

Art & Activities / Warhol's *Space Fruit* and the Color Wheel



Overview:

Students use Warhol's *Space Fruit* print series to develop a working knowledge of the color wheel and its terminology. Through observation and writing, students examine how the printing process allowed Warhol to create endless color combinations and compositions.

Grades: K-12

Suggested Time Frame: 1 class period

Pennsylvania State Standards:

PA Academic Standards in the Arts and Humanities

9.1.Production

A. Know and use the elements art: color, form, shape, line, space, texture, value C. Know and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the art forms.

Objectives:

- Students investigate and analyze Andy Warhol's use of color in his print series *Space Fruit*
- Students develop a working knowledge of the Color Wheel
- Students apply their knowledge of the Color Wheel through writing activities

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Andy Warhol, *Space Fruit: Still Lives (Cantaloupes I)*, 1979
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About the Art:

Throughout his career, Andy Warhol worked with assistants and printers to create numerous print portfolios. In 1977 he met printer Rupert Jasen Smith who worked with him to create the series *Space Fruit*. These prints demonstrate Warhol's experimentation with a centuries-old genre in painting—the still life. Still lifes by their very nature are choreographed compositions focusing on shape, color, space, and oftentimes symbolism. Warhol was interested in the use of shadows as a compositional element. He first placed one or more pieces of fruit on a white background, lit it from an angled position so that shadows were cast onto the white paper, and then photographed these compositions. He also used collage and drawing to create the source imagery for the additional screens used in each print. Each color in these images represents a different silkscreened layer of the print. The printing process allowed Warhol endless color combinations within each composition.

Andy Warhol Quote:

When I look at things, I always see the space they occupy. I always want the space to reappear, to make a comeback, because it's lost space when there's something in it.

Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol from A to B and Back Again*, p 144.

Discussion Questions:

1. Look carefully at the print *Space Fruit: Still Lives (Cantaloupes I)*. How did Warhol use photography, collage, and drawing in this print?
2. View all the prints in the *Space Fruit* series. Are the colors realistic? Are they appealing? Why or why not?
3. Analyze the compositions in this series. How does Andy Warhol use shadows in the compositions?

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Materials

Color Wheels
Pencils

Handouts:

Color Terminology Sheet Handout 1 (page 4 of this PDF)
Cards of Warhol's *Space Fruit* series Handout 2 (page 5)
Student Worksheet Handout 3 (page 6)

Project Procedure:

1. Introduce the Color Wheel to students.
2. Break students into groups of 2-4 and give each group a Color Wheel and Color Terminology Sheet. (A word bank of color terminology could also be written on the board.)
3. Briefly discuss the terminology.
4. Give each group 2 *Space Fruit* cards and a Student Worksheet. Instruct students to work together to answer the questions on the sheet.
6. When all groups are finished, review the questions as a class.

Wrap-up:

Ask students to decide:

- What 3 colors they would use to make a triad still life print.
- What 4 colors they would use to make a tetrad still life print.



Color Terminology

Hue: another name for a color.

Value: the lightness and darkness of a color.

Key color: dominant color in a color scheme or mixture.

Intensity or chroma: the brightness or dullness of a color.

Temperature (warm and cool colors): a color's perceived sense of warmth or coolness. Aggressive (warm) colors: reds, oranges, and yellows. Receding (cool) colors: greens, blues, and violets.

Color Wheel: the essential elements of mixing color.

Color scheme: the combination of colors on the Color Wheel implemented by artists, designers, and illustrators. **Shade:** color + black.

Tint: color + white.

Tone: color + gray.

Primary colors: red, yellow, and blue – cannot be mixed from any other colors.

Secondary colors: two primary colors mixed together resulting in orange, green, and violet.

Tertiary colors: one primary color and one secondary color mixed together.

Complementary color scheme: combining a shade, tint, or tone of one color and the color opposite on the Color Wheel.

Analogous color scheme: using any shades, tints, or tones of colors that lie adjacent to each other on the Color Wheel.

Split-complementary color scheme: choosing one color and using the color to each side of its complement on the Color Wheel.

Diad: using two colors that are two colors apart on the Color Wheel. Example: red and orange.

Triad: color scheme in which three colors are equally spaced from each other. Example: the three primary colors – red, yellow, and blue.

Tetrad: a contrast of four or more colors on the Color Wheel.

Monochromatic: using any shade, tint, or tone of one color.

Achromatic: a colorless scheme using blacks, whites, and grays.

Neutral gray: combination of black and white.

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Andy Warhol, *Space Fruit: Still Lifes (Cantaloupes II)*, 1979 Screen print on Lenox Museum Board, 30 x 40 in. © AWF



Andy Warhol, *Space Fruit: Still Lifes (Watermelon)*, 1979 Screen print on Lenox Museum Board, 30 x 40 in. © AWF



Andy Warhol, *Space Fruit: Still Lifes (Apples)*, 1979 Screen print on Lenox Museum Board, 30 x 40 in. © AWF



Andy Warhol, *Space Fruit: Still Lifes (Cantaloupes I)*, 1979 The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Founding Collection, Contribution Dia Center for the Arts © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. 2002.4.19.4



Andy Warhol, *Space Fruit: Still Lifes (Peaches)*, 1979 Screen print on Lenox Museum Board, 30 x 40 in. © AWF



Andy Warhol, *Space Fruit: Still Lifes (Pears)*, 1979 Screen print on Lenox Museum Board, 30 x 40 in. © AWF

Art & Activities / Warhol's *Space Fruit* and the Color Wheel / Handout 3: Student Worksheet

What 4 colors did Warhol use in this *Space Fruit* print?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Are the colors complementary, analogous, or both? _____

Name the colors (if any) that are:

Primary _____

Secondary _____

Tertiary _____

Are the colors warm, cool, or a combination of both? _____

Choose a color in the *Space Fruit* and describe what colors you would mix together to get that color:

Describe the order in which Warhol added layers to one of the *Space Fruit* prints.

What color did he use?

1st _____

2nd _____

3rd _____

4th _____