

Visual perception – painting

[Art & Culture](#), [Painting](#)



Name: N. Mithun Kumar Vasu Deva Sarma Roll No: 201001072 Course:

Space Time in Arts and Humanities Date: 17-11-2012 Topic: Perception of

Visual Arts (Painting) ABSTRACT The task essentially is to consider what the art of painting essentially is and how it is perceived. One of the most curious questions which first arises is ? What is an Art?? Art: Art is a diverse range of human activities and the products of those activities. The word art can refer to several things: a study of creative skill, a process of using the creative skill, a product of the creative skill, or the audience's experience with the creative skill.

Art is something that stimulates an individual's thoughts, emotions, beliefs, or ideas through the senses. Many definitions of art have been proposed by philosophers and others who have characterized art in terms of mimesis, expression, communication of emotion, or other values. Though art's definition is disputed and has changed over time, general descriptions mention an idea of human agency and creation through imaginative or technical skill. In medieval philosophy, John Chrysostom held that " the name of art should be applied to those only which contribute towards and produce necessities and mainstays of life.

The nature of art has been described by philosopher Richard Wollheim as " one of the most elusive of the traditional problems of human culture". Art as mimesis has deep roots in the philosophy of Aristotle. The nature of art, and related concepts such as creativity and interpretation, are explored in a branch of philosophy known as aesthetics. Art, at its simplest, is a form of communication. As most forms of communication have an intent or goal

directed toward another individual, this is a motivated purpose. Illustrative arts, such as scientific illustration, are a form of art as communication.

Emotions, moods and feelings are also communicated through art. Here, we consider painting, a visual art and explain its perception. Here arises the question, what are ? Visual arts?? Visual Arts: ? Visual Arts? is a term used for a broad category of different types of art. Visual arts include all forms of arts creative and have expressive production in material. In simple words, ? Visual arts? are art forms that create works that are primarily visual in nature, such as Ceramics, Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Printmaking, Design, Crafts, Photography, Video, Filmmaking and Architecture.

These definitions should not be taken too strictly as many artistic disciplines (performing arts, conceptual art, textile arts) involve aspects of the visual arts as well as arts of other types. The current usage of the term " visual arts" includes fine art as well as the applied, decorative arts and crafts. Visual arts also include applied arts. The perception of these visual arts is a lot different from Visual Perception. So, we need to know the difference between the perception of visual art and visual perception of art. For this purpose, we explain what visual perception is and then show the differences between the two of them.

VISUAL PERCEPTION: Visual perception is a function of our eyes and brain. We see images as a whole rather than in parts. However, images can be broken down into their visual elements: line, shape, texture, and color. Visual perception is the ability to interpret the surrounding environment by processing information that is contained in visible light. These elements are to images as grammar is to language. Together they allow our eyes to see

images and our brain to recognize them. For most of the people, vision appears simple and effortless as it seems like a trivial operation.

Our brain, however, has to process, combine and separate shapes, colors, shadows, object relations, and much more within fractions of a second in order to build a representation from its sensory input. Vision perception is ambiguous. For example, to see a painting, a piece of sculpture or a building takes a few moments. Other art objects may take a little more time. Most of the people appreciate (comment on) the object within moments of seeing them. But it is the product of an extraordinarily developed and complicated visual system. Visual perception helps a lot in the aesthetic experience of art.

Visual perception of art vs Perception of Visual Art: The main difference between the visual perception of art and perception of visual arts is that in the visual perception of an art we explain how our vision sees an art and sends it whereas in the perception of visual arts we explain how our vision sees the art and the reason why our vision sees the art in such a manner. One important difference between the perception of visual arts and visual perception is the task of the observer. In everyday perception, the task of the observer is well defined, often by the action that the perception supports.

As we watch the incoming traffic before crossing the road, our perception of the traffic is oriented to the extraction of useful information such as the recognition of a car and the estimation of its speed, while at the same time disregarding irrelevant information such as the make or color of the car. Once the task is established, one can define the decisions necessary to

perform it, and if one so wishes, the efficiency of the observer in this task can be computed by normalizing the performance to that of the ideal observer for this task.

It is more difficult to identify an appropriate task in the perception of visual arts. Without specifying a task, the question of how good one is at looking at a painting becomes irrelevant, and the notion of risk associated to an alleged wrong perception becomes meaningless. One way to identify a plausible task in visual arts perception is to return to the challenges of everyday perception. PAINTING Painting taken literally is the practice of applying pigment suspended in a carrier (or medium) and a binding agent (a glue) to a surface (support) such as paper, canvas or a wall.

However, when used in an artistic sense it means the use of this activity in combination with drawing, composition and, or, other aesthetic considerations in order to manifest the expressive and conceptual intention of the practitioner. Painting is also used to express spiritual motifs and ideas; sites of this kind of painting range from artwork depicting mythological figures on pottery to The Sistine Chapel to the human body itself. Painting is the practice of applying paint, pigment, color or other medium to a surface (support base).

The medium is commonly applied to the base with a brush but other implements, such as knives, sponges, and airbrushes, can be used. In art, the term painting describes both the act and the result of the action. However, painting is also used outside of art as a common trade among craftsmen and builders. Paintings may have for their support such surfaces as walls, paper, canvas, wood, glass, lacquer, clay, leaf, copper or concrete,

and may incorporate multiple other materials including sand, clay, paper, gold leaf as well as objects.

Painting is a mode of creative expression, and the forms are numerous. Drawing, composition or abstraction and other aesthetics may serve to manifest the expressive and conceptual intention of the practitioner. Paintings can be naturalistic and representational (as in a still life or landscape painting), photographic, abstract, be loaded with narrative content, symbolism, emotion or be political in nature. Painting only can "describe" everything which can be seen and suggest every emotion which can be felt.

Painting is not just mere impression of our thoughts but is composed of a number of elements like intensity, form, figure, filial, color and tone, texture, garnet, line, conduit, deformation, organix, rhythm and non-traditional elements. Some of the important elements are discussed below. ELEMENTS AND MEDIA Modern artists have extended the practice of painting considerably to include, for example, collage, which began with Cubism and is not painting in the strict sense. Some modern painters incorporate different materials such as sand, cement, straw or wood for their texture.

Examples of this are the works of Jean Dubuffet and Anselm Kiefer. There is a growing community of artists who use computers to paint color onto a digital canvas using programs such as Adobe Photoshop, Corel Painter, and many others. These images can be printed onto traditional canvas if required.

ELEMENTS INTENSITY: What enables painting is the perception and representation of intensity. Every point in space has different intensity, which can be represented in painting by black and white and all the gray

shades between. In practice, painters can articulate shapes by juxtaposing surfaces of different intensity; by using just color (of the same intensity) one can only represent symbolic shapes. Thus, the basic means of painting are distinct from ideological means, such as geometrical figures, various points of view and organization (perspective), and symbols. For example, a painter perceives that a particular white wall has different intensity at each point, due to shades and reflections from nearby objects, but ideally, a white wall is still a white wall in pitch darkness.

In technical drawing, thickness of line is also ideal, demarcating ideal outlines of an object within a perceptual frame different from the one used by painters. Color and tone: Color and tone are the essence of painting as pitch and rhythm are of music. Color is highly subjective, but has observable psychological effects, although these can differ from one culture to the next. Black is associated with mourning in the West, but in the East, white is. Some painters, theoreticians, writers and scientists, including Goethe, Kandinsky, and Newton, have written their own color theory.

Moreover the use of language is only a generalization for a color equivalent. The word "red", for example, can cover a wide range of variations on the pure red of the visible spectrum of light. There is not a formalized register of different colors in the way that there is agreement on different notes in music, such as C or C[?] in music. For a painter, color is not simply divided into basic and derived (complementary or mixed) colors (like red, blue, green, brown, etc.). Painters deal practically with pigments, so "blue" for a painter can be any of the blues: phthalocyan, Paris blue, indigo, cobalt, ultramarine, and so on.

Psychological, symbolical meanings of color are not strictly speaking means of painting. Colors only add to the potential, derived context of meanings, and because of this the perception of a painting is highly subjective. The analogy with music is quite clear—sound in music (like "C") is analogous to light in painting, "shades" to dynamics, and coloration is to painting as specific timbre of musical instruments to music—though these do not necessarily form a melody, but can add different contexts to it. Tone describes how light or dark a color is. If the painting is going to be successful, you must get the tones right.

In describing any form in particular light conditions tone is critical. You'll be amazed how dark those darks can be. Get the tone of a color right and it will make the form you want to depict. It will stay where you put it and add to the solidity and realism of the picture. Get the tone wrong, and it will jar the eye. A blazing highlight in a shadowy eye will jump out of its socket. Remember that all colors in your subject are affected by the same light. For example, if one side of a blonde head is in deep shadow, like the subjects suit, the hair is going to be very dark blonde.

If you paint those bright tones from the lit side of the head in the shadows it will be just plain wrong. This may sound obvious, but people do it all the time. Your brain knows that a dark blue suit is very dark in the shadow areas, but it also might tell you it knows that skin is still the same value in the darks. But, it is not and your eye sees the difference. Colors have tones (how light and dark) and temperature (how intense). Warm colors tend to advance. Cool colors tend to recede. The interplay between warm and cool not only creates believable form and space but is a pleasure to look at – a

painting that is all cold or all blazingly hot tends not to work so well. EDGES: Generally our eye will go straight to the crispest edge in a painting creating a focal point. This is most often a point of high contrast where a light and dark meet. Make sure that edge is where you want it, up around the head. For example, in a human face, the dark of hair against the edge of a lit cheek creates a focal point. The artist can lead a viewer around a picture by the use of different types of edge.

If it's all soft or all crisp there is no focal point and no one knows what they are supposed to be looking at! BACKGROUNDS: The question that arises is how much detail should be in a background? Too much in the background can be overwhelming. Remember, the background should stay back. The subject is primary; the other stuff while it may have emotional or historic significance is secondary. Control of edges here really helps. Simple color and shadow shapes can work well. This makes the subject the sole rendered object and focal point in the painting. Rhythm: Rhythm is important in painting as well as in music.

If one defines rhythm as "a pause incorporated into a sequence", then there can be rhythm in paintings. These pauses allow creative force to intervene and add new creations—form, melody, coloration. The distribution of form, or any kind of information is of crucial importance in the given work of art and it directly affects the esthetical value of that work. This is because the esthetical value is functionality dependent, i. e. the freedom (of movement) of perception is perceived as beauty. Free flow of energy, in art as well as in other forms of "techne", directly contributes to the esthetical value.

LINE: Line is a continuous marking made by a moving point on the surface. A line is the path made by a pointed instrument, such as a pen, a crayon, or a stick. A line implies action because work needs to be done to make it. Moreover, the impression of movement suggests sequence, direction, or force. In other words, a line can be seen as a distinct series of points. Line is believed to be the most expressive of the visual elements because of several reasons. First, it outlines things and the outlines are the key to their identity.

Most of the time, we recognize objects or images only from their outlines. Second, line is important because it is a primary element in writing and drawing, and because writing as well drawing is universal. Third, unlike texture, shape and form, line is unambiguous. We know exactly when it starts and ends. Finally, line leads our eyes by suggesting direction and movement. Line outlines shapes and can contour areas within those lines. Even though most of the art we see uses line only to form shapes, some artists allow line to call attention for itself in the art piece.

TEXTURE is the surface ? feel? of something. When the brush strokes have been smoothened, a surface is seen as smooth, when left rough, its texture is seen as rough. **COMPOSTION** refers to the ordering of relationship. Artists utilize organizing principles to create forms that inform. Techniques are ways artists go about applying the principles of composition. **BALANCE** refers to the equilibrium of opposing visual forces. **GRADATION** refers to a continuum of changes in the details and regions such as gradual variations in shape, color value and shadowing.

PROPORTION refers to the emphasis achieved by the scaling of sizes of shapes. **VARIETY** refers to the contrasts of details and regions. **UNITY** refers

to the togetherness, despite contrasts, of details and regions to the whole.

MEDIA OIL: Oil painting is the process of painting with pigments that are bound with a medium of drying oil—especially in early modern Europe, linseed oil. Often an oil such as linseed was boiled with a resin such as pine resin or even frankincense; these were called 'varnishes' and were prized for their body and gloss.

Oil paint eventually became the principal medium used for creating artworks as its advantages became widely known. The transition began with Early Netherlandish painting in northern Europe, and by the height of the Renaissance oil painting techniques had almost completely replaced tempera paints in the majority of Europe. **PASTEL:** Pastel is a painting medium in the form of a stick, consisting of pure powdered pigment and a binder. The pigments used in pastels are the same as those used to produce all colored art media, including oil paints; the binder is of a neutral hue and low saturation.

The color effect of pastels is closer to the natural dry pigments than that of any other process. Because the surface of a pastel painting is fragile and easily smudged, its preservation requires protective measures such as framing under glass; it may also be sprayed with a fixative. Nonetheless, when made with permanent pigments and properly cared for, a pastel painting may endure unchanged for centuries. Pastels are not susceptible, as are paintings made with a fluid medium, to the cracking and discoloration that result from changes in the color, opacity, or dimensions of the medium as it dries. **ACRYLIC:**

Acrylic paint is fast drying paint containing pigment suspension in acrylic polymer emulsion. Acrylic paints can be diluted with water, but become water-resistant when dry. Depending on how much the paint is diluted (with water) or modified with acrylic gels, media, or pastes, the finished acrylic painting can resemble a watercolor or an oil painting, or have its own unique characteristics not attainable with other media. The main practical difference between most acrylics and oil paints is the inherent drying time. Oils allow for more time to blend colors and apply even glazes over under-paintings.

This slow drying aspect of oil can be seen as an advantage for certain techniques, but in other regards it impedes the artist trying to work quickly.

WATER COLOR: Watercolor is a painting method in which the paints are made of pigments suspended in a water soluble vehicle. The traditional and most common support for watercolor paintings is paper; other supports include papyrus, bark papers, plastics, vellum or leather, fabric, wood and canvas. In East Asia, watercolor painting with inks is referred to as brush painting or scroll painting.

In Chinese, Korean, and Japanese painting it has been the dominant medium, often in monochrome black or browns. India, Ethiopia and other countries also have long traditions. Fingerpainting with watercolor paints originated in China. **INK:** Ink paintings are done with a liquid that contains pigments and/or dyes and is used to color a surface to produce an image, text, or design. Ink is used for drawing with a pen, brush, or quill. Ink can be a complex medium, composed of solvents, pigments, dyes, resins, lubricants, solubilizers, surfactants, particulate matter, fluorescers, and other materials.

The components of inks serve many purposes; the ink's carrier, colorants, and other additives control flow and thickness of the ink and its appearance when dry. HOT WAX: Encaustic painting, also known as hot wax painting, involves using heated beeswax to which colored pigments are added. The liquid/paste is then applied to a surface—usually prepared wood, though canvas and other materials are often used. The simplest encaustic mixture can be made from adding pigments to beeswax, but there are several other recipes that can be used—some containing other types of waxes, damar resin, linseed oil, or other ingredients.

Pure, powdered pigments can be purchased and used, though some mixtures use oil paints or other forms of pigment. Metal tools and special brushes can be used to shape the paint before it cools, or heated metal tools can be used to manipulate the wax once it has cooled onto the surface. Other materials can be encased or collaged into the surface, or layered, using the encaustic medium to adhere it to the surface. FRESCO: Fresco is any of several related mural painting types, done on plaster on walls or ceilings. The word fresco comes from the Italian word *affresco* [af? fres? ko] which derives from the Latin word for "fresh".

Frescoes were often made during the Renaissance and other early time periods. Buon fresco technique consists of painting in pigment mixed with water on a thin layer of wet, fresh, lime mortar or plaster, for which the Italian word for plaster, *intonaco*, is used. A secco painting, in contrast, is done on dry plaster (*secco* is "dry" in Italian). The pigments require a binding medium, such as egg (tempera), glue or oil to attach the pigment to

the wall. **GOUACHE:** Gouache is a water based paint consisting of pigment and other materials designed to be used in an opaque painting method.

Gouache differs from watercolor in that the particles are larger, the ratio of pigment to water is much higher, and an additional, inert, white pigment such as chalk is also present. This makes gouache heavier and more opaque, with greater reflective qualities. Like all water-media, it is diluted with water.

ENAMEL: Enamels are made by painting a substrate, typically metal, with frit, a type of powdered glass. Minerals called color oxides provide coloration. After firing at a temperature of 750–850 degrees Celsius (1380–1560 degrees Fahrenheit), the result is a fused lamination of glass and metal.

Enamels have traditionally been used for decoration of precious objects, but have also been used for other purposes. In the 18th century, enamel painting enjoyed a vogue in Europe, especially as a medium for portrait miniatures. In the late 20th century, the technique of porcelain enamel on metal has been used as a durable medium for outdoor mural **SPRAY PAINT:** Aerosol paint (also called spray paint) is a type of paint that comes in a sealed pressurized container and is released in a fine spray mist when depressing a valve button. A form of spray painting, aerosol paint leaves a smooth, evenly coated surface.

Standard sized cans are portable, inexpensive and easy to store. Aerosol primer can be applied directly to bare metal and many plastics. Speed, portability and permanence also make aerosol paint a common graffiti medium. In the late 1970s, street graffiti writers' signatures and murals became more elaborate and a unique style developed as a factor of the aerosol medium and the speed required for illicit work. Many now recognize

graffiti and street art as a unique art form and specifically manufactured aerosol paints are made for the graffiti artist. A stencil can be used to protect a surface except the specific shape that is to be ainted. Stencils can be purchased as movable letters, ordered as professionally cut logos or hand-cut by artists. TEMPERA: Tempera, also known as egg tempera, is a permanent, fast-drying painting medium consisting of colored pigment mixed with a water-soluble binder medium (usually a glutinous material such as egg yolk or some other size). Tempera also refers to the paintings done in this medium. Tempera paintings are very long lasting, and examples from the first centuries AD still exist. Egg tempera was a primary method of painting until after 1500 when it was superseded by the invention of oil painting.

A paint which is commonly called tempera (although it is not) consisting of pigment and glue size is commonly used and referred to by some manufacturers in America as poster paint. WATER MISCIBLE OIL PAINT: Water miscible oil paints (also called " water soluble" or " water-mixable") is a modern variety of oil paint which is engineered to be thinned and cleaned up with water, rather than having to use chemicals such as turpentine. It can be mixed and applied using the same techniques as traditional oil-based paint, but while still wet it can be effectively removed from brushes, palettes, and rags with ordinary soap and water.

Its water solubility comes from the use of an oil medium in which one end of the molecule has been altered to bind loosely to water molecules, as in a solution. PAINTING Painting is an art. There are different kinds of painting and you might have seen the canvas in many places. This is used in

many homes and in buildings to decorate the walls. It is not possible for each and every individual to paint a picture and convert it into a beautiful art work. You might be confused by seeing many art works and you may not be able to differentiate the one which is more beautiful than the other.

What does painting do? ? Painting makes things and their qualities much clearer than they are in nature. ? Painting, with its ? All-at-Once-ness? more than any other art, gives us the time to allow our vision to focus and participate. ? We can hold any detail or region or the totality as long as we like and follow any order of details or regions at our own pace

*****-----***** More than any other art, painting is the art that has most to do with revealing the visual appearance of objects and events. The eye is the chief sense organ involved in our participation with the painting.

Painting has existed as an artistic tradition for thousands of years. From the cave painting of Lascaux to the great masterpieces of Da Vinci it has played a historical and aesthetic role in the different ages of existence. Let's see the history of painting. **ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY** Painting has its documented origins in caves and on rock faces. The finest examples, believed by some to be 32,000 years old, are in the Chauvet and Lascaux caves in southern France. In shades of red, brown, yellow and black, the paintings on the walls and ceilings are of bison, cattle, horses and deer.

Paintings of human figures can be found in the tombs of ancient Egypt. In the great temple of Ramses II, Nefertari, his queen, is depicted being led by Isis. [7] The Greeks contributed to painting but much of their work has been lost. One of the best remaining representations is the mosaic of the Battle of

<https://assignbuster.com/visual-perception-painting/>

Issus at Pompeii, which was probably based on a Greek painting. Greek and Roman art contributed to Byzantine art in the 4th century BC, which initiated a tradition in icon painting. The history of painting reaches back in time to artifacts from pre-historic humans, and ps all cultures.

It represents a continuous, though periodically disrupted tradition from Antiquity. Across cultures, and pning continents and millennia, the history of painting is an ongoing river of creativity, which continues into the 21st century. Until the early 20th century it relied primarily on representational, religious and classical motifs, after which time more purely abstract and conceptual approaches gained favor. Developments in Eastern painting historically parallel those in Western painting, in general, a few centuries earlier. African art, Islamic art, Indian art, Chinese art, and Japanese art each had ignificant influence on Western art, and, eventually, vice-versa. Painting was initially serving utilitarian purpose, followed by imperial, private, civic, and religious patronage, Eastern and Western painting later found audiences in the aristocracy and the middle class. TYPES OF PAINTINGS ABSTRACT PAINTING: It is also called as non-representational painting. It might be difficult to appreciate it if we are confused about subject matter. In these paintings, no objects or events are depicted. So, it seems that these painting do not have subject matter. But it is not so.

The subject matter is relating to or affecting the senses rather than the intellect. It is composed of visual qualities – line, color, texture, space, shape, light, shadow, volume, and mass. These are constructed by eliminating reference to everything but color, lines, shapes, and light from their work. Abstract painters liberate us from the habit of always referring these

elements to specific objects and events. REPRESENTATIONAL PAINTING: It furnishes the world of abstractions / sensuous with definite objects and events. The subject matter are the same, the interpretation (content) of every painting is always different.

Representational artwork aims to represent actual objects or subjects from reality. Subcategories under representational art include Realism, Impressionism, Idealism, and Stylization. All of these forms of representationalism represent actual subjects from reality. Although some of these forms are taking steps toward abstraction, they still fall under the category of representation. PORTRAIT PAINTING: A portrait painting is one that embodies the image of a particular person. Over the years, these paintings started to include images of various other animals and lifeless matter.

This particular type of painting is created only when a person orders for it to be created. Sometimes, portrayers create these paintings for their own fun or interest. The importance of these paintings can be felt only by those people who strive to preserve their memories. Most people think that digital photographs and images are the best way to capture a moment. But these people fail to realize an important fact about these photographs. While the initial quality seems to be much better in terms of clarity, these digital photographs seem to fade away with the course of time.

This is not true in case of portrait paintings as these are known to last for a long period of time. This is evident from the fact that lot of these paintings have been found inside Egyptian pyramids. These paintings are mostly used as decorative items. Due to their long life, portrait paintings are used as wall

hangings in many houses. In addition to its decorative uses, these paintings can also be used as gifts to complement your friends and relatives on their special occasions. Believe it or not, these paintings can remind your close ones about your existence whenever they look at it.

Sometimes, people collect art works done by famous portrayers as part of their activities. The fun that you can have when collecting these historical artifacts is comparable to an endless sea. To learn how a painting is perceived, one has to know the effect of different situations on the eye. Some of them are explained here. **BRIGHTNESS:** The physical context of visual objects has a substantial impact on basic perception. Things may appear bigger, smaller, brighter, darker and so on, than they actually are, depending on the nature of the object and the context in which it is placed.

Consider the importance of physical context on perceived brightness as shown in the figure below. In the set of two concentric squares at the left, the two small grey squares are of identical intensity. Yet the one at the top appears much darker than the one at the bottom. The effect is due to the context of the surrounding squares. Consider the image on the right. It comprises of a ring on uniform greyness. It appears lighter on the left-hand part of the display than on the right. The influence of context on the perceived intensity of an object is called brightness contrast, a condition in which a viewer tends to bias the light intensity of an object in an opposite direction from the background intensity. **The Importance of Value & Tone in Painting** For example: If you took a black and white photograph of your painting, the shades of grey would be the different values or tones within the painting. Value is used to create a focal point within a painting or drawing.

The human eye is immediately drawn to a light element against a dark element. This creates the focal point of interest. To create the illusion of depth, gradations of value are also used.

Areas of light and dark give a three-dimensional illusion of form to subject matter. Value is independent of its hue. This is a fundamental element in the impact of visual art whether abstract or representational. The above example is a painting ? en grisaille? – a painting done entirely in values of grey or another neutral greyish color. Grisaille was sometimes used for under paintings or for oil sketches. Rubens was noted for this. Today, many successful artists believe in keeping a narrow value scale – limiting their composition to approximately 4 values. In this case it seems, less is more and helps create a cohesive and harmonious work.

Below is a contrasting example of the use of values. Whistler used ? low-key’ values and Monet used ? high-key’ values and achieved dramatically different results. The Hidden Meaning of Color in Your Art RED: It is the color of assertion, strength, romance, excitement, vitality, physical power, outgoing, ambitious and impulsive. It is a color that flatters the skin and can make an excellent background. Pale pink are warm and peaceful and combine well with greens. The deeper reds create an atmosphere of retrained opulence and power. Red elicits an uncomplicated nature with a zest for life. But, red can also connote danger or threats.

Fire engines, stop signs and traffic lights are a perfect example. ORANGE: It is the Midway between red and orange. It is a cheerful color. It is a flamboyant and lively color. Orange can be assertive, dynamic, and spontaneous and signifies youth and fearlessness. Orange stimulates the

<https://assignbuster.com/visual-perception-painting/>

brain and produces oxygen and mental activity. Dark-orange signifies deceit or distrust, whereas redorange can correspond to aggression, domination and thirst for action. YELLOW: We associate yellow with sunshine and it represents light. It creates a feeling of hope, happiness and wisdom. The color evokes an optimistic sense of wellbeing and natural light.

It is airy, radiant and atmospheric. Yellow gives the feeling that all is okay with the world. An example of this is Luminism, an early generation of landscape painters who explored ways to depict light realistically on canvas by using color to depict a melodramatic or romantic mood. But, yellow is a complicated color. On one hand, it is considered 'light-hearted' and childlike, but actually it is known to make babies cry. Although, light-yellow represents intellect, freshness and joy, dull-yellow is associated with caution, decay, sickness and jealousy. Yellow at times is cowardice. The phrase, 'yellow-bellied-coward' came into use around 1910 which probably derives from yellow's association with both treason and weakness. More than a millennium ago, Judas Iscariot was often portrayed in yellow garb symbolizing his betrayal of Jesus Christ – a cowardly act. In America's pioneer days, yellow dogs were considered worthless and the term 'yellow dog' came to be used to describe anything worthless. Our observation of the yellow of tree leaves as they age and die, as well as the yellowing of old books and papers, led to the association of yellow with old age and illness. But, yellow is very effective at attracting attention – think of a taxi cab.

Yellow is also used as a warning symbol. In football, a 'yellow flag' issues a warning. When placed alongside black, yellow issues a warning. Yellow is also used in traffic lights and signs to advise us of danger. GREEN: It is the color

of harmony, balance and security. Green also has a calming effect and symbolizes hope, peace, gentleness and modesty. It is soothing, refined and civilized with great healing power. Green suggests stability and endurance, hope and growth. It sometimes denotes lack of experience, for example a 'greenhorn' is a novice. Pale greens are particularly restful.

Dark greens remind us of money, banking and Wall Street. However, at times yellow-green is used to portray sickness, discord and jealousy. Remember the phrase, 'green with envy'??? BLUE: It is the color of the sea and sky, having a quality of cool expansiveness and openness. Soft, soothing, compassionate and caring, blue is an introspective color. Blue is often a formal color which represents wisdom and steady character. Many superheroes wear blue! It is considered a masculine color and the choice of corporate America. But, the quiet character and poetic subtlety of blue can also be associated with melancholy and resignation.

Remember Pablo Picasso's infamous 'Blue Period' of art? Picasso's personal trauma found expression in a series of deeply sentimental paintings which comprise his 'Blue Period'. I even dedicated a helpful post to artists who find themselves Feeling Blue... PURPLE: A combination of red and blue, purples are regal and dignified to be used with discretion. Pale shades are restful and serene, but the darker shades make it difficult to focus. Lavenders signify refined things of life, creative, witty and civilized. Purples can be tiring on the eyes and cause a sense of frustration, but it can make an excellent foil for works of art.

Gloom and sad feelings can be portrayed by using purples. BROWN: It is the color of living wood and the earth. Rich, subtle and extraordinarily restful to

look upon, brown creates a feeling of coolness and warmth at the same time. It combines well with rich colors such as purple and gold (popular in the Victorian era). It is a steady, dependable, conservative, conscientious and reliable color. Brown evokes a sense of nostalgia and reminds us of the great works of Rembrandt, Titian and Rubens. Tonalism used rich earth tones and muted colors to create moody landscapes.

Van Gogh's used lots of brown to set a somber and depressed mood in the famous painting *The Potato Eaters*. Think back on Soviet Russia and you might remember the common people usually wore shades of brown. GRAY: This color represents caution and compromise. Many beautiful grays can be made by mixing complimentary colors together. Grays give a sense of peace to the viewer. WHITE: It is a Symbolic of safety, cleanliness and purity. White emanates youth, perfection and innocence. Angels are usually thought of as white. White is simplicity and freshness, but too much can give a clinical feeling.

Doctors, hospitals and sterility are associated the white. Low fat foods and dairy products use white in their packaging. But, in many Eastern cultures, white signifies death, mourning, funerals and unhappiness. Ghosts are white and giving white flowers to the sick is bad luck in many cultures. In painting, use white sparingly. It can make colors chalky and lifeless. BLACK: It is Mysterious and hidden, black can have a morbid feeling. It gives us a feeling of the unknown and negative connotations like, black-hole, blacklist, blackhumor or black-death. In most Western cultures, black is the symbol of grief.

However, black can be dignified and showy with sophistication. Black will also punctuate color schemes that rely on strong contrasting colors. Try mixing your own blacks, rather than using it straight from the tube. CASE STUDY: One of the aspects that make the Mona Lisa such a masterpiece is da Vinci's use of oil as a medium. As the movie *The Mystery of Jon van Eyck* explains, the use of oil as a medium was not widely used for painting until van Eyck refined it by adding transparent colors in several thin glazes upon a white ground, creating a wholly new translucence as if lit from within.

Da Vinci used van Eyck's oil painting technique to bring lifelike qualities to their works. On the first sight of the portrait of Mona Lisa, you will see the physical features of that painting essentially identically to how all other humans see them because the light reflected from the painting and the initial processing by one's neurophysiology are fixed by physical laws. For example, generally shadows tend to form large dark areas in a painting and as such contribute to the low spatial frequency information of the image. If these shadows are placed in specific areas (near the mouth in Mona Lisa and under the brow ridge in the disappearing bust of Voltaire), they can lose their role as shadows and offer an ambiguity to the interpretation and the perception of the painting. The message, meaning and interpretation of art depend on your previous specialized knowledge of painting and related phenomena. That knowledge along with your knowledge of the world, contribute to the context in which the painting is viewed. Choice of lighting: Faint illumination. Near twilight depicted in the Mona Lisa.

Leonardo favored this type of lighting for portraiture. The responsiveness of the Mona Lisa to changes of lighting is unusual, perhaps unique. The Mona

Lisa suffers little under light-adapted vision and gain little under dark adaptation. By contrast, the degree of change in the tonal range resembles that which occurs with a natural object. Painting style and other formal elements Leonardo explains color perspective this way, ". . . through variations in the air we are made aware of the different distances of various buildings. . . therefore make the first building. . . its own color; the next most distant make more blue. . at another distance bluer yet and that which is five time more distant make five times more blue. " This principle is demonstrated in the background of Mona Lisa: the ground and hills directly behind the subject are painted in warm tones of reddish browns and tans. As the landscape recedes the mountains and water become progressively bluer. Leonardo also noted that air is denser closest to the earth, therefore the bases of hills will always appear lighter than the summit; he applies this theory to the hills behind the sitter's shoulders which start out a tan color and become dark brown.

His study of shadow can be related to his works in both compositional arrangement and in sfumato (Sfumato is the famous invention of Da Vinci - light and shade that allow one form to blend in with another leaving something to the imagination. He did this to the corners of Mona Lisa's mouth and eyes which explains why she may look different and different times.) techniques, which are both demonstrated in the Mona Lisa. One method of composition employed by Leonardo involved focus and blur.

In the Mona Lisa Leonardo uses shadow in the lowest areas of the picture plane, at the edges, and background of the landscape to blur detail and draw attention to the detailed focus area of the face. Leonardo also uses shadow

as a primary element in creating sfumato or soft focus, which creates the illusion of volume by allowing light to emerge from the darkness of shadow. The sitter's body in Mona Lisa emerges from the shadows surrounding her from the mid arm area down. Her hands are areas of light that emerge from the blurred shadows of her body and her face emerges from darkly shadowed areas of hair and eiling. Leonardo's study of the shape of shadow contributed to the blurred shadow edges that are a hallmark of the sfumato style. The Mona Lisa's body and face are enclosed within shadow, but no shadow edges ever become evident. In the Mona Lisa the subject comes closer to the front edge of the picture than had been customary hitherto: this smaller distance between sitter and viewer heightens the intensity of the visual impression while the landscape suggests greater spatial depths and atmospheric intensity.

Craggy mountains disappear into the distance against a greenish-blue sky. On the left we can make out a stream and on the right we can see what looks like a dry river-bed, although it is not possible to tell quite how this connects, if at all, with a reservoir higher up. Individual outcrops in the landscape, bereft of vegetation, are reminiscent of similar rock formations in religious pictures that Leonardo had begun not long before.