CPOPC November 2024

Understanding Colours

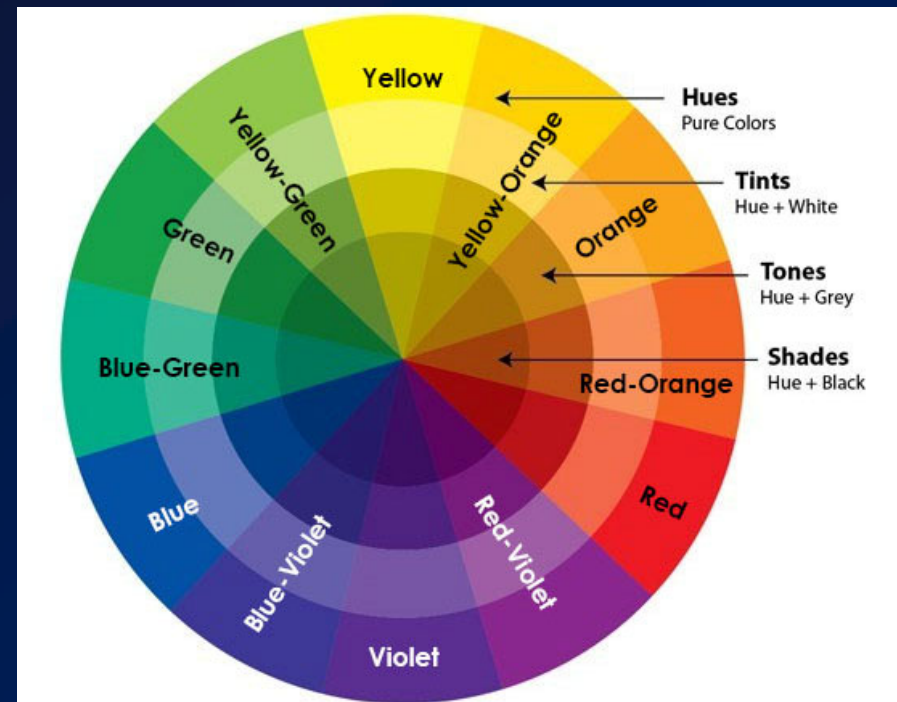**Darren Bessette – November 9, 2024**

Primary Colours

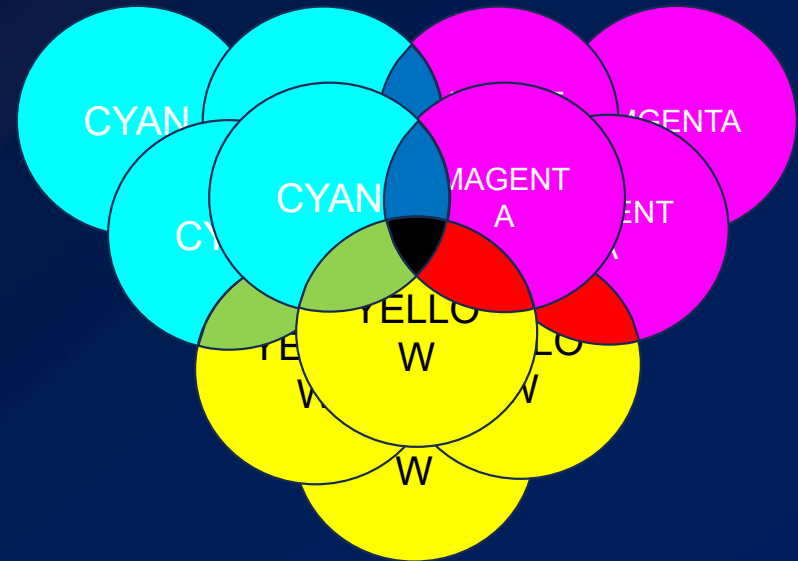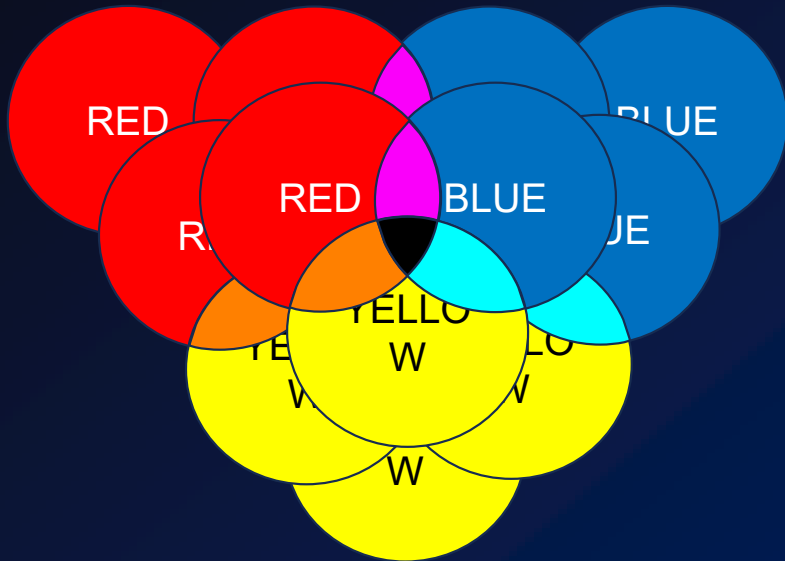In theory, mixing primary colours can create every other colour:

- Can create all the hues
- Can only create a subset of Colours (Colour = Hue x Saturation x Lightness)
- Hue is how humans perceive colour

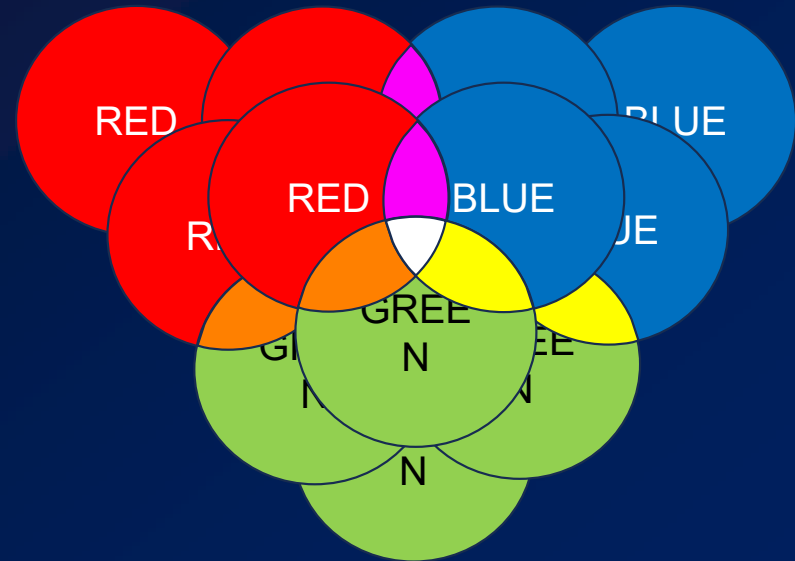Two basis for primary Colours: Subtractive and Additive
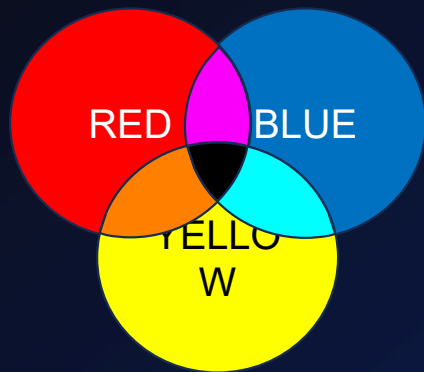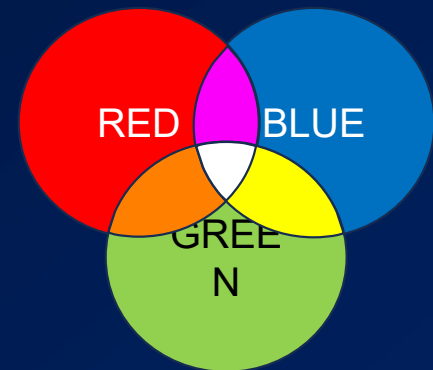
Primary Colours are not pure

Subtractive Colour

Additive Colour

Comparing Colour Spaces
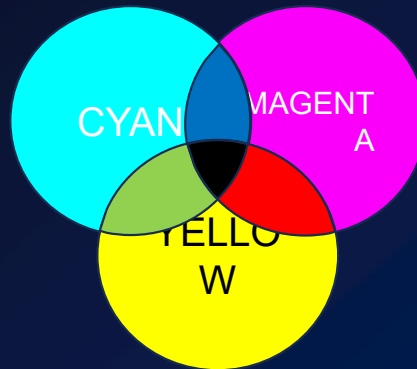

Subtractive

Additive

Additive vs Subtractive

Subtractive

- Material absorbs light and reflects the colour we see
- Used for printing and materials (paints, plastics)
- CYMK is more often used for printing because easier/better to reproduce Colour

Additive

- Projects the Colour we see
- Used for light capture (e.g. cameras) and projection (e.g. televisions, monitors)

How to Use Colour

- Coloured lights or gels on lights
    - Adds colour and mood to the scene
    - Creates unique monochromatic images
- Saturation, Hue sliders in photo processing
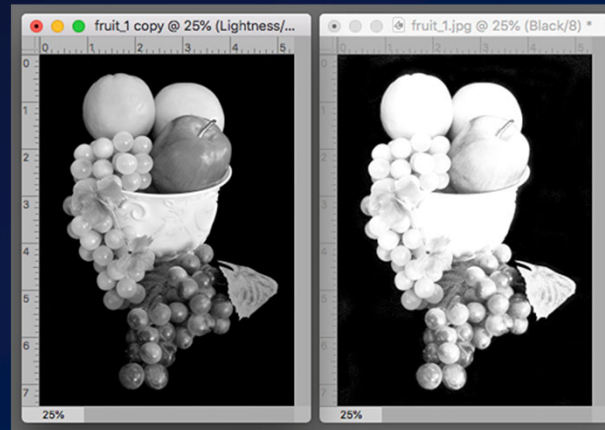
Understanding Colour Psychology

- Warm Colours:
    - Red, orange, and yellow
    - Evoke emotions ranging from warmth and comfort to anger and hostility
    - Create a sense of energy, excitement, or even tension.

- Cool Colours:
    - Blue, green, and purple
    - Associated with calmness, serenity, and sadness
    - Create a tranquil, peaceful atmosphere or to convey melancholy.

- Neutral Colours:
    - White, black, and gray
    - Used to balance your composition or emphasize other Colours
    - Often serve as a backdrop, allowing other Colours to stand out more vividly
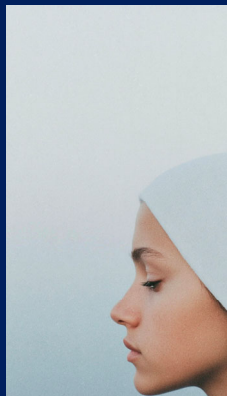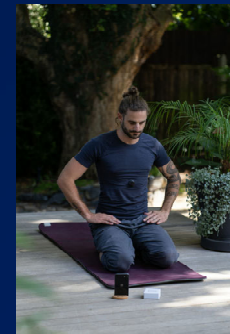
Using Colour to Tell a Story

- Highlighting the Subject:
    - Use Colour contrast to make your subject stand out.

- Creating Mood:
    - Colour palette influences the mood of your photograph

- Symbolism in Colour:
    - Colours carry symbolic meanings that add depth
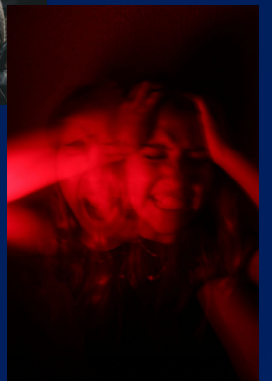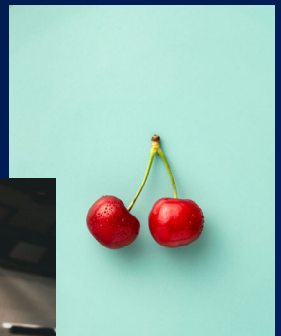
Colour Grading

- Creating Consistency:
  - Create a cohesive look across a series of photos.

- Enhancing Emotion:
  - Subtly shifting the Colours in your image, you can enhance the emotional impact

Complementary Colours

- Creating Visual Interest:
  - Make your images more visually striking
  - Used to draw attention to specific elements in your composition

- Balancing the Scene:
  - Important to balance them to avoid overwhelming the viewer
 - Use one Colour as the dominant hue and the other as an accent to maintain harmony

Analogous Colours

- Harmonious Composition:
    - Analogous Colours are next to each other on the Colour wheel and tend to create a harmonious, pleasing effect.

- Subtle Storytelling:
    - Analogous Colours can be used to tell a more subtle, nuanced story

Monochromatic Colour Schemes

• Focus on Form and Texture

• Creating Unity:
  • Monochromatic images can create a strong sense of unity and cohesion
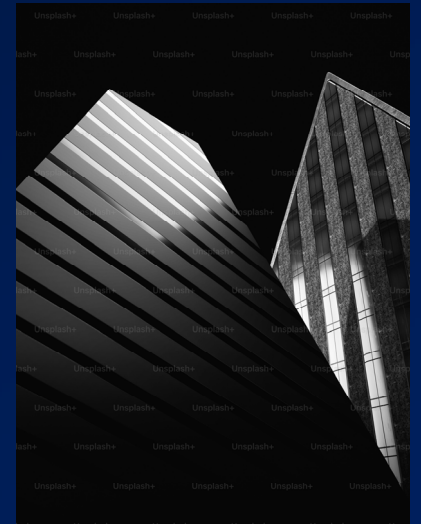
Practical Tips for Working with Colour

- Use Colour Intentionally:
  - Convey a mood
  - Highlight a subject
  - Create a sense of balance
  - As a guide your composition and storytelling

- Experiment with Post-Processing:
  - Fine-tune the Colours in your images
  - Experiment with different Colour grades, tints, and saturation levels to see how they affect the mood and narrative
  - Subtle adjustments can often have a significant impact

- Consider the Environment
  - Pay attention to the Colours present

- Learn from Film and Art
  - Study how others use Colour (Photographers, Films, Artists, etc.)