

Keeping a Sketchbook: The Basics of Color

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
(OLLI) at Vanderbilt University

Winter 2022

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Working with Color

- Color can be complex
- Goal today is give you some tools to think about color and paint so you don't have to learn by trial and error
- Topics
 - Characteristics of Color
 - Color and value: ink wash demo
 - Characteristics of Paint
 - Color wheel demo on ipad
 - Relating paints to colors
 - Characteristics of the Color wheel

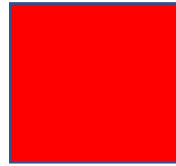
First Time I
Successfully
Mixed Colors...



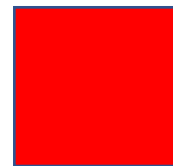
Basic Characteristics of Color



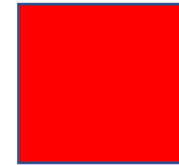
Green



High Chroma



Warm



Violet



Low Chroma



Cool



Hue = “name” of
the color

Chroma = intensity
or purity of the
color, or
brightness/dullness

Temperature=
cool or warm

Value = light or
dark, place on a
value scale

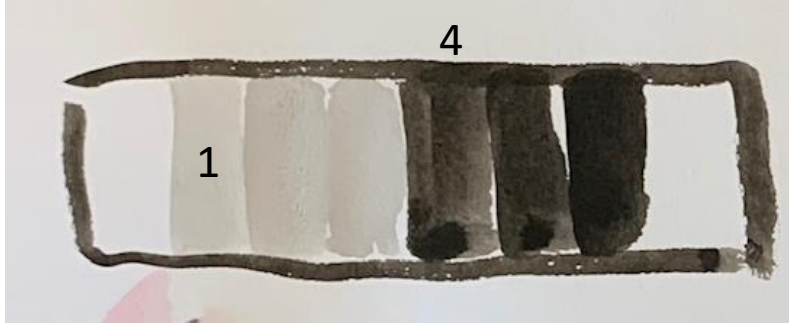


“ Color gets
all the
credit, but
values do all
the work”

Let's try a B/W
demo with
diluted ink in a
water brush



Let's try a B/W
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water brush

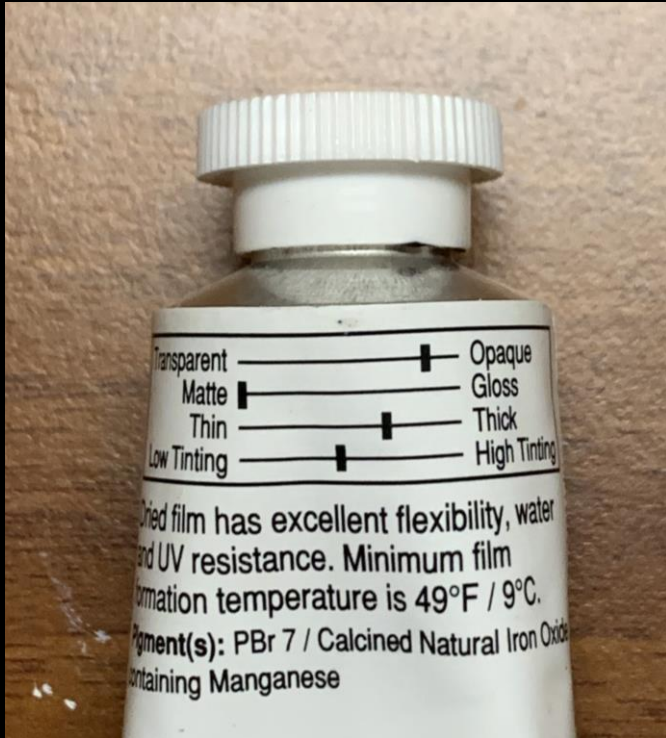


Ink-water brush value scale. Pens
are mixed for values 1 and 4. The
4 value should probably diluted
with water to make it lighter



Basic Characteristics of Paint

- Color name or hue: Given an industry standard Code, Burnt Umber =PBr-7
- Lightfastness: Degree to which light will cause fading
- Transparent/Opaque: covering capacity
- Surface finish from Matte (not reflective) to glossy (reflective)
- Physical consistency from thin to thick
- Tinting strength: Concentration of a color
- Series: refers to expense or quality of the paint



Basic qualities of Paint

- Hue
- Lightfastness
- Transparent/Opaque
 - Surface finish
- Physical consistency
- Tinting strength
- Series



Topics in Color

- Try video demo ink wash
- Story about buying different color paints on irises
- Relate colors to names of paints
 - <https://i.pinimg.com/736x/21/fa/dd/21fadd38dc807449f97fa974134eae0e.jpg>
 - <http://drewharkey.com/research/color/color-wheel/>
 - <https://www.handprint.com/HP/WCL/cwheel06.html>
- Qualities of color hue, chroma, value, transparent etc.
- Qualities of paint, number opaque, lightfastness
- Six and 12-color wheels, naming conventions
- Mixing color
 - Opposites-dull, adjacents bright
 - Examples, greens in TN
- Color schemes split complementary, triangle, etc. gamut?
- Only want 3-5 colors in a sketch
- Earth colors
- Color temperature advance/retreat
- Bibliography gurney, acrylics
- Check pin video
- Black/no black
- Grays Opposites+ brown and white
- 6th lecture-process example, pencil, pen, color, large/small, then my examples.

Color Wheel Demo-Six-Color Wheel

P=Primary
S=Secondary



Color Wheel Demo: Twelve-Color Wheel

I did this color wheel before class on the ipad-I think the color separation is better in this one.



Relating Paints to the Color Wheel

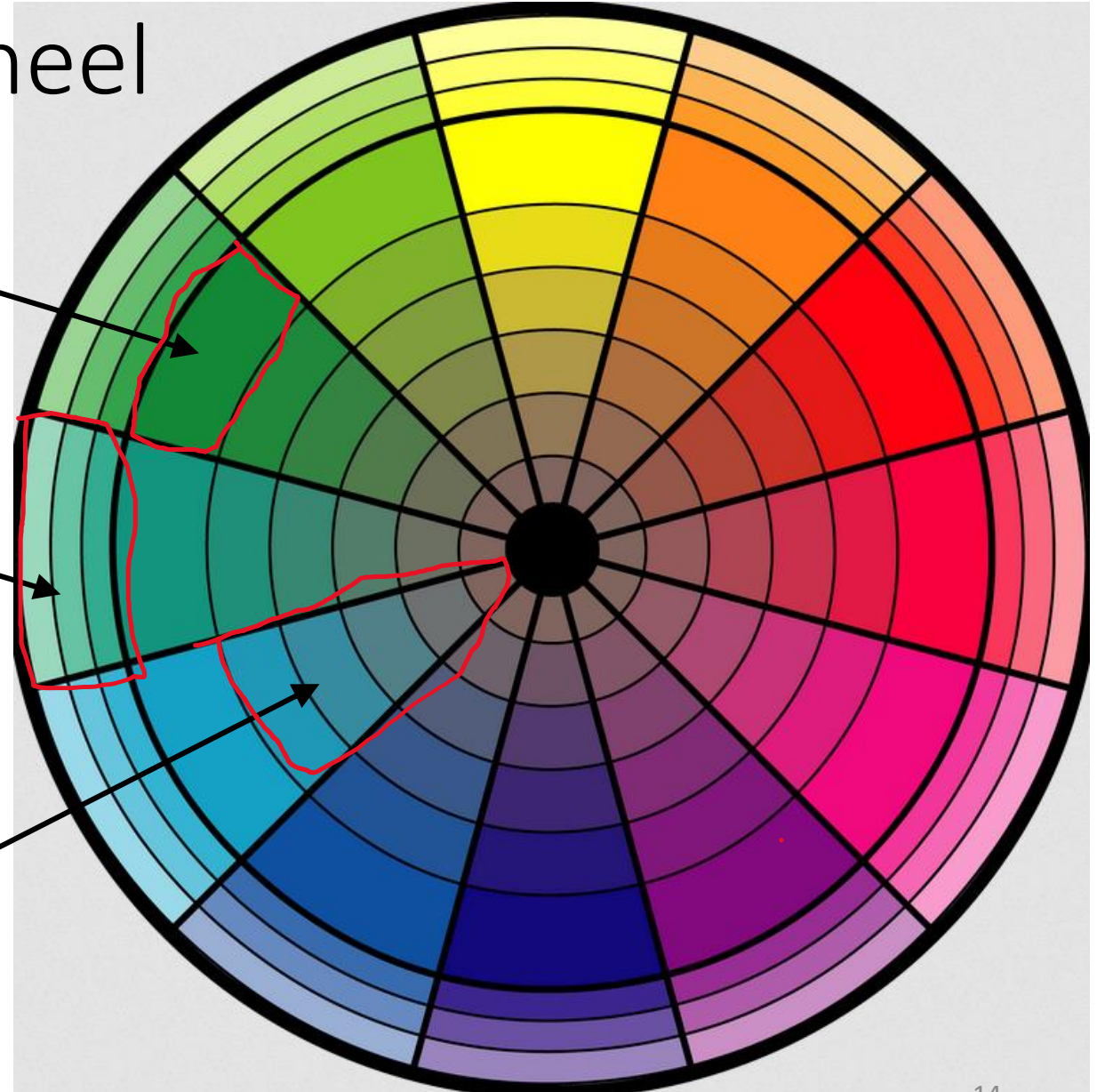
- Good references for relating colors to names of paints
 - <http://drewharkey.com/research/color/color-wheel/>
 - Nice color wheel to work from, good discussion of color and color wheel
 - <https://i.pinimg.com/736x/21/fa/dd/21fadd38dc807449f97fa974134eae0e.jpg>
 - Lists the names various hues of paints related to their color
 - <https://www.handprint.com/HP/WCL/cwheel06.html>
 - Shows the names of paints on top of an ideal color wheel

Drew Harkey Color Wheel

Main Color

Main Color mixed
with varying
amounts of white
(pastels)

Main Color mixed
with varying
amounts of
opposite color
(complement)

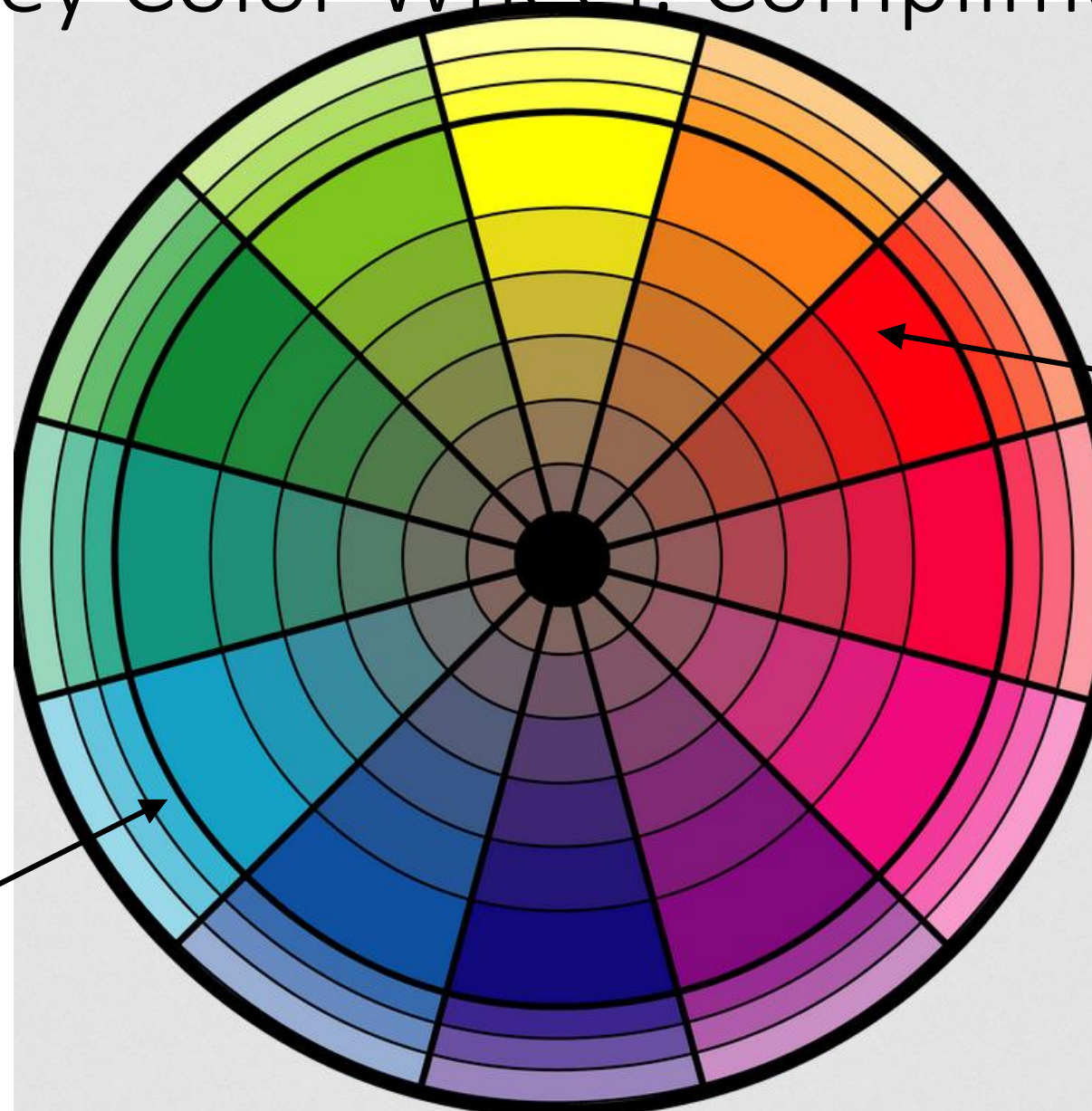


Drew Harkey Color Wheel: Compliments

Use complements
to:
Dull down a color
Add contrast and
vibrancy

Mixing Rule:
Far colors are dull
when mixed,
Near colors are
bight when mixed

Light blue is the
complement of
red-orange)



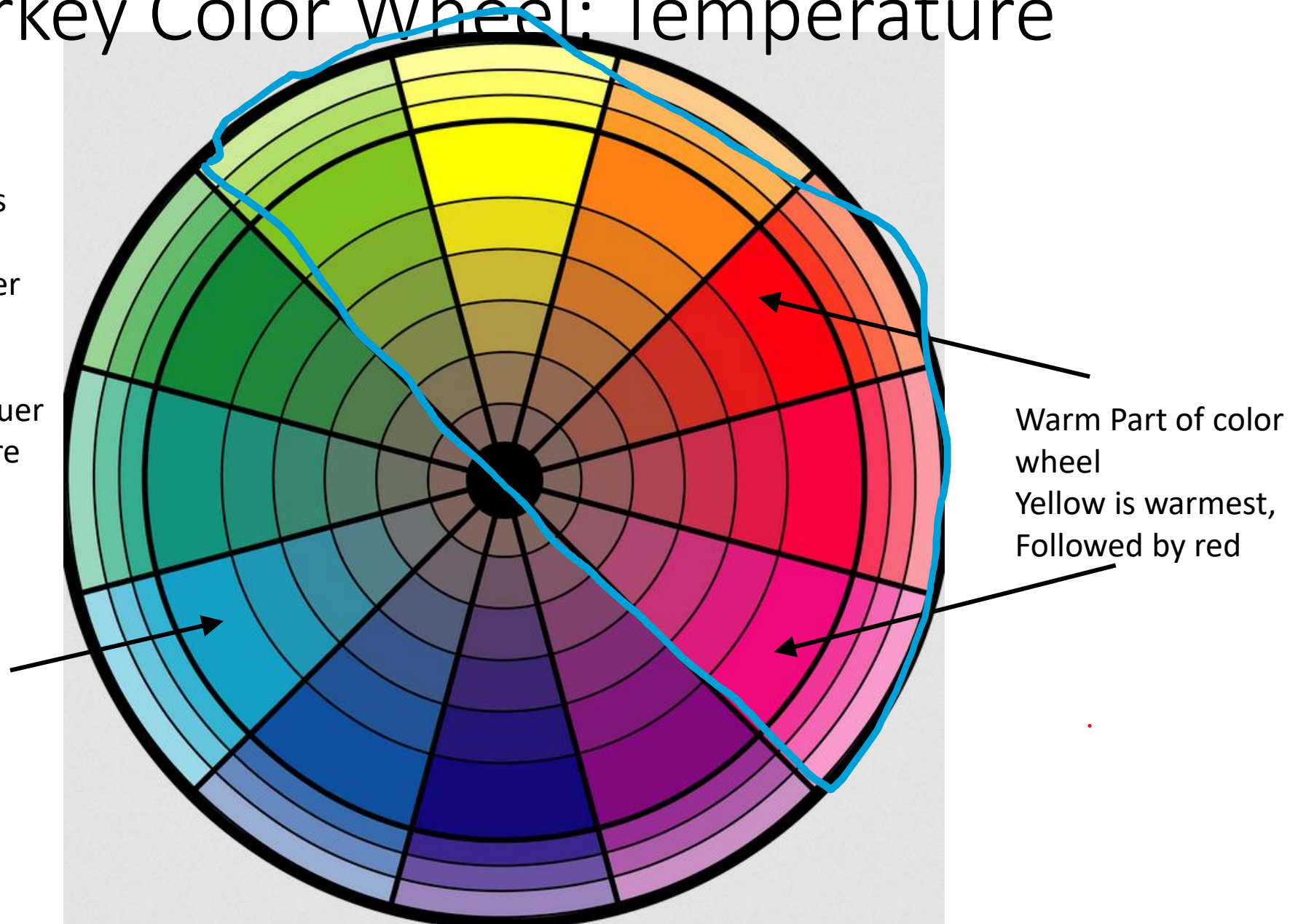
Red Orange is the
complement of
light blue

Drew Harkey Color Wheel: Temperature

Rule of Temperature:
Warm advances towards
the viewer,
Cool recedes from viewer

Aerial Perspective:
Things get cooler and bluer
the further away they are
from the viewer

Cool half of the
color wheel: Blue
considered coolest

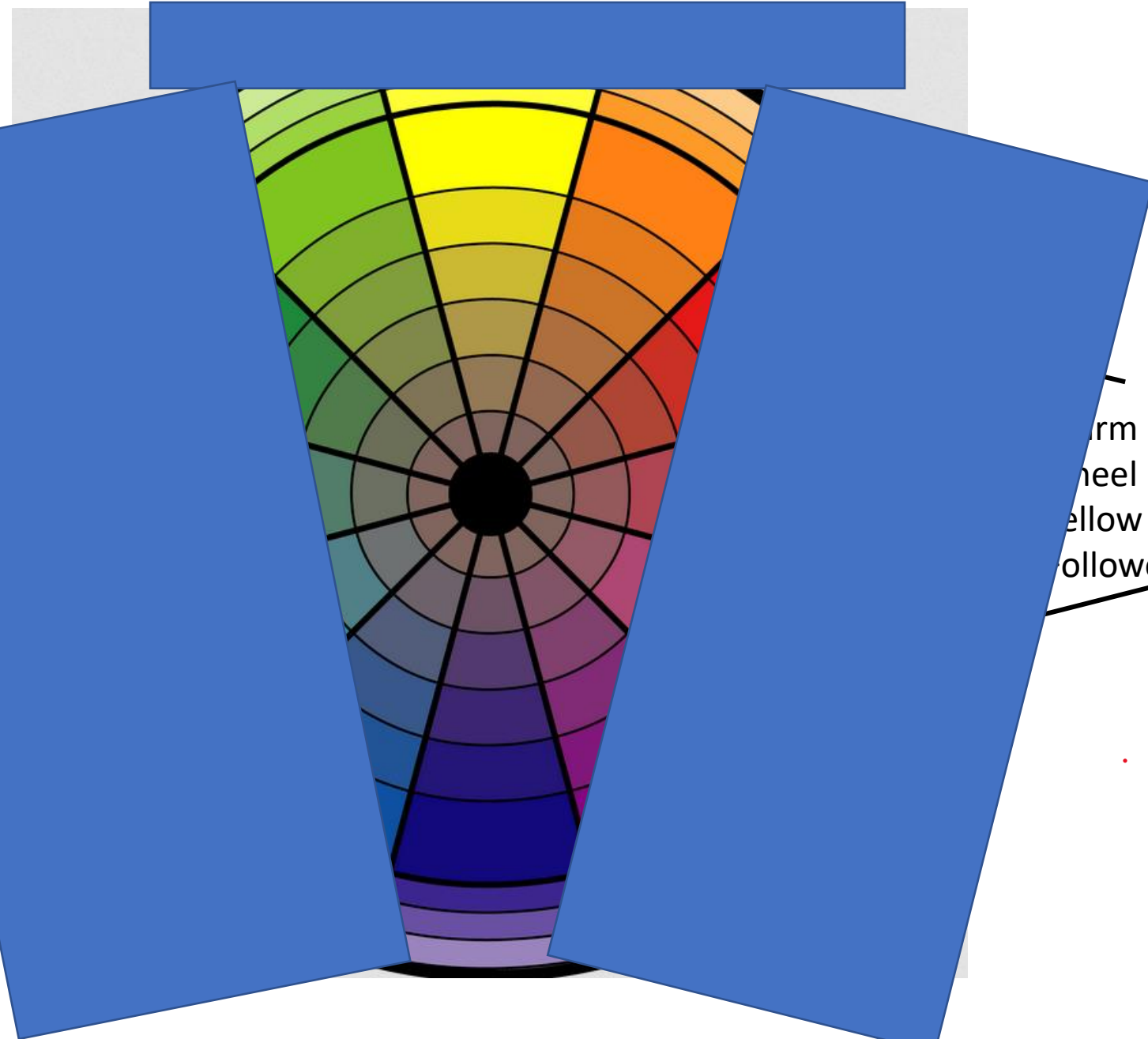


Drew Harkey Color Wheel: Gamut, Limited Palette

Suppose you choose
yellow-green, orange, and
blue-violet as your three
colors

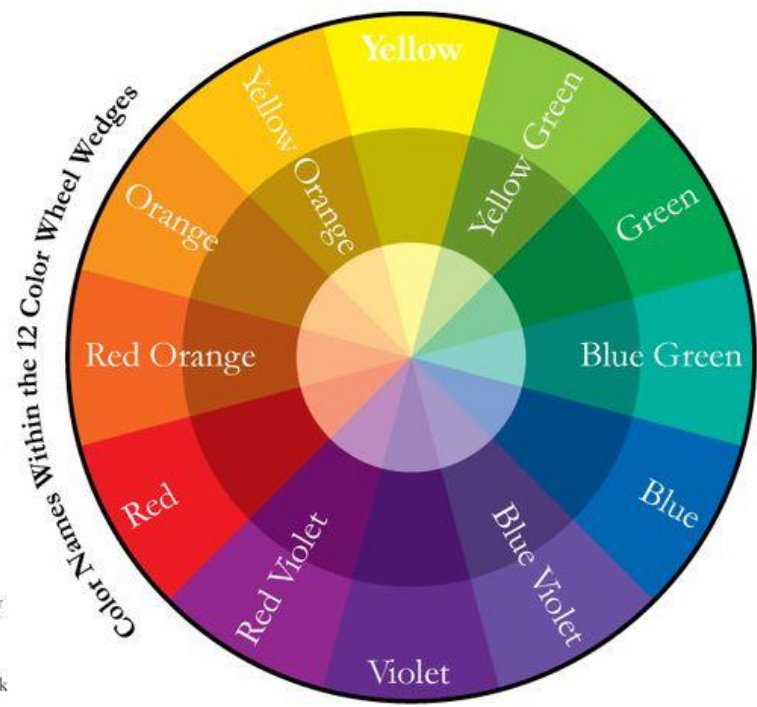
You can mix the whole
range of intermediate colors
shown in the “gamut”

Gamut: portion of
the color wheel
that is reachable
with your basic
primary colors.



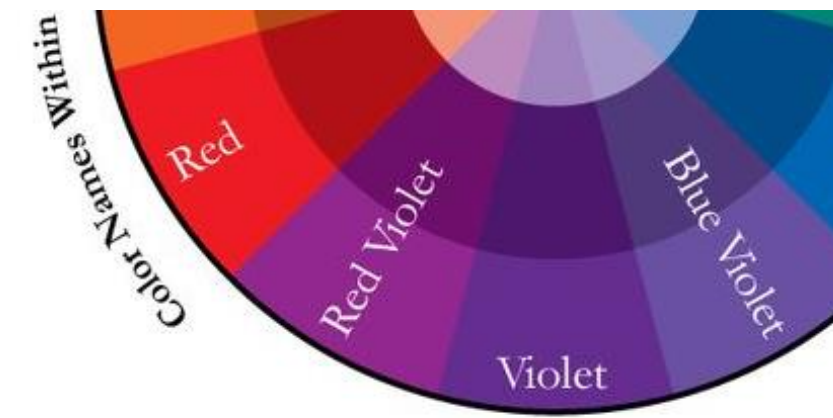
Warm Part of color
wheel
Yellow is warmest,
followed by red

- Yellow**
 - Banana
 - Blond
 - Butter
 - Canary
 - Chamois
 - Champagne
 - Corn
 - Cream
 - Daffodil
 - Dandelion
 - Flax
 - Gold
 - Goldenrod
 - Grapefruit
 - Honey
 - Jasmine
 - Jonquil
 - Lemon
 - Maize
 - Mustard
 - Primrose
 - School Bus
 - Sunflower
 - Titanium
 - Wheat
- Yellow Orange**
 - Amber
 - Bisque
 - Butterscotch
 - Cantaloupe
 - Caramel
 - Cheddar
 - Gamboge
 - Mango
 - Naples
 - Ochre
 - Peach
 - Safety
 - Saffron
 - Topaz
- Orange**
 - Apricot
 - Burnt Orange
 - Burnt Sienna
 - Cadmium
 - Carrot
 - Copper
 - Orange Peel
- Red**
 - Barn
 - Beet
 - Blood
 - Blush
 - Bordeaux
 - Bubble Gum
 - Burgundy
 - Cardinal
 - Carnation
 - Cayenne
 - Cherry
 - Chinese
 - Claret
 - Cotton Candy
 - Cranberry
 - Crimson
 - Fire Engine
 - Flamingo Pink
 - Garnet
 - Maraschino
 - Pink
 - Raspberry
 - Rose
 - Ruby
 - Scarlet
 - Strawberry
 - Tea Rose
 - Tomato
 - Vermilion
 - Watermelon
 - Wine
- Red Violet**
 - African Violet
 - Boysenberry
 - Byzantine
 - Byzantium
 - Fuchsia
 - Heliotrope
 - Lilac
 - Magenta
 - Maroon
 - Mauve
 - Mulberry
 - Orchid
 - Plum
 - Puce
 - Purpureus
 - Thistle



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See link previous slide



- Violet**
 - Amethyst
 - Aubergine
 - Black Raspberry
 - Concord
 - Damson
 - Eminence
 - Grape
 - Lavender
 - Purple
 - Royal Purple
- Blue**
 - Azure
 - Baby
 - Blueberry
 - Bluebonnet
 - Celestial
 - Cerulean
 - Cobalt
 - Cornflower
 - Delft
 - Denim
 - Imperial
 - Indigo
 - Lapis
 - Liberty
 - Midnight
 - Navy
 - Phthalo
 - Powder
 - Prussian
 - Royal
 - Sapphire
 - Ultramarine
 - Winsor
- Blue Green**
 - Aqua
 - Aquamarine
 - Azure Mist
 - Bottle
 - Cadet
 - Cyan
 - Peacock
 - Persian
 - Pine
 - Robin Egg
 - Sea
 - Sky
 - Teal
 - Topaz
 - Turquoise
 - Viridian
- Green**
 - Celadon
 - Emerald
 - Forest
 - Grass
 - Hunter
 - Jade
 - Jungle
 - Kelly
 - Laurel
 - Loden
 - Mint
 - Shamrock
 - Spring
- Blue Violet**
 - Bluebell
 - Eggplant
 - Iris
 - Periwinkle
 - Purple Heather

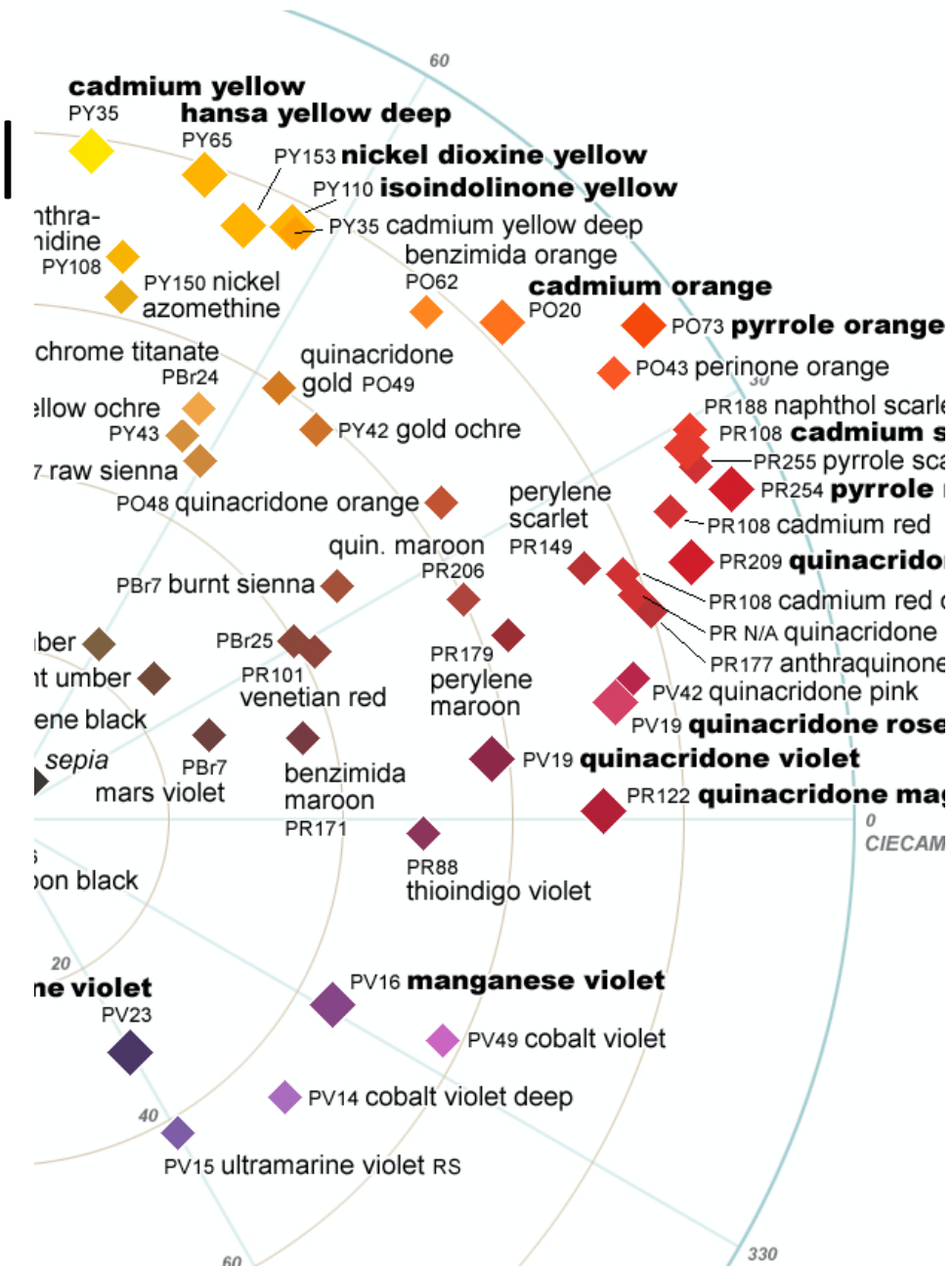
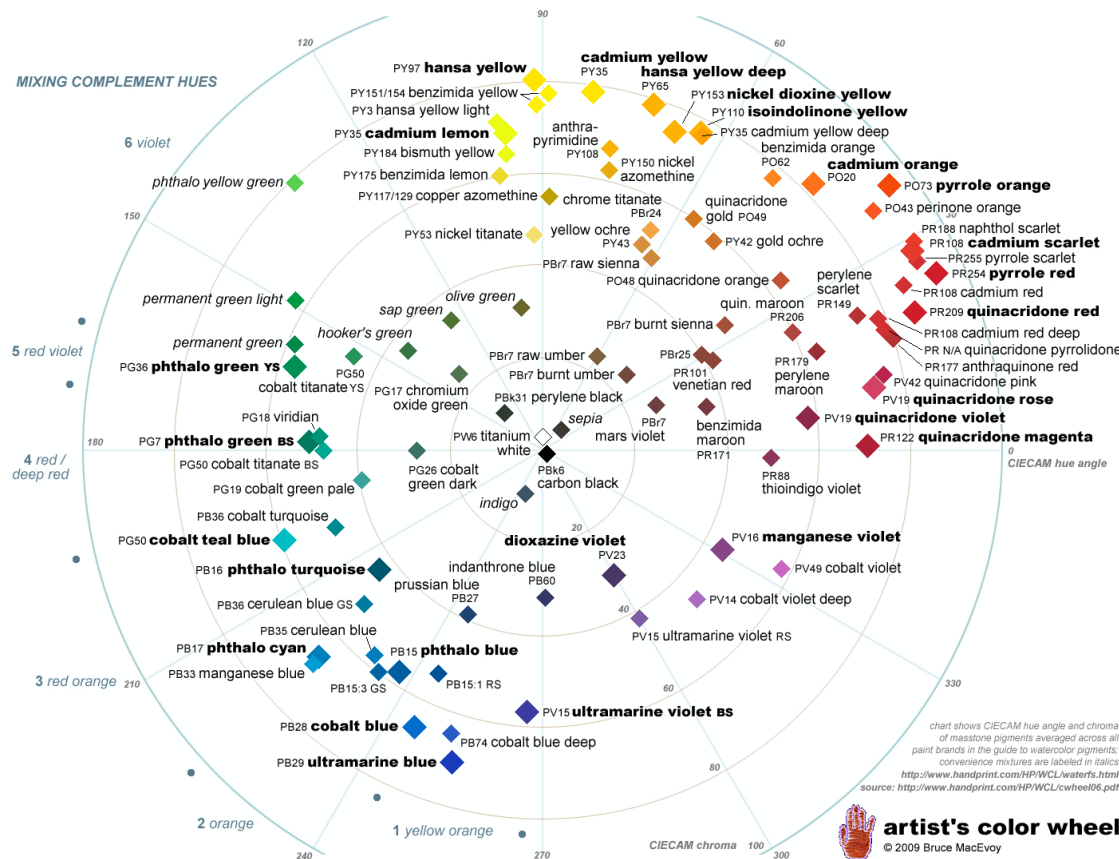
Color Wheel

Fully saturated color (outside)
Tone: black added (middle)
Tint: white added (center)

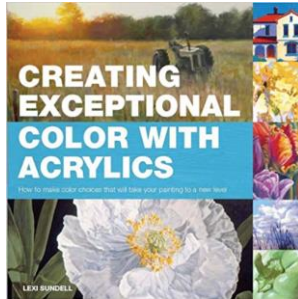
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Bruce MacAvoy's Color Wheel

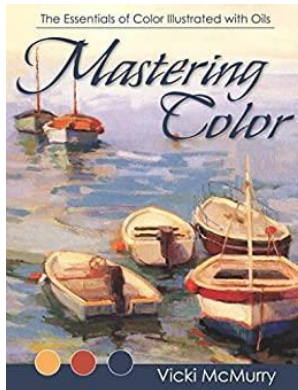
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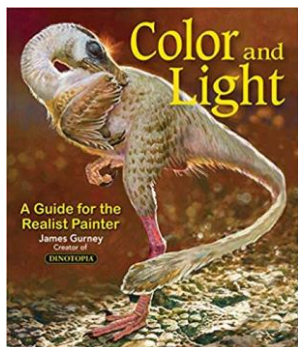
Bibliography



- **Creating Exceptional Color with Acrylics: How to Make Color Choices That Will Take Your Painting to a New Level**
- By Lexi Sundell



- **Mastering Color: The Essentials of Color Illustrated with Oils**
- By Vicki McMurry



- **Color and Light: A Guide for the Realist Painter**
- By James Gurney

Final Thoughts

- Make your own color wheel this week
- Tools in the tool box:
 - Color wheel
 - Mixing Rule-nearby colors mix bright, far colors mix dull
 - Use complements to dull down bright colors to more natural chroma
 - Remember that value does most of the work
 - Aerial Perspective: Use warm/high Chroma colors to make objects advance, cool/low chroma colors to make objects recede
- You only need about 3-4 colors in a sketch-simplifies your color decisions