

THE MAGIC OF COLOR



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THE MAGIC OF COLOR



The earliest colors came from the earth as plant and mineral pigments. While they continue to evolve through technology, what artists do with them is what makes the work endure, creates dialogue and changes minds. The crossover between sensory pathways is a common ability and expression of artists. How a color tastes, feels, sounds, looks and smells is unique to each of us.

COLOR QUOTES

Color! What a deep and mysterious language, the language of dreams.
-Paul Gauguin

Instead of trying to reproduce exactly what I see before me, I make more arbitrary use of colour to express myself more forcefully ... To express the love of two lovers by the marriage of two complementary colours ... To express the thought of a brow by the radiance of a light tone against a dark background. To express hope by some star. Someone's passion by the radiance of the setting sun.
-Vincent van Gogh, 1888.

The craving for colour is a natural necessity just as for water and fire. Colour is a raw material indispensable to life. At every era of his existence and his history, the human being has associated colour with his joys, his actions and his pleasures.
-Fernand Leger, "On Monumentality and Color", 1943

There are painters who transform the sun to a yellow spot, but there are others who with the help of their art and their intelligence transfer a yellow spot into the sun.
-Pablo Picasso

Art without color would lose much of it's purpose
-Andrew Loomis

Among the several kinds of beauty, the eye takes the most delight in colors.
-Joseph Addison

GLOSSARY

achromatic - free of color

analogous - describes hues that are beside one another on the color wheel

chroma - a term used to designate the purity of a color

chromatic - having color

color temperature - colors may be described as warm or cool

complementary colors - those which appear opposite one another on a color wheel

contrast - the degree of difference between light and dark tones

cool - the colors on the blue-green-violet side of the color wheel

hue - the traditional color name which represents a specific wavelength of light

intensity - the purity of the hue; the brightness or dullness of color; also known as chroma and saturation

monochromatic - having one color

opacity - opposite to transparency; an opaque pigment will cover previous layers

pigment - the material used to create the effect of color on a surface

polychromatic - having many colors

primary colors - red, yellow, blue

shade - used to describe a hue that has been darkened in value from its normal value; shades are made by mixing black with the pigment

secondary colors - orange, violet, green; each secondary color is midway between the primary colors from which it is mixed

tertiary colors - colors that represent a mixture of secondary colors

tint - used to describe a hue that has been lightened from its normal value; tints are made by mixing white with the pigment or diluting the pigment so the white of the ground shows through

tone - used to describe a hue that has been darkened from its normal value; tones are made by adding grey to the pigment

transparency - ability of a pigment to transmit light and allow previous color layers to show through

value - the relative degree of lightness or darkness; the extent to which a color reflects or absorbs light

warm - the colors on the yellow-orange-red side of the color wheel

RED

Seeing Red

by Cherrie Lucerne-Martin

Red is the color of roses, of ripe raspberries, of blood, of rubies, of danger, of fire, of passion. Red is one of the primary colors and is the first color we learn when we begin to learn our colors. Red was also the first color, after black and white, to have its own name. Red is all around us.

Throughout the millennia, red has been used in countries throughout the world: China (pottery 3000BC), India (textiles 300BC), Americas (textiles 100BC). Between 170,000 and 40,000 years ago, Late Stone Age people were scraping and grinding ochre clay, colored red by iron oxide, probably to adorn their bodies. The cave of Altamira in Spain has a painting of a bison colored with red ochre that dates to between 15,000 and 16,500 BC. The Egyptians were manufacturing color as early as 4000BC. Although the most famous was Egyptian Blue, they also made the first bright red by grinding and washing cinnabar.

Red has many fascinating, similar and conflicting associations in various cultures. Red's global similarities are significant: it is one of the top two favorite colors of all people; it is the most popular color used on flags in the world - approximately 77% of all flags include red; it is the international color for stop; red districts sell sex and pornography in every European culture.

Culturally, red is the color of good luck in Asia and is the most popular color in China; most Japanese children draw the sun as a big red circle; it is an auspicious color for marriage - brides in India and Nepal wear red saris; in Japan, a red kimono symbolizes happiness and good luck.

RED

In some cultures, the privilege of wearing red was reserved exclusively for the powerful. It was forbidden for ordinary citizens to wear red. When you saw someone wearing red in Japan or Italy, you realized, "this is a person of high status." But non-nobles broke the rules all the time; some Japanese lined their kimonos in the forbidden color or even wore red underwear.

Red has the longest wavelength of any color in the visible spectrum and that is why it attracts our attention. It appears to advance, making red objects seem closer. As artists, we use this to our advantage. We can make something red to help it stand out or pop.

Red is the most vibrant color in any artist's range of colors. However, red is not just red. There are many hues we describe as being red. There is cadmium, Chinese vermilion, crimson, alizarin crimson, pyrrole, magenta, rose, ruby, scarlet, Winsor red, burgundy, carmine, brilliant red... the list is almost endless. If you stand in a room with 50 people and you ask them to visualize the color red, 50 different colors will come to mind.

Some of the greatest artwork of all time is great because of the use of the color red. It doesn't have to be a lot of red but it has to be the right red and in the right place. If we take a look at the extravagance of red in Vermeer's *Girl With a Red Hat*, not only does the particular shade of red create warmth, but it causes the bright red-orange of the hat to advance, heightening the immediacy of the girl's glance. Imagine the hat in a different color – what if it was pink? – not the same painting at all.



RED



When JMW Turner painted *Helvoetsluys*, he showed it for the first time in 1832 at the Royal Academy where it hung next to John Constable's *The Opening of Waterloo Bridge*. When Turner first entered the room where it hung, he realized that next to Constable's painting his lacked color. So, at that moment, he painted a small red buoy in the middle of his canvas. His painting stole the show. What it had lacked was *red*. No matter what medium you use, the next time you use red in your artwork, think carefully about it, because red is not an accidental color. When you have used red, you have used red on purpose.

BLUE

The Archetypal Experiment: Investigating the Blue Sea of the Collective Unconscious

by Priya Lin

I have been drawn to the color blue since I was a child. Each color has its own feeling element to it, for me that feeling element lies in the color blue.

I decided to take the deep dive approach to the color blue. Since art has so much to do with tapping into the personal as well as the collective unconscious, it is worth the investigation immersing oneself in the blue sea of our collective psyche.

I like to look at it as a collective geometry. It's as if the collective psyche has its own unique shape in mind, of how and where each one of us could lead our lives so that the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

My art professor, Alan Roberts, from Aix-en-Provence, once held a rose in his hand explaining how an artist can capture the details of each part of a rose through careful observation with a trained eye, and in that process learning to capture the whole, or the essence of a rose through drawing. Drawing, in this context, becomes a disciplined practice of training one's eye to see the essence of an object, including the essence of a color that is reflected in the object.

Why does the image of the blue sea invoke a representation of the collective psyche? To me the image serves the function of invocation, it is leading us inward into the blue sea of our inner mystery. How we decode this mystery is up to each of us. It can be left untapped, or it can be seen in its totality and beauty, directly and surely.

BLUE

The primary language of the collective psyche is images. As artists we are already drawn to the language of the image as a portal to the transcendent. We have become sensitized to the language of colors, shapes, lines and spaces. With the added element of our own intention, this symbolic language becomes an insightful guide into meaningful places that are previously unexplored.

I have been working with the Tarot as a way of having a dialogue with the collective unconscious, and there is a particular image called “The Star” that speaks to me about our collective process.

When we walk into the image of “The Star,” and have a conversation with it, we will see that the essence of the color blue is beginning to reveal itself to us by the way of the image itself: It is the foreground as well as the background color in the image, except in the foreground the blue is represented as a body of water, representing the source of life. In the background it is representing the deep blue sky at night, upon which all the stars could rest.

Therefore, the collective meaning of the color blue can emerge from a single image: It is the source of life, and it is the silent backdrop for our individual lights to shine. This is the contemplative path to meet our collective psyche, and it grants us a personal encounter with the archetypal meaning behind every color.

We are living an archetypal experiment that is guided by an unseen hand at this very moment, and I would dare to say that we are designed to live this archetypal experiment, for the unknown is always where the excitement lies.



BLUE

Blue is one of the 3 primary colors and the one that we see nearly every day in the sky and the sea. It suggests calmness, serenity and harmony. Blue is believed to be the most popular color worldwide. The original blue pigments were made from lapis lazuli, cobalt and azurite.

The color blue appeared later in history. It was not one of the “earth” colors, like red, black, browns and yellows. It was not found in the soil and until mining was begun, the color blue was virtually non-existent. The first blue pigment was derived from lapis lazuli about 6,000 years ago. That mineral was difficult to obtain so blue remained a very rare and expensive pigment until the industrial age. This could explain the association of the color blue with royalty and religion.

The Greeks and Romans used blue extensively to decorate stained glass, architecture, mosaics and friezes. During the Byzantine Empire dark blue was widely used to decorate churches. The prestige of the color blue was also raised during the 12th century when the Virgin Mary’s robes were painted blue.

Less costly pigments for the color blue were later discovered and used to save money, but they often turned dark over time. The invention of oil paint changed how artists could work with pigments. Oil paint produced more vibrant colors and could easily be blended with other colors.

Despite its late arrival, blue has found its way into our lives... from blue jeans, true blue friends, and blues music, blue has made its mark.

GREEN

The Color Green

by Mary Ellen Palmeri

Green with envy, green grass, green dragons, green in the gills! These are a few of our instant associations with the word green. But *which* green comes to mind? This differs for most of us since there are infinite variations possible for this secondary hue of the color wheel. It depends upon the proportions used of the two primary colors we mix to make green hues, namely yellow and blue. Other hues, tints and shades can be added for many subtle and not-so-subtle variations.

Green is the color most commonly associated with nature, but not only in the plant kingdom – there are many animals whose main color is a shade of green, and some minerals as well. If one thinks in terms of the animal-vegetable-mineral categories of the natural world, some of the most prominent examples are as follows:

- animal – frogs, alligators, snakes (in particular the green mamba), fish (piranhas are green!), birds and insects
- vegetable – trees, leaves, flowers, peas, lettuce, cabbage, beans, limes, green olives
- mineral – jade, emeralds, malachite

The color green has been adopted symbolically by the environmental movement because of its strong connection to nature, and has also been used historically by countries and groups to represent ideas and beliefs. It is strongly associated with Ireland, the Emerald Isle, because of its very green landscape, and also with Islam, where, traditionally, green is the color of Muhammad's robe and banner.

GREEN

Another strong association with this color is “greenbacks,” as a common term for money because the reverse side of the U.S. dollar bill is green. This coloration was originally used to deter counterfeiters because color photography was not yet in use.

In the art world there are many sources for green pigments, some natural, some synthetic. Historically, malachite was used by ancient Egyptians to make the first known green pigments; these were used in tomb paintings and for eye make-up. Cobalt green was one of the first synthetic green pigments developed in 1780. Verdigris (copper carbonate) is the green patina that forms on copper, and was commonly used as a pigment in the Renaissance. Viridian was patented in 1859 and used by Vincent Van Gogh. It became popular because unlike many other synthetics it is stable and non-toxic.

An interesting facet of the color green is its use in games and recreation. Gambling and billiard tables have traditionally been green, and tennis courts are painted green in imitation of the original grass courts. Hunter green and olive drab are traditional hunting colors, and green is the color of a belt in karate and judo to signify a level of proficiency. And let's not forget British racing green, a common color for sports cars!

In my own artwork I often use green as a complementary color to set off other aspects of a piece, sometimes as an abstract background as in the mixed-media piece, *Listen to Your Heart*.



GREEN



Using Green with Other Colors

With both a warming and cooling effect, the color green denotes balance, harmony, and stability: Several shades of green provide a fresh, springtime feel. Green with blue produces echoes of nature - water and forest and can denote new beginnings and growth. Green with brown, tan, or beige says organic or recycled. Tri-color combinations of green with yellow and black or white are sporty, outdoorsy colors. Purple with green can be high contrast and lively. Lime green with orange and yellow is a fresh and fruity palette.

In *Panda Forest*, I used green-colored paste paper behind the folded pieces to set off the images.

Other times green becomes a major focus as in my garden pieces where I use different colored papers to fold stems and leaves of plant as seen in *Hummingbird's Delight*.



YELLOW

Shades of Yellow

by Connie Kampsula

The hue yellow, the brightest primary color is the most luminous of all colors in the spectrum of light. The human eye processes yellow first. Thus, it is used for caution signs, rescue vehicles and school buses. Yellow is the most common color of flowers and is most visible to insects. It is associated with the emotions of happiness, cheerfulness and optimism as well as cowardliness.

Yellow is symbolized in psychology as the color of the mind and intellect. Metaphysically, the color yellow represents the third chakra-manipura (self-esteem and ego). Feng Shui believes yellow increases well being and health. The crystal citrine quartz is used as a healing stone for clarity of mind.

Culture and religion have a strong history in yellow's meaning. In Egypt, Mexico and Ethiopia yellow is the color of mourning. Since the sun and gold were both yellow, it was felt that yellow had lasting qualities and would be a good sentiment to send the deceased into the afterlife.

In China yellow was reserved for the clothing of high-level officials and members of the Imperial family. The general public was not allowed to wear or possess such clothing and violators were subjected to harsh punishment. Buddhist monks wear saffron robes and the Hindus associate the color with sacrifice and the quest for salvation.

YELLOW

In art, yellow has symbolized many things. Byzantine painters lavishly used gold, a symbol for heaven, in their paintings. The Byzantine mosaics in Ravenna, Italy influenced Gustave Klimt. The Kiss is his most popular work. It was painted during his Golden Period between 1908 and 1909.



Vincent Van Gogh captured mood and emotion in the paintings of sunflowers and *Starry Night*. It is believed that Van Gogh suffered from temporal lobe epilepsy, which may have been aggravated by his use of absinthe. It is also believed that another doctor treated him with digitalis, which can cause one to see yellow or yellow spots. This may be one of the reasons he loved yellow. In *Starry Night* Van Gogh uses complementary colors to balance the golds and oranges and blue.

Josef Albers was a teacher of color theory and influenced many Color Field painters in America. In *Homage to The Square: Glow*, he used the square as a motif to demonstrate how the interactions of color relate. In this painting the intensity of the central hue advances and seems to float over the others.



YELLOW

Georgia O'Keefe's harmonic use of color describes nature, seasons and sense of space. In *Yellow Hickory Leaves*, the leaves found on her walks around Lake George in upstate New York, where she and her husband summered, inspired her.

Whether we call it Naples yellow, nickel azo gold, or cadmium yellow or whether it is a sunflower, a drip of honey, or a school bus, yellow certainly attracts our attention and commands a pause in our view.



ORANGE

Orange you Glad?

by Linda Penny

Although orange is often referred to as a polarizing color - you either love it or hate it - orange is the happiest of all colors, in my opinion. It is optimistic, sociable and extroverted. Orange stimulates us both physically and emotionally and is uplifting and rejuvenating to our spirit.

Before the late 15th century, the color orange existed, but it was referred to as yellow-red. Spanish and Portuguese merchants brought the first orange trees from Asia to Europe along with their Sanskrit name, naranga. This gradually became orange in English. So, similar to the chicken and egg debate, the fruit came before the color name. The name orange, is the only color named for an object. It is a blend of the primary colors red and yellow.

In ancient Egypt, artists used a mineral pigment called realgar to create the color orange. Medieval artists used orpiment (arsenic sulfide mineral) to create the color orange.

In 1797, a French scientist discovered the mineral crocoite, or lead chromate, which led to the invention of the synthetic pigment chrome orange. Soon after, other synthetic pigments, cobalt red, cobalt yellow, and cobalt orange, were invented. These new pigments, as well as the invention of the metal paint tube in 1841, made it possible for artists to paint outdoors and to capture the colors of natural light. Orange also made an impression on the British painters who painted scenes of people wearing clothing brighter than they ever were. Winslow Homer, a painter in the United States, used many vivid oranges in his palette.

ORANGE



In the late 1800s Claude Monet painted *Impression, Sunrise*, which gave rise to the impressionist movement. The orange sun in the sky appears to be the brightest spot, when in fact, measured with a photometer, it is the same brightness as the sky. Impressionist artists favored the use of complementary colors and the impact they had. Vincent Van Gogh once said, "There is no blue without yellow and without orange." He knew that the combining these complimentary colors made each color brighter.

Of all things orange, the violin is not one you would associate, as representative of the color, but the orange varnish Antonio Stradivari made for his violins remains a mystery today. It is believed that the make-up of the varnish is what gives his violins their exquisite sound. Artists have attempted to replicate the orange but have not succeeded.

Orange is also a warning color. It is used to set objects apart from their surroundings especially outdoors where it contrasts with the sky. Construction zone warning cones, signs and workers vests all use the color orange. Even the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco was painted orange to make it visible in the fog.

A discussion of orange would not be complete without reference to autumn. Orange brings up images of autumn leaves and pumpkins. It represents the changing season, so in that sense it is a color on the edge, the color of change between the heat of summer and the cool of winter.



PURPLE

Passionate About Purple

By Kaitlin Meadows

In my box of life's crayons, the purple one is always the first one worn down to a nub. And if you have a quick peek in my closet, you'll see I've had a life-long love affair with purple in all its beautiful hues. Without succumbing to "purple prose," I'm just plain passionate about purple!



Oxford English Dictionary describes purple as a deep, rich shade between crimson and violet. In the traditional color wheel used by painters, violet and purple are both placed between red and blue. Purple occupies the space closer to red, between crimson and violet. Violet is closer to blue, and is usually less intense and bright than purple. The word purple comes from the Greek word for the Tyrian purple dye manufactured in classical antiquity from mucus secreted by a tiny sea snail, the spiny dye-murex.

As an enthusiastic archaeologist, I'm excited to report that purple was one of the first colors used in prehistoric art. The artists of Pech Merle cave and other Neolithic sites in France used sticks of manganese and hematite powder to draw and paint animals and the outlines of their own hands on the walls of their caves. These works have been dated to between 16,000 and 25,000 BC.

PURPLE

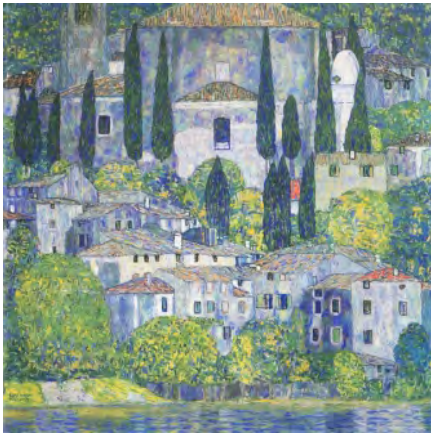
Purple was the color worn by Roman Emperors and magistrates, and since that time, purple has been associated with royalty and piety. Purple became the color of kings, nobles, and priests, and during the Roman Republic, the Emperor Caligula had the King of Mauritania murdered for wearing a purple mantle better than his own, and Nero made it a crime punishable by death for anyone else to wear purple! After the great dye works of Constantinople were destroyed in 1453, scarlet, made with dye from the cochineal insect, became the royal color in Europe.

While Medieval and Renaissance kings and princes wore purple less frequently, it was worn by the professors of many of Europe's new universities, and particularly by students of divinity. Purple and violet also played an important part in the religious paintings of the Renaissance in which angels and the Virgin Mary were often portrayed wearing purple or violet robes. In the 18th century, purple was still worn on occasion by Catherine the Great and other rulers, by bishops and, in lighter shades, by members of the aristocracy, but rarely by ordinary people, because of its high cost.

But in the 19th century, that changed. In 1856, an 18-year old British chemistry student was trying to make synthetic quinine. His experiments produced instead the first synthetic aniline dye, a purple shade called mauveine, shortened simply to mauve. It took its name from the mallow flower, which is the same color. The new color quickly became fashionable, particularly after Queen Victoria wore a silk gown dyed with mauveine to the Royal Exhibition of 1862. Mauve was a color that only the aristocracy and rich could afford to wear before the new synthetic was invented. And then everyone could!



PURPLE



At the turn of the century, purple was a favorite color of the German painter Gustave Klimt, who flooded his pictures with sensual purples and violets. In the 20th century, purple retained its historic connection with royalty; it was prominent in every feature of the coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953, from the invitations to the stage design inside Westminster Abbey.

But gradually, purple was becoming associated with social change. With the Women's Suffrage movement which fought to win the right to vote for women, with Feminism in the 1970s, with the peace and love culture of the 1960s, and especially during The Purple Rain Protest against apartheid in Cape Town, South Africa on September 2, 1989, in which a police water cannon with purple dye sprayed thousands of demonstrators. This led to the slogan The Purple Shall Govern. Purple has become the color most used in tribute to wise elder women. Maybe now you know why I'm passionate about purple in all her beautiful hues!



BOOK REVIEWS

Four for One and All for Color

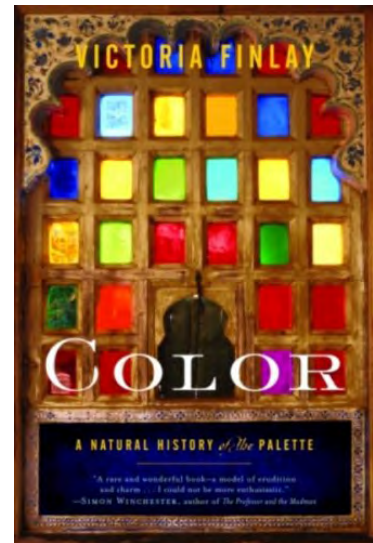
by Elizabeth Brizzard

I couldn't stop with one favorite book. Each book approaches color from a different background: social, anthropology, chemistry, spirituality/healing and graphic design. All have in common a rainbow approach with necessary inclusions of black, white, ochre, brown, and gray. Each book can stand-alone but together they are more satisfying.

Victoria Finlay, author of *Color: A Natural History of the Palette*, was born with a curiosity nurtured by parents and early travel.

She was educated in social anthropology, and wrote as an arts/travel journalist in Hong Kong. It is a large book, sometimes seeming to be more a travelogue (visualize a hefty budget) with countries on almost all continents visited. Her searches for origins of the pigments are told vividly, and several maps offer us a sense of place. Each section can be read on its own, and tells enticing quirky fact-stories. There are also stories about the people who made the things that made the art. We learn about the artist grinding his own pigments, the color men (pigment suppliers), the pig bladder containers, and the discovery of metal collapsible paint tubes.

Meanwhile we learn bits about the effects on the economies of regions and religious and political cultures worldwide. For example, Finlay searches the history of the indigo/Tyrian purple that colors the threads of Jewish prayer shawls, and finds it involves a shellfish; shellfish are not exactly kosher. And we learn that true ochre is gradually being commercialized out of existence in Australia, where the Aboriginal people have had the longest continuous painting tradition in the world.



BOOK REVIEWS

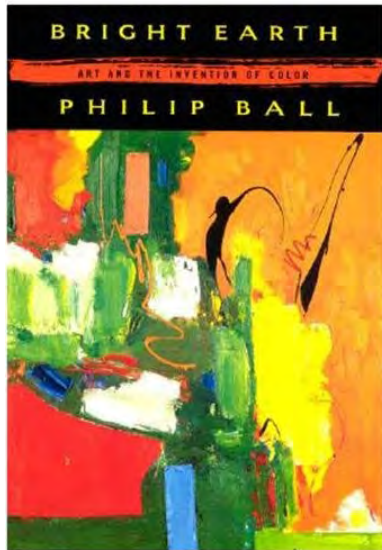
My favorite color story is her trip into the often-dangerous deep back roads of Afghanistan in pursuit of the source mines of lapis lazuli, the color of the sky and the Virgin's veil in Michelangelo's unfinished *Entombment*. Writing in the early 2000s, before the destruction of the huge Buddha statues, the author encounters wonderful residents and ever-present Taliban escorts.

There is a small collection of photos and a bibliography. Though the title says *history*, I think the original British subtitle is more appropriate: *Travels Through the Paintbox*, because Finlay occasionally will start speculating and imagining how events may have been. So? This is her personal journey and it is filled with exciting, non-technical adventures that have made it quite a favorite of artists and culture explorers alike.

Color: The Language of Light, by Karen Speerstra, shows us how to read this language of color. The use of color for healing and alchemy, to read auras and chakras, is ageless and is found across all cultures. Speerstra gives us a richly illustrated exploration of the connection between the spirituality of color and mysticism, and a deeper understanding of how color affects our lives, emotions and hearts. Nurture your imagination and awareness of how color is used by artists with this book.



BOOK REVIEWS



The third book, *Bright Earth*, written by chemist/physicist Philip Ball, has a more scientific bent. His approach gives us the full story of color chemistry, the evolution of the palette from technological advances, and even its effects on foreign trade. This is not a textbook, but it is big – for the dedicated inquisitive nerds among us.

The ‘funnest’ book is *ROY G. BIV: An Exceedingly Surprising Book About Color*. This is color from graphic designer, Jude Stewart, an editor for PRINT magazine. I found the explanations of color’s many questions and the layout (sidebars with reference pages to the color-underlined topics) totally compelling. Big mind-map diagrams head each color chapter. “A tantalizing reawakening of creative ideas for your own work.” “A universe of meaning lurking within color.” Dip your brush into any or all; you will be delighted.





My Rocky Relationship with Color

By Deb Hilbert

“Those colors just don’t go!” If you grew up in the ‘40s, ‘50s or ‘60s, these words may sound very familiar to you, especially as a girl. From an early age a very definite color consciousness was groomed into me. Even though I had to wear the requisite

uniform of Catholic grade school, I was always free on weekends to choose whatever I wanted to wear, “as long as the colors go,” or match. My color-conservative mom, grandma and aunt conspired to keep me in pastel florals, while I longed for the latest mod colors my older cousins were allowed to wear. When I hit fourth grade, my color palette was transitioning from those florals to all the right clothes during the “Twist” years of Chubby Checker.

My big breakthrough came when my mother taught me to use her sewing machine. Once I learned how to make some of my own clothes, Mom allowed me to pick out whatever fabric I liked, and I spied color-freedom on the horizon. Gone were the pallid solids, plaids, and florals from grade school, and in were the tie-dyed, paisley, and neon of my teens. While some experimented with cigarettes and other no-nos, my rebellion was color coordinated.

EDITORIAL

Teen years brought four more years of plaid uniforms, replacing one shade of blue with another, and my burgeoning fashion-sense began to settle on rich earth tones and neutrals. Early college years brought a vacillation between the good girl clothes of high school and the mod/hippie clothes of my peers.

A moment of true color awakening arrived when I was able to have a free personal color analysis during a conference in Atlanta. My friends and I eagerly queued up, waiting to learn what our individual color “season” or palette might be. This took all of three minutes per person, the analyst asking a couple questions, then pronouncing me a *fall*. (Think gold, rust, dark turquoise, royal blue, terra cotta, and some warm neutrals.) I was thrilled to learn what my true color palette was, but the high of the thrill turned into a definite nosedive when I returned home to survey my closet. Ugh - about half my wardrobe would have to go.



Over the course of several years, I made those changes. As I grew older, I became more sensitive to colors in general, especially color combinations. For example, years ago I noticed that the small local grocery store in my rural Pennsylvania town was being readied for a much-needed paint job. After a week of work, the tarps were removed and the newly painted storefront was revealed. The new color combination literally made me shudder! How could they (the store owners and the painters) *not* know that the new colors on the front of the building did *not* go? I was horrified and felt like I had to avert my eyes every time I drove past the store. Really, it's true!

EDITORIAL

A couple years ago, I happened upon one of those self-help quizzes so popular in women's magazines. It was called "Are You a Hyper-Sensitive Person?" Feeling game for a quick mini-quiz, I filled in the blanks, only to learn that indeed, I could now add the term "hyper-sensitive" to my personality description. The days following the quiz brought some quirky realizations. I suddenly realized that things in my life that were formerly mysterious (like why colors on a storefront, innocuous to everyone else) could drive me bonkers. The longer I thought about this weird new development, the more I could see that extreme *color* sensitivity, in addition to several other things, made me so sensitive.

Beautiful color excites me and can make me truly happy. I may buy a rosy red pepper just because the color speaks to me, or paint a sheet of Arches Text Wove to improve my mood. And these days, I must admit that I occasionally cheat and wear clothes that are not within my color palette. But I figure that's some other hypersensitive person's problem.



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Cover Photo – Bo Mackison
Girl with the Red Hat – Johannes Vermeer
Helvoetsluys – Joseph Mallord William Turner
The Star - Pamela Colman Smith, illustrator
Listen to your Heart – Mary Ellen Palmeri
Panda Forest – Mary Ellen Palmeri
Hummingbird’s Delight – Mary Ellen Palmeri
The Kiss – Gustave Klimt
Sunflowers – Vincent Van Gogh
The Starry Night – Vincent Van Gogh
The Square Glow – Josef Abers
Yellow Hickory Leaves – Geogia O’ Keefe
Impression Sunrise – Claude Monet
Purple Perfection – Kaitlin Meadows
Pear Tree - Gustave Klimt
Purple Water Lilies – Claude Monet
Indian Paint Brush – Deb Hilbert
Wild Alberta Rose – Deb Hilbert
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