

The Influence and Application of Thomas Cole's Color Theories

All Hail ye mountain solitudes! Ye wilds
Untrodden by the city's noisy crowd!
I come to dwell with you – reject me not,
For I have lov'd you with an earnest love...

-Lysander, *Spirits of the Wilderness*, by Thomas Cole

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Appendix

***Images from the Thomas Cole Papers, New York State Library,
Albany, NY***

Transcriptions of papers by Caroline Gillaspie

Introduction

Thomas Cole was born in Lancashire, England in 1801. His father was a woolen textile manufacturer, who was unsuccessful as a businessman, and had difficulty providing for his family.ⁱ Thomas, therefore, began working as an engraver in a textile factory. When the family moved to America in 1819, Thomas worked as a wood engraver. While Cole was a poet and musician, he realized that his true love lay in the expression of nature through pictures, and he began painting landscapes, and later portraits for income.ⁱⁱ Cole would make his first trip to the Catskills in 1825. The three paintings he would make from his sketches would be bought by John Trumbull, William Dunlap, and Asher Durand.

Louis Legrand Noble's biography of Cole allows the reader to realize Cole's lack of formal artistic education and training, other than his employment as an engraver. However, Noble states that Cole was an avid reader,ⁱⁱⁱ so it is likely that much of his artistic understanding was picked up from books. For example, much of what he learned about the practice of landscape painting he would have read in William Oram's *Precepts and Observations on the Art of Colouring in Landscape Painting*.^{iv}

Cole had notebooks and sketchbooks that he filled with poems, journal entries, and notes about various painting techniques. One subject that occurs in various notebooks is that of color. The subject of color seemed important to Cole, as color, as well as the principles of light and shade, created expressiveness in a painting, and could be used to deeply affect the viewer, and manipulate the gaze. Cole was mainly interested in the character of colors, the placement and quantity of colors, the use of light and shade, and techniques to create warmer landscapes. He wrote about his own interpretation of the character of colors and how colors could be used, therefore, to reflect the character of a painting's subject. He also wrote about the effect of

opposing colors, and opposing light and darkness, as well as initial steps to be taken in painting, such as creating a composition first in light and shade, and the use of underlying tones to create warmth.

A final subject that Cole wrote about frequently was the analogy between color and sound. Both can have an effect on the viewer/listener, whether pleasing or not. Sounds as well as colors can be used in harmony with one another, which is something that Cole explores to the point of proposing a design for an instrument that could “play” colors. Because of Cole’s interest in music as well as painting, this seems like a very natural subject for him to pursue.

The entries found in his notebooks about color seem unique and ingenious, but they are not all Cole’s original ideas. Many of the points Cole makes, and the subjects he writes about, can be found in the publications of an Englishman by the name of George Field. Field’s first book on Chromatics was published in 1817 in London. The book contains technical descriptions of color and chromatics, but it also contains similar ideas such as the use of light and shadow in painting, and the comparison between sound and color. While it is difficult to determine when, Cole most likely encountered this book, and later publications by Field, and was very influenced by it. Cole seems to have taken away many of Field’s ideas about underlying light and shade, and the analogy between harmony of sound and harmony of color, and developed them into ideas that improve his paintings, writing these ideas in his notebooks, while leaving out much of the basic color theory. Despite being influenced by Field, Cole includes many original ideas in his notebooks as well, such as his assigned characteristics of colors, and suggestions for warm tones in the sky and foreground.

Introduction to Chromatics

George Field (b. 1777) was an English pigment maker, and writer on various subjects including chromatics. Although he did not create artwork himself, his writing influenced artists in England and abroad, as can be seen by the list of subscribers to his books.^v In his first publication, *Chromatics, or, an Essay on the Analogy and Harmony of Colours*, from 1817, Field presents very technical and scientific explanations of chromatics. He begins his book by stating, “The term Chromatics denotes the science of the relations of *light, shade, and colours.*”^{vi} There are *inherent*, and *transient* colors, which are two terms that will be used frequently in this essay. *Inherent* colors are solid, such as pigment on canvas, whereas *transient* colors are refracted colors, such as through a prism (rainbow). While Field does not mention these, the terms *additive* and *subtractive* are related to *inherent* and *transient*, and are important to color theory. The term *additive* is used to express the addition of transient colors (refracted colors) together to form white. All the colors of the prism combined will form white light. The term *subtractive* is used to express the addition of pigments. While pigment is being added, color is being taken away, eventually creating black. Therefore, white is the sum of all colors, and black is the absence of all colors. Field also uses the terms “light and shade”, which, in their inherent or transient state, are either white and black or light and dark, respectively. I will be using the term “hue” to denote color, and “tone” to denote the brightness or darkness of that color. Thomas Cole, in some of his papers, also uses the word “tint” to signify color, or hue. Field also explains the difference between primary (red, yellow, blue), secondary (orange, green, purple), and tertiary colors (citrine, olive, russet), as well as the predominance and subdominance/subordinance of colors when mixing. For example, in the color olive, blue is the predominant color because it is contained in both purple and green, which when combined make olive. Red and yellow are,

therefore, subordinate in this case. These will be the recurring terms and themes throughout this essay.

Much is written about Cole's love of the wilderness, poetry, music, and painting, but there is not much published about his interest in color. It is an important subject, as it encompasses more than just an interest in painting. A comparison can be made between a poet's use of words to describe a landscape, and a painter's use of color. The same is true with a musician's use of pleasing melodies and harmonies and painter's choice of dominant and subordinate colors.

Cole's Main Statements Regarding Color

In the majority of his writing on the subject of color, Cole discusses the effects of color on the composition. He is concerned with how the choice, quantity, and placement of colors will reflect the character or mood of the painting, how the viewer will respond to color, and how the technical application of colors will affect the finished hues. Concerning the choice of color, Cole believes that different colors are associated with different moods or characters. The appropriate colors must be chosen to reflect the subject or character of a painting. In a composition, Cole explains that there should be a predominating color, which will create the character. Other colors included in the composition are considered subordinate. Cole writes, "If the subject is a gay one, the predominant colour should be in unison with that character. If a sad one, the colour should be sad also. If terrible, the colour that has most of that characteristic ought to be predominant."^{vii} He assigns characters to colors; yellow being "gay", blue "sad", and red "terrible". Cole also explains the effects of light and dark on the character of colors. He believes that darker colors will appear gloomier, while light colors have the opposite effect, creating a gentler appearance.

In one page of his notebook containing the description “order of colours in the Heavens at Sunrise as viewed from the top of a high mountain”, Cole has drawn a diagram of a semicircle above a horizon line.^{viii} The primary colors are labeled at three points along the semicircle, along with “gay colours”, “sad colours”, “sun” and “black”. This represents a view, facing north, of the sun rising, producing the color yellow in the far east, red in the center, and blue in the west, where the sunlight has not yet reached. By labeling the right side (east) where the sun is emerging as “gay colours”, and the left side (west) as “sad colours”, Cole is reinforcing the idea of the characters of colors. He also may be suggesting a metaphoric use of daytime and nighttime to represent compositions that are “gay” or “sad” (as relative terms). Cole uses this metaphor of day and night in some of his paintings, as will be discussed.

Cole enters this page in his notebook, believing that these effects do occur in nature. He writes, “I have observed their effects on my own mind...”^{ix} He seems determined to examine these effects so as to best emulate them in his work. The color choices used by Cole and his followers are incredibly powerful, and may be considered highly exaggerated. However, the use of color may not be too far off, and these effects Cole experiences in nature and later documents may be genuine. Observation and enjoyment of the natural scenery in and around Catskill, New York may yield similar effects.^x

Cole also writes that the quantity, as well as the choice of colors is important for creating certain effects. Large amounts of bright color should be used for a powerful subject, as a bright color “seldom, if ever effects as such when scattered or in small masses.”^{xi} The predominating color, which creates the character of the painting, must be used in large quantities, according to Cole. In this page, Cole discusses the predominating color to be used in large masses as being a bright one. He does not mention predominating dark colors.

However, Cole does discuss the opposition of colors; dark and light, warm and cool. Opposing colors will draw the viewer's eye to certain points, and around the painting, and will create a brilliant composition. Again, stressing the importance of using large quantities of color, Cole believes that opposing masses of light and dark will attract the eye. He writes, "The eye is attracted by light in the middle of dark, and by dark in the midst of light."^{xii} He also mentions lines of light and dark in the next sentence, suggesting that the use of alternating lights and darks will move the eye through the painting. The opposition of masses of warm and cool colors is important in a composition as well. Cole believes that this opposition will give "the most value and brilliancy" to the colors.^{xiii}

The last main point Cole devotes to the effect of colors is the use of warm tones, mainly red, underneath the finished painting, and the practice of painting in "light and shadow". Cole believes that landscapes are best painted on a red ground, "as it gives to the skies and distance an aerial diaphanous appearance that cannot be produced otherwise."^{xiv} This technique will mean a warmer tone in the end. Secondly, the sky and distant landscape should also have an underlying red tone that is painted as light or as dark as the finished sky and distance will appear. "These painted upon with blue, white, and yellow will have a hazy yet clear appearance..."^{xv} The use of red underneath the blue makes the sky appear warmer, and allows for pure blue to be used without appearing harsh. Cole concludes this entry with the technique of using yellow in the sky. A little yellow can be mixed with the blue of the sky when approaching the horizon to create "a beautiful amber sky."^{xvi}

Of the same topic is the application of paint in "light and shadow," in which the initial construction of the composition focuses on applying warm colors on the canvas. This initial pigment should be applied in the degree of light or dark (tone) that the finished painting is

intended to have.^{xvii} The final hues will reflect the tone of the underlying pigment in their brightness or darkness. This technique is concerned with the initial tones of the composition, rather than the final hues, or “tints”, as Cole says. Cole describes in the previous entry this technique through the choice of reddish pigments as underlying warm tones. In this entry, he uses the terms “light and shadow,” which is not an idea unique to Cole, as will be examined later. This term seems to imply the *transient* state of colors, such as sunlight, rainbows etc., versus the *inherent* state, which is pigment. Cole believes it is important, therefore, to focus on the brightness or darkness of a landscape due to natural light, in the initial phases of painting. “By this means you make certain of your light and shadows and make a ground that will give a tone to the picture and give a warmth and beauty to the true tints afterwards laid on.”^{xviii}

Two of Thomas Cole’s palettes, which are at Cedar Grove in Catskill, NY, can be examined with the ideas of underlying warm tones and light and shadow in mind. The larger palette^{xix} is almost entirely covered in paint. The hues of the pigments, however, are solely variations of reddish-oranges, yellows and browns, along with black and white. The smaller palette^{xx} contains pigment only on 2 edges. The hues found on the small palette are of a wider range of the spectrum. I believe the large palette may have been used to paint in warm reddish tones as light and shadow. The small palette may have then been used for final hues.

Cole often sketched in the wilderness and brought his sketches back to his studio to paint. He therefore included many notes in his sketches, on color, descriptions of specific landscape features, and notes on movement (such as that of clouds). Two pages I found with Cole’s writing have small sketches with notes. In the top image of the first page,^{xxi} different areas are labeled with different colors. In the sky he labels different layers of color: “gold” is written close to the horizon, then “greenish”, then “soft orange.” This relates to his diagram of the horizon. He also

includes “green” and “a rich olive” in different parts of the ground. Secondly, he specifies which part of the composition is in sunlight (the left side), and which is in shade (the right side). The lower sketch on the same page includes description of colors also, as well as descriptions of the clouds. The upper-most portion of the sky is to be painted “pale blue”, with the addition of “dusky soft clouds” and “fine clouds.”

The second page again has more descriptions of sky color and cloud characteristics and colors.^{xxii} The top sketch includes notes stating that there should be “bright light” with “warm clouds” in the top left, moving into “warm gray loose clouds” when nearing the horizon. Cole also includes a note reading “clouds moving over the mountain.” He not only reminds himself of warmth or coolness of color, or light or shade, but also the sense of movement. Clouds moving over a mountain would have a different appearance than if they were stagnant.

A sketch of Cole’s that was done overlooking the Oxbow in Northampton, MA also contains extensive notes. The sketch, which is in one of his sketchbooks at the Detroit Institute of Arts, is included in an article about Cole’s painting of the Oxbow by Oswaldo Rodriguez Roque,^{xxiii} and the writing has been transcribed. This sketch contains some notes on color, such as “reddish gray rock”, however it mainly contains names of details in the landscape, such as pines, elms, and cornfields.

In one of his essays, Allan Wallach states that Cole studied the writing of William Oram, who, it is believed, influenced Cole’s work greatly.^{xxiv} One of the main techniques that Cole picked up from Oram, says Wallach, is that of creating very simple sketches with notes on color, light and shade, composition etc. Two examples of Oram’s engravings from his book *Precepts and Observations on the Art of Colouring in Landscape Painting* are found in the article. The two sketches of Cole, referred to earlier, are very similar to Oram’s engravings. Both contain

notes on varying colors in the sky, as well as specifications of light and dark throughout the sketches.

Application of Statements in Cole's Paintings

Cole seems to experiment with different ideas and techniques, which he records in his notebooks. They appear to be tried and proven techniques, and many things are crossed out or adjusted. Many of these ideas seem to be based on his love of the wilderness. In his writing, he focuses on ideas that are less technical and more concerned with warmth and character. The ideas that are more technical, such as colors in opposition to one another, are important for effects on the viewer, a powerful portrayal of the wilderness, as well as composition. All of these techniques can be seen in practice in Cole's work.

In The Oxbow, Cole uses opposing colors, both light and dark, and warm and cool. The composition can be divided down the middle, half being painted light and warm, and the other half painted dark and cool. The sky is divided between dark, cold, raging clouds on the left, and opposed with a bright, warm, clear sky on the right. The ground, too, contains opposing dark and light, cool and warm. The tangled forest on the left is painted in dark, cool greens, while the peaceful farmland on the right is bright, and depicts warm, yellow-gold fields. The main technique he is using here is the use of large masses of color in opposition to one another. However, there are also alternating light and dark areas in the cultivated land. As Cole writes in his notebooks, alternating light and dark areas will lead the eye through the composition. This idea is applied, alternating light and dark tones (really, light and shade) through the farmland, leading the eye to the hill in the background.

The use of these techniques is intended to create an effect on the viewer. As stated, the composition is divided in half. The left half of the sky depicts storm clouds, while the left half of the land depicts the wilderness. The subject celebrates the power of nature, and the untouched beauty of the American wilderness. The right side of the painting depicts a clear sky after the passing of a storm, and the neat, cultivated farmland surrounding a peaceful river: the influence of human behavior on the land. The colors Cole chose reflect the character of the subjects. On the left, the green of the land, and the gray of the sky are dark and cold, representing the wilderness as untamed and unfamiliar, whereas the warm yellows and browns of the farmland are inviting and familiar. There are, however, some hints of warm and cool, dark and bright, within the masses. The touches of red in the bark of the tree in the foreground suggest that the wilderness is still appealing, while the patches of shadow cast by the storm clouds over the fields suggest that nature will always be in control.

The Course of Empire series is a fine example of the application of Cole's color ideas, as there is a wider variety of techniques used, and a repetitive use of techniques in different ways. In the Pastoral State, one of the most prominent of Cole's ideas is the underlying red tone in the foreground. It creates warmth, and assists with the peaceful composition, reflective of the subject, or stage of the empire, as pastoral: familiarity and equality with the land. The alternating light and shade throughout the foreground leads the eye back to the ever-standing mountain in the background, and the warm, hazy sky painted in cool blue over a warm undertone, with the addition of yellow in the clouds near the horizon. The use of colors to reflect the character of the painting is repeated in each state.

In the Consummation, the dominance of the empire over the land is apparent through the composition of man-made structures, as well as the choice of cold, but dazzling, white as a

dominating color. The bright reds and oranges contrast with the blinding white to create a strong opposition, and the direct sunlight reflected off the white structures suggests the brilliance and power of the empire. In Destruction, dark and bright are contrasted again, but this time dark is predominating. Cole again uses bright reds and oranges in opposition with cool colors, but this time they contrast the cold, dark gray of storm clouds. As mentioned before, Cole sketched a diagram of a horizon at sunrise. I speculated that he might use day and night metaphorically in his paintings. While Course of Empire doesn't use day and night to symbolize "gay" and "sad", the course of an empire over time is reflected in the course of the sun through the sky, from morning to twilight. The brilliance of the sun at noontime is reflected in the representation of a victorious empire at its height, while the sun sets on the deserted ruins.

Cole as a Renaissance Man: The Analogy of Sound and Color

Thomas Cole's notebooks are full of poetry and writing on various subjects. He composed poems about the wilderness, documented his travels in Europe, and wrote letters in elegant prose and penmanship. His interests also lay in music (two woodwind instruments owned by Cole are at Cedar Grove), which he believed had a great deal in common with painting. Cole believed that everything that comprised a song corresponded with elements in a painting.^{xxv} For example, the melody in a song is equivalent to the arrangement of a painting, the time (meter) in a song is equivalent to the continuity of the composition, and the harmony of sound is equivalent to the harmony of colors. In the same entry as he writes these comparisons, Cole assigns a color to each note.^{xxvi}

A diagram drawn by Cole in his sketchbook from 1827 is made up of lines intersecting in the middle to form 12 points.^{xxvii} Writing at the bottom of the page indicates that this is an

“analogy between sounds and colour”. On first inspection, the diagram resembles the circle of fifths/circle of fourths used in music, which is based on key signatures. With each new key, either a sharp or a flat is added to the key signature. The order of the addition of sharps and flats remains the same, and therefore the position of the key signatures around the circle remains the same as well. Cole has written in 6 colors on this diagram (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet) and placed them in order going clockwise around the circle. The colors do not correspond to the same notes that Cole assigns to them in image 8, nor do the letters around the circle follow the same order as the circle of fifths, making this diagram a bit puzzling. However, I believe that Cole is making a connection between the order of sharps and flats, and the order of colors in the spectrum, as well as the addition/combination of colors (such as in the formation of secondary colors).

A page from one of Cole’s other notebooks, from 1829, contains a comparison between harmony of sounds and light and shade through gradation. He writes, “Harmony appears to be the product of gradation.”^{xxviii} He creates two diagrams to show this comparison. The first shows gradation between notes in a right angle. There are five lines within the right angle, which form acute angles. Each acute angle corresponds with a note. The notes are either one or two steps apart, creating gradation. The second diagram shows light and shade in gradation, black to white with shades of gray. These degrees of change in light and shade from black to white correspond to the steps between notes, which Cole believes creates harmonious sounds and appearances.

Not only do both sound and color create harmony within themselves, but also both have similar effects on the viewer or listener. Cole writes in an entry to his notebook, dated from 1835-1848, that both sound and color can cause either pleasure or pain. A pleasant color compares to a pleasant note played by an instrument, while a disruptive noise, such as the sound

of a firing cannon, compares to the appearance of lightning.^{xxix} This same entry is when he proposes the idea of creating an instrument that “plays” colors. Because he had previously experimented with assigning notes to colors, he believes that there can be created an instrument that would use this understanding of both notes and colors. In this idea, he brings all his propositions about the relation between sound and color together.

The Influence of George Field

George Field was a pigment maker from England, who published a number of books on color theory. He was one of the founders of *The British School*, and worked on an exhibition of British art that opened in 1802.^{xxx} His first book was published in 1817, titled *Chromatics; or, an Essay on the Analogy and Harmony of Colours*. Although it is unclear when, Thomas Cole certainly encountered Field’s works, and perhaps Field himself and his followers during his trip to Europe between 1829 and 1831. Along with Cole’s own writing, found at the New York State Library, is an announcement, or advertisement, for the publication of one of Field’s later works, *Elements of Analogical Philosophy: or, a Primary View of the Principles, Relations, and Purposes, of Nature, Science, and Art*,^{xxxi} which was published in 1839. Although he was not a subscriber to Field’s books, Cole was certainly an avid reader and follower.

Also amongst Cole’s original writing are a number of pages that were copied from one of Field’s books. A page, titled “Field’s Optical Instruments – In Chromoscope & Metrochrome”,^{xxxii} includes a short hand version of pages 222-223 from Field’s *Chromatography; or, a Treatise on Colours and Pigments, and of their Powers in Painting*. Another series of 4 pages is also a summary of this book, and is titled on page 1 as “Extracts from Field’s Chromatography; or a Treatise on Pigments and Colours.”^{xxxiii} Much of what Cole

wrote in his notebooks was less technical and often focused on techniques that he had tried and found successful. Much of what he has copied out of Field's book is more technical, and deals, for example, with the mechanics of a prism and optical effects.

In an article by William I. Homer, titled "Thomas Cole and Field's 'Chromatography,'" a comparison is made between a diagram found in one of Cole's notebooks (1839) at the Princeton Art Museum, and a diagram appearing in Field's *Chromatography*.^{xxxiv} Both diagrams are circular, and contain overlapping circles, and different areas represent different colors. There are six circles total that overlap, representing the three primary colors and the three secondary colors, placed in order clockwise. The circles overlap to represent the mixing of colors to form tertiary colors, and dark orange, green and purple. There is a small circle in the middle labeled "neutral", representing the combination of all (inherent) colors, which, in theory, forms black. Homer suggests that the finished appearance of the diagram and text, and lack of mistakes, or cross-outs, in the writing indicate that it may have been copied from somewhere else. He says, "the text is written in the methodical, logical style of a scientist, not in Cole's picturesque and colorful prose, as found in his letters", and "the physical appearance of the writing does not indicate any struggle to formulate ideas, as might have been revealed by word changes, cancellations, and insertions."^{xxxv} The two diagrams are, sure enough, almost identical.

At first read, Cole's entries on color seem to be unique tried and proven techniques. While some pages most likely include some of Cole's original ideas, many of the main themes were based on Field's writing. In image 5, as mentioned before, Cole proposes that there is an advantage to painting a landscape initially in "light and shadow." He believes that painting light and shadow in a warm tone will make the tone of the finished painting warmer. Field, however, when discussing light and shade, focuses on three different states: *sensible*, *latent*, and

compounded (a combination of both).^{xxxvi} In a *sensible* state, light and shade appear as white, black or grey and in a *latent* state as red, blue or yellow. Field then writes about the mixing of primary colors to form secondary and tertiary colors. Cole, however, seems to adapt this scientific approach to light and shade for his own use, and focuses more on the application of light and shade on a white canvas so that they will “give a warmth and beauty to the true tints afterwards laid on.”^{xxxvii}

Field also mentions the relation between the effects of color and the effects of music.^{xxxviii} He compares gradation of color (which allows for infinite colors) to melody, and goes on to discuss harmony of color and harmony of sound, which occurs when “three or more sounds or colours [are] in consonance or opposition.”^{xxxix} Colors and sounds can either be in concordance or discordance with one another. Like in mixing colors, musical and painterly compositions have a predominating color, or sound, and subordinate colors, or sounds, which are harmonious.^{xl}

Conclusion

George Field’s influence on Cole (and many other contemporaneous artists) is undeniable. But it is important to understand Cole’s self-motivation as a student of music, poetry, and especially art. With little training in the field, he became one of the most admired and influential painters of the period.^{xli} His technical and intellectual abilities are certainly ones to be admired.

Cole is considered the founder of the Hudson River School of painting. His interest and ability in portraying the American landscape as an untouched wilderness became one of the main ambitions that other artists of the school would follow. As Frederic Church’s mentor, and close friend to Asher Durand, it is possible that his ideas on color, both those he read in Field, as well

as his own, in turn influenced these artists, as well as others, making him truly the “father” of the Hudson River School.

ⁱ Noble, Louis Legrand. *The Life and Works of Thomas Cole*. Pg. 3

ⁱⁱ *Ibid.* pg 12-13

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid.* pg 4

^{iv} Wallach, Alan. “Thomas Cole: Landscape and the Course of American Empire.” Pg. 28

^v Field, George. *Chromatography, Or, a Treatise on Colours and Pigments, and of their Powers in Painting*. Pg v-viii.

^{vi} Field, George. *Chromatics, or, an Essay on the Analogy and Harmony of Colours*. Pg. 1

^{vii} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 2)

^{viii} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 6)

^{ix} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 2)



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^{xi} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 1)

^{xii} *Ibid.*

^{xiii} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 3)

^{xiv} *Ibid.*

^{xv} *Ibid.*

^{xvi} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 4)

^{xvii} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827 (See image 5)

^{xviii} *Ibid.*

^{xix} Cole, Thomas. Large Palette (See image 9)

^{xx} Cole, Thomas. Small Palette (See image 10)

^{xxi} Cole, Thomas. Sketch, date unknown. (See image 17)

^{xxii} Cole, Thomas. Sketch, date unknown. (See image 18)

^{xxiii} Roque, Oswaldo Rodriguez. "The Oxbow" by Thomas Cole: Iconography of an American Landscape Painting." pp. 65.

^{xxiv} Wallach, Alan. “Thomas Cole: Landscape and the Course of American Empire.” Pg. 28

^{xxv} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 8)

^{xxvi} *Ibid.*

^{xxvii} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827. (See image 7)

^{xxviii} Cole, Thomas. Notebook, 1829 (See image 14)

^{xxix} Cole, Thomas. Notebook, 1835-1848. Entry dated November 8, 1935. (See image 15)

^{xxx} Gage, John. *George Field and his Circle: From Romanticism to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*. pg. 8

^{xxxi} Announcement for the publications of work by George Field. Date unknown. Book was published in 1839. (see image 11)

^{xxxii} Cole, Thomas. Thomas Cole Papers, date unknown. (See image 12)

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- ^{xxxiii} Cole, Thomas. Thomas Cole Papers – set of 4 pages. (See image 13)
^{xxxiv} Homer, William I. *Thomas Cole and Field's "Chromatography"*. Pg 26
^{xxxv} *Ibid.*, Pg. 26
^{xxxvi} Field, George. *Chromatics*. pg 2
^{xxxvii} Cole, Thomas. Sketchbook, 1827 (See image 5)
^{xxxviii} Field, George. *Chromatics*. Pg 13
^{xxxix} *Ibid.*, pg 14
^{xl} *Ibid.*, pg 18
^{xli} Noble, Louis Legrand. *The Life and Works of Thomas Cole*. Pg. 36.

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Appendix

Transcription of image 1

In painting an object intended to be powerful and bright, it is necessary to have a ____ mass of lights & colour. For the brightest colour that can be placed in a picture seldom, if ever affects as such when scattered or in small masses.

Quantity as much as quality is necessary to produce [a strong] effect on the eye. I have observed that the pictures of [unknown – an artists name?] and others (as seen in prints) that the sunny light appearance is produced by having a broad [masses] of the lightest colours. The bright light predominates and they take their character pleasant [sunshiny] picture from that in great measure

The picture sent to Mr. Roger London. A scene from the Last of the Mohicans. Was first painted in light and shadow in the warmest colours possible. In the sky [unknown] and [unknown] in the warm parts much Terra Sienna. This ground gave a tone to the picture where finished. The foreground was painted with the richest colour possible with fine grays. They [run] in [unknown] afterwards. The clear sky was painted over with cobalt blue, fine raw Terra Sienna & whites [perhaps] a touch of vermillion. The clouds were painted with warm purples & [yellows] afterwards. Thinly painted with cooler colours in the shadows and higher lights put on

The eye is attracted by light in the middle of dark. And by dark in the prudest of light. The eye may be led through a picture by lines of dark as much as by lines of light.

Transcription of image 2

All pictures ought to have a principle of colour. If the subject is a gay one, the predominant colour should be in unison with that character. If a sad one, the colour should be sad also. If terrible the colour that has most of that characteristic ought to be predominant. I should call yellow gay; blue sad; red terrible. Light as the opposite of dark enhances. Dark causes gloom. But light, as white, though it ameliorates, does not destroy the characteristics of colours as it regards their effect on the mind. When yellow is made light it is more delicate. Blue has a more tender effect. Sadness is a lesser degree equivalent to what we call pensiveness. Red is stimulating. The peculiarities of colours as to their effects on the mind are badly explained in what I have said. But I believe such affects are found in nature. I have observed their affects on my own mind on [unknown] coloured rooms. Blue is commonly called the melancholy colour – red - is the violent – yellow is the gaudy.

Transcription of image 3

Colours always have the most value and brilliancy when they are contrasted the warm with the cool, not only in touching a warm colour with a cool one, a cool with warm, but in laying them in masses opposed to each other. By this means great brilliancy and clearness is preserved.

Crossed out:

(Never use much white in foregrounds and you will already have a richness that cannot otherwise be given and the distance will be thrown off)

Red grounds are the best for painting landscapes on as [it] gives to the skies and distance an aerial diaphanous appearance that cannot be produced otherwise. It will do very well to lay in the skies and distant mountains [unknown] in red and white not [here] darker than they are intended to be when finished. These painted upon with blue, white, and yellow will have a hazy yet clear appearance and advantage arising from first painting red is that the tints are purer from not [having] so much mixed as in the common manner of painting skies & when the yellow red and blue are mixed together and often produce a dirty tint. The fewer colours the tints are compounded of, the clearer they are. Sky using the red under.... (continued on color theory 4)

Transcription of image 4

The upper part of a sky may be painted with pure blue and white without appearing cold and gradually mixing a little yellow to the blue as you approach the horizon a beautiful amber sky is produced.

Green herbage are always [unknown] on a reddish or gray ground or rock

Burnt brown, ochre, Lehigh, black, white, perhaps [unknown] Indian red make a fine distance in the shadow of a rain storm

In painting [ragged] and violent clouds to give that loose effect it is [well] to (sometimes) bring the lighter colour over the dark

Black, Terra Siena Brown, broken with [R Siena] black and white for the ground makes a fine colour for shadowy cool rocks.

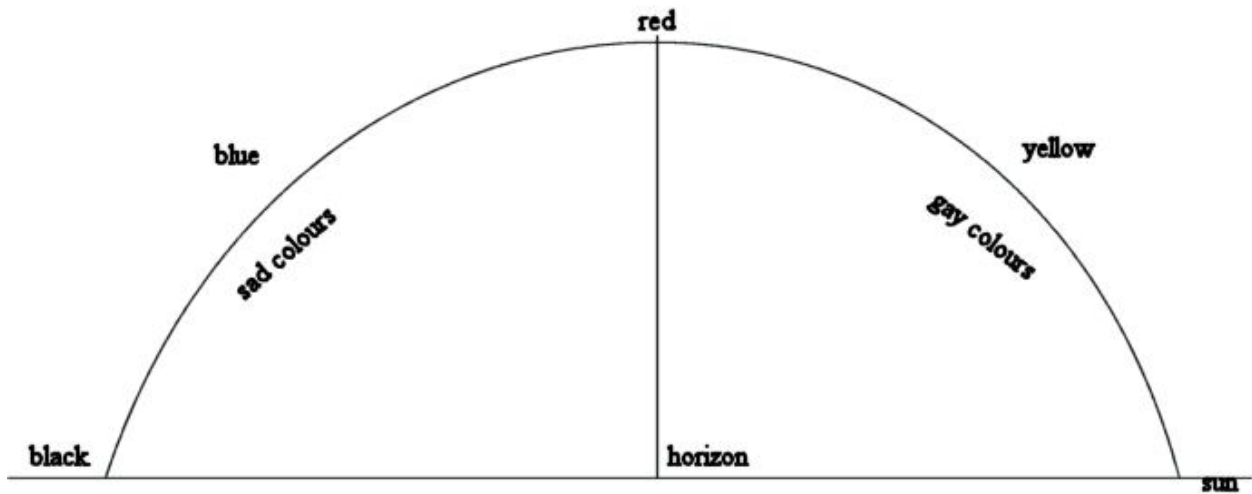
Harmony of forms is analogous to harmony of colours, and the knowledge of one facilitates the study of the other.

Transcription of image 5

I think great advantage might be derived from painting landscapes in light and shadows first, in warm glowing colours on a white ground, by this means you make certain of your light and shadows and make a ground that will give a tone to the picture and give a warmth and beauty to the true tints afterwards laid on.

Transcription of image 6

Order of colours in the Heavens at Sunrise as viewed from the top of a high mountain.



Transcription of image 8

Sound

Colour

Loudness

analogous to

Intensity

Harmony

Harmony

Melody

Arrangement

Time

Massing, Continuity, Succession

Colour

Sound

Sound

Colour

Red = a

Heighth & Depth

=

Light & Darkness

Orange = b

Yellow = c

Green = d

Blue = e

Indigo = f

Violet = g

Transcription of image 14

Thoughts on the Principle of Harmony

Harmony appears to be the product of gradation. All straight lines drawn from one point and included in a right angle are gradations from the lines that form that angle, and are more or less in agreement (or harmony) with those lines, according as they form acute or obtuse angles with them.

A and B are the lines that form the right angle. All the included ones are gradations. G is more in harmony with B than C is.

Light and shade in gradation harmonize.

Forms being included in lines depend for harmony on the gradations of those lines, but have also other gradations.

Perhaps it is melody rather than harmony of the [term] may be applied to anything but music.

Transcription of image 15

In the first place a simple sound may give pleasure or pain to the ear as the note of an instrument or the [report] of a cannon. So rose-colour for instance gives pleasure to the eye, the lightning flash pain. *

The first modification of a sound in its approach to music is being measured. Such is the music of the drum.+ Colour is capable of this modification.

The second modification of sound is the rising and sinking in the scale. Here some difficulty arises in the analogy, for although there are the seven prismatic colours to correspond with the seven notes in music, yet each colour has an expression+ or character peculiar to itself. As far as I am at present acquainted with music, the [many] notes are altogether arbitrary and have no analogy with colours as red blue & [some], though may depend on [unknown]. The melody of sound depends upon arrangement. So colour may be arranged with corresponding effect. The harmony of sound depends on combination. So does that of colour.

It is evident that there is an analogy between colour & sound & with study & experiment it might be traced through all its ramifications, but I am not... (continued in image 16)

*[unknown] light as colour. It is the primitive. Colour cannot [unknown] without light.

+ Perhaps the first modification is degree or intensity

+ Of this I will speak hereafter

Transcription of image 16

...aiming to prove the analogy, but to show that there is plausibility in the thought that an instrument could be constructed by which colour could be played & to those who had cultivated

their task in the art as much as our taste in music is generally cultivated would experience a pleasure by no means inferior to that given by music.