Color Harmony & the Color Wheel

Color is the most emotional and complex of any design element. In a way, colors can increase people feeling, make them hungry, happy or sad. In commercial work can make or break a brand-name. Fortunately, there is a tool that helps to create color harmony schemes, the Color Wheel, a practical and easy to use since 340 years ago.

"Color is the most emotional and complex of any design element"

Ask your friend, what color do you like? And you get an answer in few seconds, ask, Why don’t you like all the existing colors available in the world? And the answer will be, “I never said that” that means, people always are attached to certain color they like, there are no person in this world that don’t like a particular color, we all have a choice of color, at least one. Needless to say, I always been fascinated with colors, I observe how nature use colors to send a message, to separate genders, to warn species over others, and for hundreds of purposes, I believe colors are the right hand of nature.

By: Herman Cerrato
In the Beginning.....
There was darkness, black
dominated the universe
and everything in it.
Then.....
God created three basic colors. called the primary.
And.....

These three colors collided, and split into many others colors called secondary of the primary.
Showering.....
Our beautiful universe with millions of colors of unimaginable magnitude.
Our planet became amazingly colorful place

Elevating our creativity!!
Then.....

Our Imagination Exploded!!

Color Harmony, a history of colors
Experiments led to the theory that red, yellow and blue were the primary colors from which all other colors are derived. It's influential in the color wheels developed in the early 1800's as well as the color wheel currently used today. Add to that the secondary colors of violet, orange and green which result from mixing the primary colors and the color wheel begins to take shape. The tertiary colors yellow-orange, red-orange, red-purple, blue-purple, blue-green and yellow-green complete the color wheel, creating harmonious color schemes.
Others......

Color researchers were intrigued on how color behave and how to make the color wheel a useful tool to select color combinations according the rules of nature. They believe in a system of order to organize combinations, proportion, hierarchy values, perception rhythm and simplicity in tune with selected hue.
Color harmony begins with the use of the color wheel.
Red

"Light red is joy, passion, sensitivity, and love. Pink signifies romance, love, and friendship. It denotes feminine qualities and passiveness. Dark red is associated with vigour, willpower, rage, anger, leadership, courage, and wrath."

Red is associated with energy, war, danger, strength, power, determination as well as passion, desire, and love. It's considered the absolute color, is a very emotionally intense color. It enhances human metabolism, increases respiration rate, and raises blood pressure. Physiologically, red stimulates and energizes the physical body, including the nerves and the circulation of blood, raising blood pressure and heart rate. If you want to draw attention, use red it is often where the eye looks first. Red is the color of energy, it's associated with movement and excitement. Red excites and motivates but in excess it can cause anxiety and tiredness. It also has negative connotations associated with blood, war and violence.

Green

"Green is associated with nature, health and healing, and the environment"

Green is the color of nature. It symbolizes growth, harmony, freshness, and fertility has strong emotional correspondence with safety. Dark green is also commonly associated with money. Has great healing power, it is the most restful color for human eyes; it can improve vision, suggests stability and endurance. Sometimes green denotes lack of experience; for example, a ‘greenhorn’ is a novice. Green, as opposed to red, means safety; it is the color of free passage in road traffic. Use to indicate safety when advertising drugs and medical products. Is directly related to nature, so you can use it to promote ‘green’ products. Dull, darker green is commonly associated with money, financial world, banking, and Wall Street.
Orange

“it’s the only color that can produce a neutral color as brown, when combined with black or white”

Combines the energy of red and the happiness of yellow; it is associated with joy, sunshine, and tropics. Represents enthusiasm, fascination, happiness, creativity, determination, attraction, success, encouragement, and stimulation. To the human eyes, orange is seen as a very hot color, so it gives the sensation of heat. Increases oxygen supply to the brain, produces an invigorating effect, and stimulates mental activity. It is highly accepted among young people. As a citrus color, orange is associated with healthy food and stimulates appetite. Has very high visibility, so you can use it to catch attention and highlight the most important elements of your design. Is effective for promoting food products and toys.

Blue

“Younger people see blue in general as a color relating to maturity and the adult market.”

Ask people their favorite color and a clear majority will say blue. Much of the world is blue (skies, seas). Seeing the color blue actually causes the body to produce chemicals that are calming. Avoid using blue when promoting food and cooking, because blue suppresses appetite. When used together with warm colors like yellow or red, blue can create high-impact, vibrant designs; for example, blue-yellow-red is a perfect color scheme for a superhero. Is linked to consciousness and intellect. Is a masculine color; according to studies, it is highly accepted among males. Dark blue is associated with depth, expertise, and stability; it is a preferred color for corporate America.
Yellow

Is the color of sunshine. It's associated with joy, happiness, intellect, and energy. Produces a warming effect, arouses cheerfulness, stimulates mental activity, and generates muscle energy, is often associated with food.

Bright, pure yellow is an attention getter, that's why taxicabs are painted this color. When overused, yellow may have a disturbing influence; it is known that babies cry more in yellow rooms.

Is seen before other colors when placed against black; this combination is often used to issue a warning. Use yellow to evoke pleasant, cheerful feelings. Is very effective for attracting attention, use it to highlight the important elements of your design.

"Men usually perceive yellow as a ‘kiddish’ color, so it is not recommended to use yellow when selling prestigious, expensive products to men. Nobody will buy a yellow business suit or a yellow Lexus car."

VIOLET

Combines the stability of blue and the energy of red. Is associated with royalty. It symbolizes power, nobility, luxury, and ambition, it conveys wealth and extravagance.

Is associated with wisdom, dignity, independence, creativity, mystery, and magic.

75 percent of children prefer violet or purple to all the other colors.

Physiologically, purple heightens people's sense of beauty and their reaction to more creative ideas. Is often used to denote a high quality or superior product. If you are in a service business, use some violet in your marketing to denote your premium service.

"Is a color that works well with gold, taupe, turquoise, jade green, deep red, magenta and yellow. Combined with orange it creates a unique contemporary look."
Understanding.....
how professional artists and designers create successful masterpieces and commercial work is the key.
They mostly use the color wheel to blend and combine colors harmoniously in their work.
Another.....

Important aspect of colors are the tonality, contrast and values. The latter not only define the color but create an array of hundred of thousand of shades, tones and tints of any particular hue, contributing to expand the creativity of color schemes apply to any particular project.

Tint, colors pass through when combined with white, it soften the hues to an infinite option. Use tint to define farness and softness, stay away from tints to attract or suggest attention to your design. Tint is generally a touch of subtle to the overall project.
In this composite, it shows the hugely different between solid colors and their respective values, demonstrating the incredibly importance of values to define: distance, rhythm, proximity, contrast, balance, and more important restful to the eyes of the viewer.
Instrumentally.....

The color wheel is an important tool for combining harmonious schemes, as a carpenter need a hammer, a designer need colors. The use of the color wheel is not limited to professional designers, homeowners can use it to coordinate color combination in their home decor, children benefit from the color wheel as they have better understanding of colors.
The ColorLink.....
offer a faster and accurate way to find harmonious color schemes. I created the ColorLink in 2012 with the main idea to help students of the arts and anyone with the desire to create harmonious combinations in their project.
I also created schemes posters as the “440 color combinations”, “Hue ColorLink Harmonious color schemes” and “The Coca-Cola Color Visualization” and many other learning color aid to assist in your learning process and creativity.

448 Color Combinations is a perfect reference to select any of the hues and values schemes of all harmonious color schemes, perfectly arranged in groups and values of tint, tone and shade.

Hue ColorLink Harmonious Schemes, is how all the color schemes are arranged in the ColorLink as tetrad, triad, analogous, etc. If you are an art educator this poster help your student to understand how the harmonious color schemes work.

Color Visualization is a way to demonstrate how colors affect our standards of accepting colors as natural the Coca-Cola can had been red for 100 years, but, how would you feel if you see a pink Coca-Cola? Would you drink it or would you think it taste different? Can you picture a man with a pink can? That’s color visualization.
In conclusion.....
What I’ve learned about colors is minimal compared to the immense impact that this element produces to humans, animals, or any living organism out there. The mystery about colors—it’s not resolved, even with powerful thinkers like Newton, Da Vinci, Itten, Munsell, and many more dedicated researchers, still there will be hundreds of years to research and learn more about how colors influence our lives.