

Colour Harmony: The Ideality of Pleasurableness

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Abstract

The search for the essence of colour harmony has a long tradition that, being a quest for aesthetic values, still remains a contemporary question insofar as it addresses the interrelated issues of both beauty and pleasure. Colour harmony has been discussed in terms of two different points of view. As a measurement of aesthetics, the researches of colour harmony are based on the discovery of its systematic rules by identifying the relationship between colours and its aesthetic value in beauty and harmony. The proportional and orderly arrangements of colours and their relations to mathematics are the main concerns of this first approach. As a measurement of emotion, colour harmony is regarded as subject matter of pleasure, subjective feeling which is peculiar to an individual. Relying on the second approach, many studies have been conducted to identify the reasons behind why colour combinations are perceived as beautiful, pleasant, and harmonious. Thus, this paper is a retrospective review of the literature of colour harmony, its theories and principles considering the two approaches. The assumption is that, in either case, colour harmony is grounded in a search for the ideality of pleasurableness.

Keywords: Colour Harmony, Complementary Colours, Colour Order Systems, Pleasantness, Aesthetics