

“21 IN BLUE” and “A JOURNEY IN BLUE”

Visual Composition, Shape and Color in Design

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SUMMARY

The extended summary consists of 61 pages of which 47 pages text, 12 pages illustrations, and 2 pages bibliography. It defines the theoretical framework and the process of realization of the exhibitions “21 in Blue” and “A Journey in Blue” (some of the more important activities in the period 2020 – 2021) which represent the author’s scientific and artistic search on the borderline between design and visual arts. It also describes the methodological apparatus and the related experimental part in the establishment of two creative cycles examining the principles and potentials of the visual composition. The extended summary includes 33 pencil sketches, 30 color compositions, and 41 graphic compositions.

The personal motivation for this research lies in the concept that in order to perfect ourselves as lecturers it is indispensable to be able to apply new methods and models, to examine a variety of opportunities, to acquire an attitude for recognizing and understanding the different viewpoints, to apply instruments typical of various trends differing from our own area of research, to work on our own development, and be ready to meet new challenges.

The methodological apparatus used in the process of elaboration of the creative project includes:

- an experimental study achieved through creating compositions – sketches, colored paintings compositions and colored graphics;
- applying the lateral thinking approach in the course of work by taking up the challenge of non-typical characteristics and random combinations of forms;
- theoretical study using the means of investigation from different points of view of the principles of form building, visual composition and color science;
- analytic approach through analyzing the results of the experimental study in terms of the theory of visual composition.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE ACCOMPLISHED CREATIVE PROJECT

The creative project aims at a deep study revealing and rationalizing composition potentials and laws, drawing a parallel between visual arts and design. The process and the achieved results are based on two aspects. On the one hand - the theory of composition, form building and color science, on the other – the method of lateral thinking. The basic guideline of this way of thinking is to seek for answers of the type “what it can be” rather than “what it is” as well as to develop the full potential of the creative process.

Choosing a working format – The square is preferred because in itself it has no direction and it exerts a minimum tension effect in the visual composition placed within it. It implies different approaches to one task, which is the purpose of the creative experiment.

Theoretical notes on the composition issues

▪ Elements of composition

We have included the main categories of forms, the line, contrast as a basic relation between the elements in the composition. There is always a complexity of visual stimuli and tensions in design. The separate objects cannot be viewed out of context of the setting (background) they correspond with.

▪ Organization of the elements in the composition

In nature phenomena and objects are structured, interconnected, cyclical, so we tend to seek for and rely on this organization and logic. We take into consideration the basic principles in the organization of elements in the composition – symmetry and asymmetry, dominant, meter and rhythm.

▪ Theory of color

Color is one of the basic and highly effective tools of design. Through color we can achieve or change a certain effect, convey ideas and messages, influence the psychological attitude and the quality of man-environment interrelation.

Some problems of the color science are discussed – parameters of color, role of color in the composition, synthesis and interaction of color with the other means of expression – format, position in the plane or space, background, form, contrasts, etc.

In order to achieve harmony and utility in design the means of expression have to be used with due measure. During the creative experiment the means of expression are also limited, the color palette being focused in the cold spectrum with a predominance of the blue. In order to give character and resonance to a visual composition it should possess dominant values and radiate tension attained through the contrasts.

▪ Principles of the composition

We examine the means of attaining harmony in the composition – mutual subordination, tension, unity, balance, proportion, affinity. What is characteristic of design is that it exerts influence on the customers in the emotional sphere, both with its utility and constructiveness as well as with its aesthetic qualities. The symbiosis between these effects is extremely important. The designers approach implies precise rationalization of each element as part of the whole and of the whole subordinate to the interactions of the separate parts.

CREATIVE PROCESS

The creative project carries out an in-depth empirical study with the purpose of revealing potentials and rationalizing the laws of visual composition.

In the process of research process we have examined the particular manifestations of the form, given different composition techniques, we have studied interactions and comparisons between various categories of forms. The results attained from the

experiments with visual values are subjected to analysis. Preconditions are created for further development of the research and finding possibilities for practical realization.

The graphic compositions investigate the interaction of the non-oriented form with the other categories of elements. The motive, present in all of them, is the non-oriented form building up a dominant, bound to the symbolism of the sun – our permanent source of light, heat, energy, life. The series of pencil drawings is influenced by the mountain relief and the abundance of plains and layouts. A contrast is sought between the airiness of the sky, the source of light and its propagation, and the orientation of the solid landforms.

The oil compositions are in the cold range with a prevailing blue color and its nuance combinations. The color experiment carried out shows the wealth of the palette applied. Despite the prevailing of the blue the overall impression is not one of a cold radiation, devoid of vitality. We have also overcome the dependence, defining the blue as a technological color and one related to the man-made material world.

Nature – we have tried to make an impression for connection with nature and the diversified relief of Bulgaria, despite the limited coloration which does not match reality and the lack of direct re-creation of nature. This is achieved through various composition approaches while using the six categories of forms. The confrontations between the separate elements and their characteristics and the rhythm to which the interactions between forms submit, follow the laws in the nature structures. An abundance of composition potentials is demonstrated in one and the same format, with the same means but with a different degree of contrast between the forms, their direction and interaction with the boundaries of the operating format.

The viewer – the findings attained develop the composition potentials step by step and on multiple layers. They have not been elaborated each for itself but follow the investigation of a given aspect. Nevertheless, the poly-variance obtains its full meaning in the process of observation on the part of the viewer. Intentionally, we have not named the compositions created. Entitling them would lead to restricting the limits of influence. In the viewer's communication with the compositions there is no correct way of their apprehension, the same is valid for the communication with design. The compositions do not demonstrate what is represented but what each viewer is able to find in them.

Knowledge of the laws generated by two fundamental factors – the structure in nature and the laws of the visual perceptions underlies the visual order. In the course of work both these factors are advanced, they intertwine and counteract, overcoming what seems to be illogical dependencies and unsolvable provocations.

A process of creative play is put into effect, based on theory, but initiated to a large extent by chance and by accepting challenges, a process with the aim to exceed the known and the awareness of the problem.