

Design Elements: Understanding Color

Chris A. Paschke, CPF, GCF, CMG



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Color

is the most emotional and
expressive element in design.

Principles of Design

Elements
are the easily identifiable
building blocks

Line

Balance

Color

Texture

Emphasis

Space

Intensity

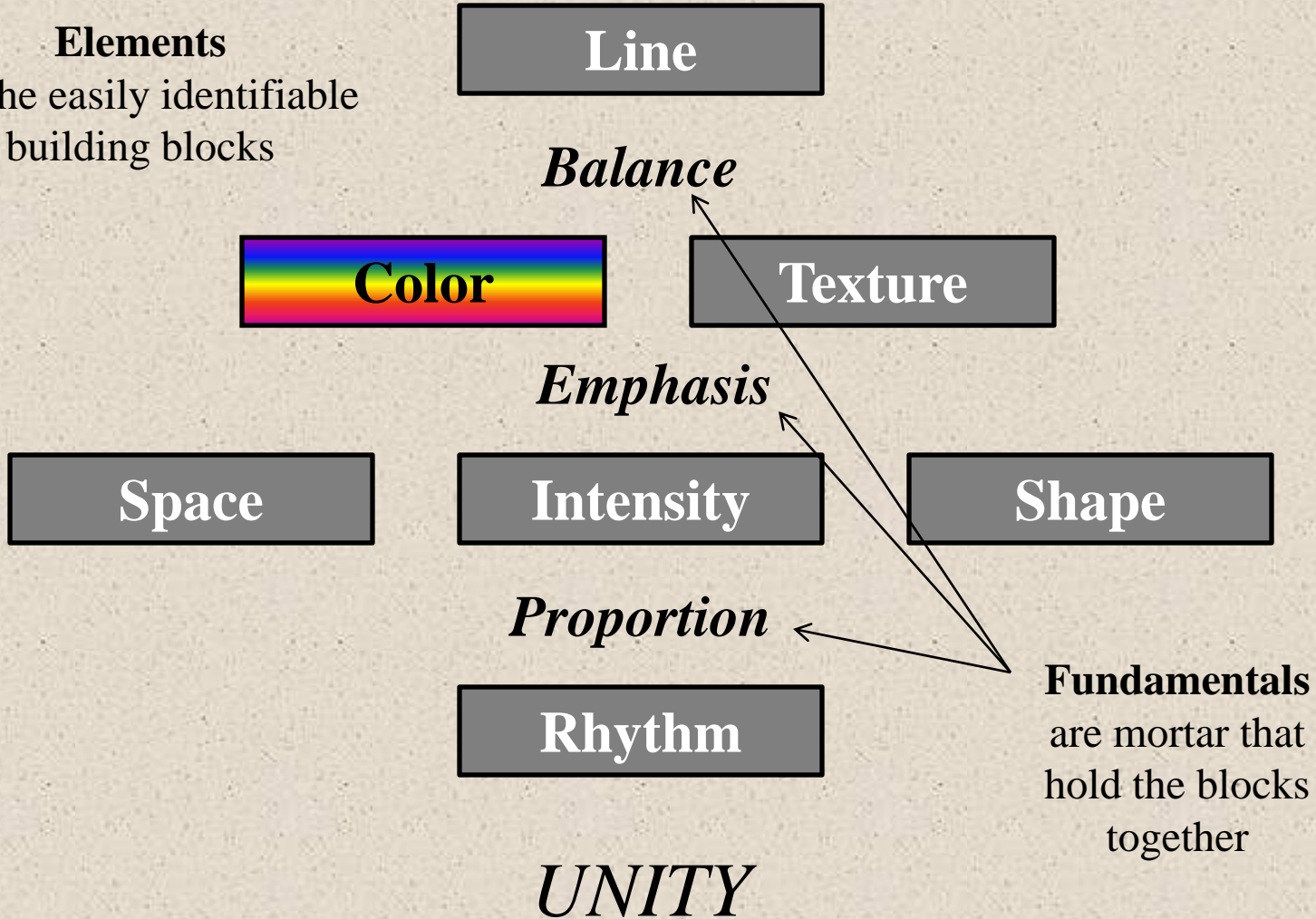
Shape

Proportion

Rhythm

Fundamentals
are mortar that
hold the blocks
together

UNITY



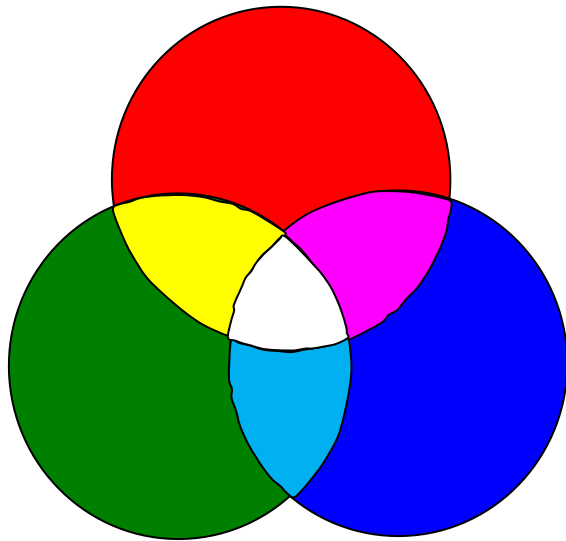
Definition of Color

“Color is the character of a surface which is the result of vision sensitivity to reflected wavelengths of light.”

In other words...in order to see green all other wavelengths are absorbed and green is reflected back to the eye

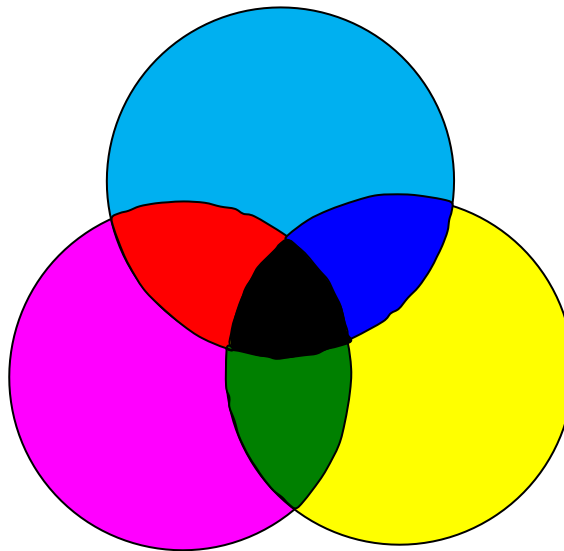
Color Theories

Additive
Light



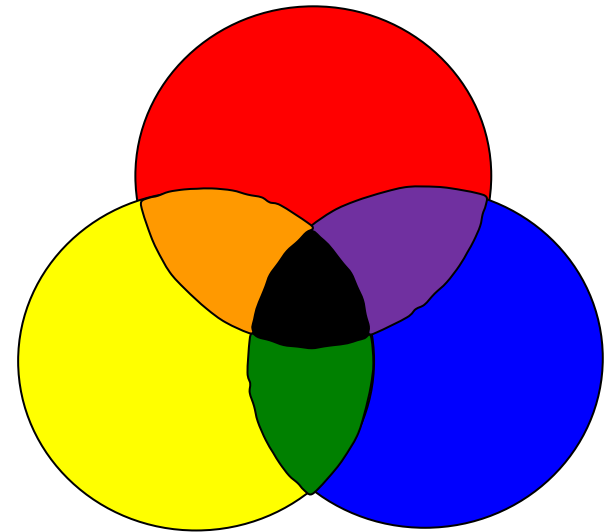
Stage Lighting

Subtractive
Digital Pigment



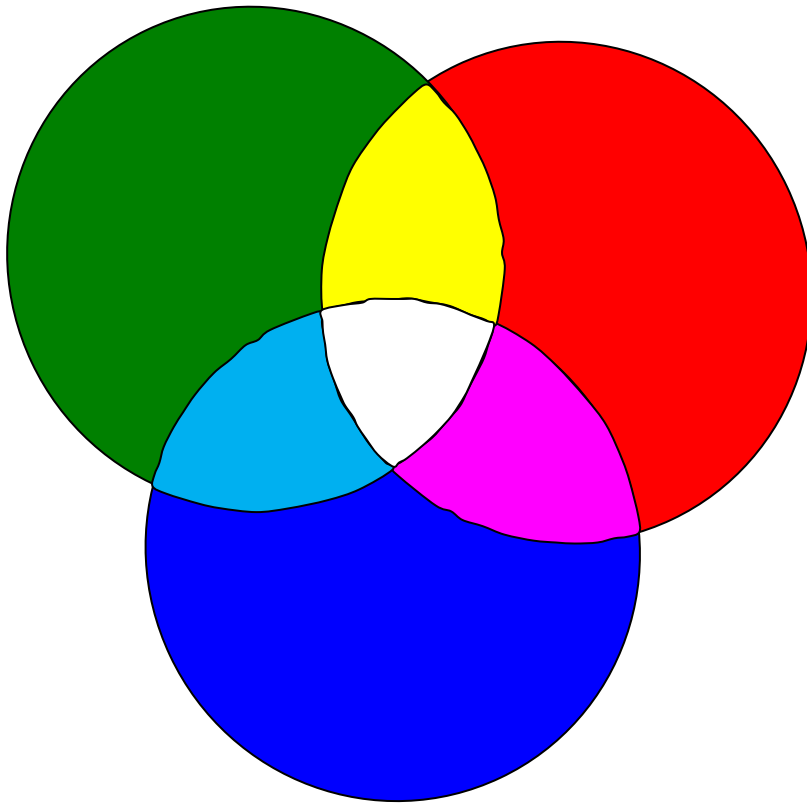
Computers/Printers

Subtractive
Artist Pigment



Framing

Additive Color Theory (LIGHT)

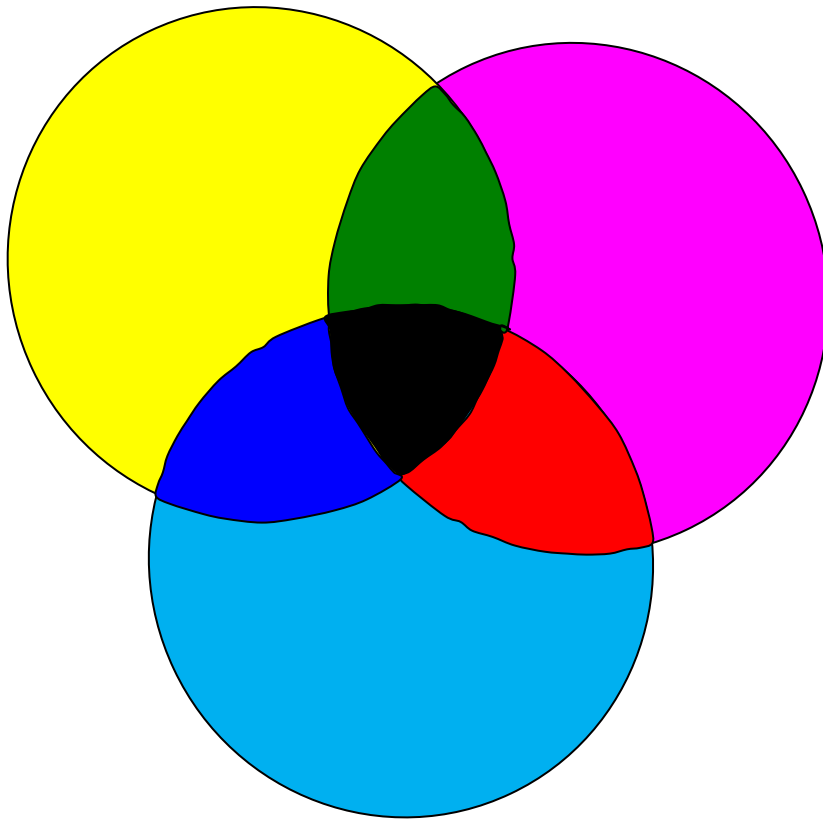


Primaries of
red, green, blue (RGB)
create secondaries of
yellow, cyan, magenta.

All six combined create
white, as all the colors
in light are present and
absorbed.

Subtractive Color Theory

(DIGITAL PIGMENT)

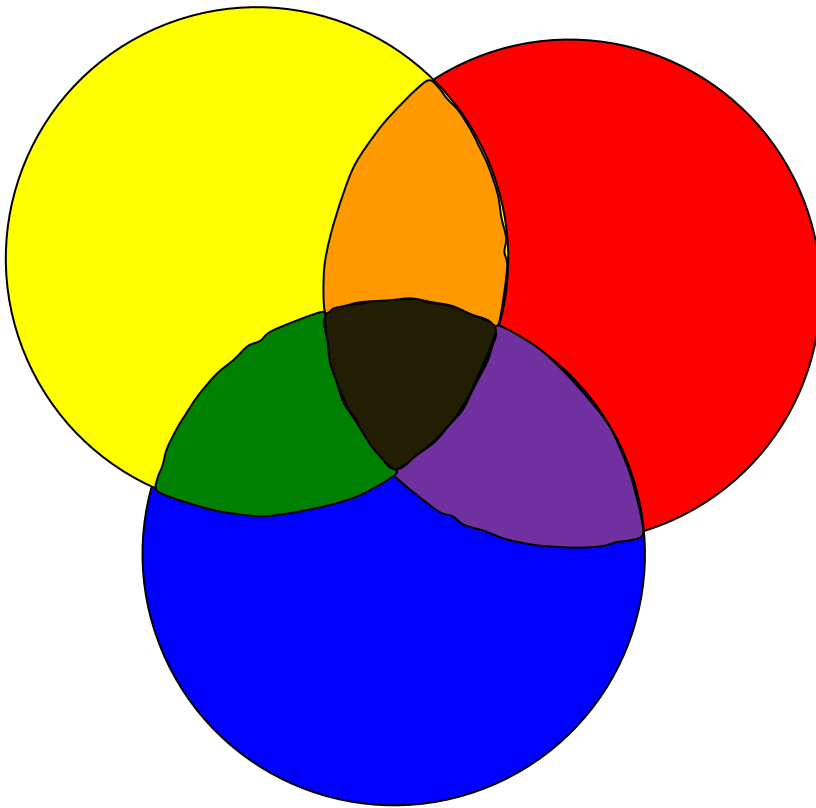


Primaries in
pigment dye are cyan,
magenta, yellow (CMY)
which create secondaries
of red, green, blue.

All six combined do not
add color, but subtract all
light wavelengths creating
black - the absence of color.

Subtractive Color Theory

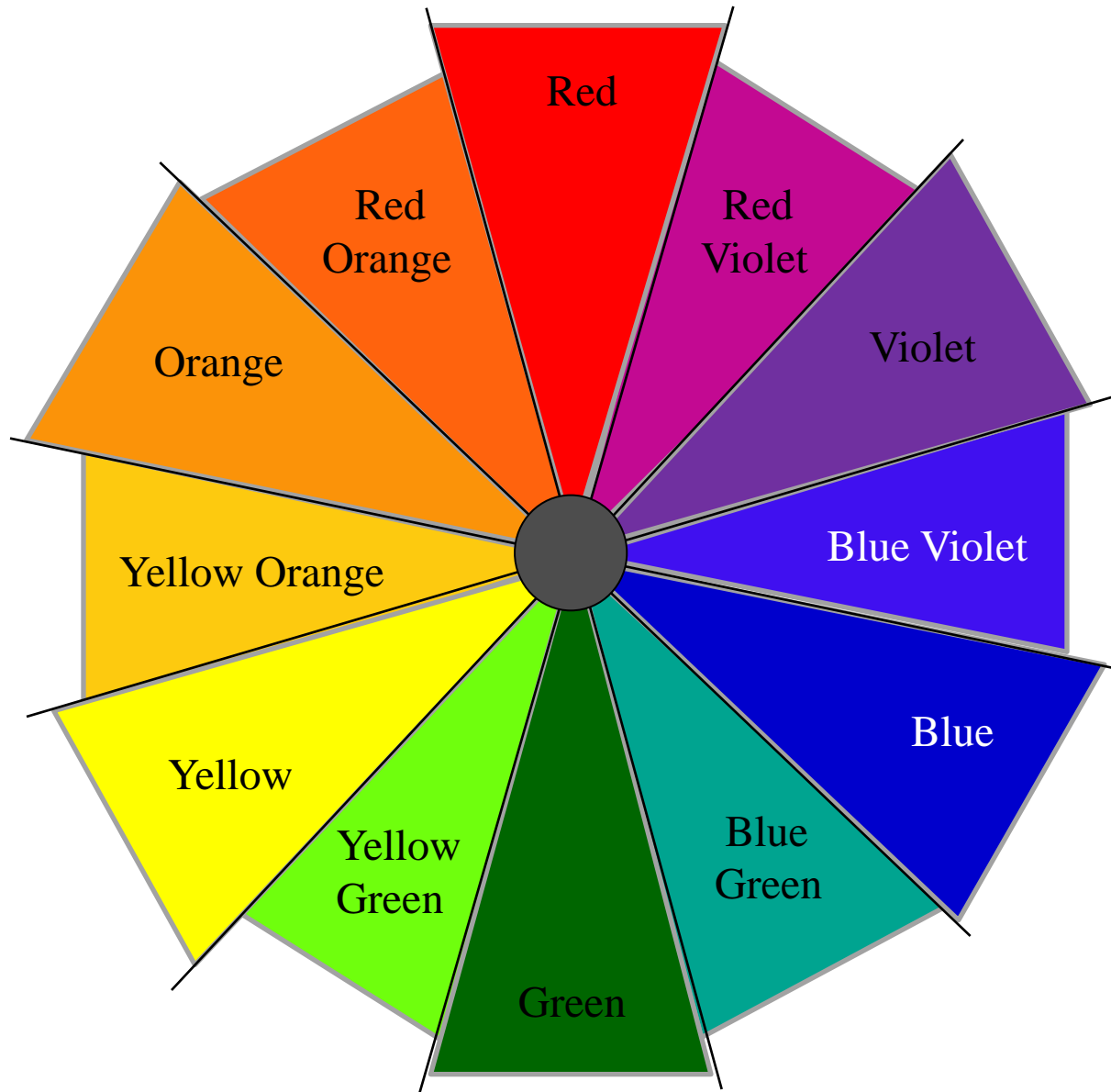
(ARTIST PIGMENT)



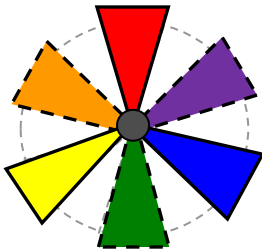
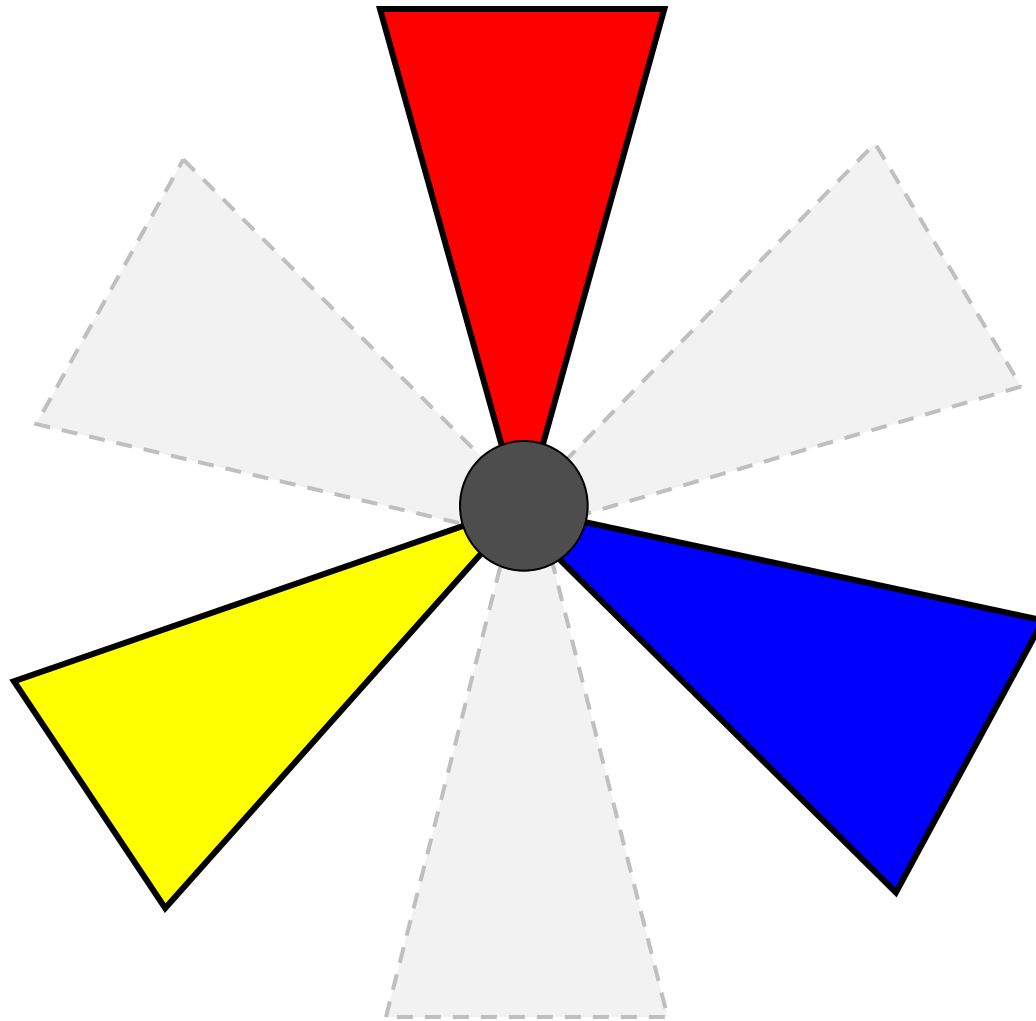
Pure pigmented primary colors red, yellow, blue are mixed to create secondaries of orange, green, purple.

When three primaries and three secondaries (all six) are blended...the result is muddy grey, brown or black.

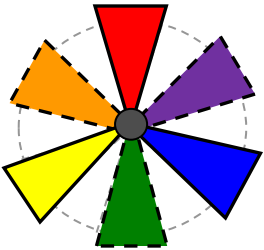
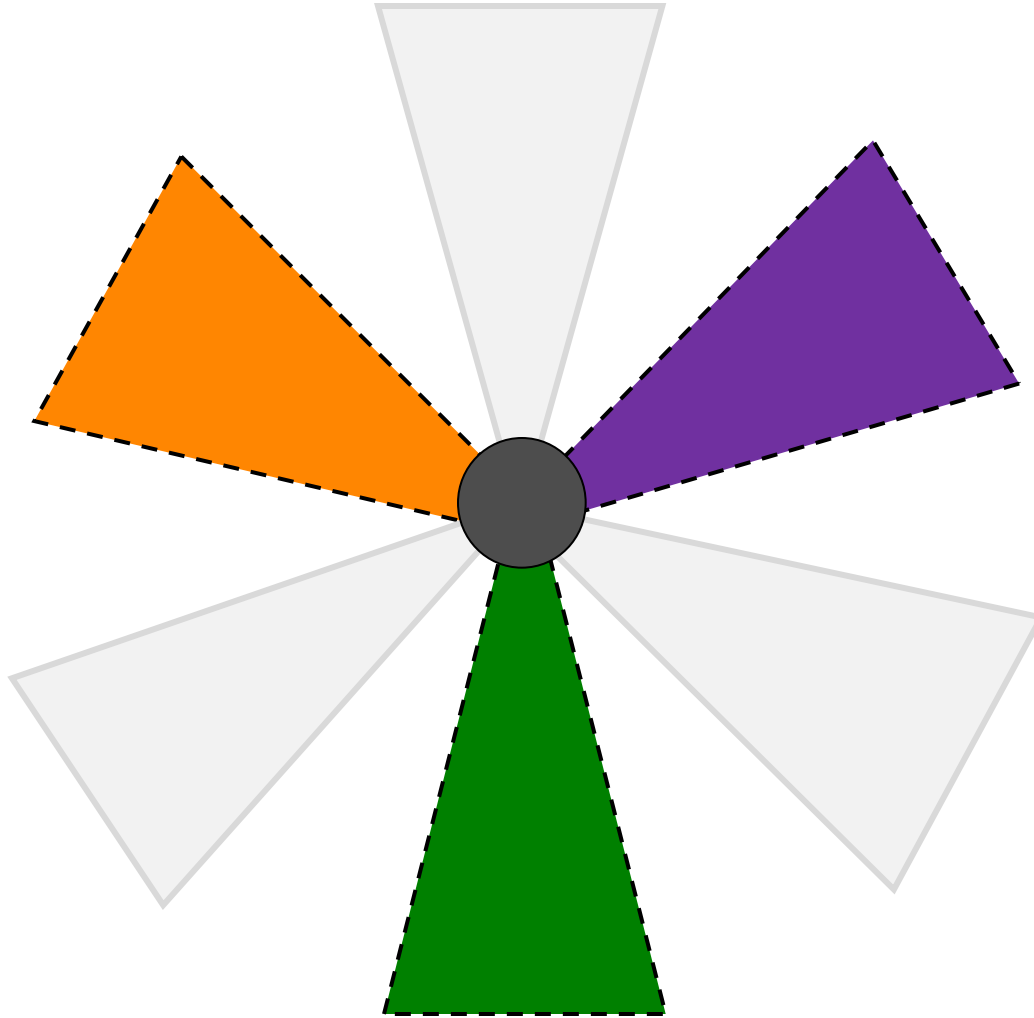
Color Wheel



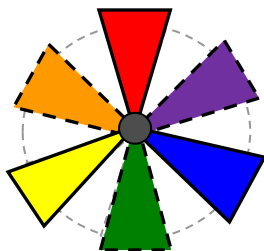
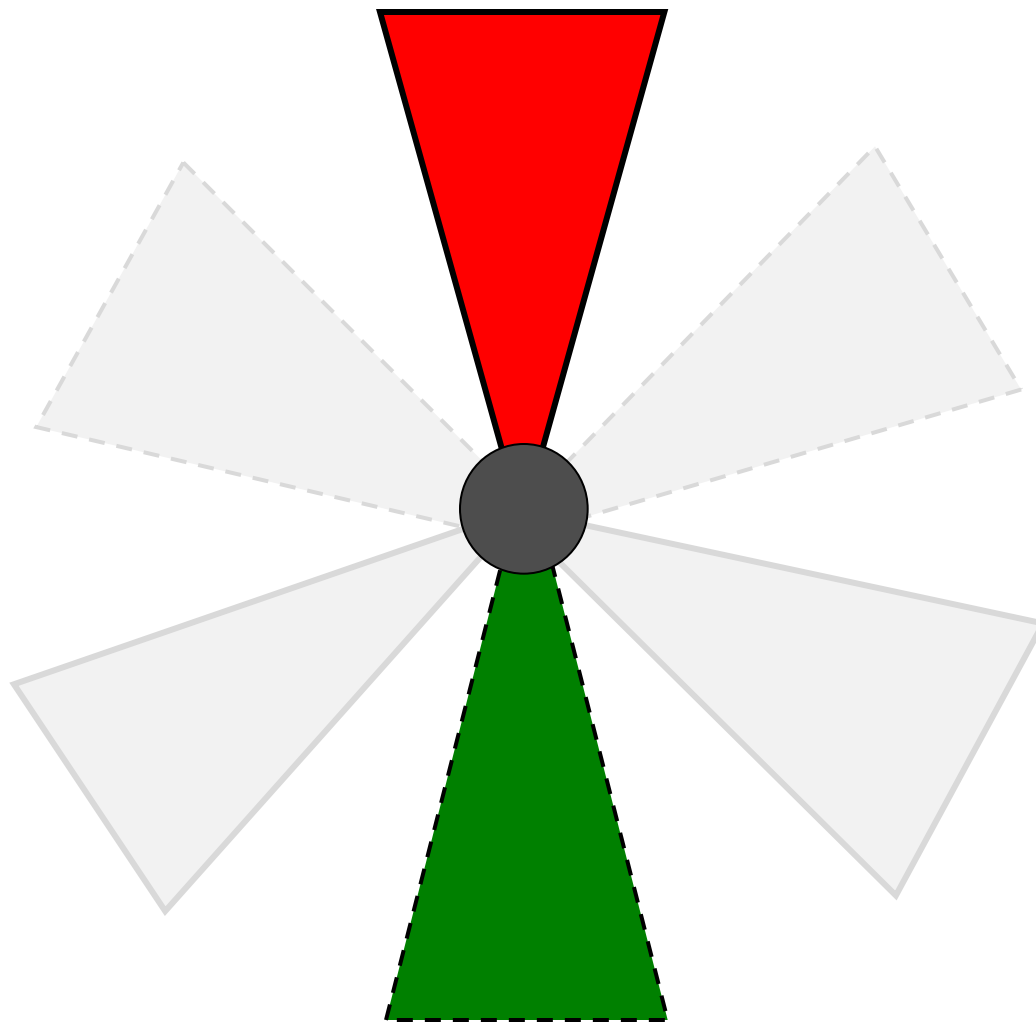
Primary Colors



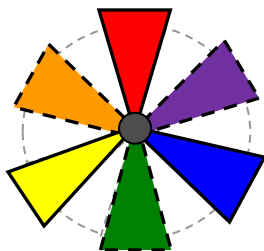
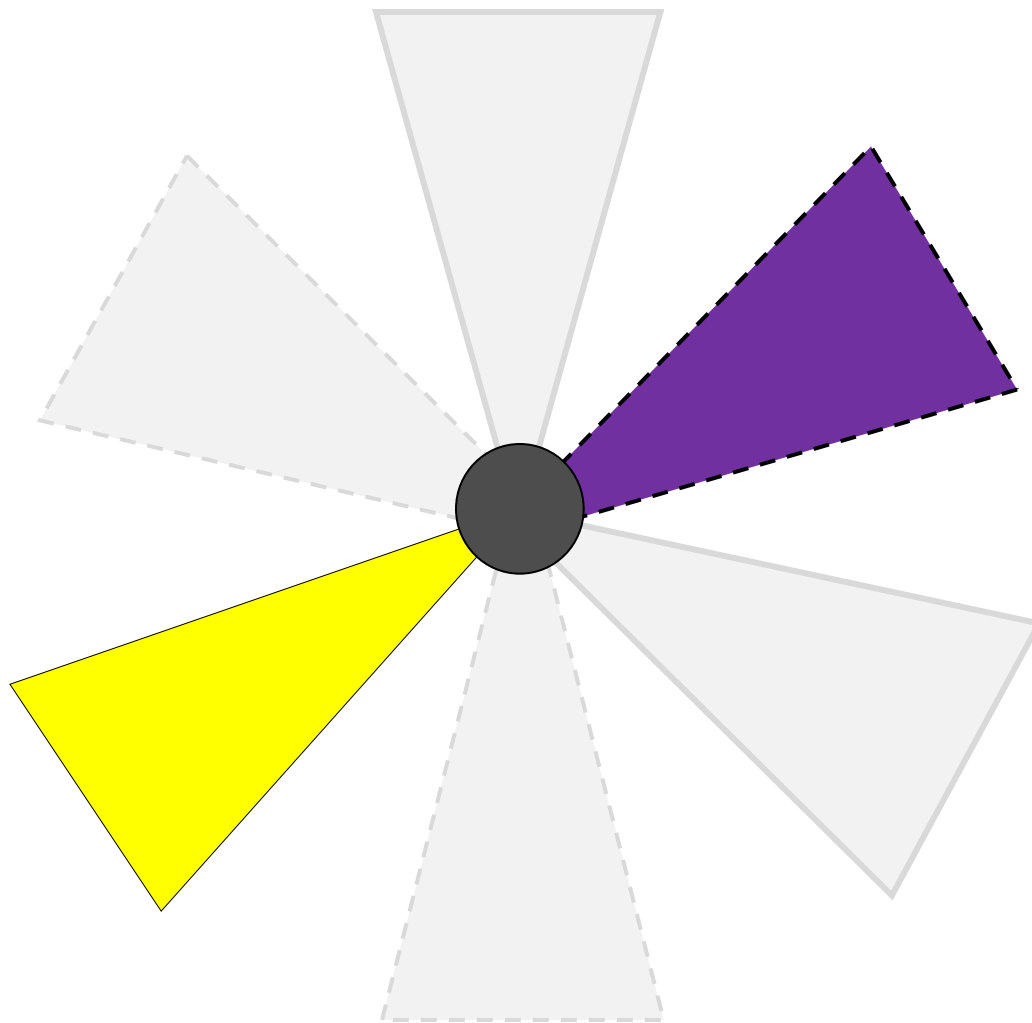
Secondary Colors



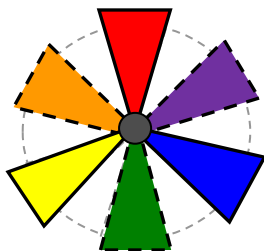
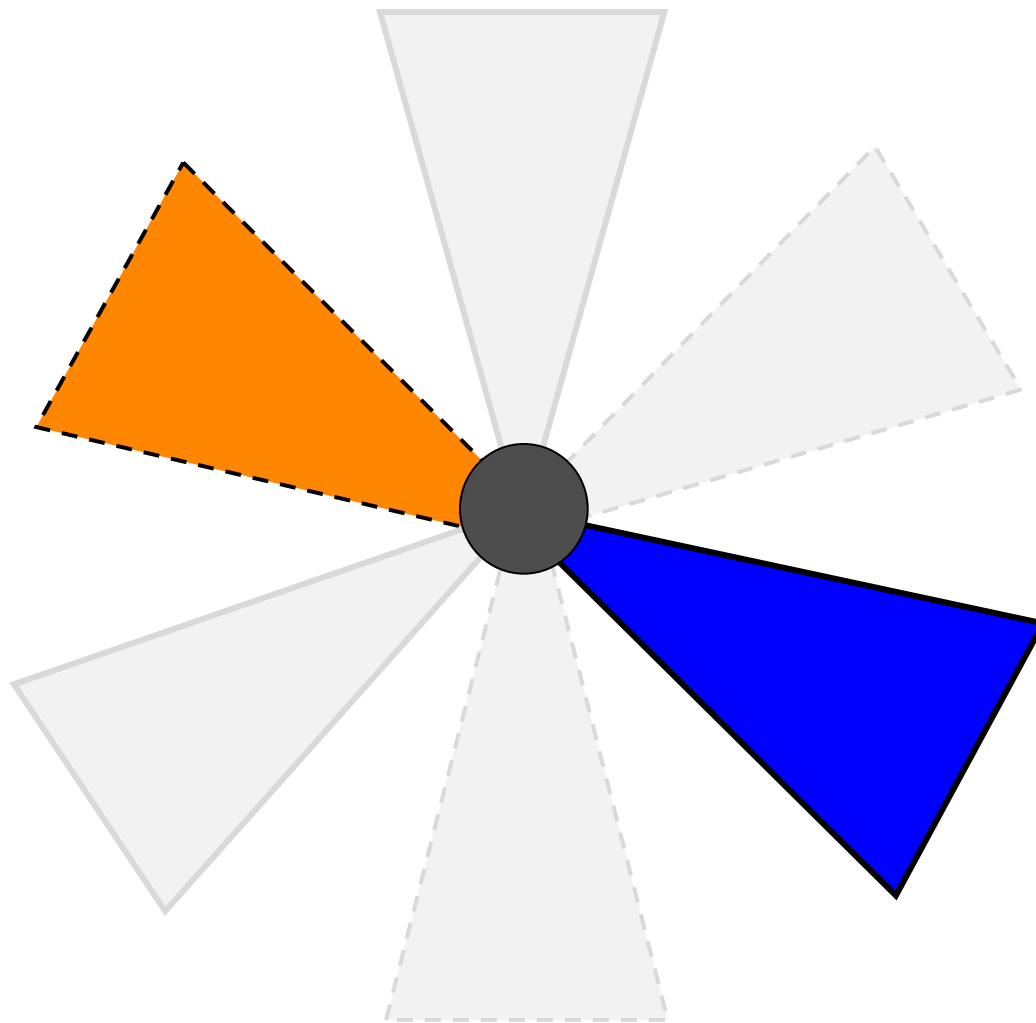
Complementary Colors



Complementary Colors



Complementary Colors





Glossary of Color Terms

Primary Colors - Pure colors that cannot be mixed

Red, Yellow and Blue on wheel

Secondary Colors - Orange, Yellow, Purple

Mixed from Primaries

Complimentary Colors - Opposites

Shade – Color plus black, darker than normal value

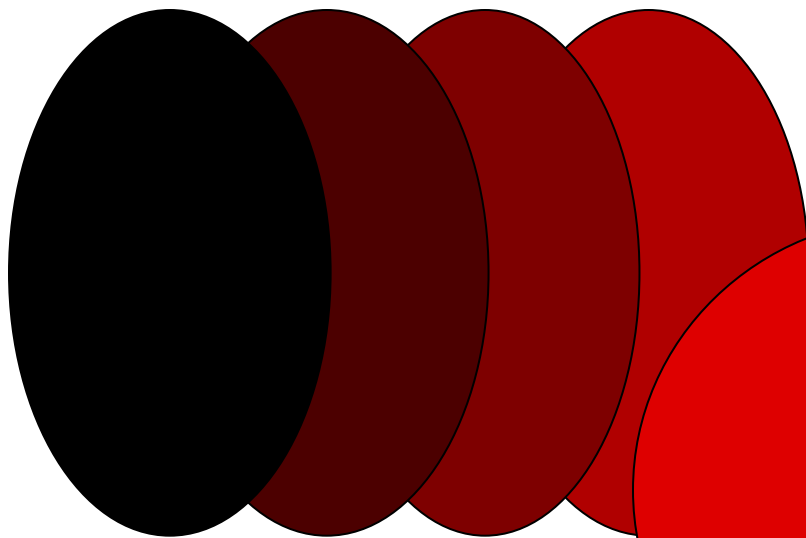
Tint – Color plus white, lighter than normal value

Tone – Color plus Grey

Monochromatic – Shades and Tints of same color

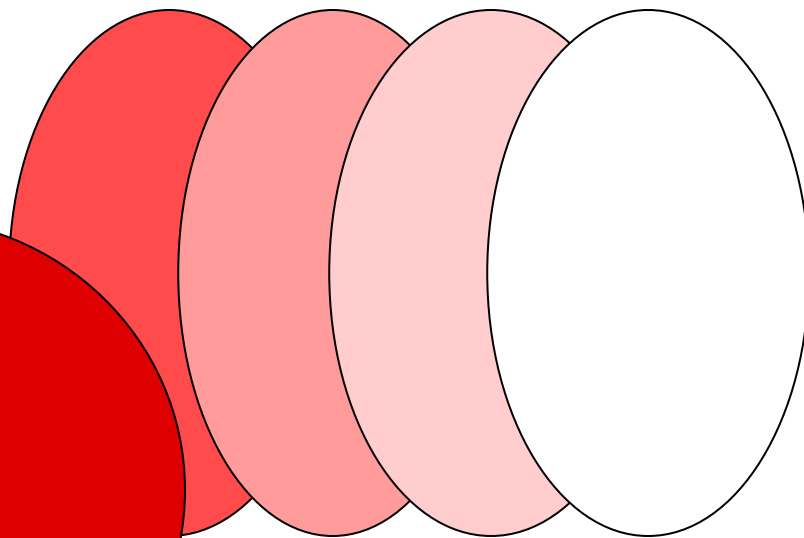
Shade

color plus black



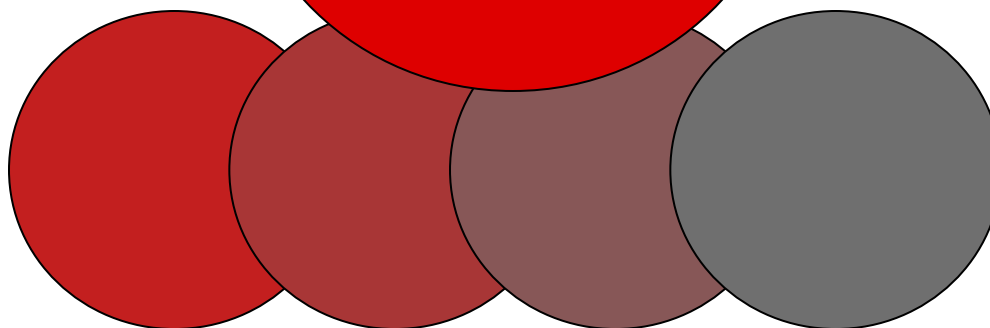
Tint

color plus white

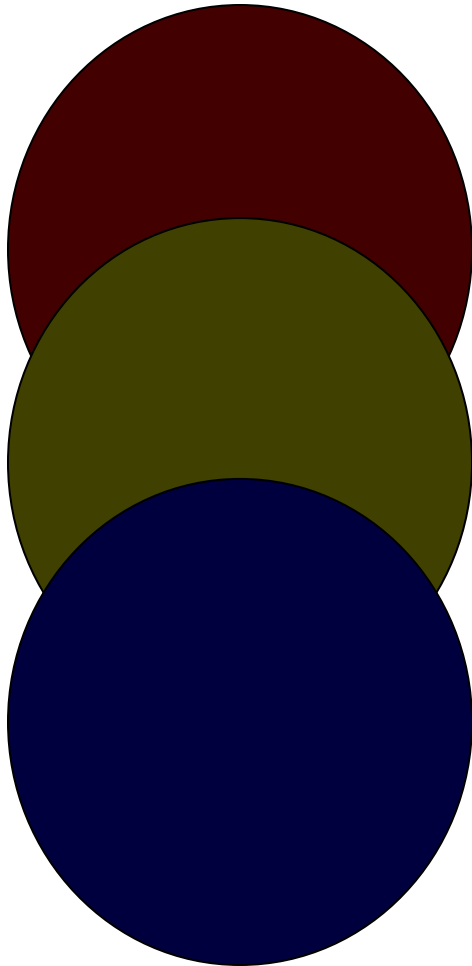


Tone

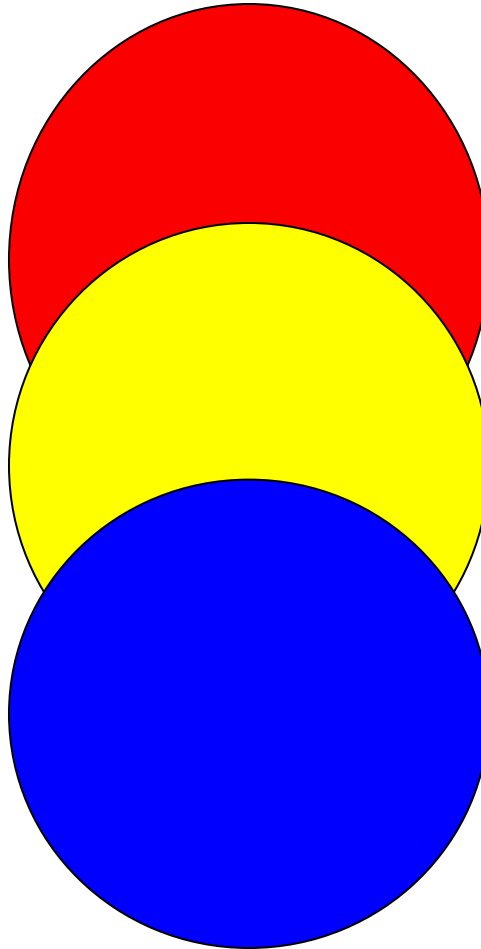
color plus gray



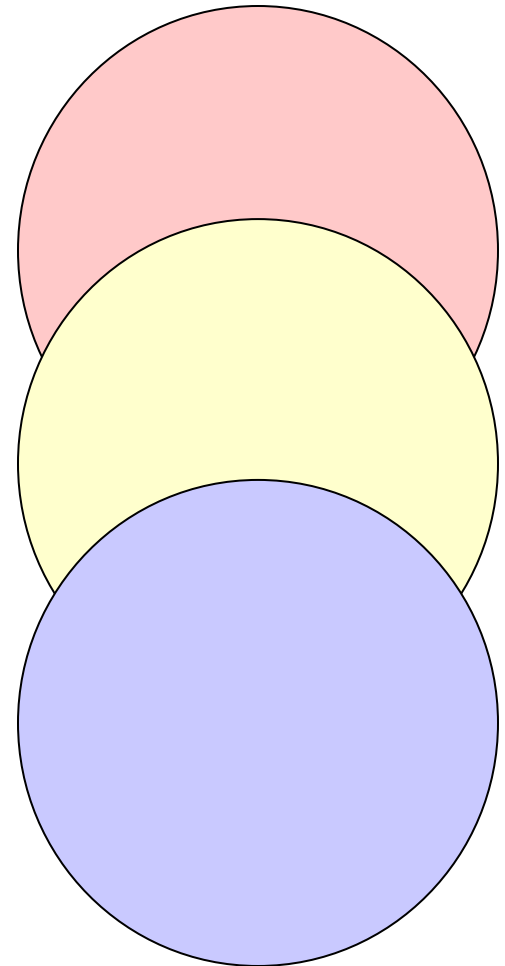
Primary
as Shade



Primary
Colors



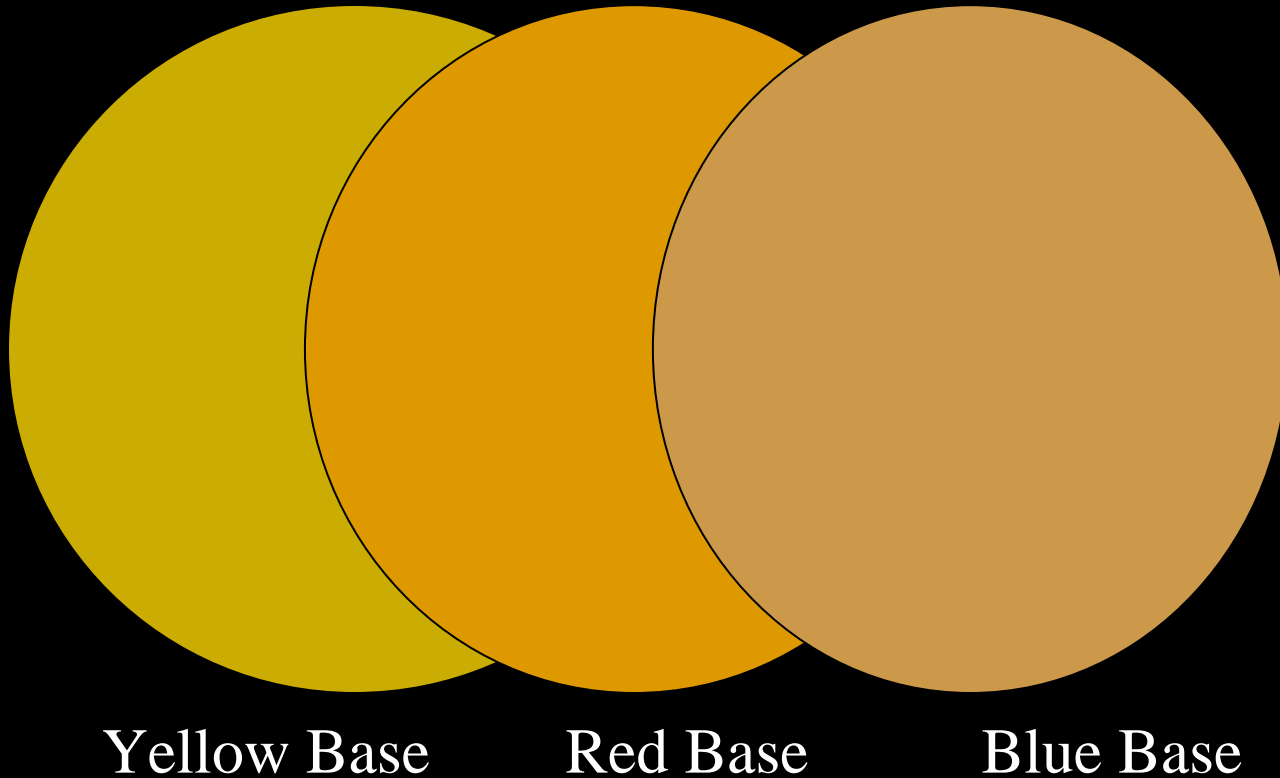
Primary
As Tint



Metallics

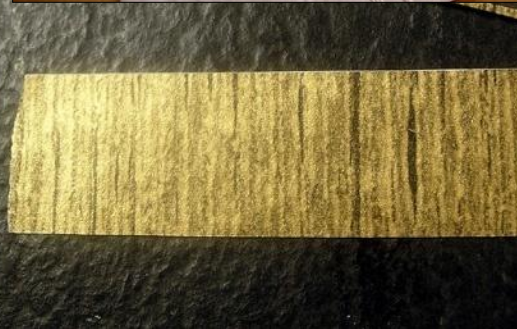
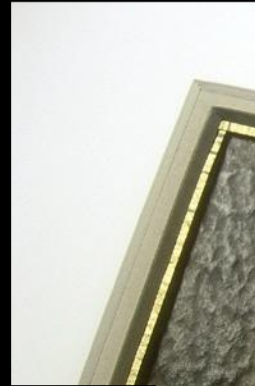


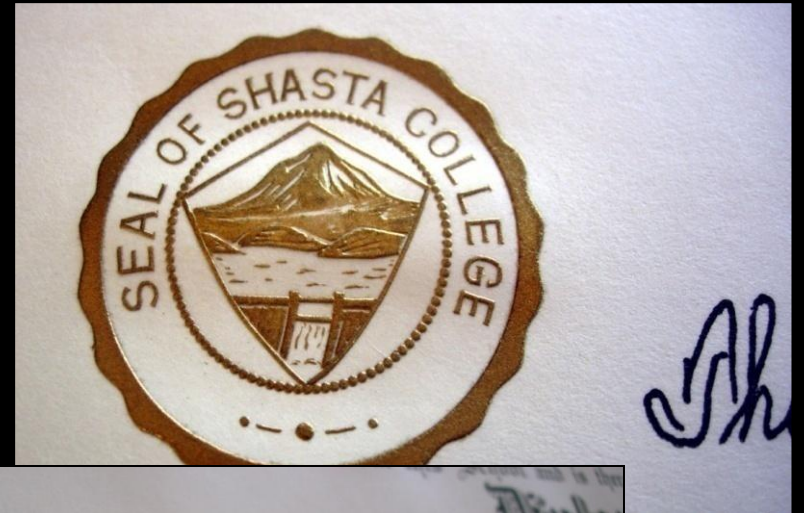
Metallic Bases



Metallic Bases

Must match frame,
mat, fillet and gold
used within art
or document





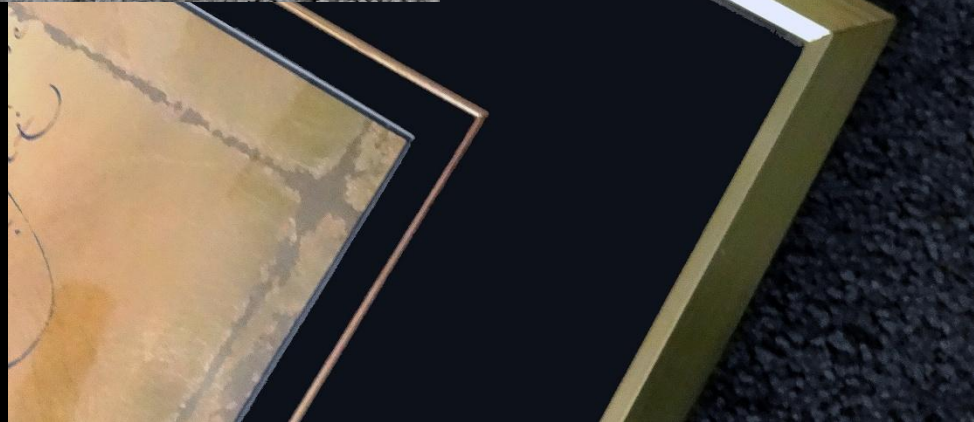
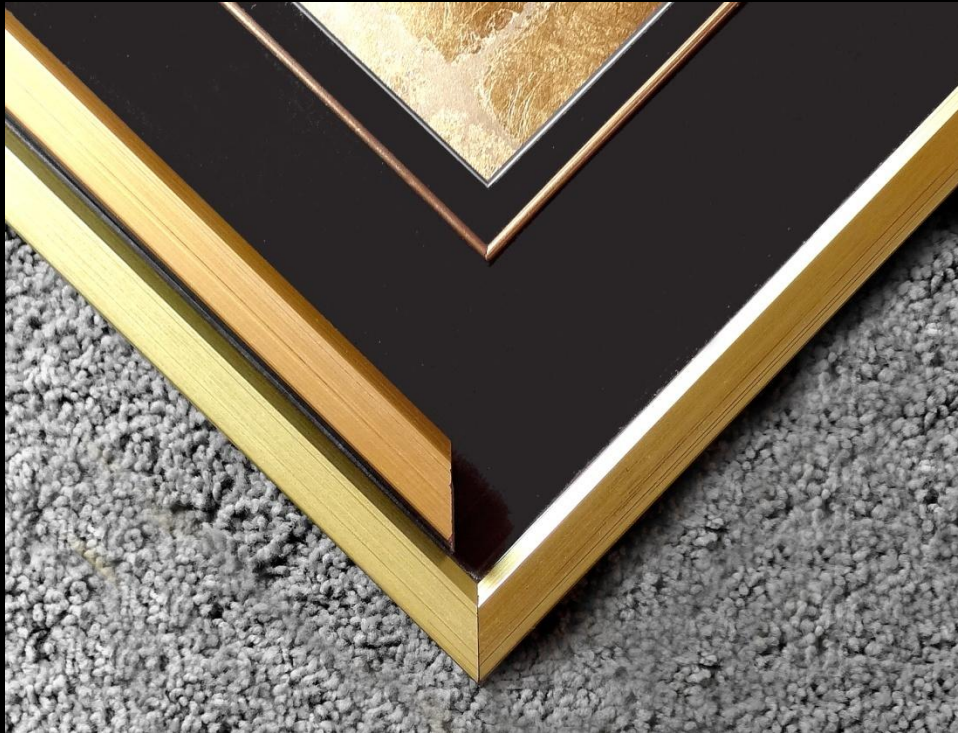




Bad color match



Faded Gold



Gold matches
tones and warmth
in painting





Common plein air profile
Good color match to cooler tones in art





Soft brushed gold tones
harmonize with the
encaustic medium



Soft brushed antique
silver works with
melted opaque waxes



Liner warm white
expands image

Bevel wrap brings
eye into tree

Top picks up
neutral tan





Warm white
expands image

Spacer adds depth
and shadows

Top warm gray
Draws the eye
into the leaves



Crème rag top mat
Wrapped textured bevel
for rhythm
Liner white to match
background





Torn paper
accents





Mat color vs. Wide frame color

Mat Color Selection – Rule of Thumb

1. Dominant art color = top mat color selection

There are exceptions to every rule and if no mat,
this doesn't hold for the frame

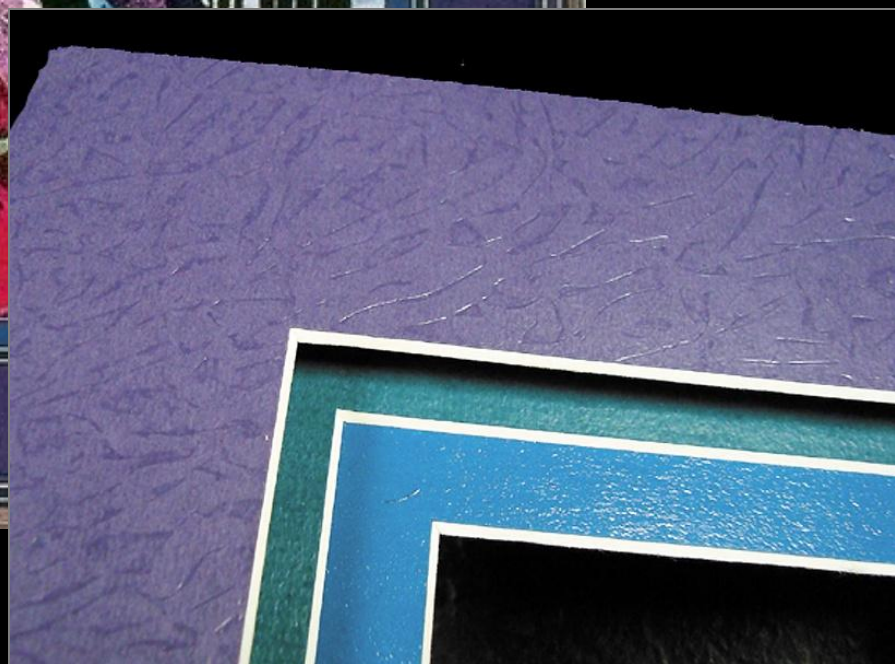
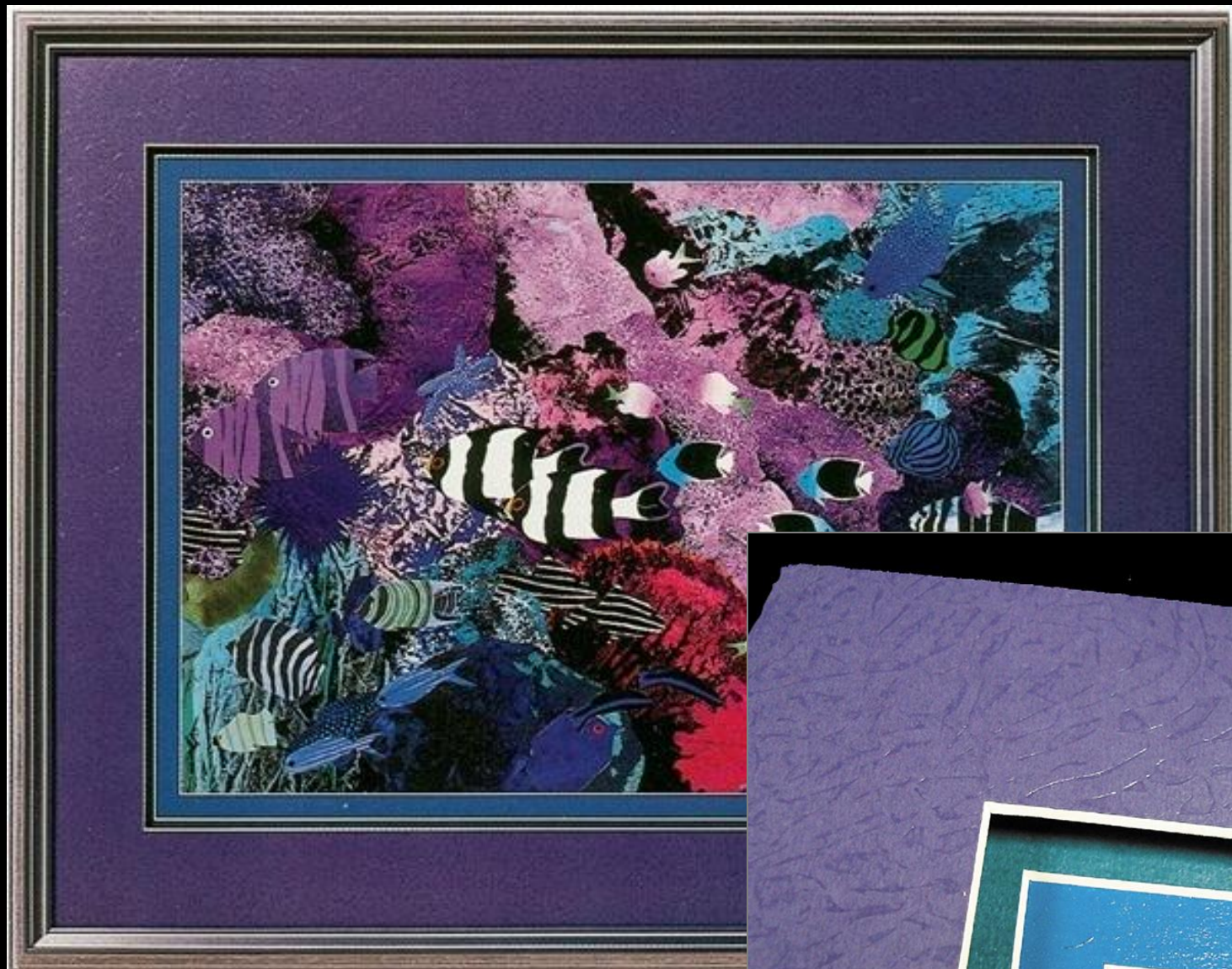
Consider textures and contrasts

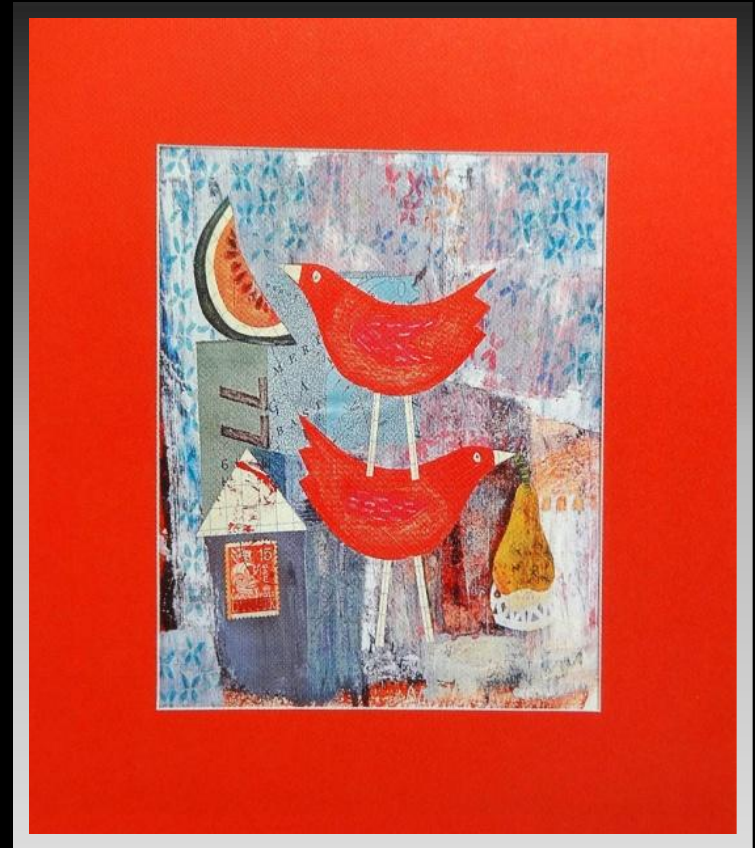
2. Secondary art color = middle mat or first accent

Second mat width does not have to be middle reveal

3. Third art color = third mat or second accent

Can be as simple as red line on frame edge
or under tiered mat





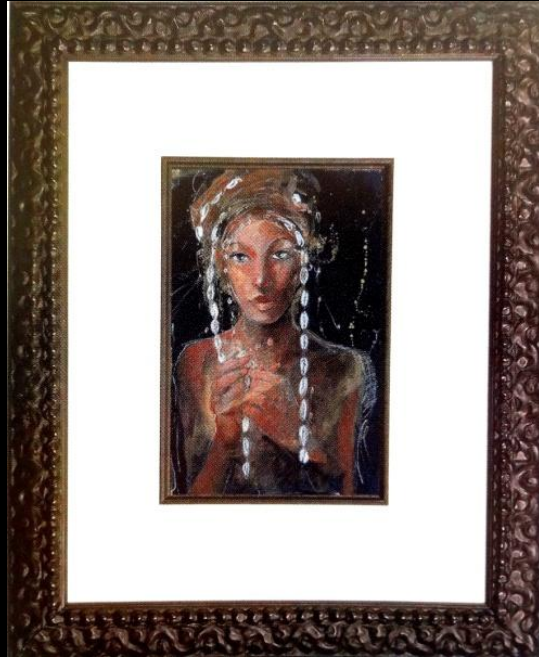
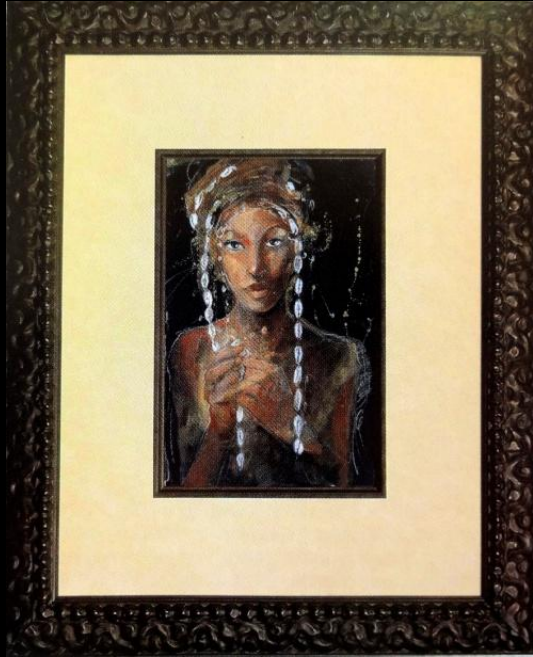
Visual emphasis through color

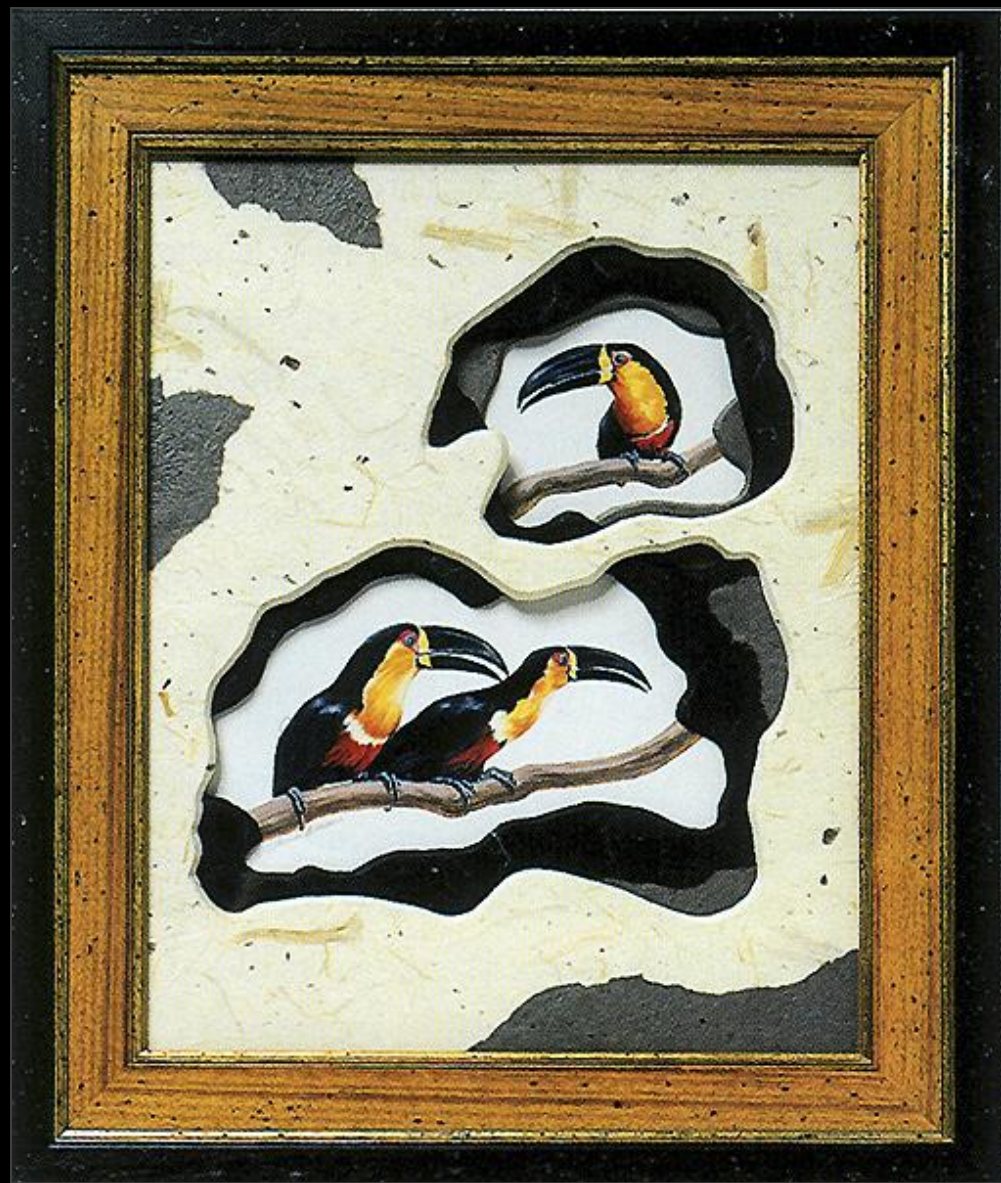


Color and Visual Focus



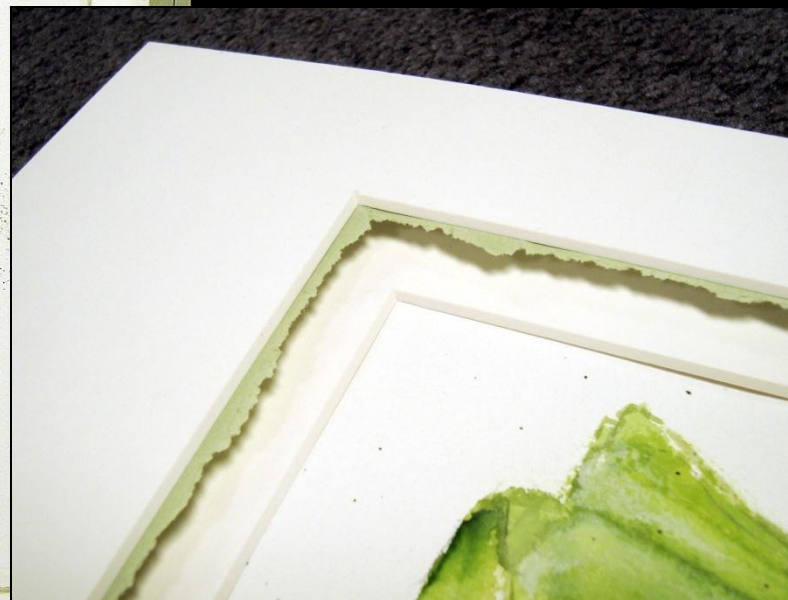
Grey Ansley stem frame pulls into the ink washes
Soft gold Cintra draws into the warmer yellows





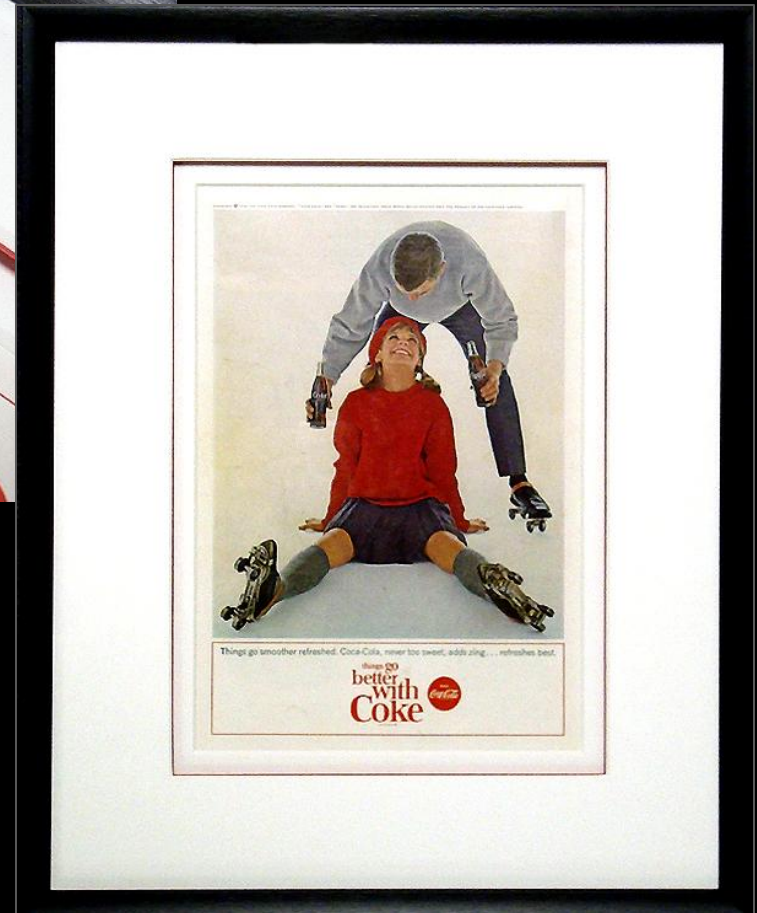


White background
Green frame & deckle
Grey edge highlight





Under tiered top mat
Liner mat varied to
match aged ad



1970s original framing



Reframed to protect
original watercolor





The dominant blue would be too dark for top mat
Brushed aluminum accents the airplane
Deep bevel wrap and gray mat integrate frame and plane

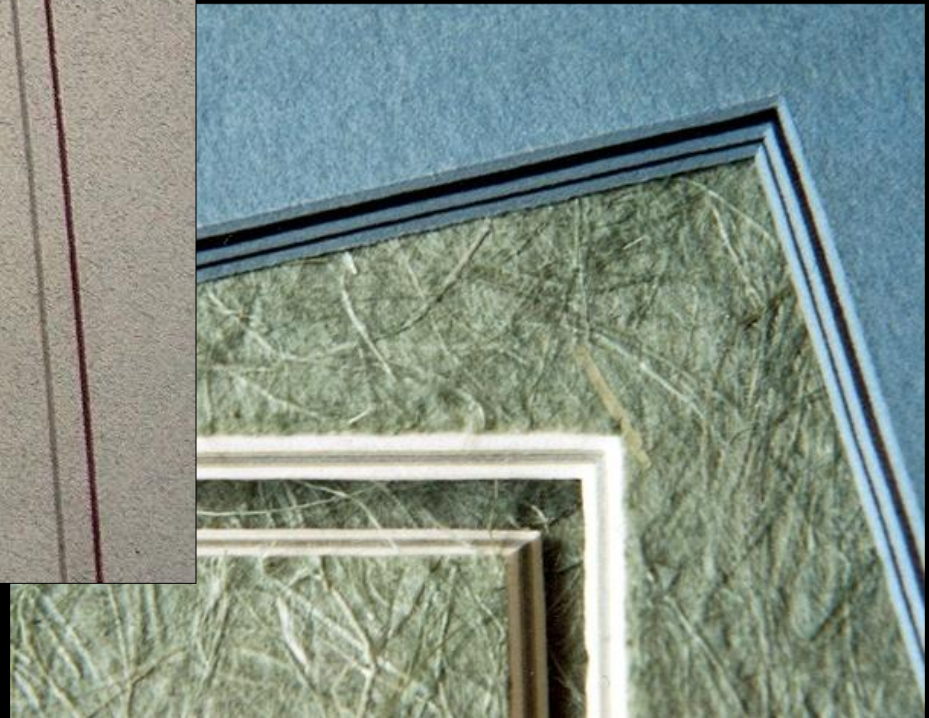


The traditional
pastel concept of
using white mats to
allow the art to
showcase itself



Softened transition
of antique whites,
brightest on top, using
a copper frame to unify
with color

Color and Line





Color, Line & Texture









Color and Rhythm





Warm white and Gray repeated as top mat and deep bevel.

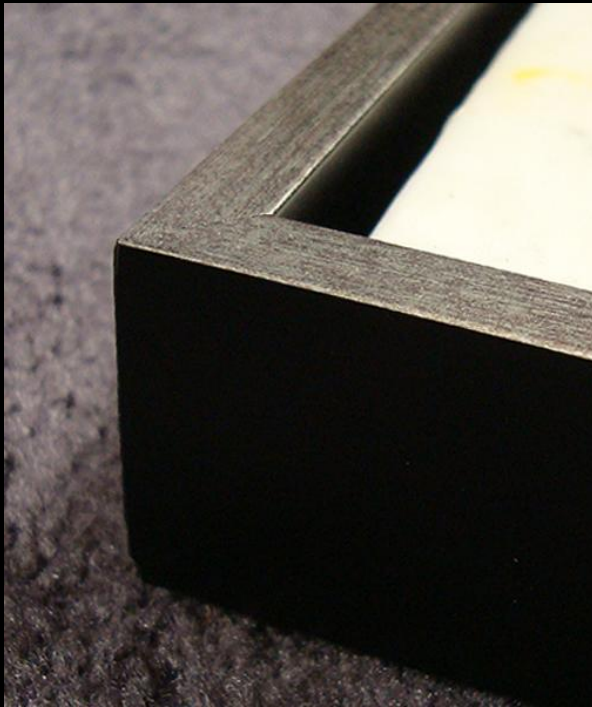


Surface tiered (T)
Matte laminated (B)





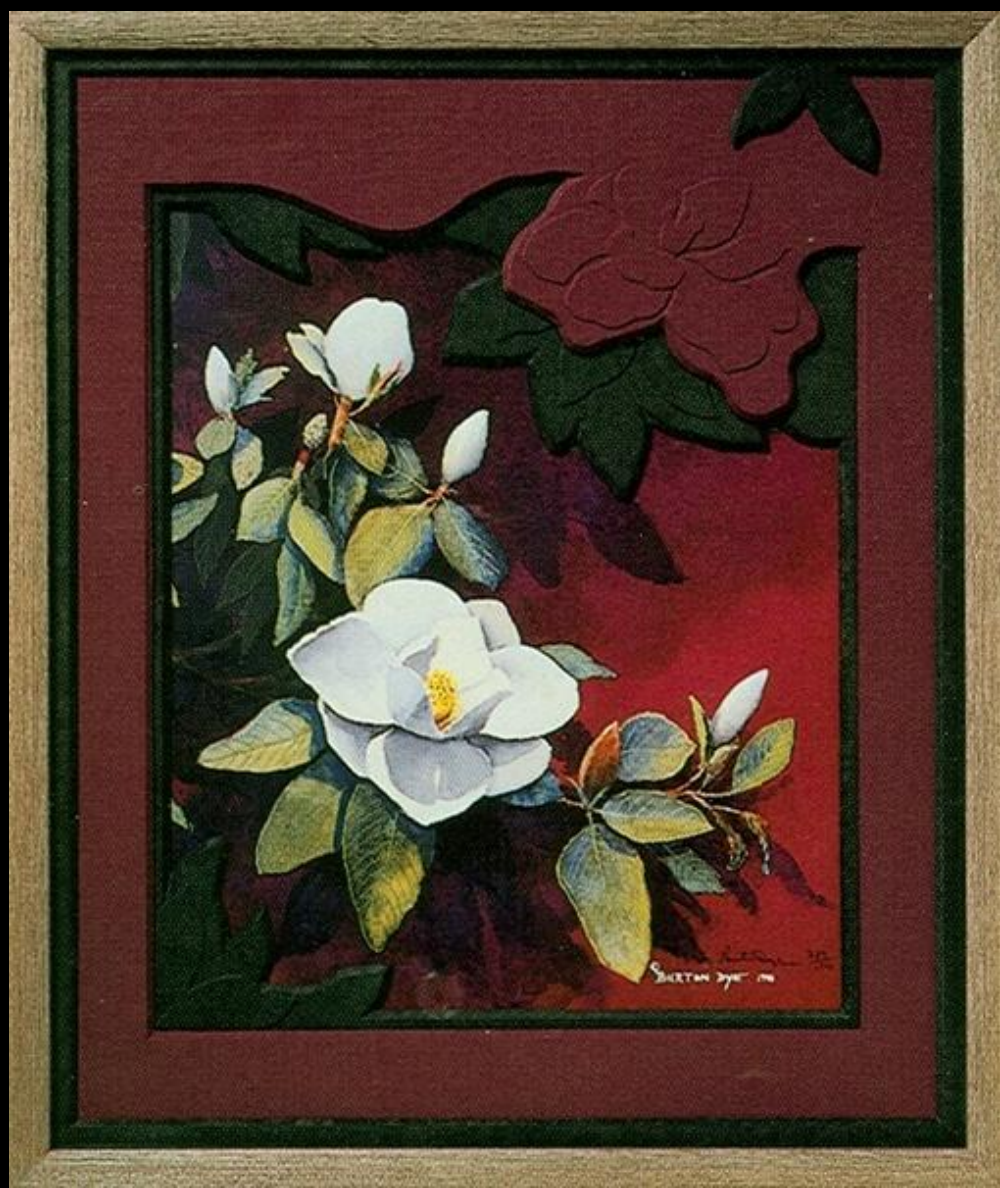
Color can be contrast
and intensity.
Brushed antique ties
to gray in the art.





Color and Shape



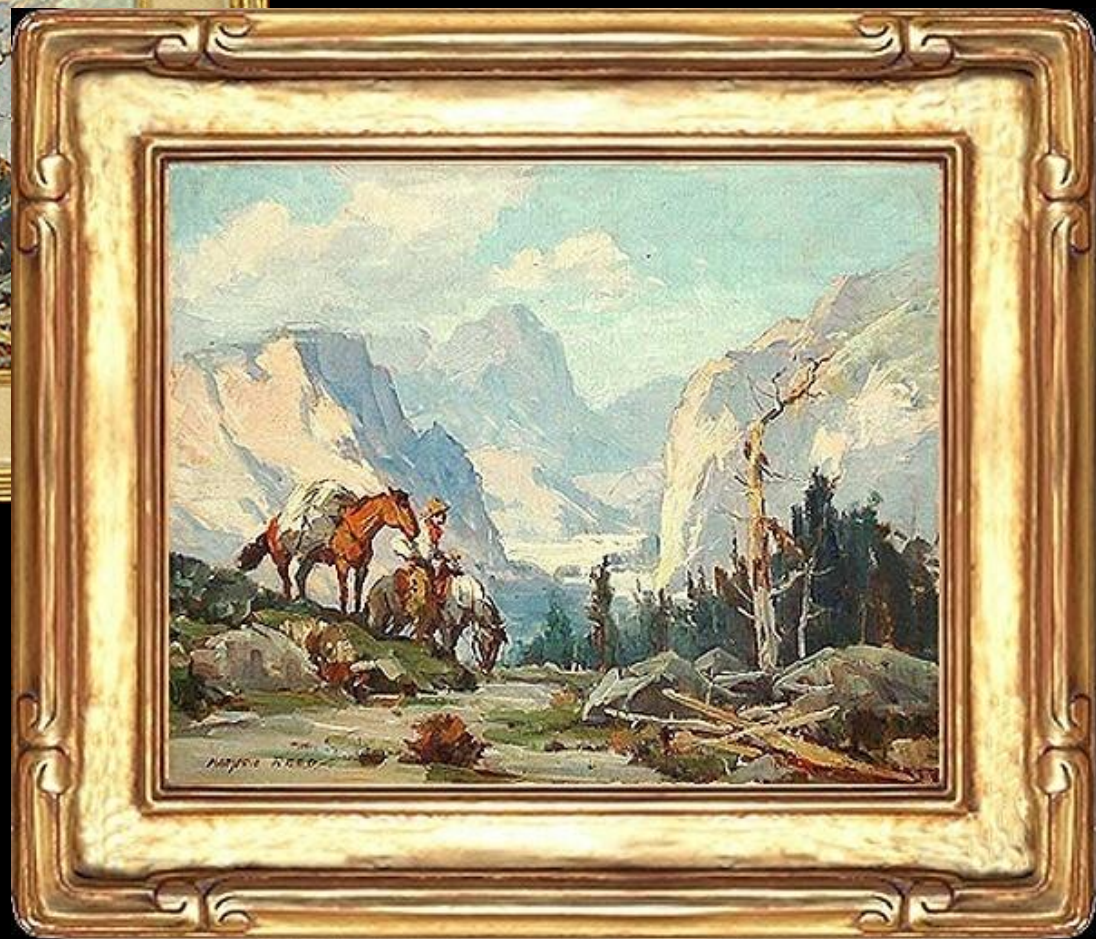
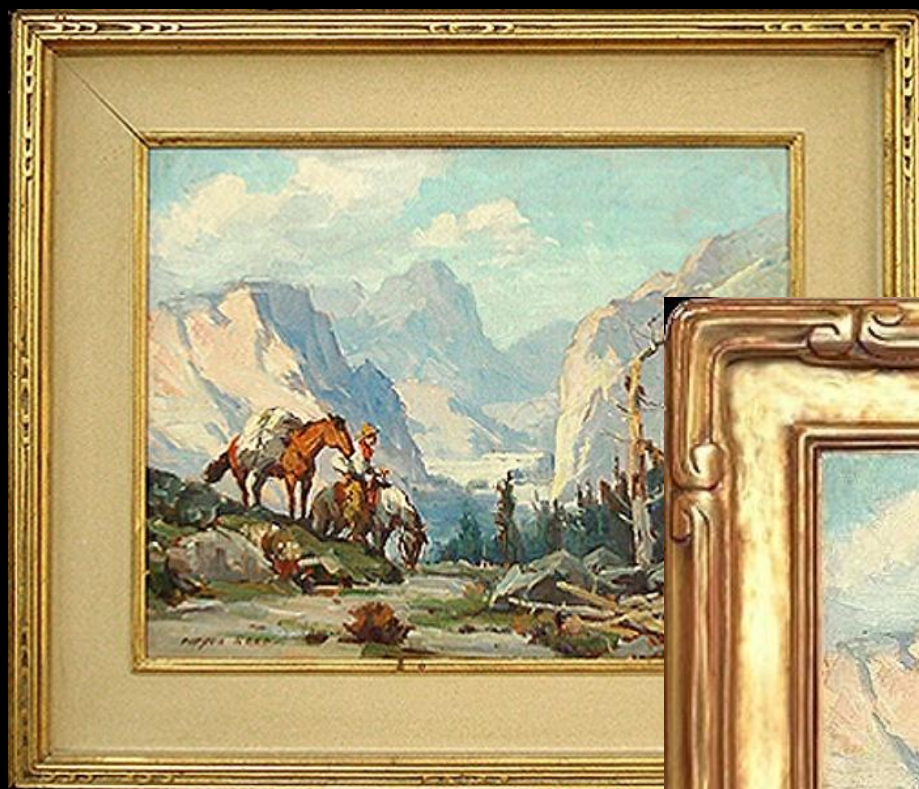


Color and Style









European

Black = Grief, death, void, nothingness

White = Purity, innocence

Yellow/Orange = Warmth, newness

Pink = Tenderness, poetry

Red = Love, passion, desire, fire

Violet = Meditation, mystery, occult, exotic

Purple = Aristocratic, royal, worldly

Blue = Loyalty, isolation, honesty, sadness

Green/Blue-green = Earth, naturalism, Zen

Brown = Earthiness, solidity, firmness

Asian

Black = Immortality, knowledge, power

Grey = Dullness, indefinite

White = Death, mourning, spirits, ghosts

Yellow = Clarity, reliability, royalty

Orange = Change, spontaneity

Pink = Love

Red = Wedding, luck, happiness, joy, life

Purple = Spiritual healing, strength,

Blue = Healing, calmness, immortality

Blue/Green = Vigor, vitality, longevity,

Green = Calm, healing, health, harmony

Brown = Industriousness, grounded

Science of Color

Physicists tell us about the make-up of color composition and explain how the human eye perceives a given color.

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Psychologists tell us how color affects us physically and emotionally.

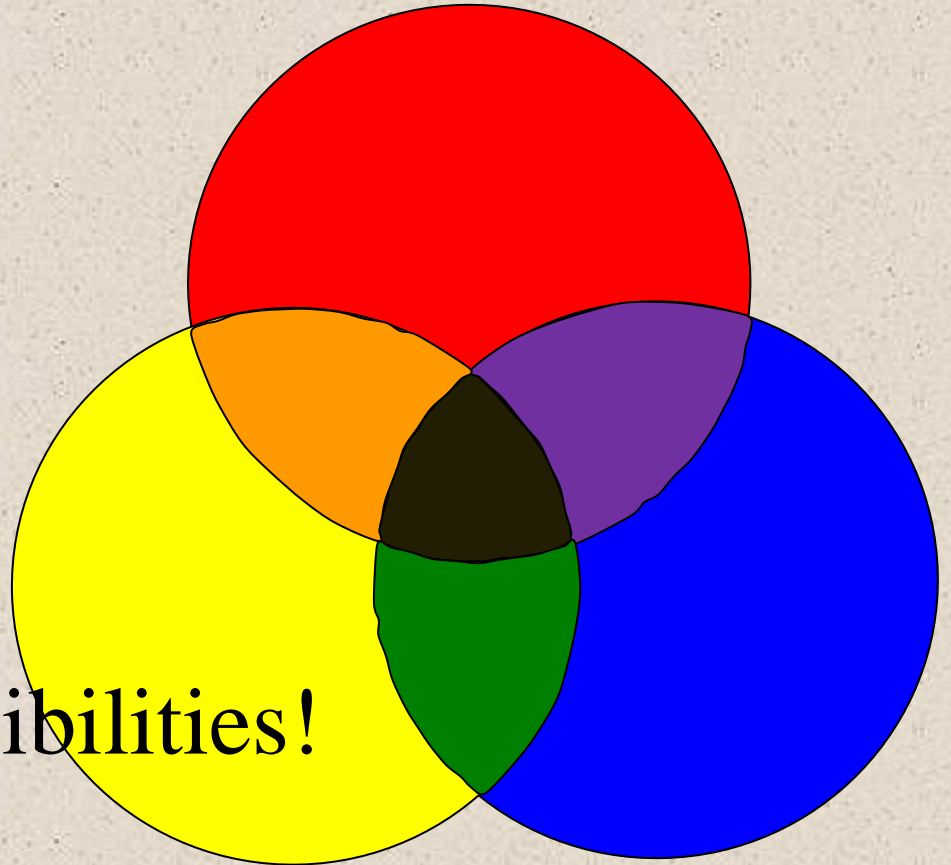
Science of Color

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 the frame designer to assimilate all of this information and sell it to the client as the most dynamic solution possible.

Consider the possibilities!



Additional Resources

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New York: Holt Rinehart Winston, 1984.

Graves, Maitland. ART OF COLOR DESIGN. 1951.

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New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987.

Paschke, Chris A., Designs Ink, <http://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.**

Other Paschke WCAF 2017 classes:

Mastering Mounting: Sensitive Items

Monday, 9:00-11:30 am

Design Elements: Shades of Gray

Tuesday, 9:00-11:00 am

Mastering Mounting: Creative Mounting

Lecture = Tuesday, 12:30-3:00 pm

Workshop = Tuesday, 3:30-6:00 pm

Mastering Mounting: Digital trends & Handling 2017

Wednesday, 9 am-12 pm

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