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Independent Inquiry Proposal: Colour, Design, and Drawing.

For my independent inquiry proposal, I have chosen three keywords to show an insight into my interests and passion within my practice. I will be investigating the meaning of the words; colour, design, and drawing within the context of Surface Pattern Design. As a Surface Pattern Designer, I create placements, patterns, and repeats that are applied to pretty much everything you see. Having to consider balance, harmony, colour, texture, and scale, as designers we need to acknowledge and understand these three words. To support this proposal, I will be touching base on Laura Perryman: The Colour Bible, Isaac Newton's Colour Theory, Tim Brown, and his Design Thinking, Van Gogh's use of colour, and other artists and theories to support this proposal.

Colour

"The colour of something is the appearance that it has as a result of how it reflects light" (Collins Dictionary, 2022). Isaac Newton discovered that when white light passed through a prism it would separate into what we now know as primary colours: red, yellow, and blue. Identifying seven different colours in the visible light spectrum, his work is rooted in the connection between colour and wavelengths of light. This discovery sparked a new interest in colour theory, inspiring other artists, and theorists to explore and adapt Isaac's theory. As you can see in Figure 1, in 1785, entomologist and engraver by trade Moses Harris, presented an extensive colour system, two colour wheels that broke colours down into 18 "prismatic" hues based on RYB primaries (Perryman, L. 2021, p. 14).

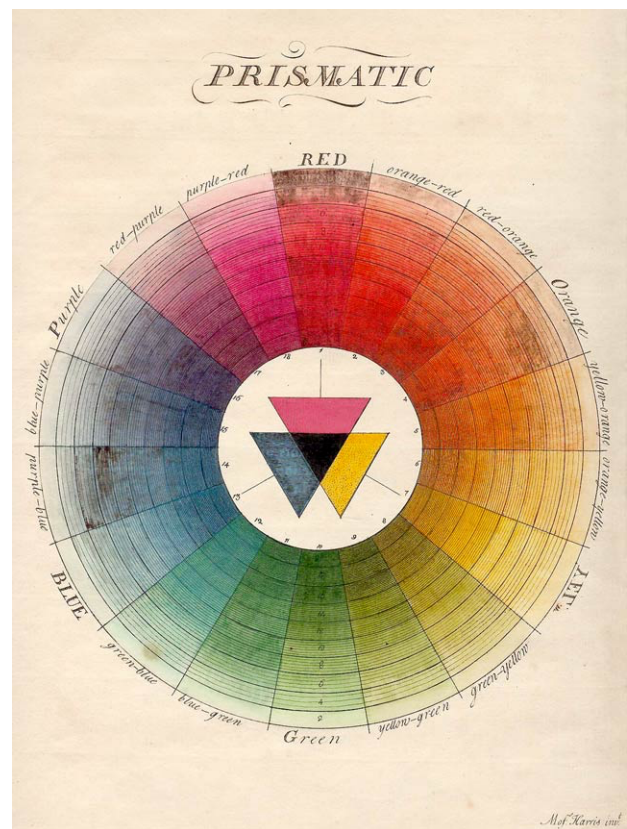


Figure 1.
Prismatic Colour Wheel by Moses Harris
(1785)

Colour Theory is an essential part of any designer/artist's practice, understanding how colour is constructed and seeing the relationship between different colours, can help designers use colour more effectively (Hampton-Smith, 2021). This is evident in my studies as a Surface Pattern & Textiles student. As a course we are re-taught the basics

of Colour Theory, having this knowledge is essential to our development and understanding as designers.

Psychology of colour is an area of research that works on the basis that the impact of colours has on us goes beyond aesthetics. It proposes that different colours have specific effects that influence emotional, sensory, and physical responses (Perryman, L. 2021, p. 34). Colour Psychology has become a part of colour theory, assigning emotional and psychological significance between emotions and colours. Many of these emotions are universal but some are only cultural for instance, a hue that is happy and uplifting in one country could be depressing in another. Not only does colour depend on culture, although it can also depend on personal upbringing, experience, visual effect, and preferences on an individual (Chapman, C. 2021). Therefore, colour is a powerful tool, having the ability to change and influence someone's mood.

Red Excitement Strength Love Energy	Orange Confidence Success Bravery Sociability	Yellow Creativity Happiness Warmth Cheer	Green Nature Healing Freshness Quality	Blue Trust Peace Loyalty Competence
Pink Compassion Sincerity Sophistication Sweet	Purple Royalty Luxury Spirituality Ambition	Brown Dependable Rugged Trustworthy Simple	Black Formality Dramatic Sophistication Security	White Clean Simplicity Innocence Honest

Figure 2. The Meaning of Colour (2020)

An example of an artist that was known for his use of colour was Van Gogh. Like other Dutch painters, he originally used dark colours, nevertheless, he was curious about colour theory and became familiar with complementary colours. In his findings, he established that blue and orange, red and green, and yellow and purple enhanced each

other. The choice of what colours he would use depended on his mood (Nazanin. 2021). In Figure 3 you can see that he limited his colour to yellow with a complimentary colour to intensify the sunflower painting. Yellow is the colour of the sun and a symbol of life, energy, happiness, and hope. Vincent hoped that his colourful paintings would contribute to the modernisation of art, he predicted in 1888 that "...the painter of the future is a colourist such as there hasn't been before" (Gogh, V.V. 1888). Little did he know that he would turn out to be that painter.



Figure 3. Sunflowers by Vincent Van Gogh (1888)

How can this be applied to Surface Pattern Design you may ask? In design we can choose colour palettes that will mirror the emotions that we want the customers to feel when engaging with a design. As humans, we process information through what we see and absorb what is before us and that sends a signal to our brain to interpret. As designers how we utilise colours are important in helping design or branding, engage with the right audience and help stimulate emotion.

Design

The word Design and its terminology provides a complicated insight into the world of design. Cambridge Dictionary provides a range of definitions that include adjectives or nouns as a prefix or suffix. The terminology refers to the type of design author, discipline, context, approach, and history, furthermore, finding it difficult to offer a single definition of design (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). For many people, the word prompts thoughts of the traditional form of design such as creativity, architecture, products, graphics, or the way something functions or looks (Faud-Luke, A. 2009).

People are often mistaking the difference between art and design. Art vs. Design has been a debate topic for many years and with the ever-evolving world, the lines between them are fuzzy, although they are different specialties there is a distinct line separating them (Suhad, M. 2020). The definition of art is to create something expressive and meaningful using skills and imagination whereas, the definition of design is to plan or specify the development of an object or system. The difference between both is the intention of why it was made.

Design principles are a group of guidelines that make the basis of any good product. There are many principles within the design and while there are debates on how many, there are twelve regulars on the list. These key principles include contrast, proportion, repetition, pattern, movement, balance, hierarchy, emphasis, rhythm, unity, white space, and variety (Chapman, C. 2019). Although these principles are talked about separately, in practice they perform together to create visually appealing designs. Combining design principles is not limited to two at a time, the majority of great designers incorporate half of these fundamentals and occasionally more. The purpose of these principles is to influence the way users view and connect with a design, they can enhance the overall experience the user has with the design and create emotional impact. As a result of my findings, I have discovered that I, a Surface Pattern Designer, unintentionally use these principles when creating designs, myself. As you can see in my work labelled Figure 4, I have combined numerous design principles: *Contrast* between the yellow, blue, and pink; *repetition* in the pattern being used and consistency in the shoes, haircut, and illustrations; *unity* among the outfits; and *variety* in the styles of outfits. A good design statement that follows the design principles, creates an eye-catching fashion visualisation board.

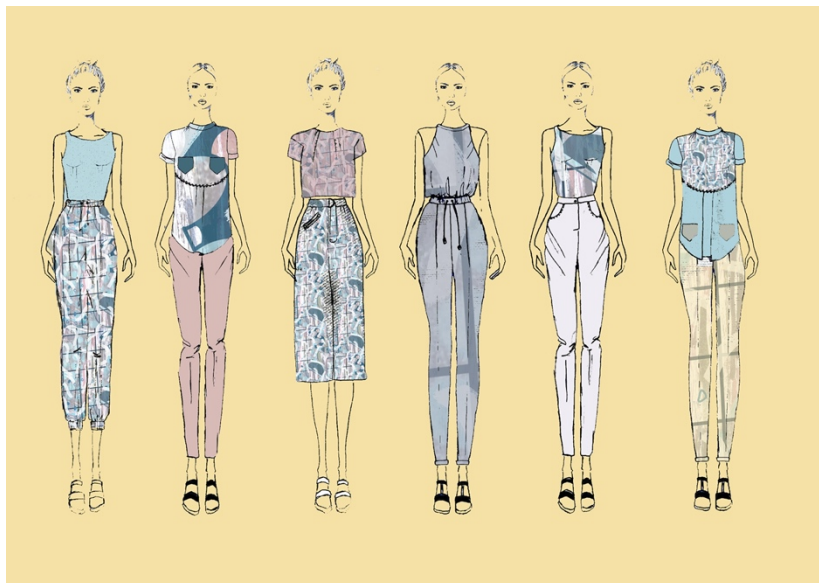


Figure 4. Collection 1 – Major Studies (2020)

Design Thinking comes hand in hand with design principles, it is a constant process of understanding your users, reevaluating problems, and creating new solutions to prototype and test. A starting point for the characteristics of a design thinker is empathy, integrative thinking, optimism, experimentalism, and collaboration (Harvard Business Review, 2008). As Tim Brown stated, "Design thinking is a human-centred approach to innovation that draws from the designer's toolkit" (Brown, T. 2008). They can imagine the world from multiple perspectives without entirely relying on analytical processes, questioning, and exploring advantages and disadvantages in creative ways that progress in a new direction. Design Thinking is all part of the design process, to define the problem, collect

information, brainstorm, analyse ideas, develop, have feedback, and improve. These steps continue in a circle for all products and systems that use the Design Thinking or design process.

The basis of the design process is to solve problems, but not all designers start a project with a problem to solve. An end goal such as selling a product could be the beginning step, figuring out what you need to do, then doing it is key. It is not about working the right or wrong way, it is a method you use to further creativity, productivity, and accuracy. This method is important on days when your creativity is lacking in inspiration, it helps designers like myself to be reliable and creative without depending upon inspiration (Drysedale, J. 2017). Checking off the design process steps ensures concepts do not steer off course and in the wrong direction.

Drawing

The history of drawing began with cave paintings having been discovered as far back as 10,000 years BC, possibly being as old as the human race itself. Nonetheless, artists developed thorough drawing skills during the Italian Renaissance in the 14th century, such as Michelangelo (1475-1564). During this period, drawing was a specialised profession, and painters and sculptors held high positions within society and their work was in great demand. During this time artists left the decorative art of the Middle Ages, to focus on visuals that would be admired, leaving behind the traditional religious iconography, focusing deeply on the study of the human body and its natural history. As you can see in Figure 5 Michelangelo's "Creation of Adam", located on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, broke the boundaries that were set in art at this moment in time. As a sculptor, elements of this painting are shown to be influenced by his occupation, the figures present the work of sculpting rather than the work of brush strokes (Sistine Chapel, N/A). The "Creation of Adam" is just one part of a large fresco, however still to this day is considered one of the most crucial and artistically important parts of the work inside the Sistine Chapel.

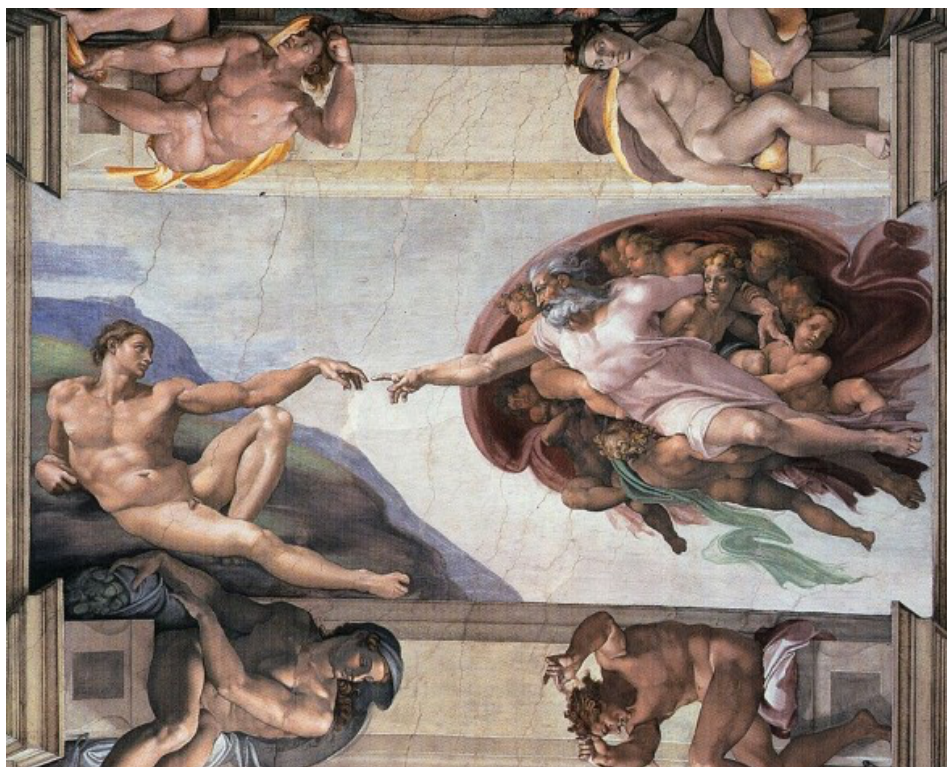


Figure 5. Creation of Adam by Michelangelo (1512)

Drawing is a form of technique where images are composed on a surface by making lines, non-linear marks, washes, and tonal areas. Materials commonly used to draw are chalk, crayon, pencil, ink, and charcoal, however, combinations of wet and other dry media can make up a drawing (Tate, N/A). Drawing merged with seeing is an inquisitive process, both can barely be separated. "Learning to draw is a matter of learning to see – to see correctly – and that means a good deal more than merely looking with the eye" (Nicolaidis, K. 2008). The ability to see the way an artist sees, gives you the ability to draw, though most people will never see well enough to draw. Drawing is not a difficult task, seeing is the problem, being able to shift to a particular way of seeing. Allowing access to the right side of the brain to experience a modified mode of awareness will help you to see and experience things in a different way (Edwards, B. 1993).

Drawing as other art forms helps with stress relief and relaxation, it forces us to notice our surrounding environments, relieving the brain from continuous concentration, and it can improve a range of critical thinking skills. Sketching can be an exercise for the mind, eyes, and hand, which enhances creativity enabling us to think differently and to have open-ended thoughts. Whilst using our brains to draw we release endorphins, helping us to build pathways and connections (invaluable, 2019). Using both creativity and logical thinking strengthens both sides of the brain, giving us the ability to think and focus sufficiently.

As children we are taught to express our thought through drawing, being the first form of art that helps us express ourselves unconsciously. Drawing is the perfect way to

conceptualise thoughts, giving the possibility to discover ideas, especially as a Surface Pattern Designer. Being able to develop our ideas from the initial stage of drawing, enables us to define a creative concept, develop the idea, and transform it into the real world to convey sensations and feelings. Although designing might include abstract and loose form sketches, technical skills such as depth, proportion, and perspective are needed. Most of the time a Surface Pattern Designer will create sketches and artworks that are not yet repeated, it can either be used as a repeated pattern or as an engineered design. For example, when designing clothing apparel we use repeats, whereas engineered designs are for coordinating accessories, dress borders, or other areas (Silver, E. 2020). As you can see, the role of drawing is a critical process to start the development of any design ideas. To visualise an idea by putting pen to paper can articulate the importance of why drawing is the basis of any design pathway.

To conclude this independent inquiry proposal, I have defined and deconstructed my three key words and how it plays a role within my pathway context as a Surface Pattern Designer. As a designer drawing, design and colour are huge factors to consider when designing for a project, having to consider how these words may affect a consumer's reaction to a design whether that is emotional, sensory, or physical (Perryman, L. 2021). Although there is plenty to consider whilst designing, I would like to focus my further research for my Independent Project towards the marketing side of design. After analysing the three words I am fascinated by how I can use this research for marketing strategies of my own, creating a brand for myself and having the right knowledge to become successful in my field. As I progress as a student into my 3rd and final year, I now cannot help to wonder if there is anything more I can do to expand my knowledge and enhance my skills as a designer and a soon to be graduate. Thus, exploring questions such as '*What is a good design?*' and '*Does this change for different product format?*' will help direct me to the right information needed for my research question: *"What effect does design and colour have on influencing the consumers purchases?"*.

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Figures

Figure 1: Harris, M. (1785) The natural System of colours. Available at: <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/prismatic-colour-wheel> (Accessed: 5 April 2022)

Figure 2: London Image Institute (2020) Colour Psychology: how Do Colors Affect Mood & Emotions? Available at: <https://londonimageinstitute.com/how-to-empower-yourself-with-color-psychology/> (accessed on 7 April 2022)

Figure 3. Gogh, V.V. (1888) Sunflowers. Available at: <https://colors.dopely.top/inside-colors/van-gogh-and-his-strange-play-with-colors/#:~:text=In%20fact%2C%20in%20Van%20Gogh's,color%20depended%20on%20his%20mood> (Accessed: 8 April 2022)

Figure 4. Evans, K. (2020) Collection 1 - Major Studies A1 M4X02217. (Not Available) (Accessed: 7 April 2022)

Figure 5. Michelangelo (1512) The Creation of Adam. Available at: <https://www.italianrenaissance.org/michelangelo-creation-of-adam/> (Accessed 24 April 2022)