

Color speaks volumes, conveys emotions and inspires

The Magnificent Speechless Language

by Cindy Gapter, CMG

Imagine you're in space. Drink in the blackness and the countless stars with their blue, red and yellow tints. See the nebulae swirling, each color a specific ionized gas. As you move towards planet Earth, colors collide in the northern lights. Moving even closer, blue oceans and white clouds appear. Night is falling and the skies transform from blues to reds, oranges, yellows and pinks and then to the deepest purples. How do you describe this without color?

The elements of our universe are filled with color. Colors tell us when to rise and when to fall to sleep, when to go outdoors, and when to seek shelter. Color has helped answer questions about what might live on planets we have yet to visit and whether these planets might be inhabitable by the human race.

"Plato, Newton, Da Vinci, Goethe, Einstein: All these great minds and many more grappled with the profound complexity of color. They sought to understand it, creating systems to explain its mysterious workings," ac-

ording to Ekstut and Eckstut in *The Secret Language of Color*.

Throughout history some of these thinkers have fared better than others, when trying to explain and understand color. From the vantage point of our current scientific knowledge, many of their attempts now seem funny,

the tears in our eyes. The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosopher Goethe tried to impose order on color's chaos by arranging hues into three groups: powerful, gentle/soft, and radiant/splendid. Although we've come a long way in our understanding of color, much remains a mystery.

We all have stories about how a given color evoked a response in us that was almost automatic without our conscious thought creating that response. Color makes our selections almost easy. We purchase certain items because of their color or packaging. In the entertainment industry, certain colors in clothing, backgrounds, props and sets are used to create an almost imperceptible response that happens more out of emotion than conscious thought or language.

Color motivates, excites, draws attention and provides emphasis. It is one element of the coordinated effort to effectively communicate in design. Color has long been thought to be only for embellishment or decoration. But if used intelligently, color can help give visual order to

complex information. It can attract, enlighten and engage, and thus, add value without speaking a single word.



bizarre or downright fantastic. In the fifth century BC, Plato drew a causal relationship between color vision and

Color illuminates everything in the universe. How many colors can humans see? A whopping 10 million! However, more color rarely means more value. Just because there are so many colors cheaply and readily available doesn't mean that you should use "every crayon in the box" when designing, because the brain can only handle so many thoughts or concepts at a time. Think of what you do when selecting colors for your home, paint, flooring, window coverings. We more than likely select those colors that elicit an emotion or response without a word. Colors that we are drawn to and almost magically attracted to just by the response we unwittingly have....a response without words but rather the emotion created just by that color!

Color fuels our curiosity to discover and emotionally connect us to objects, places, or times. Highly theorized for the ability to deliver context and value, fundamentally, it is our individual interpretation that makes color meaningful. Color is human. Color gives meaning. Color creates curiosity. **V**



Cindy Gapter, CMG, MBA, is Sales Executive/Business Development of Colwell, Inc., a global manufacturer of color merchandising

aids for the paint and window fashions industry. With more than 30 years' experience, Gapter has helped compa-

nies find different ways of reaching their market with strategic merchandising and design, helping customers to more easily select color with confidence.

CLOSER LOOK



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The previous article was recently published in the September/October 2015 issue of Window Fashion Vision, featuring Color Trends. This publication goes to over 25,000 decorators and designers and can also be viewed at www.wf-vision.com

We hope that you will enjoy our 2016 calendar, which showcase Colwell's ability to deposit color in unique designs and shapes. Here's to "Looking Forward" and a great next year!