

Module 3: "Color has Three Properties"

Lecture 6: "Introduction to Color Properties Understanding Value"

The Lecture Contains:

Introduction to Color Properties

- Value
- Hue
- Intensity

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Introduction to Color Properties: Understanding Value, Hue and Intensity

Color is visually perceived. Based on color's properties human being reacts and experiences various conditions. Hence, it is important to examine properties of color pigments. In art and design color is applied based on its value, hue and intensity. Because while perceiving anything that we see would have these qualities. Color value is seen in comparison to another color.

Color has three properties -

1. Value
2. Hue and
3. Intensity

Color Value



Plate1. A



1. B Conversion in Color Value (in gray cells)

(Plate A&B photo by the author)



Plate2. A



2.B Conversion in Color Value

(Plate 2 A, B & Plate 3 A&B by the author)



Plate3. A



Plate3. B.

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Human eyes experience various gradations of colors. The relative lightness or darkness of color is called color value. Understanding color value is an important knowledge for designers and artists. From ancient period throughout the world we have used such knowledge to create illusion. Ajanta murals have beautifully applied the same technique of color contrast to create color dimensions. It is an important tool for the designer/artists to create spatial relationship. In nature there is no line. Contrast of color creates line. Value contrast separates the object creating demarcation between two, while the tonal variation or gradation suggests the curvature to suggest volume. Therefore if intentionally or unintentionally the color values merge with each other they tend to lose the volume and appear flat (plate1.B).

The above pictures (plate 1 A&B and plate 2 A&B) are shown with their color values. Color value helps us to realize volume. We have more number of 'rods' compare to 'cones'. Rods help us to identify objects in dark while we cannot recognize the color. 'Cones' help us to recognize colors. Based on the color intensity of the color in contrast to other color some areas appear nearer. The Butterfly (plate1A) appears quite colorful; however its color merges with the background when converted in color value (gray cell). In the Plate3 A the blue color is seen against black strip; in this case the blue color appearing closer because of its contrast against black color strip. On the other hand in Plate3 B the same blue strip is seen against a bluish-gray strip where the blue tends to recede back. Therefore the lightness or darkness of color carried higher or lower value.

(Ref. <http://char.txa.cornell.edu/language/element/color/color.htm> ; May 29, 2012)

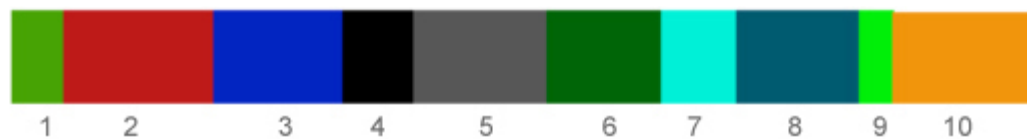


Plate4. A. Color Strip

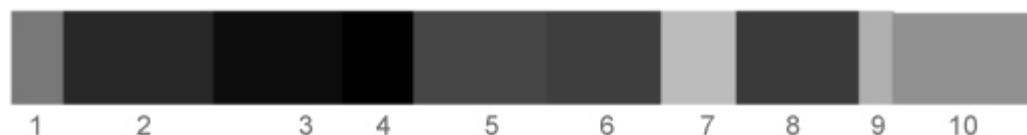


Plate4. B. Color Strip in Gray Cell (color value)
(Plate 4 A&B by the author)

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Plate 3 A & B are reflecting the colors in gray cell. Color 3-4 strips in term of color appears recognizable however when check through color value, both the strips appears almost same. Therefore, understanding color value of each hue compare to other hues is necessary for making correct decision in the color palette of a product.

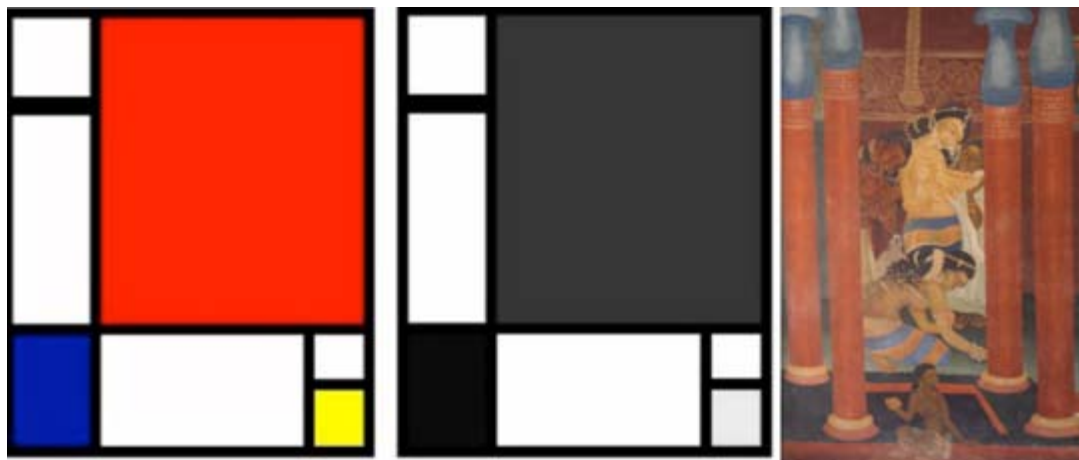


Plate5. A Piet Mondrian

Plate5. B Ajanta Fresco

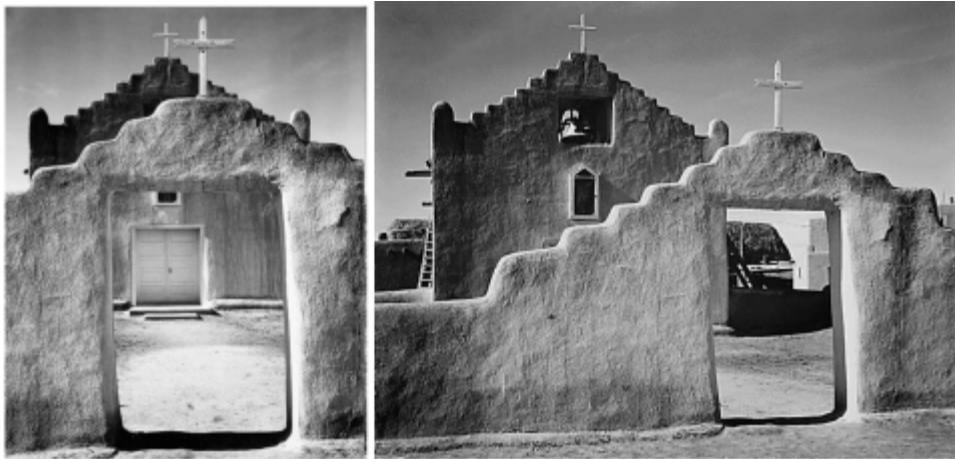
(Ref. Plate5A. <http://www.google.co.in/search?q=piet+mondrian+paintings&hl=en&prmd=imvns0&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=RVHET9fIDo-JrAfs6zICQ&ved=0CHIQsAQ&biw=1350&bih=585> ; May 29, 2012 ; Plate5 B: Copy of the of the Ajanta Fresco at Nandan, Kala-Bhavana, Santiniketan, photo by the author)

The blue has greater color value compare to red and yellow. Thus in term of color value the layers of color appears (foreground) from blue, black, red, yellow and white. In above paintings, Piet Mondrian (plate4 A) exhibits the use of color value that helps to understand the dimension of colors in comparison to other colors with the help of 'pure color'. On the otherhand the Ajanta murals (plate5 B) are unique examples of creating color dimension in relatively flat color scheme as early as 3rd-4th C AD to create depth of field. The foreground brown color appears nearer because of the dark color strip. The dark color strip pushes the figures back. The four vertical columns on the dark horizontal strip holds the foreground in front of the figures.

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Plate6 A&B Ansel Adams (1904-1984), *Church, Taos Pueblo* (1942)

(Source: [http://www.google.co.in/search?](http://www.google.co.in/search?hl=en&pg=ansel+adams&cp=4&gs_id=3l&xhr=t&q=ansel+adams&bav=on.2.or.r_gc.r_pw.r_qf.cf.osb&biw=1350&bih=585&um=1&ie=UTF-8&tbm=isch&source=og&sa=N&tab=wi&ei=YrvET9TPO8fhrAeWiOjYCO)

[hl=en&pg=ansel+adams&cp=4&gs_id=3l&xhr=t&q=ansel+adams&bav=on.2.or.r_gc.r_pw.r_qf.cf.osb&biw=1350&bih=585&um=1&ie=UTF-8&tbm=isch&source=og&sa=N&tab=wi&ei=YrvET9TPO8fhrAeWiOjYCO](http://www.google.co.in/search?hl=en&pg=ansel+adams&cp=4&gs_id=3l&xhr=t&q=ansel+adams&bav=on.2.or.r_gc.r_pw.r_qf.cf.osb&biw=1350&bih=585&um=1&ie=UTF-8&tbm=isch&source=og&sa=N&tab=wi&ei=YrvET9TPO8fhrAeWiOjYCO) ; May 29, 2012)

Similarly Ansel Adams's black and white photograph (plate 6) produces excellent depth of field in term of color values. The horizontal and vertical planes stand apart with clarity due to the contrast and intensity of the hues.



Plate7.A Poster



Plate7 B. Color Hues

(Source: Plate7 A <http://char.txa.cornell.edu/language/element/color/color.htm> ; May 29, 2012)