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CLASS: Lecture/PPT (2 hour)
Friday, February 27, 1:00-3:00pm

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
The Principles of Framing Design, 2025

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.shtml>
"The Design Process", PFM, 12 part series, 1994.
"Design And Critique", PFM series, 1997.
"The Essence of Design", PFM, 12 part series, 2000-2001.
Paschke, Chris A., Designs Ink, <https://www.designsinkart.com/library.shtml>
West Coat Art & Frame Expo Paschke Classes - PowerPoint and Outlines as PDFs 2026.
<https://www.designsinkart.com/articles-subject.shtml#WCAF>
Perkins, Greg. GREAT FRAME DESIGNS. New Jersey: PFM Books, 2009.
Wong, Wucius. PRINCIPLES OF COLOR DESIGN. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987.

"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 into 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 = see green star on orange

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

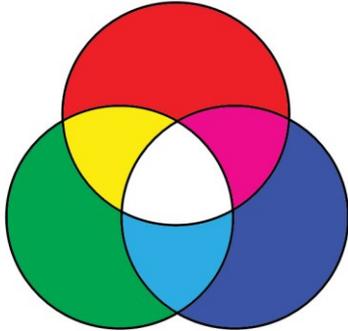
Purple (more blue) = Aristocratic, dignified, worldly, royal

Blue = Loyalty, passive, dreamy, isolation, deep feelings, honesty, sadness, dignified

Blue-Green/Teal = Zen, calming, peaceful, meditative

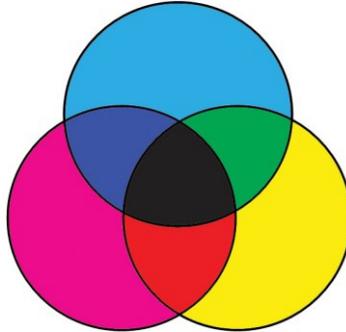
Green = Organic, calming, neither cool nor warm

Brown = Earthiness, solidity, firmness



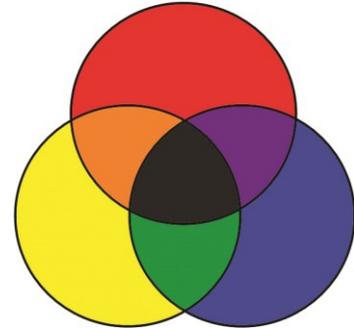
LIGHT COLOR THEORY (ADDITIVE)

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.



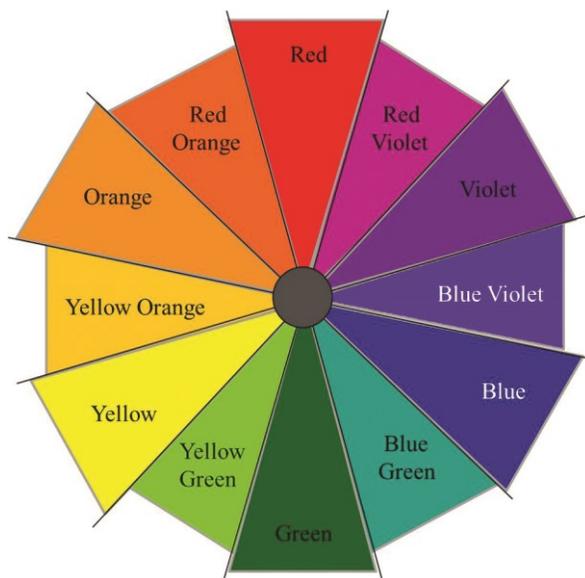
DIGITAL COLOR THEORY (SUBTRACTIVE)

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.



ARTIST PIGMENT COLOR THEORY (SUBTRACTIVE)

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

VIII. Colors of the Year 2026

International colors from Coloro + WGSN

Coloro a color system based on hue, lightness and chroma
WGSN is the World's Global Style Network

WGSN Spring/Summer

Transformative Teal (COTY)

Electric Fuchsia
Blue Aura
Amber Haze
Jelly Mint



WGSN Fall/Winter

Transformative Teal

Wax Paper
Fresh Purple
Cocoa Powder
Green Glow



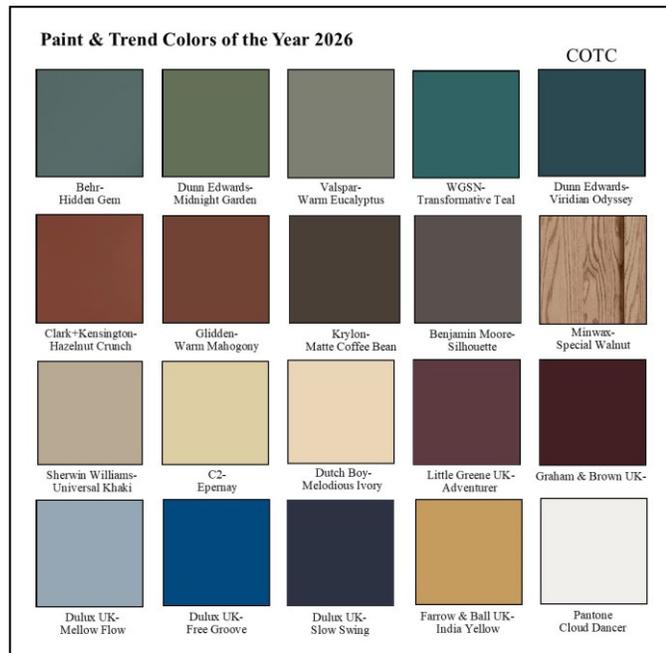
Paint Colors 2026

Behr = *Hidden Gem*
Benjamin Moore = *Silhouette*
C2 = *Epernay*
Clark+Kensington = *Hazelnut Crunch*
Dunn Edwards = *Midnight Garden*
Dutch Boy = *Melodious Ivory*
Glidden (PPG) = *Warm Mahogany*
Krylon = *Matte Coffee Bean*
Minwax = *Special Walnut*
Sherwin Williams/HGTV = *Universal Khaki*
Valspar = *Warm Eucalyptus*

Dulux (UK) = *Trio of Blues*
Farrow & Ball (UK) = *India Yellow*
Graham & Brown (UK) = *Divine Damson*
Little Greene (UK) = *Adventurer*

WGSN = *Transformative Teal*
Pantone = *Cloud Dancer*

Dunn Edwards COTC = *Veridian Odyssey*



Pantone COTY

Cloud Dancer Palettes
Powdered Pastels
Light & Shadow
Atmospheric
Take A Break
Glamor & Gleam
Comfort Zone
Tropic Tonalities

