

COLOR TERMINOLOGY AND MOVEMENT

Some ways in which color can move or change:

Light-Dark Contrast - Value:

There is only one maximum black and one maximum white, but there are an infinite number of grays between them. As spiritual entities, we can't directly perceive absolute Light or absolute Darkness, but all the values in between are transformed into the world of color in which we live. The "gray scale" is used to describe *value*, or how light or dark something is. This scale is achromatic—no color. But all colors also have a value. It is important to note how white weakens the luminosity of colors around it, making them appear relatively darker, while black causes them to appear lighter. (See Simultaneous Contrast below.) Therefore, to create luminosity, we need darkness.

Change in Hue:

Perhaps the most obvious way color can change is by changing to a completely different color. Hue usually refers to a pure undiluted color or the dominant color. For example, color can change to a lighter hue (as you go around the color wheel) as it gets closer to the light (e.g., orange to yellow, or blue to turquoise) and to a darker hue as it gets further away (e.g., orange to red, or blue to indigo or violet).

Change in Temperature:

Colors can be generally classified as warm (yellow, orange, reds) and cool (turquoise, blues, violet). Green is more neutral. But all colors have some degree of warmth, since they all have some amount of darkness (warmth). Any specific hue can also have relatively warmer or cooler aspects, e.g., vermilion is a warm red (more yellow), whereas carmine is a cooler red (more blue); sap green is a warm green and viridian green is a cool green; golden yellow is a warm yellow and lemon yellow is a cool yellow. We can create a wonderfully versatile pallet using "split primaries" consisting of a warm and cool version of red, yellow and blue, to mix both pure and toned colors – intentionally!

Change in Tint:

A tint is a color mixed with varying amounts of white. It makes a color lighter without changing its hue. By painting with transparent watercolor on white paper, we are automatically working with various tints of our colors when using washes.

Change in Tone:

A tone is a color mixed with gray. Tones can also be achieved by mixing in some of the complementary color, since complements make gray when mixed together. Nature is full of beautiful tones. It is the tones in our painting that allow the brighter, purer colors to become luminous.

Change in Shade:

A shade is a color mixed with black. In veil painting, we usually work with a range of tones created from the colors we are using to deepen the darkness, rather than actually adding black (although you can), but it's good to know the terms.

Change in Intensity:

A pure or saturated color has maximum intensity—no dilution, no white or black added. If gray or the complement is added to the color, it becomes "toned down" and therefore less intense. On the scale from pure color or hue to gray, we go from *brighter to duller* in intensity.

Complementary Colors:

Colors are considered complementary when their pigments mixed together form a neutral gray-black or their light mixed together yields white. They are diametrically opposite to each other on a color wheel, inciting each other to maximum vividness when adjacent and annihilating each other to gray-black when mixed. Yellow, red and blue are always present in some combination when colors are complementary.

Simultaneous Contrast:

The way a color looks to us is influenced by the colors surrounding it. Simultaneous contrast is perceived in the eye and results from the fact that the eye always calls up the complement to any color it sees, generating it within itself if it isn't already present. Goethe claimed that simultaneous contrast gives color its aesthetic utility. A dynamic is set up between colors, as each tends to influence the other toward its own complement.

It is important to realize that movement in color corresponds to movement in the soul. Liane Collot d'Herbois states: "When one sees colour and the variations of colour, one's soul makes the same movements that the colours make. Because what is paint on paper in the physical world is, in the world of the soul, living beings, moving and interacting in an infinite space." (*Light, Darkness and Colour in Painting Therapy* p.51, new edition p.60)