

[Motion]

As Herb Zettl writes in *Sight, Sound, Motion*, “The expressive function of color is to make us feel a specific way. First, colors can express the essential quality of an object or event. Second, color can add excitement and drama to an event. And, third, color can help establish a mood...Color adds a new dimension to everything. It brings excitement and joy, makes us more aware of the things around us, and helps us organize our environment.” By using color, motion, and shape to compose an abstract photograph, viewers are challenged to respond to the fundamental elements rather than as Zettl writes, “selectively seeing.” Zettl continues, “Colors, or particular color groups, seem to influence our perceptions and emotions in fairly specific ways...You can use color not only as an additional element of an event but also as the event itself...Abstract paintings that have their subject various color areas are examples of using color as the basic *materia* of the event.” In addition to demonstrating aesthetically pleasing images, this essay will inform the viewer about how color, texture, and shape are used to create a visual experience.

From an artistic perspective, my statement is as follows: The intention of this continuing project is to show all the movement that surrounds us. In the day of instant gratification (24/7, etc.), we need to step back, observe, and not get caught up in the moment. This series is from the vantage point of someone who is able to standstill in time and observe the busyness of the surrounding world. As the musician Jack Johnson says, *"Slow down everyone, your moving to fast. Frames can't catch you when your moving like that."*

Image 1: Zettl writes, “The way we perceive a color is greatly influenced by the surrounding colors. Sometimes a color looks brighter than its real brightness value, if it is set off against a dark background. Sometimes the foreground color may even take on another tinge caused by the surrounding background color.” The colors and shapes of this image create an engaging feeling to the viewer. By following the graphic vectors, the viewer is led to the center of the image where he is met with brighter, more intense colors and shapes.

Image 2: By applying the principle of overlapping, the viewer may recognize the blue is in front of the brown background. The texture of the colors creates a tactile feel to the composition. The predominant color in this composition is brown, which invites the viewer in with its warm, sensuous qualities.

Image 3: This image’s greatest quality is the texture created by the movement of the camera. The earth tones make the viewer feel relaxed and calm. Also, because the colors are not overly saturated, the viewer is enticed to participate in the image. The interaction of the blue and green create a 3-dimensional effect. This can be analyzed according to Gestalt’s theory that the whole is greater than the parts.

Image 4: The saturation and horizontal movement give this image a sense of energy and excitement that cannot be ignored. In addition, the combination of movement and color contrast also offers a sense of texture. The aesthetic of this image is similar to that

regularly found in pastel oil art. This could be one more reason that the image appeals to the viewer—because it reminds them of something they know.

Image 5: Green! This image can best be deconstructed by directly quoting *The Lüscher Color Test* (Dr. Max Lüscher, 1969). “Beyond its symbolic associations with nature and growth, green is the color of ‘elastic tension,’ often associated with the desire for improved conditions: the search for better health, a useful life, social reform. It expresses the will in operation, firmness, constancy and persistence. It is a color that a person who possesses – or wishes to possess – high levels of self-esteem responds to strongly. Green is associated with many forms and degrees of ‘control,’ not only in the sense of directed drives, but also as detailed accuracy in checking and verifying facts, as precise and accurate memory, as clarity of presentation, critical analysis and logical consistency – all the way up to abstract formalism.”

Image 6: This pastel reminiscent photo has a high degree of atmospheric feeling that allows the viewer to feel free, as if the sky is the limit. A similar sky appears in the movie “Vanilla Sky” as a metaphor for a life free of pain or difficulty, a dreamlike, ethereal realm where one is cradled in the warm hues of perpetual summer sunset. From an artistic standpoint, this is a very powerful, conceptual image.

Image 7: Zettl writes, “De-saturated pastel colors are the most appropriate to express softness.” The pastel colors in this image create a stable background for the organic shapes of the white graphic vectors to roam. The viewer receives a sense of engaging

motion and stability at the same time. Though the vectors support movement, they are held under control by the stable background. This is how the composition controls its energy.

Image 8: This was the 4th of July spectacular. Again, Dr. Lüscher says it best.

“Physiologically, red makes blood pressure, pulse and respirations rates go up – it’s an energy-expending color. Red’s associations are with vitality, activity, desire, appetite and craving. Symbolically, red is blood, conquest, masculinity, the flame of the human spirit. It is the impulse towards active doing, towards sport, struggle, competition, eroticism and enterprising productivity.” These are all the emotions that the viewer is to feel in response to this image.

Image 9: Though there is motion in this image, it is minor. The predominant visual element is the brownness to the photo. Zettl writes, “A dark, warm brown or a neutral off-white seems to express the objective, unbiased judicial activity in a courtroom.”

Though this image did not take place in a courtroom, it does maintain the objectiveness that Zettl writes about.

Image 10: This image communicates a sense of confusion. Under normal circumstances the colors in this composition would evoke excitement from the saturation and warmth. But the confusing aesthetic of this image is counter-conducive to our pre-conceived expectations of these colors. In addition, the multidirectional movement of the camera intensifies the confusion of the image.

Image 11: This image is of “The Dead”. Very fitting. It can be symbolic of the drug-induced jams that they are well known for. The lights in this image are very saturated, almost neon looking, which lead to the associations of concert lighting that one would make upon viewing this image. The motion compliments the image and subject because “The Dead” are a very free-spirited band--they do not stick to the rules. There is a lot of negative space that helps the viewer focus on the subject. The lines are very free forming.

Image 12: Another pastel photo. It is very interesting to observe the yellow vector line and the energy it creates on the stable background. Dr. Lüscher writes, “Where red stimulates, yellow suggests. It can elevate body rates as red does, but its effect is less stable. Yellow is primarily the color of happiness, cheerfulness, expansiveness, lack of inhibition. It is the welcome warmth of the sun and the glow of a spiritual halo. While calming and relaxing, the color does suggest a desire for change, that things are never quite at rest – people who favor yellow may be very productive, but that productivity often occurs in fits and starts.” This is exactly the feeling the viewer gets from the non-dominant visual element in this image.

Image 13: This is a portrait of my roommate Heather. There is a very peaceful aesthetic to this image. As Zettl writes, “A scene bathed in warm colors can communicate a glowing feeling of affection and compassion.” Who doesn’t want those feelings conveyed in a photo of themselves? The earth tone qualities to this photograph also

convey a feeling of being organically content.

Image 14: In this image of the barn at my house, the warm colors of the green tree move forward while the cool colors of the sky move backward. It is interesting to note how the movement by the green on the left seems to be moving downward, while the movement on the right bottom seems to be moving upward. This is a direct example of how we perceive movement and color in collaboration.

Image 15: The dark masking of this image creates a small frame for the brighter portion to be exhibited. The aesthetic is that of water pouring down a window, though no water or window were involved! To some, running water evokes a feeling of relaxation and contentment. This image definitely maintains its personality and demands the viewer to consider the displayed atmosphere.

Image 16: This aesthetically energetic image illustrates the intensity of the concert-attending crowd by contrasting the red hues with a black background. A black background emphasizes and enforces the characteristics of the colors it surrounds. The forms in this photo are recognizable as people, almost looking as if they were on fire. The liveliness transfers from the image to the viewer, energizing him to become active in the image. The motion in this image suggests that the crowd is influenced by the music and amplifying the power of the music. Always a good thing to see in a crowd.