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Three keywords: Reduction, Colour and Pattern

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BA course title: Surface pattern design

Word count: 2558

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Reduction, Pattern and Colour.

3 keywords:

1. Reduction
2. Pattern
3. Colour

This essay will focus on three keywords that are highly influential on my subject. During this essay, the three keywords will be explored by referencing theories, theorists, artists and finding links. The research found within this essay will then lead me to a question that I wish to research and write about for my dissertation. The three keywords will have similarities and links within depth research which will guide me and give me understanding of information that then lead to ideas which I could carry for my Independent inquiry.

An act of making something less or smaller; the state of being made less or smaller is the meaning of reduction according to (Oxfordlearnersdictionaries, n.d).

Also as a *'surface pattern design is the creation or application of artwork specifically for printable product surfaces'* (Christies, 2015) the sector focuses on creating pattern through a range of different processes- but reduction print is one that is very popular especially with interior design. The process of reduction is tricky to start off with but gets easier as the process unwinds. Reduction print is printed from one block/lino piece and one artist- Picasso used this method. He would print using this method to create a piece of work using *'just one block'* per image. When *'the block was printed in the lightest colour, then cut further and printed successively from the lighter to the darker colours'*. (Christies, 2015).

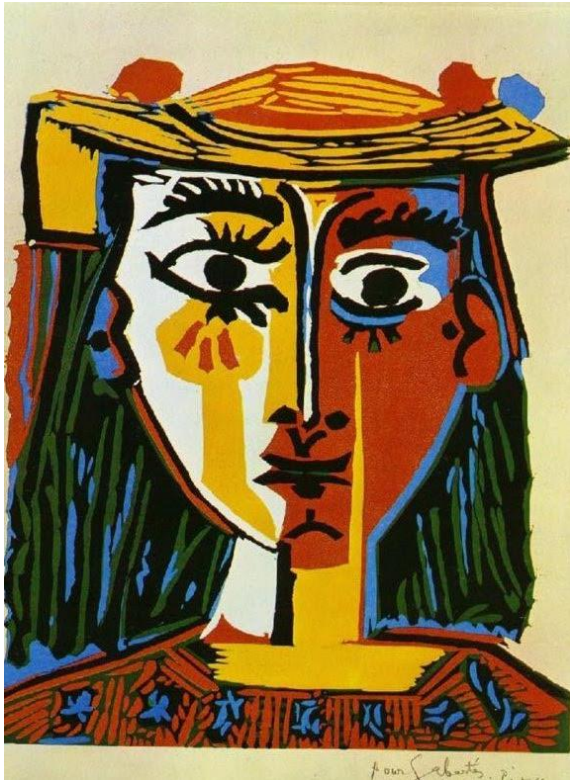


Image 1: Reduction print piece, '*Buste de Femme aux Chapeau*', (Picasso, 1962)

The image above is one of Picasso's very well-known Reduction printed pieces. From looking at the piece you can see the process Picasso uses if you look closely and for long enough.

The white would have been the first colour used whilst using this method and the black would have been the last colour to then its markings would be the only ones not being cut away as suggested during this process. This is not the only piece of art in the essay with the main process being cutting away and being reduced. I want to now talk about reduction with a very known performance piece by Yoko Ono - *cut piece* 1965.

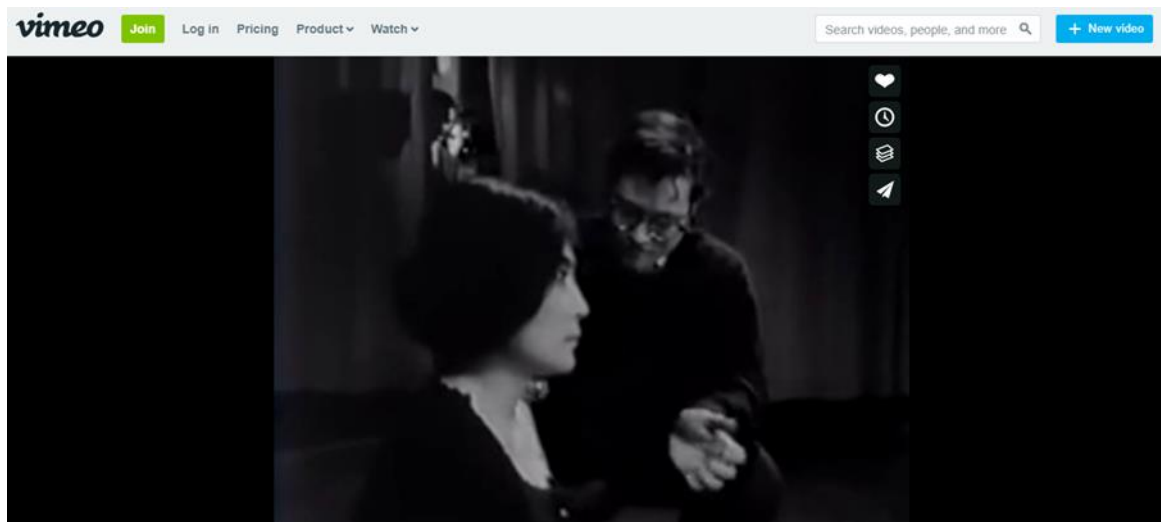


Image 2: A screenshot of Yoko Ono performance of *Cut piece* 1965. Image showing a man cutting a piece of her clothing off. (Vimeo, 2015).

Yoko Ono was a part of the 'Fluxus movement'. Fluxus *is an international avant-garde collective or network of artists and composers founded in the 1960s and still continuing today.* (Tate.org, 2020).

The video retrieved from (Vimeo,2015) shows the 1965 clip of the *Cut piece* performance by Yoko Ono. In this clip you can see that she is dressed, and her audience is handed a pair of scissors and individually they each cut a piece of her clothing off. According to (Halliday, 2015) it is stated that "*Ono has said that the impulse for Cut Piece came from the desire to create art free from ego, the "mentality of saying, 'here you are, take anything you want, any part you want,' rather than pushing something you chose on someone else."* This was not initially perceived to be a feminist meaning behind the performance but "*Critics over the years have interpreted Cut Piece as a striptease, a protest against violence and against war, and most recently (and most frequently) as a feminist work* (Concannon, 2008). The reduction of clothing in this piece is Ono sharing her views of wanting to create art without there being any ego's "*As will be clarified below, she has characterized it as a test of her*

commitment to life as an artist, as a challenge to artistic ego, as a gift, and as a spiritual act." (Concannon, 2008) , especially as she is being stripped to her own, naked body by both men and women. It also creates the feel that both the men and women should respect her equally and see her as art, not just a naked body. This could be argued that it therefore was a performance of femininity.

Although reduction in textile design represents methods, processes, pieces and performances- The environmental impact of textile waste is an issue so reduction needs to happen where appropriate regarding this issue.

"The best way to reduce any environmental impact is not to recycle more, but to produce less and dispose of less" (Braungart, McDonough, 2009 PP 50). Reduction is needed to minimise the threat that the clothing and textile waste have on our environment and landfills. Carpet nutrients from the carpet industry are wasted each year leading to new raw materials needing to be extracted which is not good especially for those who are environmentally concerned. To reduce the waste of the carpet, 'eco leasing' is being adapted. The average carpet consists of Nylon fibres, fiberglass and PVC. As Cradle-to-cradle states, it is not good for the environment so the carpet could be redesigned to combine a durable bottom layer with a detachable top using 'safe materials'. This means it would reduce the amount of leftover material from the carpet and being toted to a landfill where there are petrochemicals and other toxic substances. A carpet is just one example of waste which gets dumped on a landfill but there are ways for this to be reduced. *"Reduction is a central tenet of eco efficiency"* (Braungart, McDonough, 2009, PP 54). In the textile industry clothing is the main product being wasted as it is estimated that £140 million worth of clothing goes into landfill each year according to Wrap.co.uk.



Image 3: *How the UK's fast fashion habits are polluting a country halfway around the world- Ghana (ITV, 2020)*

In the ITV clip, it shows a woman called Lucy who is studying the environmental impact of fast fashion. She states that *"Clothing is now disposable, and I don't know how we can come back from treating it like a plastic bag or plastic bottle"* (Independent Television, ITV, 2020).

This shows the true impact that fashion is having on countries, and not just the UK, but worldwide. As suggested above from cradle-to-cradle *"to produce less and dispose of less"* would reduce an environmental impact especially one as bad as above. Reducing less clothing and textile materials seem to be the way forward to reduce the amount of waste and pollution causing these issues highlighted regarding clothing and textiles. The less amount of materials being produced for clothing means the less of it ending up at the landfill. During the video clip, a local businessman in the fashion market David Adams

comments on how *"the quality of much of the imported clothes is an insult"* and he also states that *"we can't use them, they are junk"* which is leading to the clothing itself being dumped at the landfill. If clothing were made using higher quality, less harmful products would it reduce the amount that is ending up at landfill and destroyed the environment? The amount is causing other countries to deal with the consequences of the fast fashion rate in the UK. Ghana being one of them. According to the clip *"Around 50 tonnes clothing waste a day"* are being dumped daily at a landfill in Ghana. *"The UK sends more clothes here than any other country"*. (Independent Television (ITV), 2020).

Colour

The meaning of colour according to the lexicographers at Oxford Dictionaries is defined as *'One, or any mixture, of the constituents into which light can be separated in a spectrum or rainbow, sometimes including (loosely) black and white'* (Lexico ,n.d.). How we see and experience colour is important for designers generally because it has a strong emotional impact. According to Curtis (N.d) *"We all respond instinctively, emotionally and powerfully to colour. It affects our mood, our energy and our perception of everything around us"*. This means that when creating art especially within the interior side of surface pattern design you should always take consideration when choosing your colour palette as to what affect it would have on a customer/client. Colour in surface pattern is especially important. From fashion textiles to interior. Choosing the right colour for your work should be very well thought out and considered, especially with interior textiles as it could change the whole dynamic of a space. As suggested by Curtis (N.d) that colour changes mood, why is this? *"Color is a psychophysical sensation and it is very important in daily life for humans. Human beings have unique sensations of color of their own and they express their feeling also by the*

color choice of their garments and environment.” (Becerir,2017). This suggests that by choosing the right colour to work with within textiles both fashion and interior you should use colours that you know work together and to also have positive impacts on people’s emotions. For example, if the colour red symbolises *‘Defiance, aggression, visual impact, strain’* (Colour affects, n.d) OR (WRIGHT, 2008)?? you would not then pair it with another negative colour as it would not work well with your space but also your client’s emotional needs. *“The color of a textile material is often one of its most important features. Color is a subjective (individual/personal) perception and in a color-using industrial environment, objectivity is of great importance”* (Becerir,2017). This implies that colour, is in fact a personal want and desire. Although there have been tests conducted and evidence that Red does cause you to feel negative emotions, that is an individual preference. *‘It has long been established that colour is the first aspect that people notice about any product or space’* (Best, 2017, pp 318) so working with the right colour scheme is essential for any designer but most importantly an interior designer.

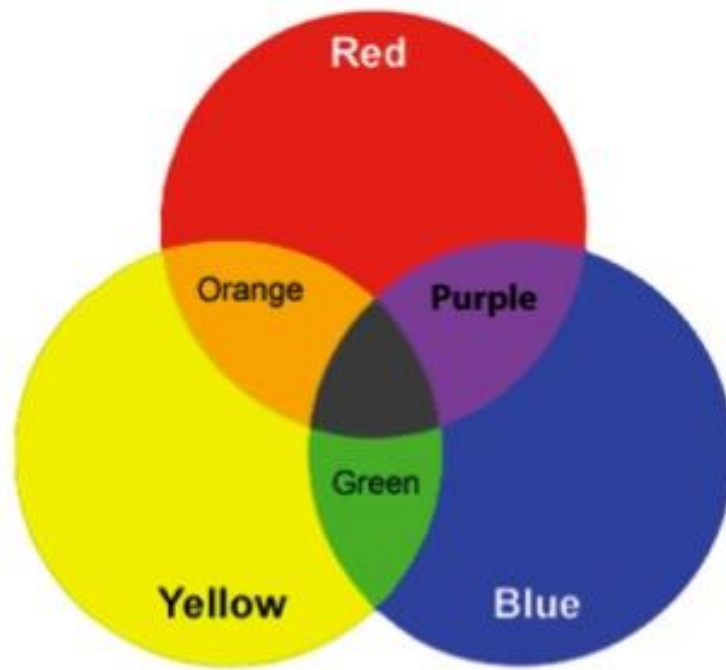


Image 4: Primary colours overlapping to show secondary colours made from mixing
(Beginners school, n.d)

The three primary colours are red, yellow and blue (Beginners school, n.d). As you can see from the image above that the three primary colours are the foundation to making the secondary. For example, the purple is made from mixing and overlapping both the red and blue. The primary colours are not only seen as the foundation to creating secondary colours but are also connected to Bauhaus. *‘Today, the yellow triangle, the blue circle, and the red square are unmistakably connected to the Bauhaus’* From artist and teacher at Bauhaus ‘Wassily Kadinsky’. He was the *‘founder of these color-shape associations.’* (Documenta Archiv, n.d).

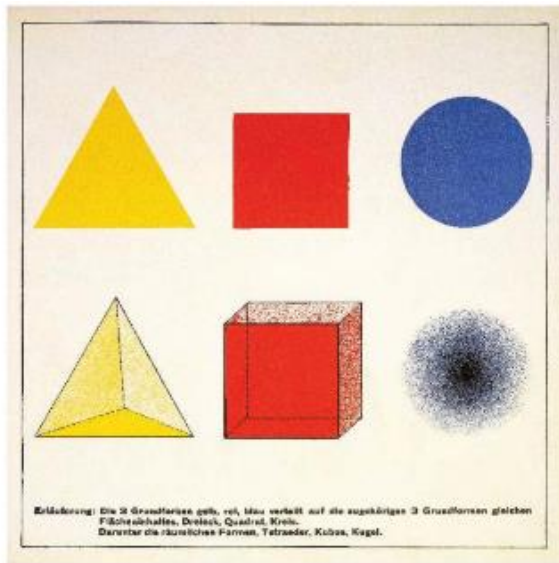


Image 5: The three primary colours and their shapes, (Kadinsky, 1923).

'Bauhaus members studied primary colors and shapes extensively and assigned them to each other on the basis of certain characteristics.' (Documenta archiv, n.d). Although the Bauhaus and students are known for the primary colour shape associations, the Bauhaus movement was based on form follows function. A documentary, 'Bauhaus 100' was created to celebrate the 100 years since the movement started. During the documentary, it focuses on how the movement started.

Form follows function. This was looked at first through paper forms. Different shapes and forms were being made to later then have a function. It then evolved to chairs, tables etc. As stated in Bauhaus 100 (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2020), Bauhaus was an architecture made from Bauhaus students and designed by Walter Gropius was made to be *"a modern kind of living"* (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2020) house. The Bauhaus building itself *'was a project of modernism'* (British Broadcasting corporation, 2020).

Pattern

A regular arrangement of lines, shapes, colours, etc. as a design on material, carpets, etc is the meaning of pattern according to (oxfordlearnersdictionaries, n.d.). During the Bauhaus movement- pattern was not considered as an important aspect of art and design. *'Pattern design was strategically omitted from the school's syllabus, and surface decoration – other than carefully chosen colours- was virtually outlawed.'* (Jackson, 2007, pp 45) although, with that being said- it had ended up being one of the most important aspects as the most popular product to be produced at Bauhaus was in fact, patterned wallpaper. *'Given the Bauhaus's reluctance to acknowledge the validity of pattern, it is somewhat ironic that wallpapers became the most successful mass-produced item to emerge from the school'* (Jackson, 2007, pp 45). Wallpaper is one of interior and textile designs most focused product on pattern.

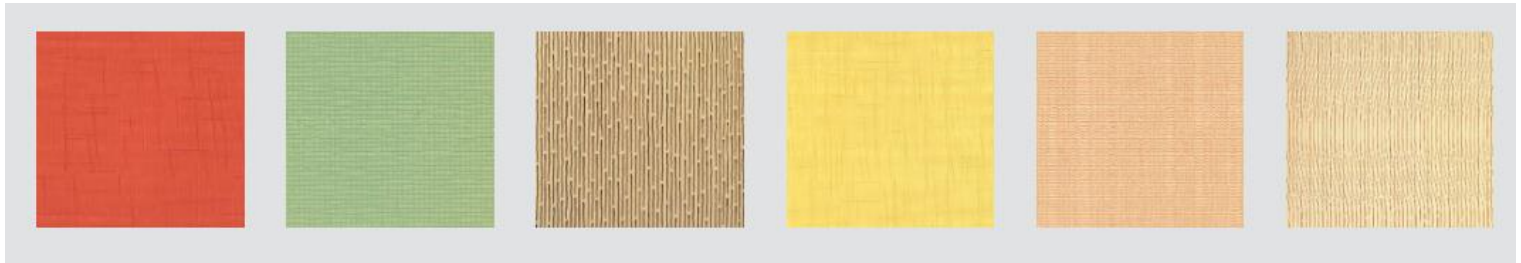


Image 6: 6 of the 14 patterns from the first wallpaper collection (Bauhaus,1930).

Above is a series of wallpapers from the first Bauhaus wallpaper collection. You can see that the patterns on the wallpaper are formed to be very structural. *'Patterns are structures with a geometric quality. When objects are arranged in a recognizable and repeatable structure, they form a'* (Bradley, 2010) Just like an architecture, pattern needs structure to be formed.

'Paul Klee also exerted a powerful influence through his teaching on design theory, prompting further experimentation in woven textiles with layering and stripes'(Jackson, 2007, pp46). One artist from the Bauhaus movement that I am focused on is Anni Albers and

who also focuses on layering and strips within her woven work creating pattern. During the time of Bauhaus, Albers was inclined to the weaving room and was not given the same opportunity on her foundation course as the men were simply because she was a woman according to the British Broadcasting Corporation (2020). At the eight years that Albers attended Bauhaus 1922-1930, she *'exemplified a more restrained approach, limiting herself to a more sober palette and a grid-like composition of bands and stripes'* (Jackson, 2007, pp 46). During the World war Albers found herself moving to America with her husband to carry her work there as the Nazis took over the Bauhaus building (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2020).

Albers has created some beautiful work including the Bauhaus colours blue, yellow and red.



Image 7: *Intersecting* 1962, cotton and rayon weaving (Albers, 1962).

Looking at Albers *Intersecting* weaving piece, it almost has a Bauhaus vibe about it especially with the chosen colours. Albers also works very boldly and blocked which gives off a similar effect. From the image, you can see the pattern is very layered. Although with this being said, the go to Bauhaus pattern was *'vocabulary of elementary forms (circles, squares and triangles) in primary colour.'* (Jackson, 2007, pp 46). Albers *'made textiles her key form of expression'*. As mentioned earlier in the essay that Albers *'was discouraged from taking up certain classes'* due to the fact she was a female had worked out in her favour as she took inspiration from her teacher Paul Klee among being influenced by *'her artist contemporaries, among them her teacher, Paul Klee, and her husband, Josef Albers.'* (Tate, n.d).

The three keywords which I have been exploring during this essay have led me to a question that I would wish to research and write about for my independent inquiry. From in depth research and connections within my three keywords research it has led me to a few ideas which I would like to investigate with more detail. I would like to explore colour more and investigate the psychology behind how colour, objects and spaces make us feel by differing the colour, tones and shade. *'It may be only 20% conscious, but colour affects us emotionally, whether that is positive or negative'* (Best, 2017, pp 323)

Proposed question for independent enquiry -

How does the difference of shade, tone and hue in colour(s) affect a designer's choice of what colour is chosen to be used in a space or object?

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Image 1-

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Image 2-

Yoko Ono cut piece 1965. 2015. Available at: <<https://vimeo.com/106706806>> Performed on March 21, 1965 at Carnegie Recital Hall, New York: Albert Maysles and David Maysles. [Accessed 17 April 2020].

Image 3-

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Image 4-

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Image 5-

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Image 6-

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