

Colorist: A definition

A “Colorist”, by my definition, is one who fully exploits the visual interaction of color, whether in representational or non-representational work. This interaction results when colors relate, creating an optical sensation which adds up to more than the sum of its individual parts. Halation and Vanishing Boundaries are two such phenomena capable of creating luminosity.

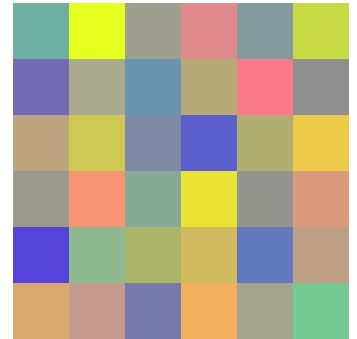
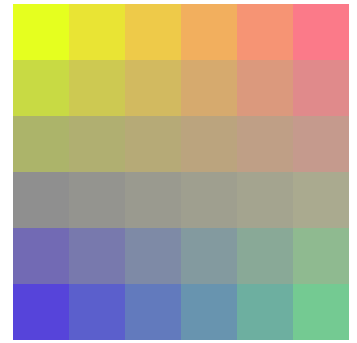
A non-colorist, by contrast, may display a great variety of color “That struts and frets its hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.” Shakespeare

The two matrixes above right are identical except for their composition. Which is the more luminous? Why?

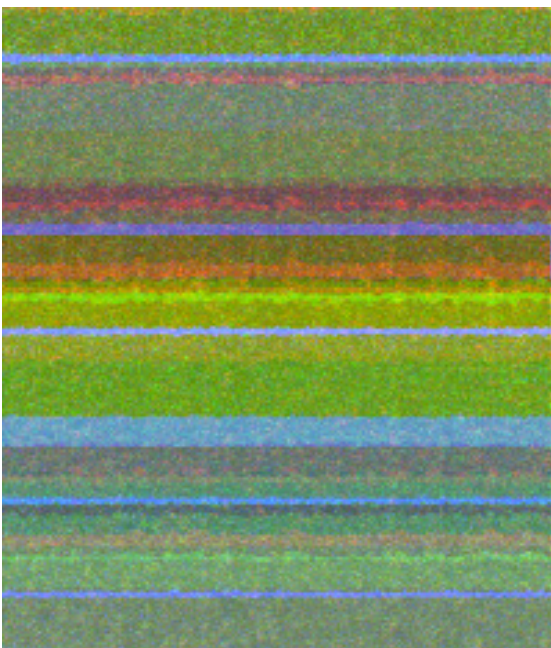
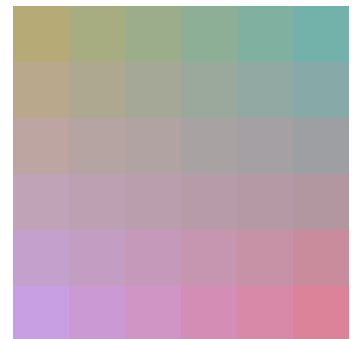
RELATIONSHIP IS THE KEY. The upper matrix glows; the lower matrix does not. In the upper matrix, colors are seated as relatives or members of a family, but the colors in the lower matrix are scattered, separating themselves as random notes of music that adhere to no rule but that of bringing attention to oneself. Using the analogy of music, the lower matrix makes sound; the upper makes music.

Which of the two works below fit this definition of “Colorist”?

Clue: Which has color interaction or luminosity? This luminosity is made possible through halations and vanishing boundaries; the only two means by which such phenomena can be created.



This matrix adds Vanishing Boundaries with Halations to double the luminosity.



Dick Nelson



Josef Albers