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CLASS: **SESS-51** Lecture/PPT (2 hour)  
Friday, January 24, 9:30-11:30pm

TITLE: **Design Elements: Understanding Color**

DESCRIPTION: Color can enrich the art, enlarge the visual illusion, direct the eye, and set a mood. It can also detract from the art, shrink the image, and bore the viewer. Basic color theories of light, pigment, and printing ink will be explored along with color wheel basics, complimentary colors and designing with an understanding of color base (red, yellow, blue). Metallics also have a color base and need to be coordinated between art, mat and frame. Lightfastness and color fade under visible light vs. UV light and glazing protection is also an issue for discussion. It can match the sofa or enhance the art...you decide.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Open to all levels.

BIOGRAPHY: She has been Mounting Editor for Picture Framing Magazine since 1991, featuring her monthly column "Mastering Mounting", also PFM author of "The Elements of Design", "The Design Process", "Digital Directions" and has a number of self published books including:  
*The Mounting And Laminating Handbook, 1997*  
*Creative Mounting, Wrapping and Laminating, 2000*  
*The Mounting And Laminating Handbook, SECOND EDITION, 2002*  
*The Mounting And Laminating Handbook, THIRD EDITION, 2008*

RESOURCES:

Bevlin, Marjorie Elliott. DESIGN THROUGH DISCOVERY. New York: Holt Rinehart Winston, 1984.  
Designs Ink Publishing, DIP Library, <http://www.designsinkart.com/library.htm>  
Graves, Maitland. ART OF COLOR DESIGN. 1951.  
Itten, Johannes. THE ELEMENTS OF COLOR. New York: Reinhold, 1970.  
Leland, Nita. THE CREATIVE ARTIST. Cincinnati: North Light Books, 1990.  
Mayer, Ralph. A DICTIONARY OF TERMS AND TECHNIQUES. NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1969.  
**Paschke, Chris A., Designs Ink, <https://www.designsinkart.com/library.htm>**  
"The Design Process", PFM, 12 part series, 1994.  
"Design And Critique", PFM series, 1997.  
"The Essence of Design", PFM, 12 part series, 2000-2001.  
**Perkins, Greg. GREAT FRAME DESIGNS. New Jersey: PFM Books, 2009.**  
Wong, Wucius. PRINCIPLES OF COLOR DESIGN. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987.  
<http://paper-leaf.com/blog/2010/01/color-theory-quick-reference-poster/>

*"Physicists tell us about the make-up of color composition and explain how the human eye perceives a given color. Psychologists tell us how color affects us physically and emotionally. It is up to framing designer to assimilate all of this information and sell it to the client in the most dynamic solution possible."*

- Chris A Paschke

## DESIGN ELEMENTS: Understanding Color

### I. Essence of Color

Color is the most emotional and expressive element of design

Definition: Character of a surface which is the result of vision sensitivity to reflected wavelengths of light;  
(to see green, all light wavelengths are absorbed while green is reflected to the eye)

### II. Color Theory

Additive Theory (light)

- Light sources of various wavelengths are added in various proportions to produce a range of colors
- Red, blue and green overlap resulting in white, the presence of all color
- Like a prism: white light enters, and the rainbow appears as the colors are separated

Subtractive Theory (RYB- pigment and CMY- printing/digitals)

- Start with white light then introduce a pigmented color
- The surface absorbs all color while reflecting the color that is actually present
- So, the color is produced by subtracting the colors that are not there
- **Framing/Artist Pigment = Subtractive Theory using RYB pigment**

### III. Glossary

PRIMARY: Red, yellow, blue; make up the rest of the wheel.

SECONDARY: Orange, green, purple; mixture of two primaries.

COMPLEMENTARY: Directly opposite on wheel; most enhancing.

SHADE: Color plus black; darker than it's normal value.

TINT: Color plus white; lighter than it's normal value.

TONE: Color plus grey.

NEUTRALS: Surface grayed tones which do not reflect any single wavelength but ALL at once.

NEUTRAL GREY: Three primaries mixed together; black plus white.

MONOCHROMATIC: One color of a single hue with various values added of black, white and grey.

ACHROMATIC NEUTRALS: Colorless scheme of black, white and grays, no color properties exist.

HUE: Name of the actual pure color as determined by its light wavelength, indicating position on wheel.

INTENSITY: aka chroma; indicates the brightness or dullness.

VALUE: A characteristic in terms of light reflected from it; the total lightness or darkness of a color.

### IV. Color Wheel Basics (pigment)

Primaries = Cannot be mixed to create hue...Red, Yellow, Blue

Secondaries = Are mixed from Primaries...Orange, Purple, Green

Complementaries = Opposites that best enhance...R+G, Y+P, B+O

Shades/Mutes = Any color muted by the addition of black

Tints/Pastels = Any color made more pale/pastel by the addition of white

### V. Metallic Colors

Color base – red, green, blue

Tarnishing felt pens, oil seep

Metal leaf vs. Real leaf

Match all metallics – frame, mat, fillet, notary seal, leaf

Gold generally equates to warmer yellow, oranges and silver to cooler blues

### VI. Color as Design Tool

Color impact:

- To create or emulate feeling
- To reinforce mood and stimulate ideas
- To control the viewer's eye
- To unify composition

Line - Tiered mat lines, French mat lines

Texture – Mat, frame and art

Mat/Frame selection

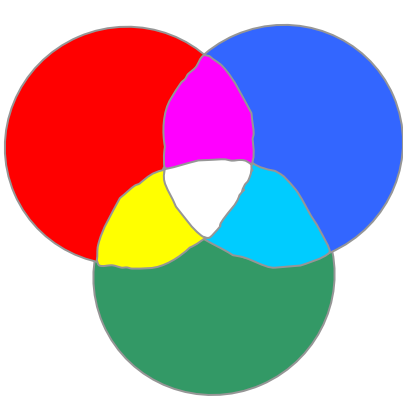
- Dominant color in the art = Top mat or frame
- Secondary art color = First accent as liner mat, deep bevel or stacked frame
- Third art color = Narrower mat liner or second accent; doesn't need to be innermost mat

Rhythm – Replicating elements from the art

Shape and Style (aka Period)

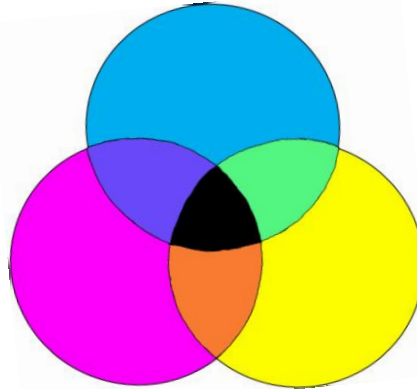
## VII. Psychology of Color

Black = Grief, death, achromatic color of nothingness  
 White = Innocence, purity, neither warm or cool; Asian = death  
 Yellow/Orange = Warmth, newness  
 Pink = Tenderness, poetry  
 Red = Love, fire, revolution, sensuality, desire, passion, excitement, appeals to the senses; Asian = marriage  
 Violet = Meditation, mystery, occult, exotic  
 Purple (more blue) = Aristocratic, dignified, worldly, royal  
 Blue = Loyalty, passive, dreamy, isolation, deep feelings, honesty, sadness, dignified  
 Blue-Green/Teal = Zen, calming, peaceful, meditative  
 Green = Organic, calming, neither cool nor warm  
 Brown = Earthiness, solidity, firmness



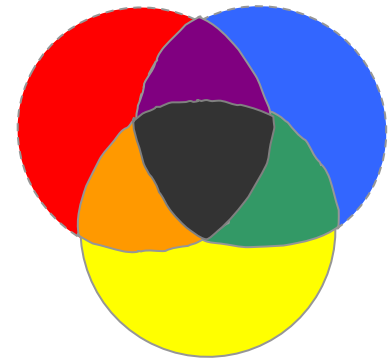
### ADDITIVE COLOR THEORY (LIGHT)

Primaries of red, green, blue (RGB)  
 create secondaries of yellow, cyan,  
 magenta. All six combined create  
 white, all the colors in light are  
 present and absorbed.  
 Think of a prism.



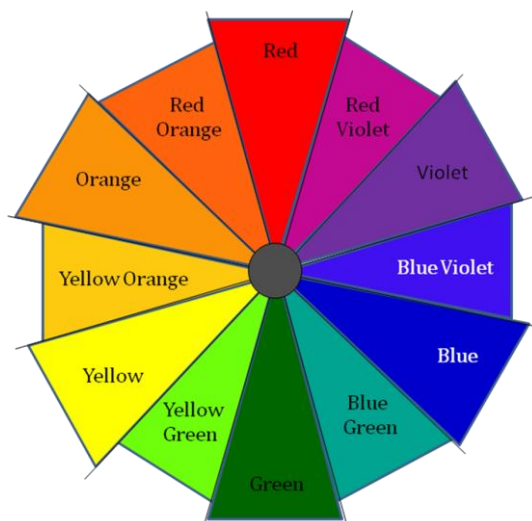
### SUBTRACTIVE COLOR THEORY (DIGITAL PIGMENT)

Primaries are cyan, magenta,  
 yellow (CMY) which blend to  
 create secondary colors of  
 violet, orange, green.  
 Final colors integrate the selective  
 absorption of light (altered by light  
 colors) to produce final colors.



### SUBTRACTIVE COLOR THEORY (ARTIST PIGMENT)

Primary pigmented colors are  
 red, yellow and blue. They are  
 blended to create secondary colors  
 of orange, green, purple.  
 When three primaries, three secondaries  
 or all six are blended, the result is  
 muddy grey, brown or black.



Pigment  
Color Wheel