

How modernist designers approach colour with the grammar of modern semioticians

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Abstract

This thesis establishes Modernist colour theory according to key faculty of the Bauhaus, before exploring colour semiotics within the work of Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen. The similarities and contrasts of these theories lead the paper into investigating the cultural and symbolic values of colour, and subsequently, what effect culture has on colour meaning. Looking at empirical and linguistic studies of colour, the paper discusses if absolute truths of colour can exist and the influences linguistics has on colour perception. Finally, by applying the findings through the analysis of selected Modernist paintings, this thesis aims to ascertain the influences of colour meaning and show the early Modernist approach to colour likens to that of semioticians.