

# FREE COLOR STUDIES

An integral part of the Albers color program involved what he called “Free Color Studies”. His rationale was that these studies, unlike the highly structured class assignments, promoted color relatedness in a more personal way. It was composed of a mix of found objects, e.g. leaves and colored paper. The mission I propose follows a similar goal, with the addition of an option not available fifty years ago, i.e., digital graphics.

Although the term “FREE” is emphasized, this freedom comes, not out of ignorance, but rather from a knowledge of our options and limitations. “Don’t allow yourself to be a prisoner of your own ignorance.”

The limitations, or criteria, in these studies are as follows:

1. Color; not shape, should be the theme. One way to consider this would be to create a composition in which shapes and their colors are “OF” and not simply “ON” the background. In fact, the very recognition of a “background” suggests a failure to comprehend the concept of figure/ground relationships. There are many ways to integrate shapes and color, and here is an opportunity to focus on this important visual ingredient.

2. The composition must have a minimum of one found object which can be incorporated physically in a collage or replicated digitally in concert with other shapes and colors. Other materials are limited to commercially produced colored materials and/or printed imagery.

3. These are stepping stones; not precious stones, so be willing to take some risks which foster uncertainty and failure as well as new insights.

4. No mats or frames.      5. Keep it simple and focused on color.