandt's "The Blinding of Samson," he was able to use color and value to draw your eye through his painting. Light is coming from the cave opening, reflecting off the armor and drawing your eye to the focal point, Samson. As your eyes travel through the rest of the painting, you begin to notice the details and supporting characters by their slightly illuminated faces. This painting is an example of how to effectively create contrast with value.


Below is an example of a new Pixar movie that I think is a great example of using an analogous color scheme and saturation of contrast effectively. The saturated red flannel shirt, blue hair, and orange flame accent against the more muted blue-purple and purplered background. Your eye is drawn immediately to the characters as they are also almost sandwiched between the light of the sunset and headlights.


I really enjoyed the "History of Color in Art." Its amazing what people would go through to get the perfect color. Knowing that certain colors were dangerous, or even toxic, artists didn't care because they needed that exact color to evoke a certain emotion. As new colors became available, that new hue seemed to become the favorite among painters because they had never been able to paint with that before. Colors that were difficult to get or more expensive were also saved for certain paintings and subject matter.

Love your example of the Disney "Onward" color schemes. I think they did a great job with the combination of cool tones while mixing in the red flannel to bring more attention to the main characters.

I love your example of Monet's Sunset in Venice, I completely agree it uses complementary colors beautifully. Also, the Disney 'Onward' poster is another great example, the use of color and value really strengthens the image.


This is the famous painting Girl With A Pearl Earring by Johannes Vermeer. We can find many color contrasts we learned - Hue contrast (red, blue, yellow); light-dark contrast (black background vs light image of the girl); cold warm contrast (blue turban top vs gold dress); saturation contrast ( part of the turban and the gold dress). We can also easily find tint and shade added to
this painting. This 17th century painting used lead white and other old technics. I'm sure there's a lot more analysis can be done around this painting. But what impresses me the most is how "trendy" this color combination is! After 4 decades, we still adore the way these colors are applied on her. Take a look at some fashion ideas inspired by this painting.



Aren't just classic and timeless?
I'm slowly building systematic knowledge of color theory, but when I open Photoshop or any photo editor, I still play with all hue, saturation, brightness sliders. It's very important to have the knowledge so we know where to start. But eventually I trust my eyes more than theory.

I like the connection you show here between paintings and fashion. The colors translate gracefully from painting to outfit. Now I have a new idea for creating outfits!

I love the connection between color in art and fashion. This is a really creative way to show the connection between history and today. That
blue is timeless, in particular. I don't currently wear that combination, but totally running to my closet to see what I can come up with. :)

This is awesome, great example! Definitely true that these color combinations are still "trendy" even today. I stumbled across another example today while I was scrolling through my instagram feed of another color palette inspired by a piece of art history. In this case it's Klimt's the kiss, and it's a literal palette (eye shadow).


In looking through examples of how artists have used and interpreted color over the centuries, there is a common thread that I found - all understood color as a powerful tool of expression. Whether it was to inspire or stimulate the viewer, artists become true artists in the sense that they used their medium to create something unique and moving.

The approaches on how they achieved this expression differed, but the application of basic color theory is present.


Vincent Van Gogh: Café Terrace on the Place du Forum, Arles- Here Van Gogh uses complimentary colors in warm and cool tones. The use of complimentary
colors makes our eye take in the whole image, and not just focus on one area. The rear windows have a strong orange next to a deep blue, this contrast makes the lit window stand out even more. In the foreground of the painting he uses orange and blue again to create movement within the cobblestones. The warm yellow of the café creates visual contrast against the cool blue of the night sky. The complimentary colors are used by Van Gogh to create effect in his painting, but if you breakdown all colors in this paint they are analogous on the color wheel: yellow orange, yellow and yellow green, green, blue.


Georgia O'Keefe: Lake George Reflection - Here O'Keefe uses analogous and complementary colors. The red and green produce power and contrast. The analogous colors of red/purple and blue/green counter that with calmness. The divide in the center is created by the use of black and white.


Rothko: as an artist he used only combinations of color to evoke emotion and nothing else. As a color field painter he believed that color became the subject itself. Some art historians feel his color choices also depicted where he was emotionally. His earlier paintings used brighter colors, where as his later ones used more grays highlighting his descent into depression.

I found it fascinating the lengths at which artists went to in their efforts to harness certain colors and how modern innovations gave them new ways to interpret and represent color.

It's interesting to see how one artist emotional state can be captured in their piece forever though the choice of colors they made.

Café Terrace at Night and Starry Night are two of my favorite paintings by Vincent Van Gogh. Usually, I don't like the use of such bright colors but something about his use of blues, oranges, and yellows is incredibly beautiful to me.

I remember having to do an artist history about Rothko in high school and being so confused and frustrated by those rectangles! But seeing some of his paintings in person a few years later completely changed my mind. The size of the canvas itself is impressive and you can really sense the subtlety in the way he layers these colors. Seen up close it is really a beautiful look at how effective colors can be.

This painting by Delacroix from 1830 called "Liberty Leading the People" depicts really well how light-dark contrast helps the eye of the viewer move around the painting towards the various focal points, the main one being "Liberty" holding the French flag with the lightest hue of the painting being her chest and the cloud behind her, along with the white of the flag. The contrast of light on the dark background conveys a very optimistic message, showing that dark times are over as "Liberty" is conquering.

When I think of a parallel to the meaning of light and darkness, I think of the Lion King, when Mufasa tells Simba "everything that the light touches is ours" when looking at their kingdom and warning his son to never go to the shadowy place as it is unsafe.


Another painting that I could draw a connection with in today's world is "Water lilies" by Claude


In the latest Valentino Fashion Show by Pierpaolo Piccioli uses a similar pallet but with different values:


Finally, a highlight for me this week in the lesson was the Mensell Color System. Visualizing value, hue and chroma in one picture really helped me understand colors in a better way.

Art history continues to inspire art today. From colors to styles, from painters to architects, inspiration is something that each artist and person looks for. When it comes to color, I think that art history inspires and effects artist's (and people's) use of color today.
I searched the internet for examples and I discovered an article (Links to an external site.) that showcases contemporary artists and how they are influenced and inspired by Claude Monet. As you look at the artwork, not only do you see a hint of Monet's style, but you see a theme in color usage as well. There is a theme of blues, purples, reds, oranges, and yellows. The artwork invokes the feel of a Monet by color alone. This point is supported by the last piece, which is painted using a different technique.
Something that has always intrigued me is the application of color in films. There are films that you remember strongly for their use of color
alone. Recently, two creators I follow on Instagram created a set of presets (Links to an external site.) (for photos). Half of these presets are directly inspired by the coloring in films. There is a preset called Painter inspired by 'An American in Paris' (1951). It is based on the magenta and yellow tones in the film. Another film used for inspiration is Amélie (2001). This preset uses green and yellow to create a similar contrast to the one featured in the film. I think this merging of coloring in films with photo presets is an exciting concept that has many possibilities. (Links to an external site.)

This week the reading I found most interesting was "A Brief History of Color in Art". I loved reading about the various processes used to create paints and pigments. I could not help but wonder who came up with these methods. Some of which, yellow and black specifically, struck me as odd. Another point that stood out to me is just how toxic, and even poisonous, paints were. Even today, some paints are toxic.

Those presets are amazing! Agree that this is a very exciting way to apply time to art.

I definitely got a very clear comprehension of light and color from Mary Jane Begin this week. Her explanations of renaissance paintings made me want to go straight to a museum and analyze art. Another thing I enjoyed from this lesson was all the different approaches of the color wheel and the hand made three dimensional wheel that was shown in several slides...I'd like to make one of those!

Regarding the assignment I chose two artists that immediately popped into my head, Kehinde Wiley and Nan Goldin.



WoW! I love this guy. When you go to the Brooklyn Museum and see his version of "Napoleon leading the army over the Alps" it's breathtaking. And let's face it....in 2019 it isn't easy to be breathtaking. Shocking, thought provoking, or despicable...sure, but breathtaking not so much. So in these two examples of Wiley's work there are very clear color theory concepts. I do not think that they were unintentional. I've only ever seen his works in person, but never done research on him. We can clearly see that he is a high caliber, classically trained fine artist who has taken renaissance style painting to a place no one ever dreamt it could go...to the streets! To hip hop! To the first African-American President Barack Obama for the National Portrait Gallery ! Incredible.

First in the Napoleon painting, which l've had the blessing to gaze at in person, I would have never thought much of the color scheme at all before this class. Now looking at it I see that there is absolutely intention in using the complimentary colors red and green. Red, in the attention grabbing background motif and more subtlety in the "Starter" branded wristbands of his "Napoleon". Then quite deliberately in the green values of the classic U.S
A.R.M.Y camouflage fatigues the rider is wearing, prepared for war. Factor in all that gold in the repeat Fleur de Lis and the very powerfully wind swept robes of this "Napoleon" and I believe we have something of a tertiary triad going on. But wait...I see some very royal looking element in...another robe?? What is that? I don't know what that fabrics significance is, but it's there, adding another element to the artists understanding of color theory. Blue being complimentary to the gold/ yellow. I'm prone to say that because of it's small peek-a-boo-esque element, it could be all that more significant.

In the next painting by the artist we get a much cooler color palette. This piece is quite a color departure from the artists "Napoleon" painting, which demands attention, precisely why it's at the point of entry to the Brooklyn Museum, his home borough. We see a pretty significant contrast in this painting, "Saint Francis of Paola". The painting has a similar concept, urban meets renaissance, but evokes a different feeling with it's color and energy i.e pose of subject and concept. In this painting we get much more of an analogous color theme. The blue tint against red tint so both are cool and soft giving us a pastel color palette. Then factor in the gold (yellow) in the Fleur de lis again and the gold of the subjects watch and we get a tertiary triad. And the pop of the saturated red Nike logo makes it stand out as a symbol of our pop culture.



The first image, a self portrait by photographer Nan Goldin, has a very ethereal quality seen in historical painting. I'm mostly using the painting that Begin used as a jumping off point. Obviously art history spans a much greater time frame than the Renaissance, but I seemed to gravitate towards that comparison. Here the color and lighting elements that she described in the painting of the father with knife, son and angel...I can see them at work here in this photograph even if it is "just a reflection" in a bathroom. The lighting is what makes this photo so dramatic and intriguing. It's such a mundane thing, looking into a mirror, but the color and lighting, even more so than the subject, is what really makes this photo curiously beautiful.

I would say this is an example of monochromatic theme. Hue red. The dramatic lighting creates a very clear focal point, the reflected face, and then the shades of red gradually radiate from there, almost to black in the bottom righthand corner. The light source could almost take the place of the sun or rays of light that are often seen in historical biblical paintings. And don't get me started on the deeper meaning of this image...I'll stick with the color theory ;)

The second photo, I would guess from possibly the same series, has many of those same dramatic lighting effects. This one really reminds me of something very old, also with a biblical quality to it's composition. The longer I look at this one the more intrigued I become. Questions about the subjects and emotions they're feeling really peek my curiosity. A far as color though it's basically the same as the mirror photo (sorry I didn't get a better variation...these two just struck me, and I'm a Nan fan).

I have never seen the first two images before. Thanks for sharing. Will definitely check it out!

Art history and classic color influence so much of what we see today. Starting with the basic availability of color - that so many pigments were deemed toxic and artists have had to find other methods of recreating those preferred pigments (and it sounds like Lead White still belongs in history). Having primarily studied the art of famous artists, rather than their lives, it was startling to read how many had their health impacted by the pigments they were using. Today, we still see that reflected in industries where toxic materials are used despite the risk.

I also think the innovation throughout history is very much reflected today. The process of even creating many pigments had to come through trial and error (who thought to feed cows mango and then use their urine?!?!), and we still see innovations with pigment today. Just this week, scientists reported the first total synthesis of the pigments responsible for the yellow color in Iceland poppies (Links to an external site.), eight decades after they were originally isolated.


I also hadn't noted how the introduction of a new pigment shaped the hues of an era. Maybe this poppie yellow will be one of the colors of the year in the 2020s.

Finally, I think the ability to study art and learn from classic color theory puts us a step or two beyond. By learning the lessons of yesterday, we can focus on innovation or the skill with which we create: the intricacies that hue, saturation, value, tones, color choice, position, shape, etc., bring to our world today. Compare two wall paintings, for example: Banksy street art vs Bulgarian cave art.

Bulgarian Cave Art:


Banksy Street Art


Crystal, I was also really struck by the information about how and where colors were sourced (including the fact that many kinds of green paint were toxic and might have led to Monet's blindness, etc). Great find about the Icelandic poppies!!

Whoa! the icelandic poppies are a stunning shade. Very interesting example with the bulgarian cave painting and the street art!

Classical color theory and the technique employed in art history are definitely still alive and well! It's so cool that after learning about techniques (such as the techniques for contrast as outlined by Itten), I began to notice it everywhere. I cherrypicked some examples from pop culture and showed how they utilized the same techniques as the great masters.

Complementary Contrast - The Mona Lisa's red tinted hair and skin stands out from the green tinted background. In this screenshot from a music video, the girl's yellow shirt stands out from the muted purple tint of the the background.


Temperature (and complementary) contrast: I love how these two color palettes are almost the same, even though the art was created 125 years apart. I personally find the temperature contrast so evocative of the mood. The blue mirrors the negative emotion the main character is experiencing (terror and heartbreak) and that contrasts with the warmth of the background, creating emotional tension in the piece. The blue stands out against the complementary orange, focusing the viewer on the subject.


Value contrast is still being used to focus the viewer's eye on the subject. The complementary color contrast supports this value structure!


Bonus: "aquamarine blue"


1. Mona Lisa. Da Vinci, c. 1503
2. Happy. Pharrell Williams, 2014
3. One of Those Nights. KEY, 2018
4. The Scream. Edvard Munch, 1893
5. The Swing. Jean-Honoré Fragonard, c. 1767
6. Look at Her Now. Selena Gomez, 2019
7. Guava Island. dir. Hiro Murai, 2019

After going through the lessons from Week 5, it's clear to see that art history has a major effect on color usage today. For starters, the color wheel, originally created in 1706 by Isaac Newton, is still in major use today. This can be compared to print ads, movie creation, and even interior design.

## COLOR WHEEL




The usage of these colors does not cause chaos or confusion for the eyes because of their relationship together. If there had been added in another color, say purple, it would cause a much different effect on the human brain and human emotion. Right now, when looking at the image, personally, I get a sense of calmness and comfort. The colors are not harsh and the blues/tans/oranges provide a more airy feeling when they are placed all together in a room. You can see in Monet's painting below, "The Gare SaintLazare" that these colors have always been in use together and always been
pleasing to the eyes. The combination of warm and cools provides depth and makes the viewer want to continue to analyze the great work of Monet.


I also found it interesting to read about what these colors used to mean years and years ago. Blue was originally used in famous paintings for its "high price tag". The Mother Mary was always shown in a blue robe, which for centuries, the color could only be found for painters in the mountain ranges of Afghanistan. Along with that, it was fascinating to read how the color white was carrying lead and was not banned in the U.S until 1978. I find it so interesting to see how hard these materials were to come by and create, not that many years ago. As humans I think we definitely take these resources for granted but I also love how we have not lost sight of what "good" color theory is and how to make these colors properly interact with one another. Had it not been for Isaac Newton and other individuals developing color over time, we would not have the knowledge of color that we do today.

Reading the Krause pieces on classic color theory, I kept thinking about sports team logos:


In the example above of American football team logos, for example, we see a lot of classic color theory at play. First, complementary colors with the Miami Dolphins teal and orange, as well as the Blue Jays' yellow and purple and the NY Giants' navy and deep orange.

We also see a lot of what Krause calls one of the most iconic monochromatic color combinations - red, white, and black - including the San Francisco 49ers, the Kansas City Chiefs, and the Pittsburgh Pirates.

With the Steelers' diamonds, we also see a classic triadic color combination.
I wonder if these sports logos hew so closely to classic color theory because a) they were, for the most part, designed a long time ago and b) they need to be striking, and therefore with bold colors and high contrast. You don't see a ton of analogous colors in American football team logos.

The same general pattern of choices is also evident in college football logos:


Lots of complementary colors or strong monochromatic combinations, with not too many palettes of analogous colors.

In my first academic go-round, I took an art history class, in which the students were required to study one painting over the course of the semester. When I stuck my hand in the portrait jar, I pulled Gabrielle Munter, 1877-1962. The painting was her self-portrait in front of an easel.


At the time, I couldn't really pinpoint why I ended up liking this painting as much as I did. In retrospect, it's her use of color to imbue both a warmth and simplicity.

After reading how some colors were made, lead white being one of them, I took a second look at the portrait. Her tones of white were not "true whites," rather shades or tints of red. The overall portrait has high color saturation and uses colors in a way to draw focus and guides your eyes around the painting.

She uses sharp contrasts effectively, as depicted in her series of children's paintings. Her painting, From Norway, uses saturation and contrast to take you on a visual journey. She uses complementary colors to pop color without using them in a dominating way. The orange and yellow-orange homes set against the complimentary blue. The red house set against the orange-green and green fields.


Overall, I really enjoyed the history of color and how colors were created. It makes me wonder how many paintings were done at the detriment of the artist. I'm still amazed at the use of lead white and how it was created.

I really like the children's painting 'From Norway', the use of saturated colors and the cozy, comforting feel it conveys.

I also found the history of color in art very eye-opening too. It makes me realize how lucky we are to live at a time when there are an excess of resources.
the history of color in art was quite interesting. Knowing that a color like lapiz lazuli was so rare and expensive adds a whole different layer of meaning to an artwork that uses it. You get a better sense of the symbols that were important to the artist when this color was used. It seems that the artwork of times past required a lot more thought and planning due to the availability of pigments and how well they last. It surprised me that so many of these paints were toxic! Thank goodness scientists figured that out at some point. It makes me wonder how that constant exposure to toxins may have affected the art produced during these times.


The use of color theory has influenced art history and culture heavily. One iconic image I can think of is Great Wave off Kanagawa by Hokusai, which has influenced artists and culture since its creation. Its cool color palette uses a variety of blues, giving depth and some drama to the piece and it is balanced by warmer tones in the sky and boats. The Great Wave off Kanagawa has become one of the most recognisable pieces of Japanese art and has influenced fashion, art and it has even been turned into an emoji! Here are a few examples of it's relevance to modern culture: https://acclaimmag.com/art/a-short-history-of-the-great-wave-in-pop-culture/\#3 (Links to an external site.)


Mondrian's use of primary colors and simple geometric forms have also been heavily influential in modern culture. His recognisable forms inspired color blocking in fashion, and the iconic YSL Mondrian dress in particular was directly inspired by his paintings. Architecture has also drawn a lot of inspiration from his use of color and shapes, with many buildings around the world featuring his famous color combinations: https://weburbanist.com/2019/04/17/mondrian-lives-on-the-artists-influence-on-architecture-design/ (Links to an external site.)
One last thing I thought of was an article I came across recently which showed how much the complementary combination of blue and orange is used in so
many movie posters. It really made me think about how so many of them end up looking quite similar, but yet they are quite impactful and memorable. The blue and orange contrast really does work well. https://www.thewrap.com/why-movie-posters-all-look-same75846/ (Links to an external site.)

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I wonder if the expense and inaccessibility of colored pigment had anything to do with the development of the chiarosuro style where light and shadow are the main stars and coloris used Chivoscuuro suse dramstic light and shodow, and tene ebrim, which Caravagio is associted with in value between the intersedy black badg tround sogisst the much lighter color of the skull and
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 ot the eun helps to strengthen that sesse of hope that the men in the boas will make it throught the emotion.


The readings from week 5 were very interesting. Reading about the lengths people would go to for certain colors throughout history wasn't something I had considered before. Especially the section on ultramarine blue that comes from lapis lazuli, how it was a color often chosen for the Virgin Mary's robe because of the cost and not because of its religious symbolism. The thought of it being so difficult to get a hold of a particular color wasn't something I had considered, I wonder how art would have evolved if access to colors was as limited today as it was in the past.

Learning about Itten's color contrasts was very helpful. It encouraged me to look at pieces more closely and critically. In the future, I will probably be more observant and diligent about collecting and finding examples of designs, illustrations etc. I enjoyed finding examples of his color contrasts in art pieces and advertisements. There are so many examples of these principles at work in color usage throughout history and even today. Here are some pieces with a contrast of complements, the Degas piece that uses a range of blue to green and yellow to orange.

Then, a Picasso piece with red/green and light blue/yellow-orange.

I found this piece by the painter Maria Izquierdo,


I chose to include this self-portrait along with this Off White ad, since both pieces use a similar color scheme.

I would say both of these pieces have a contrast of hues, the combination of red, pink, and a neutral (gray). In the case of the Off White ad, there could also be a contrast of warm and cool since I would say the neutral is a cool, silver gray.

