

x7

## Week 5 Discussion: Art History + the Modern

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.

After going through this week's materials, I started to look at the world around me from the color theory angle. It's surprising to realize how most of the sceneries & comms we interact with on a daily basis can be simplified into one or another color combination scheme.

For the purpose of this discussion, I decided to focus my attention on fashion, looking at how one of my favorite designers uses color in her work. Here are some patterns I recognized from Itten's theory:

Here she creates a complementary contrast with the blue and the orange:



Here are two examples of cold-warm contrast (red-blue and yellow-green):





And here is a saturation contrast:



Great examples with fashion, which is often where we get to see so many changes and trends. In my personal life sometimes I encounter an interesting color palette or combination For the first time in a sweater, on a pair of socks, etc. I think perhaps this is because though fashion needs to be of the moment, there are usually classic elements at play at the same time.

Hi Maria,

I loved how you thought to use fashion to describe how Itten's color theory works today. Color combinations are used repeatedly over time and for good reason. Thanks for sharing!

I was amazed at the information about how far people would go to create different pigments and colors in the past..manure, lead, vinegar? Urine of mango-fed cows? Not only were the processes complicated in their scientific processes, they were Dangerous—yet, the pursuit of art was so important to them that they knowingly used materials thaT posed significant health hazards. It makes you stop and think a lot about the role of the arts, and the artist, in those days.

Speaking of hazard, one specific example that sticks out to me as a way history still plays a role in color choices is green. If asked to list connotations of the color green, anything to with life, nature, etc. would have come first. However, the associations with arsenic, poison, Chemicals, danger, and sickness are evident. The information about different chemicals that are risky to kids cold have been red, yellow, or orange to be more attention-getting, but the green helps you know right away that the topic is poisons. The green “icky face” character is a bright, acidic shade of green so that it stands out on any packaging, signage, etc. Searching stock photos of “poison,” most are green.

I think this is also because of the fact that these brighter shades of green aren't found all that often in nature, at least not in humans. Any shade of that color in your skin would actually be unhealthy. That is the principle that makes the “green screen” work, by the way!

Turns out green isn't always so life-giving after all.









## Poison Prevention Week Pick Your Antidotes



Instructions: Please write in the correct letter corresponding with the correct antidote for the poison, toxin, or condition. Some toxins may have more than one answer.

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| ___ Warfarin                             | A. Deferoxamine                     |
| ___ Organophosphates/nerve gas           | B. N-acetylcysteine                 |
| ___ Opioid                               | C. Protamine                        |
| ___ Anticholinergic poisoning            | D. Ca/EDTA                          |
| ___ Benzodiazepine                       | E. Bal-in-oil/dimercaperol          |
| ___ Ethylene glycol/methanol             | F. Diphenhydramine                  |
| ___ Methemoglobinemia                    | G. Pralidoxime (2-PAM)              |
| ___ Heavy metals                         | H. Prussian Blue                    |
| ___ Cyanide                              | I. Naloxone                         |
| ___ Iron                                 | J. Vitamin K                        |
| ___ Acetaminophen                        | K. Methylene blue                   |
| ___ Hyperammonemia                       | L. Levocarnitine                    |
| ___ Rattlesnake envenomation             | M. Atropine                         |
| ___ Cardiac glycosides                   | N. Crotalidae polyvalent Immune-FAB |
| ___ Beta blocker/calcium channel blocker | O. DigiFab                          |
| ___ Sulfonyleurea                        | P. Calcium gluconate                |
| ___ Isoniazid                            | Q. Hydroxycobalamin                 |
| ___ Black Widow Spider                   | R. Cyproheptadine                   |
| ___ Hydrofluoric acid                    | S. DMSA                             |
| ___ Serotonin syndrome                   | T. Ethanol                          |
| ___ Extraprymidal reactions              | U. Flumazenil                       |
| ___ Heparin                              | V. Fomepizole                       |
| ___ Thallium                             | W. Glucagon                         |
| ___ Lead poisoning                       | X. Octreotide                       |
|  | Y. Pyridoxine                       |
|  | Z. Physostigmine                    |



Reminder parents, families, and employees, if a person you know swallows a known substance or poison, please call **Poison Control** as soon as possible or **911**.

**1-800-222-1222**



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Abby, I enjoyed reading what you wrote about the color green and I never thought about the fact that brighter greens are not found often in nature until now. Since green is associated with nature it's hard to associate it to hazard as well. As you mentioned, it is out there but as we now associations and culture affect how we see colors.

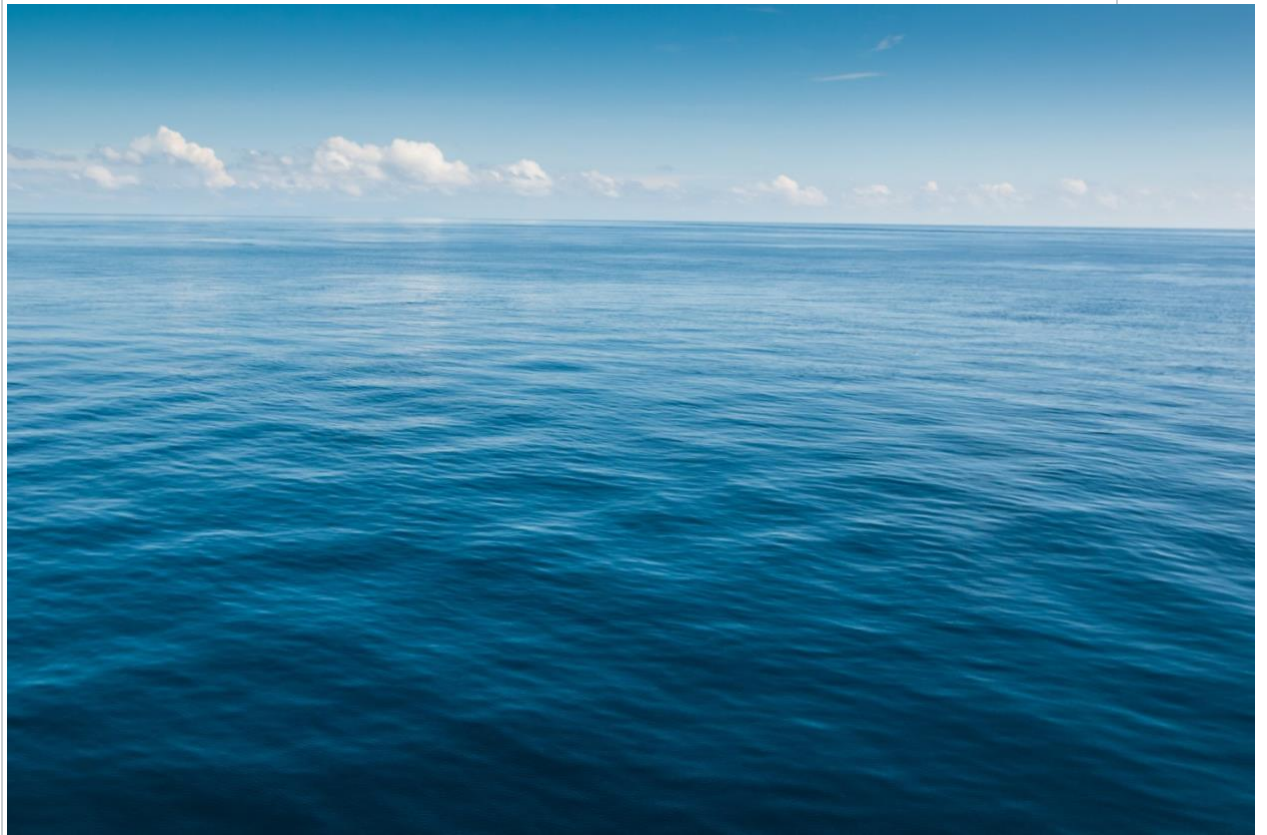
Thanks for sharing.

Really interesting theory as to why green is simultaneously associated with no many good things (nature, life) while at the same time used in society to indicate hazardous materials.

This weeks reading about art history was very interesting. The part that caught my attention the most was learning about the history of ultramarine blue and what it stands for - luxurious and high value. When reading Yves Klein's quote - "**Blue has no dimensions. It is beyond dimensions**", I automatically thought about the sky and the ocean. Today the color blue is associated with calmness, relaxation, stress reduction and when some people need that feeling they go to the beach, some might lay on the ground and look at the sky. In Israel, there is a trend of getting married near the beach. It of course has to do with the warm weather but also wanting to get married at a location that brings people a sense of peace.

Looking back at art history paintings like the Girl with a Pearl Earing I can feel that calmness when looking at her even though the girl is surrounded by darkness.

Since ultramarine blue was such a rare pigment and very expensive, colors were rarely mixed and the expensive pigments were reserved to paint nobility, royalty or holy figures. During the years when synthetic pigments were invented, artists were ably to mix colors and today with the help of technology we have such a large range of the color blue and I believe that we have not seen the end of it.





Wow animal fat, insects, arsenic, urine from mango-fed cows...this week's reading made me really appreciate how far we've come in color production and I will never take for granted how easy it is to buy a tube of paint!

This week's reading also further defined the different color schemes that we see in art throughout history and in present media. Using Johannes Itten's classic definitions of color contrasts we can actively note the strategies implemented by graphic designers in today's printed media. I have a fondness for magazine covers and love seeing what colors are used for the cover image and font type. Color combinations are intentionally chosen to communicate the message or vibe that particular issue wants to convey. Examples:

Contrast of warm and cool (with blue and orange) -



Contrast of saturation (with light and dark values of pinks and browns) -



Contrast of light and dark (with black and white)



Contrast of complements (with violet and chartreuse) -



Great examples!

It was super interesting learning about the origin of color, where do colors come from and how they developed over the years.

It was curious discovering that in the Medieval Europe people considered colors, separate pigments and almost never mixed these pigments. In fact "ultramarine" blue was very expensive imported pigment because it came from lapis lazuli, a very rare gem and so reserved to paint nobility, royalty or holy figures, giving a distinct "paint by number" look.

In the 1600s pigments are no longer reserved to specific use and they start to be mixed and glazed.

The industrial revolution then brought synthetic pigments and tube paints that make colors more available affordable and portable.

That means artists could start painting from observations (impressionism).

After came expressionism where painters express with colors the emotions the appearance of something evoke in them. The use of colors moved away from realism. Wassily Kandinsky, one of the most significant figures in the development of abstract art, thought that artists should use form and color to

express emotion and arouse feeling in the viewer. He believed that colors could affect viewer mood.

In 1950s Yves Klein used color by itself as the message. In fact the artist patented the the chemical process to make a pigment very close to a synthetic ultramarine and made the pigment itself a central part of his artwork for the remainder of his career.

In the 1960s, by the time we get pop art, the technology behind making pigments became so advanced to be able to create any color we want. At that point , any color selection, as long as it is intentional, can be as good as any other.

The masterpiece that better represents this is the color variations of Warhol's Marilyn.





We want from color being inseparable, intrinsic part of the material something is made of , to color being a changeable almost arbitrary attribute of a thing.

In this image you can find everything we learn till today about color scheme, chroma, saturation, value, tones, shades and tints.

This week's readings made me feel very lucky to how far we have come to affording paint, art and how accessible it is to create art.

This brings me to the color purple which is widely associated with royalty, power and wealth for centuries. In the past, purple fabric used to be so outrageously expensive that only rulers could afford it. In fact, Queen Elizabeth I forbade anyone except close members of the royal family to wear it. Purple's elite status stems from the rarity and cost of the dye originally used to produce it.

The dye initially used to make purple came from the Phoenician trading city of Tyre, which is now in modern-day Lebanon. However, in 1856, English chemist William Henry Perkin accidentally created a synthetic purple compound which made it widely accessible.

Nowadays you can find purple in brands such as Hallmark, which also uses a crown as a symbol which carries on the royalty association today in their branding technique.



Like everyone this week I enjoyed the most reading about the history of pigments and colours, how dangerous and hard to make they were. I will definitely appreciate more colour in tube we can buy today.

When I think about art history and colour - Mark Rothko immediately comes to my mind. He is best known for his colour field paintings.

In these works, large scale, open structure, and thin layers of color combine to convey the impression of a shallow pictorial space. Color, for which Rothko's work is most celebrated, attains an unprecedented luminosity.

His classic paintings of the 1950s are characterized by expanding dimensions and an increasingly simplified use of form, brilliant hues, and broad, thin washes of color. In his large, floating rectangles of colour, which seem to surround the spectator, he explored with a rare mastery of nuance the expressive potential of colour contrasts and modulations.

What I like the most about this kind of abstract art is that he creates emotions by only using colours and yet for each spectator it can be a different kind of emotion depending on what that colour subjectively means.





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Hi Nicola! Rothko is a perfect example of how powerful color can be in evoking human emotions. His work is very meditative and depending on the composition of colors can bring me from feeling joy and elation to being somber and depressed.

Yay, love Rothko! His paintings are also super big, so they're incredibly immersive.

During this weeks reading, it was interesting to me to see how specific colors played part in different art movements. It is the kind of thing you're generally aware of, but don't really think about it until it is pointed out. Before even reading the section on yellow, my first thought was Van Gogh! It's funny that it was viewed as a sickly color, often compared to jaundice. This makes sense for the times, as medicine wasn't very advanced and people were far more frequently exposed to illness. I personally used to not be a fan of yellow, but it has grown to be my favorite color. Likely due to the things I associate it with, like sunshine and sunflowers.

An analyzation of color in the modern world I would like to focus on is black, and how a favorite musician of mine used it to bend minds during his spring touring back in 2019.

In our reading, we learned that for a long time black was avoided, for it was thought to strip art pieces of it's subject matter. However, as art history progressed and use of color was diversified, Katsushika Hokusai, a Japanese print maker and painter, was quoted saying, "There is a black which is old and a black which is fresh. Lustrous black and dull black, black in sunlight and black in shadow." This goes to show how black has become a highly valued color, as it is just as, if not more, diverse than all other colors.

[Artist Gesaffelstein demonstrated this by using a cloth hanging made of Vantablack \(Links to an external site.\)](#), the world's "blackest black." This hanging was placed behind him on stage as he DJed, wearing a costume that added to the optical allusion. The color is so strong, that your eyes simply can not process it. The production workers on set were constantly getting disoriented while trying to arrange the piece. If you were in the crowd, the

visuals were compared to what one would expect to see whilst under the influence of psychedelic drugs. This just goes to show how intense the color black can truly be.

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Hi Maria, absolutely fascinating! It's so interesting because I just wrote about the psychedelic art movement of the 1960s below, which used a very intense color palette that caused the images to vibrate. I find it so refreshing that the same psychedelic effect was achieved by the DJ with no other colors but black -- it is truly a modern take on the psychedelic movement. Thanks for sharing :)

Interesting, I thought Anish Kapoor had secured exclusive rights to using Vanta Black.

<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/anish-kapoor-vantablack-exclusive-rights-436610> (Links to an external site.)

That's actually a really good example of the relationship between the art world and color use in culture at large, I didn't realize Gesaffelstein was using Vanta Black. Thanks for bringing that up!

I love interior design with a lot of fun colors and textures and have seen classic color theory at play in a lot of room designs I enjoy. Below are some examples.





Analogous using a range of greens and yellows



Analogous using a range of orange and yellows



Complementary using red and green



Split Complementary using a dark blue, a yellow-orange and an orange-red



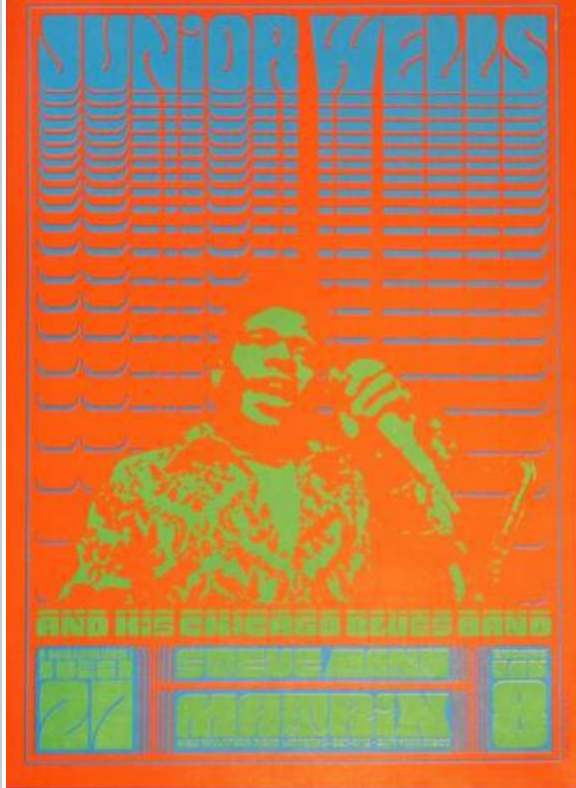
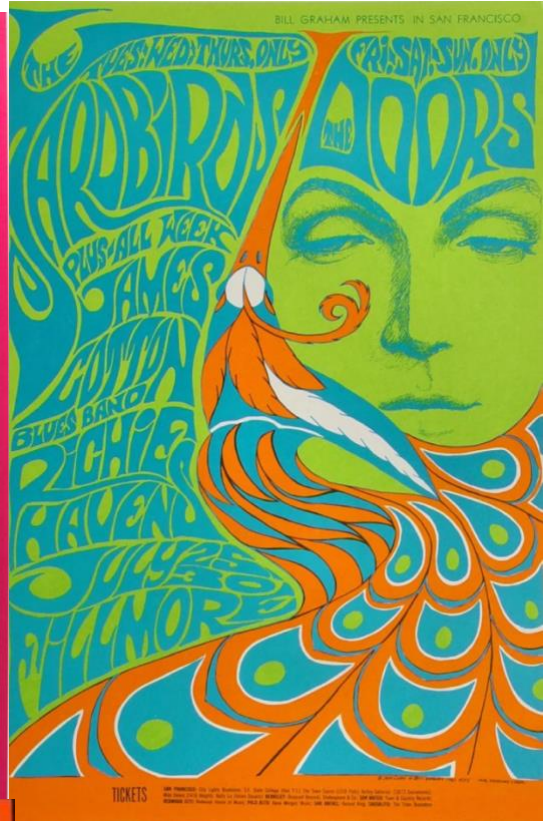
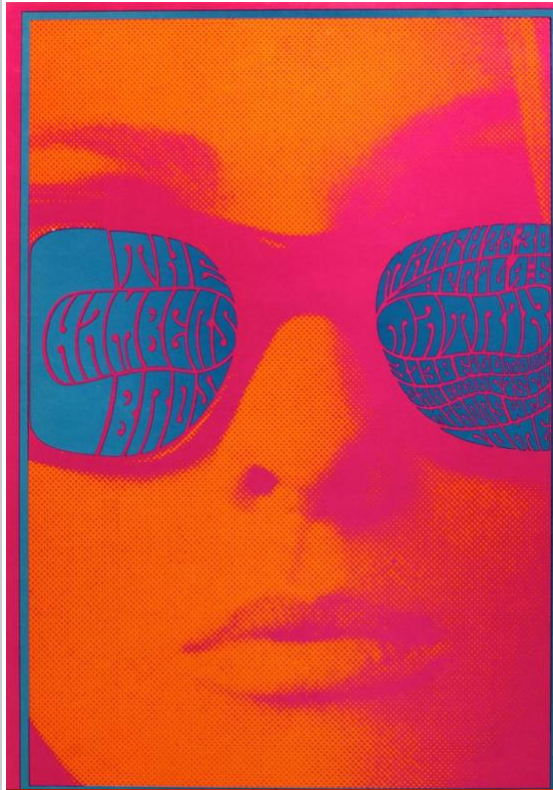
Triadic using primary colors

It was interesting looking through images of rooms to find color schemes that lined up with classic color theory. Part of what I found interesting was how much didn't line up that I still thought worked well, which correlated with the reading about color principles and problems that I found especially intriguing from this week. I appreciated it talking about the prejudices and inclinations that we have towards or against certain colors or color combinations. While I am absolutely enjoying and growing my understanding of color by

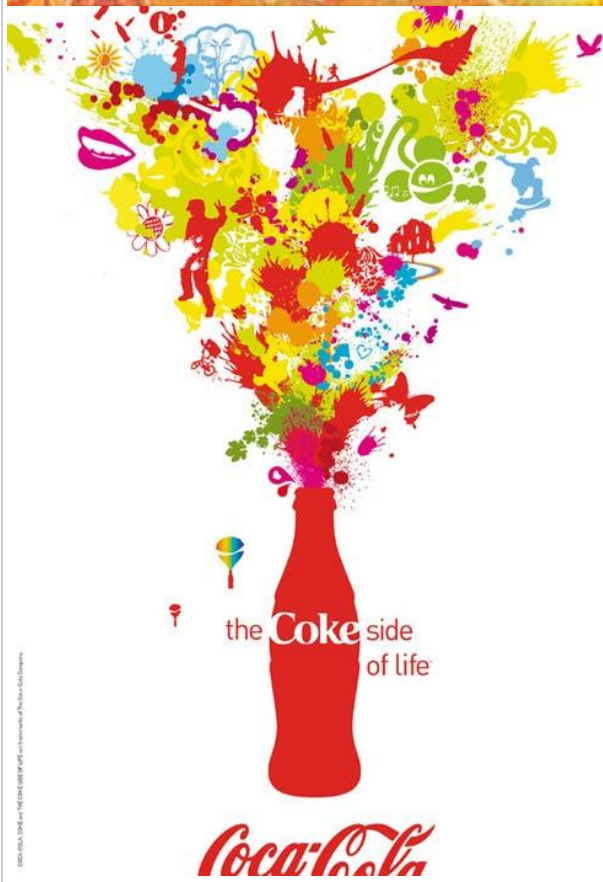
studying classic color theory it was nice to get a note on not being so rigid that your closed off to discovery outside some of these rules.

This week's focus on Johannes Itten's color combinations and the history of color in art were fascinating. What stood out the most was how the invention of the tin tube of paint enabled artists, like Monet, to capture impressions of their environment outdoors. Without these tin tubes, Monet's painting may have headed in another direction at that time. I enjoyed seeing Itten's color combinations and re-affirming that color and context are important to the delivery of what you're looking at.

In thinking about art history and its use of color, an art movement immediately came to mind. The Psychedelic art movement of the 1960s used color, most notably in poster design, in such a way that changed graphic design profoundly. Elements of the psychedelic art movement can still be seen today in advertisements, digital art and album art. Psychedelic visual characteristics included a strong color palette of contrasting colors, ornate lettering, and kaleidoscopic swirls. The use of opposing/contrasting colors caused the images to vibrate. To achieve this vibration effect, colors from the exact opposite end of the color wheel were chosen. Each color had equal value and intensity. A few examples below:



and a few examples of psychedelic color palette inspiration in today's world:







For example, on Earth Day a few years ago, Allbirds launched a collection of naturally dyed shoes:



The shoes were hand dyed and the colors were called Sea a light blue taken from indigo; Sunset, a mauve derived from the Asian madder root; and Sunshine, a light yellow from the Japanese pagoda flower.

Other brands, like Industry of All Nations, uses natural dyes like iron, acacia and indigo and even have a Clean Clothes Initiative to bring awareness to using clean, natural, dyeing processes.



The technique of creating pigment and dying clothes using flowers / roots / insects is ancient, and it's really cool to see that the practice is not completely lost in modern day, industrialized societies.

I've been watching The Mandalorian this past week. During the end credits, a slide show of concept illustrations for the show plays. For example:



I couldn't help noticing a similarity to Caspar David Friedrich:

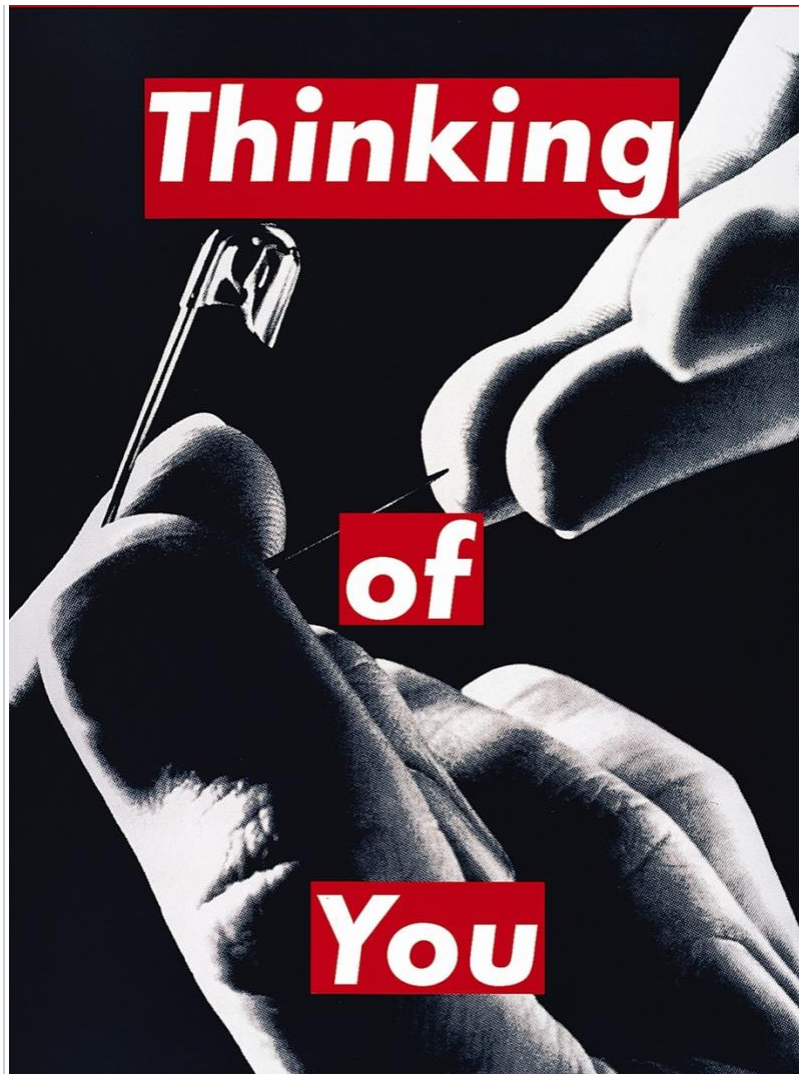




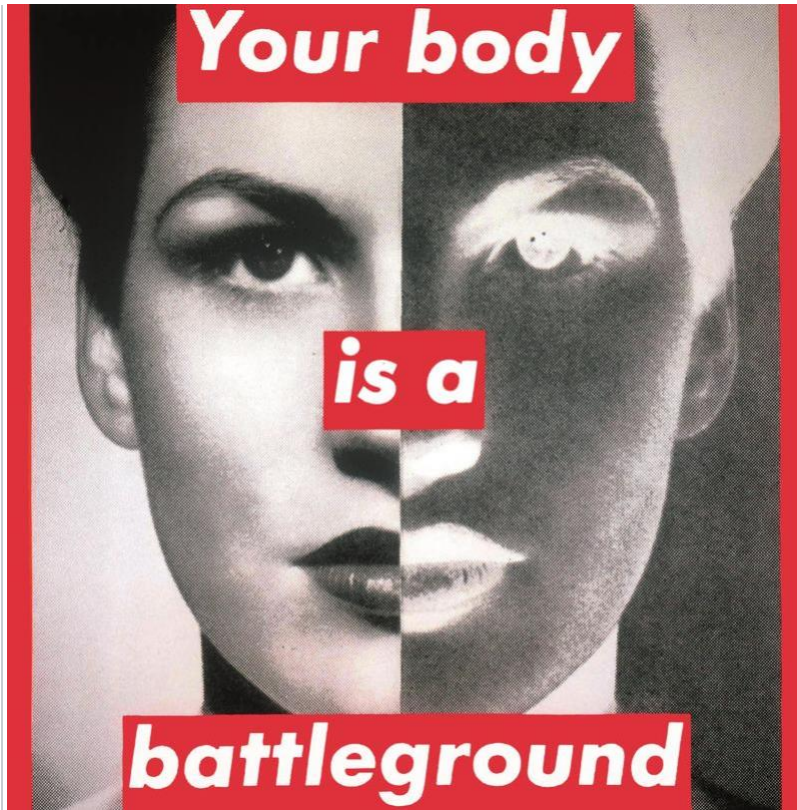
In Friedrich's paintings, the landscape is expansive and stormy, foreboding and vaguely menacing, composed of darkened blues and desaturated hues. The light, in comparison, is tightly focused and placed further along in the spatial field, or off in the horizon, strongly contrasted via hue and value.

It's not difficult to imagine the Mandalorian illustrator is drawing directly upon the influence of Friedrich for the concept artwork. By emulating Friedrich's use of color, the illustrator sets the tone for his illustrations, and thus for the television series as well, a story of a hero's quest in a harsh and dangerous universe.

Thinking about art history, I was also reminded of Barbara Kruger, and her distinctive combination of white typography over red color blocking.



Her work, from what I understand, plays off of advertising and recontextualized imagery to form critiques that encompass social issues and consumerism. Her use of red has a kind of alarm sensibility to it, as in: "Hello! Wake up!"



It's interesting the aesthetic she cultivated in her work became appropriated into the branding for streetwear brand Supreme.

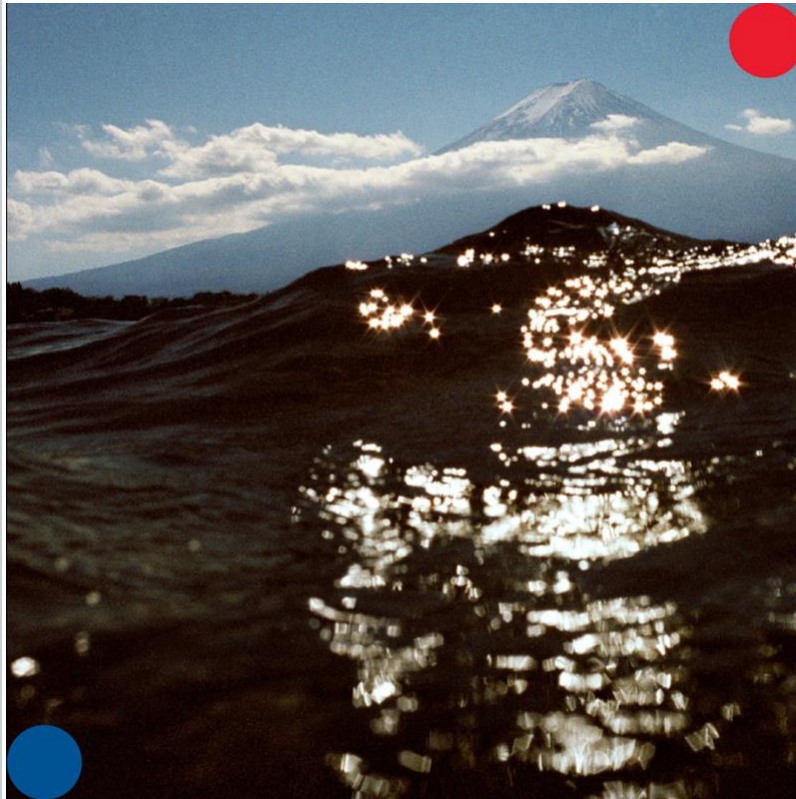


Their bold use of red likewise grabs a person's attention, although towards different ends. I imagine Supreme is trying to conjure the in-your-face attitude of youth and street culture. But rather than critiquing consumerism, they're more interested in playing the game and courting it.





Lately I'm really into this album cover by the band Cut Copy:



The photograph depicts two opposing elements, a mountain and the ocean. But the image seems mostly lacking in color, and the mountain and ocean wave are kind of equalized due to the composition. The designer leaves it to the two colored dots of red and blue, hot vs cold, to do most of the work of expressing a tension between opposites.

Contrast, I guess, was a recurring motif this past week. Mary Jane Begin discusses chiaroscuro and different ways of using contrast, whether

temperature or complementary colors. Contrast provides form and depth to objects in the composition, as well as create dramatic interest.

Johannes Itten likewise lays out a list of different types of contrast: hue, light vs dark, warm vs cool, complements, saturation, proportion. Itten suggests that contrast is fundamental to perception:

"Our sense organs can function only by means of comparisons. The eye accepts a line as long when a shorter line is presented for comparison ... Color effects are similarly intensified or weakened by contrast."

As well as an aspect of reality overall:

"Day and night, light and darkness -- this polarity is of fundamental significance in human life and nature generally."

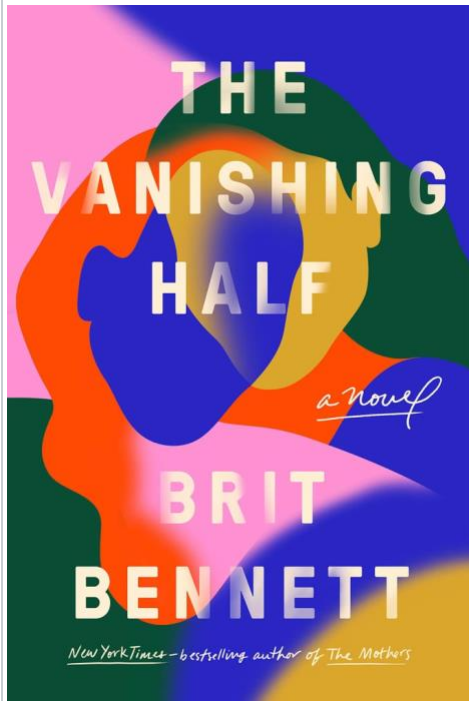
People I think like to be told a story in whatever they experience, whether reading a book, listening to music, looking at a photograph or advertisement. Being knowledgeable of the different kinds of color contrasts can aid us in creating those worlds or stories in whatever we do -- illustration, design, maybe even interiors -- and thus captivate our audience and viewers.

I worked in the publishing industry for over a decade and took Columbia University's Publishing Course right out of college, where I was tasked with designing several book jackets of my own. It was not an easy feat, creating something compelling. We learned how a cover can make or break book sales, so now I love browsing the New York Times Best Sellers list to see which books/book covers made the top.

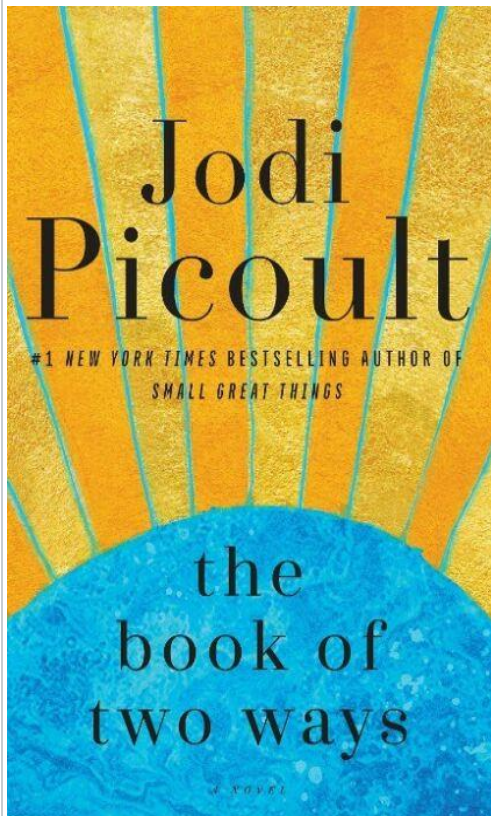
After studying Johannes Itten's color contrast definitions in this week's reading, I was struck by how many book covers from this week's New York Times Best Sellers list exemplify Itten's contrasts/pairings. I've listed a few of these examples below:

Contrast of Hue:

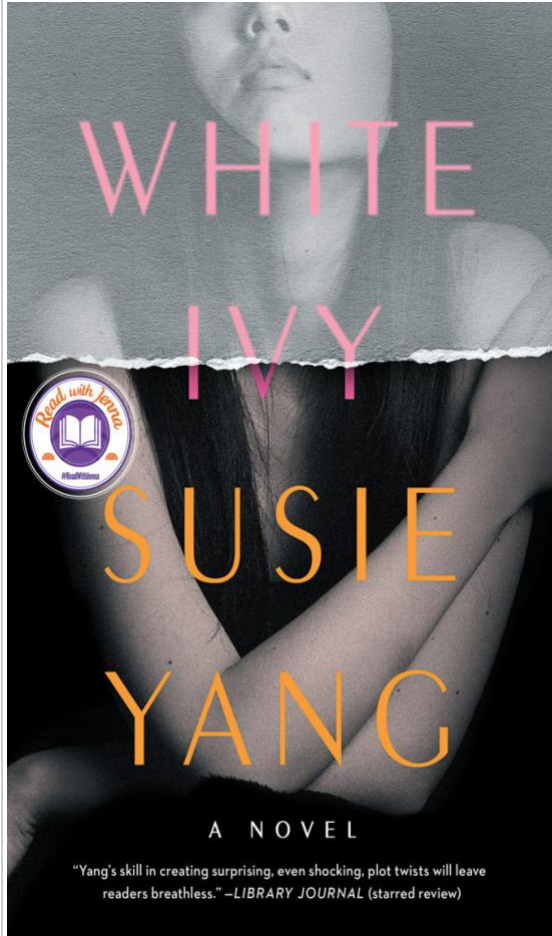
*The Vanishing Half*, Brit Bennett



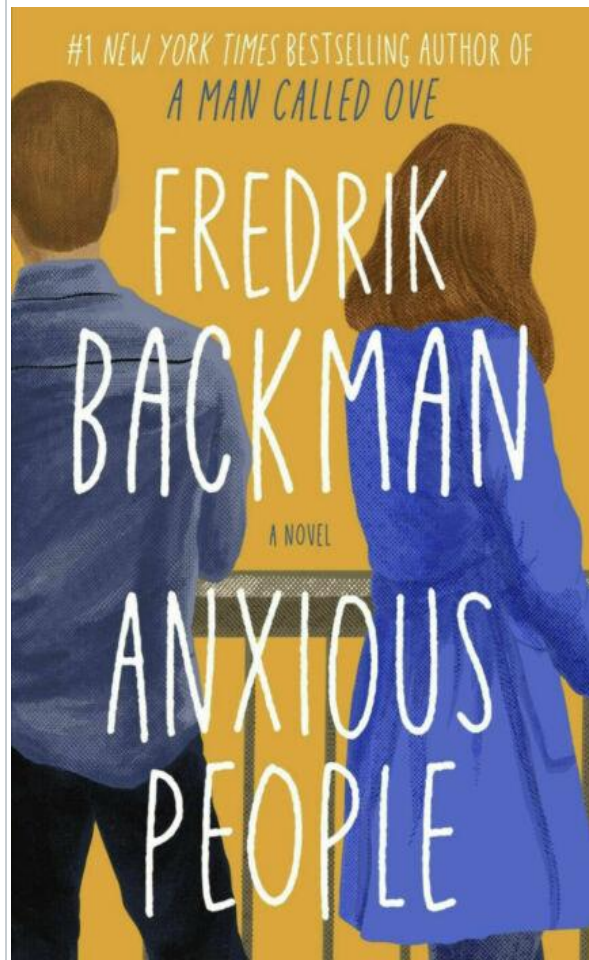
Contrast of Warm (Yellow) & Cool (Blue):  
*The Book of Two Ways*, Jodi Picoult



Contrast of Light & Dark (see the background photo):  
*White Ivy*, Susie Yang



Complementary Contrast (Blue & Orange):  
*Anxious People*, Fredrik Backman



very good eye there! It is exactly like Itten's contrasts/pairings. As a matter of fact I have Brit Bennet's book in my amazon cart right now!

I've always noticed how bright the Vanishing Half cover is! I love how the text on the cover is in white - showing the most obvious difference with the bold cover art.

How is art history currently effecting color usage today?

Some of the greatest artists in history are constantly and consistently being referred to and studied by artists today for a myriad of reasons. One of them being to learn and gain knowledge and understanding of what color is, and how to tactfully apply colors to create art aesthetically pleasing to their audiences. Well known works by Sandro Botticelli, Claude Monet, Vincent Van Goh, are just some of MANY that are constantly popping up and being referenced in magazines, articles, textbooks, ads, and so on, for centuries to come.

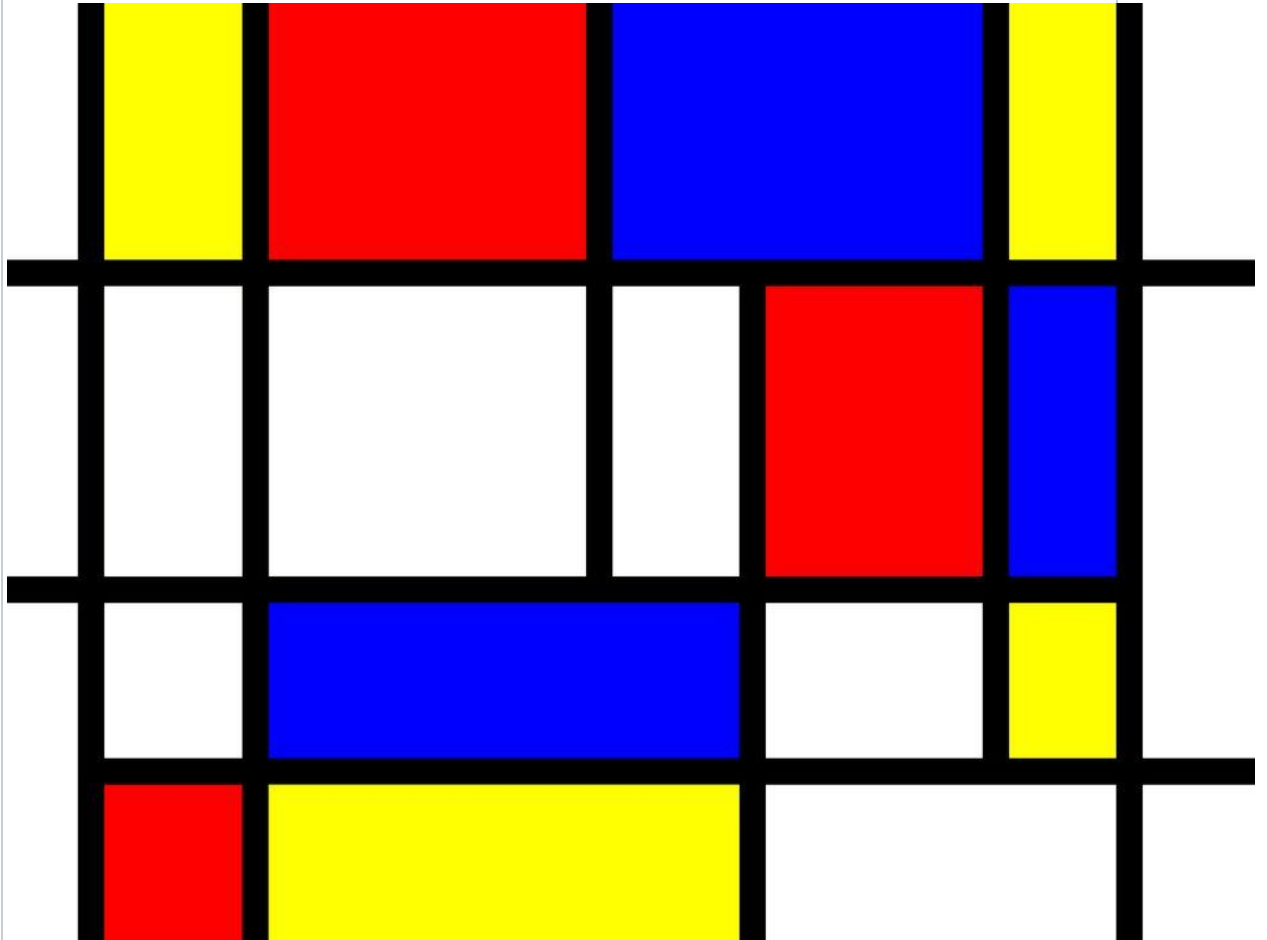
When thinking about color theory in our modern world, we see tried and true theories being utilized dating back centuries in artists' works. For example, the use of split complimentary colors of blue/orange/yellow-orange is evident in Claude Monet's "Café Terrace at night". This is one of my favorites. When I look at this piece, and I think I speak for many, an automatic feeling of calm, serenity, delight, and a magical sensation come over me. This is because the use of split complimentary colors, as we've learned, are aesthetically pleasing. But even more so, when done correctly with the use of values, saturation, tints, and shades which Van Gogh portrays seamlessly. The balance between the cool blues are juxtaposed beautifully with the warm oranges and yellows of the café and table. It creates a sensation of wanting to be there. I find myself transfixed and glazed over every time! Something else I noticed that excited me and why it pertains to today... I realized I used similar colors on my last assignment of rebranding (look back to my Mastercard colors redone). I was flattered when I looked at Van Gogh's work this time around and it hit me that I'd used those colors without realizing it! It's comforting to know that there is some consistency where my eye for art is concerned:)

Other examples of how art history and color theory actively work together is Botticelli's "Lamentation". The striking contrast of complimentary and primary colors, as well as the deep saturation of the red fabric, come together to give a strong message of utter despair.

James McNeil's "Whistler's reading by lamplight" have in fact no hues, rather a contrast of darks and lights to create a very dramatic story. It also makes the viewer have think how to interpret the artist's message. This teaches us that black and white when used tactfully with shadow/light can give just as strong and jarring appearance as with hues.

This week really showcased the importance of art when it comes to color theory. I found the Artsy article about the history of pigments and how they are produced to be extremely interesting. The vast experiments that artists when through to simply create the colors was truly groundbreaking. For example the color blue holds a huge importance in art. The example of depicting the Virgin Mary in blue was not only significant in religion but also at the time she was such a popular subject, the gemstone that created the hue blue for paint, was more precious than gold. When I think of blue, I think of nature and tranquility. Yet, to many in the the art world blue was a sign of

wealth and exclusivity. As Yves Klein said "Blue has no dimensions. It is beyond dimensions." I think blue is well used as the cool color in contrast to warmer colors. This stark contrast gives the viewer the ability to notice what is being displayed while the blue balances it. When looking at a work of art I always find the color blue last in the painting. It almost hangs back and lets the viewer recognize it last - showing the calming power of the color itself. Mark Rothko and Piet Mondrian do this very well while using limited colors. When you look at the below works - you notice blue last.





I really enjoy the readings of every week, and history always help us to understand many things. Art was created by the human being's need to express emotions, to leave for posterity what they felt and what they saw. Art alludes to our senses, and in most cases to our sight. The first artists understood the need to copy reality using bright colors, the polychrome and the use of different colors in the drawings is not new.



In fact, the great painters of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were already fully aware of the sublime power that color combinations had to make the perception of a person more impressive. The fascination for the creation and the combination of these artists in different colors is what has made us develop a whole philosophy based on certain combinations and emotions.

I found these examples.

Starry Night has a color palette that feels surprising modern. Vincent van Gogh stuck to a heavily cool-tone color palette and added an accent of bright yellow to pop out and add contrast. All of the colors he uses are rich and vibrant, adding energy to the painting.



Hokusai is a great example talking about contrast, he leans heavily on blues and grays in his famous woodcut print to create a moody and cool palette, he uses warmer grays and a cream sky to keep the art from feeling monotone or cold. I love it!



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#e1c6a5	22.1 %
#e7e2d2	17.7 %
#8599a4	13.8 %
#1f2950	12.0 %
#4a5f79	5.4 %
#3d403b	3.2 %
#857d5b	1.4 %
#bba76f	0.8 %

Brito is a very modern artist, he combines pop art, cubism and graffitis on his work, using vibrant colors and bold patterns as a visual expression of hope, dreams, and happiness.

