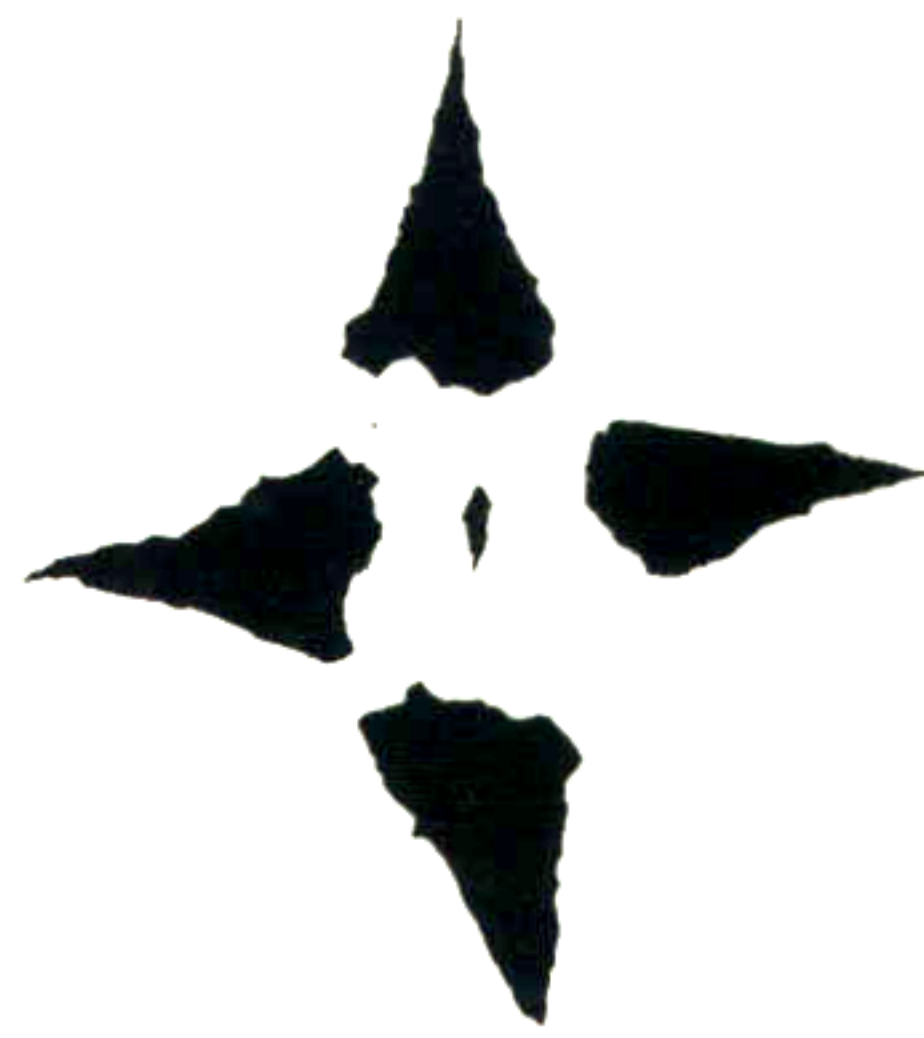


THE ONE WAY OF PAINTING  
Color, Value and Geometry



A Professional Report by

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## AN INQUIRY INTO THE PHENOMENON OF WHOLENESS

1. There is a particular quality which occurs in a variety of objects and events that seem to be unrelated. This quality evokes the depth of our being in moments of aliveness and utmost awareness.

2. In order to acquire an insight into this quality one cannot employ methods which make distinctions between facts and value. The ability to see into quality depends on the adequacy of our presuppositions and assumptions, which guide our continuous observations into reality.

3. Looking at things objectively fails to see things as they actually are, and ends in treating them as objects in general. Only by trusting feelings as the source of "being" one may see before he knows.

4. By trusting feelings one may find not-separatedness from the world as the common quality of those objects and events which move our hearts. The quality of not-separatedness is sensed as beauty and may help to recognize the essence of wholeness. Wholeness encompasses the totality of the experience and it is the natural process of becoming which prefers harmony on conflict as its code of action.

5. There is a special way in which wholeness is manifested by color. It occurs when color and geometry possess a certain beautiful structure which is sensed as "Inner Light."

## THE ONE WAY OF PAINTING

6. By using intuitive knowledge in the course of producing wholeness in paintings, one reveals the helpful distinction between beauty

and beauty-effect.

7. In order to produce beauty, a dialogue between the painter and his painting should be carried out. In each step of this dialogue one embeds his own emotional substance. The extent to which this emotional substance succeeds in creating wholeness is examined by its power to be a source of continuous nourishment.

8. The dialogue occurs first within our mind. Its purpose is to capture the first vision of the whole. Then, the dialogue continues with every color we choose to employ. It is a two-stage process in which vision and embodiment reciprocate in a continuous dialogue between the painter and his painting.

9. There is a special quality of comfortableness that wholeness evokes. This notion contains no clues as regard to the structure of wholes. Yet, it is a useful instrument to indicate the presence of the phenomenon.

10. To enrich the insight into the structure of wholeness, one should look at things as composed of relationships rather than mere components. It is most coherent in the realm of colors. The actual feelings of colors emerge out of the total interaction of the painting's colors and not from our impression of them individually.

11. The way that the totality of the painting is arranged depends on several relationships which shed light on the complexity of harmony. "Inner Light" is a product of these properties which are strongly related to another set of properties in the realm of geometry.

12. The generic nature of the quality which transcends those properties is of an entity both in the realm of value and geometry.

These entities are "centers" and create a field effect which we read as centeredness. To produce wholeness one has to seek for the making of the "field of centers."

#### COLOR AND GEOMETRY

13. The finest centers may be found in ornaments and decorative works. These geometrical shapes are the essence of geometrical harmony. Inherent in the beauty of these ornaments is a sense of simplicity, intensified with economy of means. It implies a certain state of mind which has to be an integral part of "centering."

14. There are paintings that obtain the quality of this simplicity. Their colors are subdued yet brilliant.

15. Simplicity of form and subdued, yet brilliant, colors seem to transcend the structure of harmony in an identical manner. This simplicity is the essence of the inter-relations between color and geometry as an inseparable attribute of harmony.

#### THE ONE WAY OF MAKING

16. The "one way of painting"--as a flow of harmonious results at each step--demonstrates a way of making whose rules of generating harmony can be applied in realms other than color alone.

17. The "one way of painting" is capable of overcoming obstacles such as the fear of objective values and the lack of tradition.

18. There is but one way of making which is capable of producing wholeness.

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## PREFACE

This report documents the process of learning about color that I underwent during the spring semester of 1985, in a seminar given by C. Alexander.

The work is divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents the phenomenon of Harmony, as the quality which we have a moral obligation to reproduce. Chapter two describes the process of painting which we found suitable to apply in achieving this phenomenon.

This process cannot be obtained without understanding the fundamental role of geometry in the production of harmony. Therefore, the third chapter discusses the special relationships between the realms of color and geometry. As a conclusion, the last chapter suggests the existence of one generic way of making, of which painting is only one mode of practicing the production of harmony.

This report is based on my detailed diary, describing our meetings throughout the seminar. In addition to this diary, I took advantage of the "remarks" which I kept writing in response to the issues discussed in the sessions I have attended. A few of my own paintings, done in this period of time are used to explain and demonstrate the theoretical issues. Some of Matisse's paintings, and a few Indian miniatures were chosen to present the quality beyond words which is the matter of this whole study.



## INTRODUCTION

I found the following passage about an ancient Chinese painting manual to be of great help in describing what we were in pursuit of in this seminar: ". . . the writer of that manual describes how, in his search for a way of painting, he had discovered for himself the same central way that thousands of others like him had also discovered for themselves throughout the course of history. He says that the more one understands painting, the more one recognizes that the art of painting is essentially one way, which will always be discovered and rediscovered, over and over again, because it is connected with the very nature of painting, and must be discovered by anybody who takes painting seriously."\* Learning about this "one way of painting" was the subject matter of our seminar. Therefore, it is for this report to document the process of studying how to employ colors in order to bring any good geometrical arrangement of shapes to a higher state of wholeness or harmony within itself and within the "zone" to which it belongs. Using the studio's terms, this is what "Inner Light" is all about.

This "one way" does not belong exclusively to the realm of colors: it reflects a way of understanding the making of things as production of deep order.

The meaning of wholeness and harmony in the context used above will be discussed in great detail in the next chapter, by describing the Phenomenon of "Inner Light" and answering questions regarding whose sense of harmony and values this "one way of painting" refers to. Nevertheless, it might be helpful, at this stage, to realize that

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\*C. Alexander, "The Timeless Way of Building," p. 526.



the substance of this "one way" is to create a sense of comfortableness, of connectedness or not-separatedness within us and space. Recognizing the value of painting we get a deeper view on the substance inherent in this way of painting. It looks clear and straightforward. Yet, when trying to paint, directed by this understanding, we found the results did not match our expectations. We came to realize that mere conviction in the need and value of this "way of painting" has no operational nature. I found that aesthetics theories and other conventional design methods are not of help because they manipulate things and give up living in them. The kind of knowledge that can produce things with inherent value cannot be one whose fundamental bias is to treat everything as though it were an Object-in-general. To get back to the real world it has to seek the transcendental foundation for its operation, otherwise painting and making will be defined as a mode of thinking and not as a central operation contributing to the definition of our access to being.

Harmony, a property of perceptual nature, falls into the category of qualities that are not of an objective nature and thus has no place in the world of facts. It carries no significance in regard to how the world works. The method we were taught in the studio has room for value. It uses the concepts of harmony and wholeness as its guide and compass in the process of painting. The knowledge, and not the consolatory aspect of this understanding, is what transcends this understanding.

There is a set of fundamental assumptions underlying this method of study. One has to be aware of them. Otherwise any operational guideline will be meaningless. These assumptions, dealing with the general order and structure of the harmony, constitute what we may call the

metaphysics of painting. Without a kind of confidence in the moral value of harmony, it would be almost impossible to accept these assumptions.

In this "one way" in which harmony occupies such a role, a painter can actually measure the degree to which his painting possesses wholeness using the concept of "centers." Harmony becomes the standard, the reference point, like the focal point while we draw a circle.

The process of learning about the phenomenon of Inner Light proved to have a practical nature while we were making painting. More surprisingly, in the process of making we unfolded more of the phenomenon. Therefore, these two processes, learning and making, interacting in a kind of spiral into one process, enabled our understanding to become more comprehensive. In following this "one process," this report was written.



## AN INQUIRY INTO THE PHENOMENON OF WHOLENESS

1. Experiencing a Quality

What is there in common to an Arab village in the Judea mountains, a birthday party, and a painting by Matisse? (Figures 1-3) The question is rather serious and is inter-related to another question: Is there any reason to believe that the very essence of the answer to this question may contain a clue, capable of helping one to reproduce the quality intrinsic in the above examples? Might the answer cohere the presumption about the validity of this quality and reside beyond mere personal opinion? My suggestion is that the difficulties in answering these questions are derived from the lack of specific, adequate knowledge rather than a shortage in sufficient information. The following example should clarify the substance of this suggestion. It is based upon experiencing a certain deep quality which is the key to my confidence in the relevance of an inquiry into the above comparison.

It happens that while working on some puzzling problem a flash of understanding occurs. This flash is accompanied by an act of recognizing in this understanding a deep and comprehensive recognition that must evolve from some other faculty than thought itself. One can validate one set of rational conclusions by another set of rational thoughts, but the perception of new order of new structure which is not just a mere modification of what is already known does not occur due to thoughts. It is executed by another sphere of knowledge, knowledge from another order.

There is a kind of energy attached to such a perception. It is interpreted by special sensations which are derived from the cognition



Figures 1 & 2: "What is there in common to an Arab village . . .  
a birthday party, and a painting by Matisse . . .?"  
(Page 4)



Figure 3: Entrance to the Kasbah. 1912. Oil on canvas. Matisse H.

". . . we may find that the Arab village, the birthday party, the painting by Matisse . . . are capable of 'moving the heart' in a deep manner . . ." (Page 13)

of the new structure. It is a precious moment of deep awareness that evokes the totality of our being. This energy, which in one sense in those moments is not due to the particular content and value of the "missing part" that has been found, rather is due to its fitness, to the formation of a harmonious new whole. I believe that the infiltration of that particular "missing part" was achieved by its gaining victory over other numerous alternatives due to its capacity to impose more harmony than the others would do. For its own hidden reasons nature prefers harmony over conflict and this very choice is caused by some inherent power whose code for well-being is harmony.

This "gestalt" phenomenon reveals itself in various fields of life: it is true for fine and applied Arts, both in the process of making and consuming; it is true for dear moments of human affections, and in moments in which nature exposes itself in all its mighty power. These are very rare moments, but their strength and vitality may survive as a source of nourishment for a long interval of time. In some intuitive way one knows that these instants have unique value and truth, like holding something dear that you want not to dismiss. These are the moments where one touches God, and for me this experience is an event as real as any immediate sense perception or any other concrete event. Each of the events or objects which I mentioned before (the village, the painting, the party) evokes a depth of feelings within ourselves. Since I found the depth of these feelings to be similar in its nature to the "gestalt" quality I have just described, it may just be that these specific examples are self-organized in some unique manner capable of evoking an inner, deep order drawn from my own very being. What is required, therefore, is an act of understanding, in

which we see the relation between ourselves and the "world out there" (the village, the painting) as a process that, when carried out properly, tends to bring about harmonious reality.

To obtain this knowledge we must employ methods which recognize this quality to be concrete and objective, a method which does not consider harmony to be subjective.



## 2. The Need for a Different Type of Knowledge

In the last decades, the act of understanding that the architects are required to acquire is of a unique nature. Let me explain this fact. Two thousand years ago, Vitruvius had said that there are three things in Architecture: convenience, duration, and beauty. Modernists have tried to combine these notions by saying: "function creates beauty," and by believing that form should follow function. Architects were supposed to concentrate on function and duration and acquire beauty as a result. As a reaction to this type of Architecture, the Post-Modernists claim that architecture should follow some meaningful forms, rather than pure function. Beauty has become a tool to evoke intellectual interest and to bring about rational stimulus. Certain shapes and forms are thought to contain some inherent meanings, crucial for our existence, and vital ingredients in the construction of such intellectual interests.

Theories are established and claim to present knowledge about reality, from which the value of these forms and shapes is derived. Scholars and architects call upon the existential meaning intrinsic

in these shapes, and promote the values inherent in them. These values are highly articulated, and very sophisticated by their definition. They do not retain the slightest memory of what intuitively one might think about as value: good and bad, harmony and conflict, beauty and ugliness. These values are left out of any discussion because they are considered subjective and therefore irrelevant.

Thus strange relations between practice and theory exist in today's architecture. It is hard to discern whether practice calls upon theories to justify its formation, or theories pave the way for the contemporary practice of this field. Altogether, it is hard to avoid the suspicion that architecture has ceased to serve the people's needs as they should determine it, and rather dictates tastes and fashions in the name of the people's well-being.

The mainstream of western architecture would answer such a criticism by pointing out our ever-changing needs which have to be met by new contents. In my opinion what underlies this content is the notion that architecture is in the process of becoming a commodity, like any other artifact. The marketing of artifacts does recognize our feeble notions about our needs, and through advertising manipulates us to believe that in the price of certain commodities (beer, for example) one may bring oneself to some desirable worlds where one is better off. But architecture cannot be treated in this manner; all these experiments are becoming part of our daily reality, portions of our environments which we have to confront without any choice.

This report suggests stopping these experiments. Eventually, such a proposal is the consequence of a dispute with the course that the mainstream of today's western architecture follows, and the values that



govern today's theories. It is in common to these theories to divide things up in order to reduce problems into manageable proportions. This process of division as a way of thinking about things is convenient and useful mainly in the domain of practical, technical, and functional activities, the source from which architecture pulls some of its materialized forms. The cause for this proposed halt is the realization that this process of division has been carried too far. This division extends the analysis of the world into separated parts beyond the domain in which to do so is appropriate. The picture of reality that architecture theories present does not contain that which has meaning only in relation to the conscious, perceiving and feeling subjects. As a result, values of any kind which relate to the meaning and scope of reality as a whole have no room in this display. Harmony and beauty are among these qualities which are missing in this sort of display, an absence that eventually has an impact on the quality of the physical output of such theories.

Inherent in our ability to see the nonphysical facts and to unfold their significance and value is the reasonable act of confidence that the world is an expression of meaning. It is this confidence that has the eye to see, even if it does not see the reason for it. The capacity to see depends on the adequateness of our presuppositions and assumptions. By this willingness of seeing before knowing we let the mind's eye embody its superior power over thought to produce insights rather than opinions.

What emerges from the above discussion is the realization in the need for a new, adequate set of basic assumptions about the nature of reality upon which an alternative act of understanding can be constructed.

Such metaphysics do not challenge, nor do they question the existence of Natural necessity--"something that could not be otherwise, because of what the world is." The very first assumption proposes the notion that there is one real world to be distinguished from its perceived pictures. The world "in itself" is different from the one we perceive because it has more in it than can ever be implied by the content of our thoughts about it, as can always be revealed by further observation. It is "like having a particular view of an object: each view gives only an appearance of the object in some aspect. The whole object is not perceived in any one view but rather it is grasped only implicitly as a single reality which is shown in these all views."\* To conclude is to say that ". . . the world is given to me only once, not as one existed and one perceived."\*\* The second assumption is an elaboration of the first one and adopts its contents from the Eastern doctrine of identity: it is called "the oneness of mind."\*\* There is one real world because the multiplicity of consciousness is only apparent. There is one mind--the unification of minds or consciousness. In his book Schrodinger quotes Islamic Persian mystic Aziz Nasof:\* ". . . the spiritual world is one single spirit who stands like onto a light behind the bodily world, and who, when any single creature comes into being, shines through it as through a window. According to the kind and size of the window lesser or more light enters the world. The light itself however remains unchanged."

I found these assumptions to be crucial for the pursuit of the

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\*David Bohm, "Wholeness and the Implicit Order," Chapter 3.

\*\*Ervin Schrodinger, "Mind and Matter," Chapter 4.

knowledge to see into the "quality without name" which was mentioned in the first pages of this report. This "quality" may easily be recognized by anyone who possesses self-awareness. But the power of the above assumptions is in their capacity to provide us with a key for an insight into the nature of this quality simply by considering the possibility of one objective existence of reality. Such insights are obtained by observations, accumulated over a span of time. The domains which these observations have to focus on are the "self" and the "reality" as two independent entities yet portions of some greater whole. The way to knowledge is through "knowing the self." It does not imply knowing one's self personality, but rather the "truer essence within our being." The knowledge of the self is to be gained through attention: by learning to direct attention and not to be captured by outside forces. To know where one's attention is, one has to be aware so he can increase the intensity and quality of his attention. The ability to be aware cannot be found by thoughts--it occurs when our minds are free of thoughts, when the thoughts are put in place.

Gaining this knowledge we may obtain some insight into the grounds where the self and the world meet. The Delphic inscription says: "Know thyself and you will know the universe and Gods." According to Socrates, knowing the self may enable one to set his hands on anything and ". . . give his opinions about any matter or subject that attracts his attention."\* The ability of doing it properly is dependent on the inquiry into knowing the truth. This is the knowledge we are after: to make things in the image of the Universe, things that are done with the "eye of the heart," that can discriminate between true and false, between

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\*See "On the Delphic Precept," unpublished paper by D. Avnon.

harmony and conflict. Such an insight may enable us not only to appreciate the quality's beauty, but also to reproduce this quality in building, painting, and any other man-made things and events.



### 3. Feelings as the Primary Source of "Being"

Any observation that may gradually construct this body of knowledge can be carried out in two different manners. It is common to distinguish the objective view of things from the subjective one. The objective view of things is considered concrete, reliable and rational because it is not influenced by the subject's personal feelings. All that I actually do when I see things objectively is try to eliminate my own personal feelings or opinions from my first fresh experience of things.

There is another way of getting a reliable, solid base for the world without eliminating feelings because of their fragility and mutability. This way of viewing the world trusts feelings as the primary source of the world-existence. We try to achieve a more solid feeling which can be shared by everybody at the same time. It sounds reliable, but still one may ask "Why should we trust feelings more than rational thinking?"

The answer runs as follows: The knowledge about the world around us both that is gained in everybody's life and that is revealed by planned experiments rests entirely on immediate sense perception. But in the picture we form about the world the sensual qualities are absent. In his book Mind and Matter, Erwin Schrodinger uses the question "What is yellow?" to demonstrate this fact. According to his analysis, any

scientific answer such as ". . . transversal electro magnetic waves of wave length in the neighborhood of 590 millimicrines" does not contain any trace of the sensation of yellow. The color itself tells us nothing about the wave length. Any intimate scientific knowledge would tell us nothing about the sensation of color. No objective description includes the characteristic of "yellow color." The observer's colorful impression of the phenomenon does not provide the slightest clue as to its physical nature. Yet, the theoretical picture we obtain rests eventually on "a complicated array of various information all obtained by direct sensual perception."

Concerning what is real, Schrodinger quotes Democritus (who lived in the fifth century B.C.) introducing the intellect as having an argument with the senses: The Intellect: "Ostensibly there is color, as intensibly sweetness, ostensibly bitterness, actually only atoms and the void," to which the senses reply: "Poor intellect, do you hope to defeat us while from us you borrow your evidence? your victory is your defeat." In other words, we cannot obliterate the distinction between the actual observation and the theory arisen from it. Otherwise we become part of a reality, where facts are detached from their values and where values are held as not reliable in the formation of a theory derived from the actual observation.

Our fresh experience is fresh and vivid only as a momental movement. That is the essential reason why the feelings are so fragile and timebound. No matter how directly we feel the world, it is extremely difficult to keep on "feeling the feeling." In spite of this difficulty, the recognition in feelings as the prime access into "being," is the fundamental step in the way of revealing the phenomenon of "not-

separatedness." By eliminating our feelings from our experience of things we lose the only tool by which we can truly evaluate those observations.



#### 4. Not Separatedness and the Phenomenon of Wholeness

Concerning the quality of the feeling one may find a special phenomenon: many things advocate different feelings, but among them there is a very specific quality which is felt as specific feeling of centeredness or anchoredness--a feeling of directness to the world. The quality of this feeling can be sympathized with by people in a deep sense. This quality's beauty is not in the object itself: it is the feeling that opens up one's mind, the feelings that spring from genuine internal life. When we set the feeling free, these objects and events provoke a sense of being, of not-separatedness from the world. This is the value of this quality--the value of harmony and not of conflict. When we confront the world without pretending to be objective, we may find that the Arab village, the birthday party, the painting by Matisse and many more objects and events are capable of "moving our hearts" in this deep manner. One can feel an actual warmth in the heart, as real and as physical as concrete sensation. It is a moment of high awareness, but the mind is in the heart and not in the thoughts; it is a moment of real comfortableness. After finding the notion of the "eye of the heart" in literature of different origins I do think that this very concrete "warmth" is the attached sensation to the grasping of an insight into this "not-separatedness" phenomenon. It is a most

vivid feeling because in such a moment one ceases to realize what it is in him that feels this sensation, what faculty does sensualize it. In these instants one can see clearly without his own bias, and by recalling them he can obtain nourishment and calmness.

It is now the time to refer to the first session of the studio in which we were shown the very first examples of colors: they were all presentations of some phenomenon, which Chris called "Inner light," and was not that clear at that time:

Chris presented the phenomenon by showing us a variety of works, totally different in form; Persian miniatures, Turkish carpets, colored rooms in Germany, paintings by Matisse, early medieval illuminated manuscripts, paintings by Piero Della Francesca, and more. Despite the fact of each being so different from the other, it was clear that they possessed a common virtue. Yet it was very unclear what its substance was. The overall impression of each one of these works was of one thing. Almost as if the colors prevent the shapes from being separated, or rather, help the shape to become more united. There was some smoothness in the manner the colors were put together. Our fresh impressions were the following:

1. The colors create a comfortable light.
2. There are some highlights of color in the work.
3. There is a use of cold and warm colors.
4. There is something in the relations between the colors as well as in the colors themselves.

The individual colors were so carefully mixed, that it was hard to avoid the impression that this comfortable light was deliberately produced so that the picture would shine. Chris made it clear that seeing this phenomenon and understanding it will help us in producing it. It is understanding of feelings, he said, and as such it is not a different subject from the ability to produce it. (1/28/85 session)

Trying to clarify some of this vague understanding, I wrote the following remark, right after this first session.

Back home, I realized that I am quite puzzled. I looked at the painting in a book done by a contemporary Israeli artist, trying to understand the difference (Figure 4). What "bad" colors are is rather clear; the quality inherent in "good" colors is still very vague. One obvious property is the opaqueness of the colors, in comparison to the small miniatures, where the colors look "dirtier" and more alive.



Figure 4: Illustration 1980. Watercolor on paper. Tartakover, D.

". . . there is a sense of sophistication in the way the Israeli artist chooses colors . . ." (Page 15)



(Figure 5). There is a sense of sophistication in the way the Israeli artist chose colors. The colors respond to some overall concept, he appeals to a common memory of the Israelis, and having succeeded he created a sense of pleasure. But the miniatures are communicating in a different language, one that I still do not understand. It is like the ensemble is more important than the individual color. Yet, a lot of very careful attention is paid to selecting each one of them. Like constructing an independent entity. The color (in the miniatures) is not used as a tool to cover surface. It almost feels like a three-dimensional object. I don't mean that it has a physical depth, but rather that the manner in which it was produced is like the one used for an object in its own right. Every color has its own structure: texture, value, hue, light, halo.

The Persian miniatures' colors are very delicate and calm. Matisse's quality of colors is quite different. I still don't see what they have in common, even though I can appreciate the two. I feel that the colors in the miniatures do not reflect mood (sadness, winter, etc.). They reflect some other emotion. They are light, almost "happy," creating the impression they were done with an easy hand. They possess a kind of depth; a center." (Remarks)

Our assignment was to paint, with gouach colors, some abstract painting that will try to capture these sensations.

Presented with the paintings we have made, Chris asked us to select the ones that have the most feeling. The results of his request surprised us to a great extent. Using his standard, it appears that the one that had the most feeling was created in the most passionate way. These feelings are not happiness or sadness: they belong to another category of deeper emotions, that transcend these feelings. This perspective reveals a unique relation between the feeling that is "there," in the painting, and the feeling "here" with the one who created the painting. An object done in this manner reveals a sense of vulnerability of feelings to the world. To be in touch with a thing is that the object induce what there is in us. Our selection was totally different from Chris's. He selected a small, simple painting,  $1\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ , made by Denis, which contained three colors--very dark blue, blackish green, and some red spots that just gave it some beautiful light. Clarifying his reasons for his choice he established the distinction between prettiness and inner light. Prettiness has the nature of a semi-automatic action. It is not produced by real human substance. The colors are good but they are not derived from inner substance of being, and therefore they lack authenticity. One experiences "inner light" as a human "being," in the sense that you can feel human



Figure 5: After the bath. Bundi School, about 1775 (miniature 6.0" x 6.4")

". . . to become a genuine part of reality, with its beauty and ugliness, grace and disgrace, is what real beauty is about. . . ." (Page 17)

substance in the other end, i.e., in the painting. As the painter revealed something of his very essence. To appreciate this quality is easy, but to paint it one has to have connectedness to his inner world. This way of presenting oneself is totally different from drawing the "mood" one has while painting. Working with "taste" is safer but almost by definition incapable of producing this quality of feeling. (1.31.85, Session)

Reading these words today, after months passed from the day I saw those examples, I realize that these paintings are still clear and concrete in my mind and did not lose their internal power. This "lasting ability" is the common denominator of these works. This appreciation does not derive from my thoughts, but rather due to the paintings' capability of communicating well with my organs of cognition in creating desirable feelings. These feelings can be read as comfortableness, as a sense of space, but it is not just the mere direct effect of the painting on me. It feels like a result of its relation with reality as a totality, of which I, the observer, present a portion rather than the only content: it feels like it may melt into reality and become an integral part of its matter.

This integration without a conflict, this absorbing act does not release the energy which one may read as wholesome and harmonious feelings. We know to cognize that energy, as may be easily demonstrated in the opposite example which is very common and familiar: when a person enters a room, where two people have conflict, the nervousness in the air is contagious, and the conflict is concrete and real as the persons themselves.

All the common theories of painting emphasize harmony and proclaim that the quality depends absolutely on the harmonious relations between the colors. But such an inner harmony is not sufficient because these rules of harmony, as can be obtained for example from Cheveral's

research,\* are not capable by themselves of producing the quality we realize exists in some paintings. The missing part in those theories is the ability to become one with reality in a harmonious process. This ability has no formulation in rules or words; it is a result of a state of mind in which harmony is a real, concrete value. To become a genuine part of reality, with its beauty and ugliness, grace and disgrace, is what real beauty is about; beauty which reflects existence in all its mighty rather than mere appearance.

When one realizes that there is a phenomenon sensed by us as beauty in our immediate perception and analyzed intellectually as coherent and ordered structure, one may think that the function of this order is to create the "well being" sensation we mentioned before.

Harmony and wholeness are terms used to describe a natural state of affairs which may be enriched while certain valuable relations occur among people and between people and their artifacts. Certain objects enjoy properties capable of evoking depth of inner feeling. To be touched in such an intimate way embodies a state of harmony where man and object are not detouched but attouched. Therefore, a state of wholeness reflects a state of harmonious relations.

We can use geometry and colors as means of intensifying this sensation of comfortableness which occurs when harmonious relations do exist. Therefore, wholeness does not appear in an object nor within oneself: It is a name of a world where the substance of relations possesses the quality to make us feel comfortable. It is impossible to produce this quality without knowing to recognize it first. To do so we ought to know what we are looking for. It is a circular condition which we have to break through in order to learn to see. We have to realize first that we are not after a "thing" nor a formula. We are seeking for the ability to recognize a quality. We can acquire it by trusting our feelings as the primary source of the world-existence and try to feel more: by feeling the feelings we may discriminate between real and fake; knowing what is real, we may find some common quality in these real things, and even examine the structure of the quality. (Remarks)

To continue this line of thought, arts can be looked upon as a form of expression that functions in order to comfort its makers and

its observers. Under the notions of wholeness, harmony is no more a little secret preference of our own but rather the criterion of our access to reality. Its order implies that Arts capable of creating harmony are still in the frame of mind which impose fragmentation as long as it advocates that the function of wholeness is just to nourish ourselves.

If one can grasp the notion of not separateness as a real thing, and understand that the whole universe exists in the form of this structure, then it becomes clear that to intensify the state of wholeness is possible just by this repeated structure. It is almost impossible for me to really grasp these notions. But it is their implications that create a confidence, or rather a faith in its true substance. If it is true, that a person is made from the same matter of the universe, of some greater self, then wholeness is not merely a gate for men to be close to a higher level of being. There is more in it than the idea of "save the self," because this notion still distinguishes man as superior in relation to the rest of the universe. It hints at some other kind of reason, inherent in the importance for the matter to be in unity; it is the desire of the matter itself. As part of this movement toward unity, man finds himself developing his best. This implication which indicates that man is not the center, that nature and universe are not to be possessed and mastered, increases my own confidence in these metaphysics. (Remarks)

It is the process itself that demands harmony to become its code of action. Man-made things have to be created in the image of this process so it may contribute to the total harmony which is already given to us. It is this act of understanding where things are carried out in the proper way that may enhance and intensify the existing state of "wholeness."

The preceding discourse may be wrongly interpreted as discussion about two different notions: the "making in harmony," and "the results as harmonious objects." It is not true, because "making in harmony" can produce nothing but "harmonious objects." Thus, the notion of harmony

is one and all objects, events, etc. are forms that can be abstracted from its process. There is a structure which is unique to this state of affairs, and by realizing it the call for "one way of painting" reveals its true substance: making as a way of producing wholeness.

To conclude we may say that "wholeness is essentially a condition in space in which all parts of space are glued together, united, unified, and not separated. The more whole the space is, the more it realizes itself, the more we become a part of it, the more we feel it."\*



#### 6. Wholeness, Colors and Inner Light

Now that the general meaning of wholeness, as a property of an overall arrangement of parts, is established it is clear that harmony lies in matter and in colors, as well as in geometry. The color, or the matter out of which the thing is made, contributes to its state of wholeness. In the realm of colors we see something which we may best call "Inner Light." Something in the definition of this phenomenon already revealed the essence of its nature and reveals some characteristics of the comparison of colors and geometry. Harmony exposes itself through some inner light whose existence is due to a certain organization of shapes and pigments, through certain arrangements of colors and geometry. If, as has been said before, "wholeness is the quality in which space is revealed as something transcendental,\*\*" then, in the realm of colors, the aspect of space is intensified. It

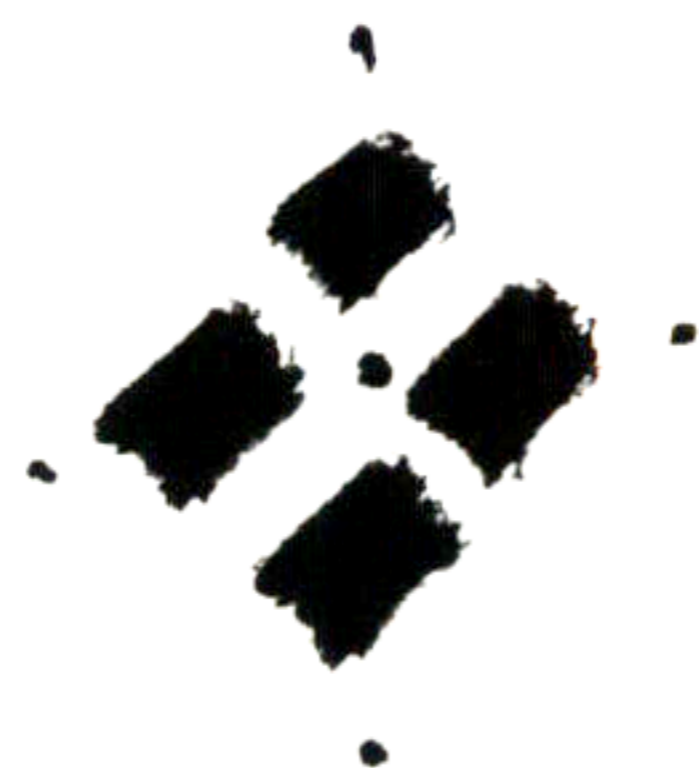
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\*C. Alexander, unpublished manuscript, Berkeley, 1981.

\*\*Ibid.

is clear, then, that color is an integral part of space, and has a fundamental role in the construction of the structure of space.

"Inner light" is the state of wholeness which the "one way of painting" aims to reach. This way of painting does not see harmony and conflict as subjective, secondary qualities that exist only in the eye of the observer. It is a method which not only leaves room for value judgments, but rather bases its very substance on notions of values. Therefore, this "one way" gives us a base for discussion and criticism. This is the operational value of the value of harmony: to make things in the image of wholeness. Our experience in painting according to the principles of this way of painting is presented in the next chapter.



## THE ONE WAY OF PAINTING

At this level of decoding the substance of harmony and Inner Light, any further insight might be gained only through actual experience in producing harmonious painting. Therefore this chapter clarifies tactic notions, means and goals we have had constructed in order to achieve the adequate practical acquaintance with the notion of wholeness.



#### 6. Intuition as an Access into Beauty

The conclusions and proposals presented in the previous chapter were still an enigma when we first painted. Nevertheless, we were equipped with two strands of advice:

1. it is easier to produce when one knows what one is after; and
2. at any given moment in the process of painting one should decide upon the next step according to what is on the paper and not preconceived ideas.

The kind of work that was done after the first meeting is demonstrated in Figure 6. It was full of desire to succeed in the first time. But learning the colors and experiencing the endless way of mixing was hard enough. I found the advice useless; I couldn't form a vision in my mind, not to speak of trying to follow it on the paper. Using the "step by step" method was easy to follow, but since the confidence in the feeling we had to capture was shattered, the paintings followed the path of harmonious composition in the conventional manner. (Remarks)

Some of the following remarks may clarify a few of the hidden properties of this phenomenon:

1. The distinction between "prettiness" and "inner light" made it possible for an "ugly" painting to have the most feeling. This conclusion does not fit with the conventional "aesthetic truths."





Figure 6: The Yellow Tiles. Gouache on paper. Painted during seminar.

". . . it was full of desire to succeed in the first time. . . ."

2. The "inner light" phenomenon reflects values that are inherent in existence rather than in appearance.

3. This deep source of feeling from which the painter draws his inspiration is materialized in some kind of an order that enables the observer to feel depth, drawn from his own being.

Denis' small painting has some of this quality. What struck me the most was its simplicity. It was almost unnoticeable. The composition of blue and green was not at all what is being considered beauty. It had no "big sunset" in it. Its power is probably due to simple geometry, very careful choice of colors, and to these small red dots. Exclude them, and there is nothing there. (Remarks)

These discriminative observations about "prettiness" and "inner lighted" paintings are crucial and fundamental to understanding the viewpoint which sees harmony as "value." "Inner light," this aspect of harmony which colors may best produce, is to my belief the source of beauty. The concept of beauty has to be cohered right away due to the deceptive notion of its substance as a result of the daily use of this word.

The beauty which I see as the attribute of "inner light" is the beauty lurking within, not displayed before the observer by the painter. The "one way of painting" implies the making of paintings that will lead the viewer to draw beauty out of it for himself by himself.

It is common today to treat beauty as if it were an effect which the object comes to radiate when it has some characteristic composition of its attributes, such as proportions, texture, color, etc. Thus the creation of beauty is to produce the effect out of pre-effective things, and design has become the production of "beauty-effect." By looking for beauty as an effect of the object, we choose its value by employing all the possible criteria instead of directly feeling it.

The object "out there" has no property which we may call "beauty" which is attached to it. Rather it has a sort of overall structure whose arrangement is unique in its order. It is this totality which

is sensed as beauty and analyzed as order. To attach beauty to the object is an act of fragmentation, which leaves the observer detached from his subject of observation. It dwells upon beauty outside of ourselves, and so the access to appreciation of beauty passes through the domains of what was thought to be adequate education, proper taste, and concepts about talent. Beauty had been seized from its natural domain. A distinction between outer appearance and inner expression had been established, and the birth of "beauty effects" has taken place.

These notions of beauty do not belong exclusively to the realm of color. The beauty of traditional and religious architecture derives from a process in which those buildings were materialized in the image of this beauty, as a mirror of the inhabitants' selves, and not for the sake of mere beauty. It is the sense of real genuine existence, the feeling of "inner life" in the object, the very essence of life which the object's creation stamped into the matter.

One may come forth and claim that all this is too poetic, and that these notions of beauty are subjective and too idealistic. I would argue this comment in several ways. First, there is no reason to believe that lyricism is possessed solely by poetry. Second, the "grades of significance" to which one attaches oneself are chosen not by rational thinking but rather by the confidence (which I have mentioned before). Last but not least is that, in the absence of such poetic notions, there is no way in which one may grasp how objects which one loaded with emotional substance were made. The criticism of the inadequacy of "poetic" idealism indicates that while the essential role of poetics is beyond any dispute, its use in the domains of matter is improper. It reveals a state of mind where concepts of strict realism, such as efficiency

and objectivity, force the value out of the process of making. It is most unlikely that the ability to make beautiful things is solely possessed by geniuses, because a large portion of the objects that have this quality were made by devotees rather than rare, gifted people. So Yunagi, a great Japanese researcher of folk art, claimed that real beauty stands in the realm where notions of aesthetics don't exist and "Beauty and ugliness are still unseparated."\* In this realm value is inherent in facts and there is no opposition between subject and object. The sense of this beauty is timeless. It may exist at this very instant unbounded by past or future. Great works of art are not a result of a knowledge of the nature of beauty but they are produced out of a realm where "the criteria of beauty and ugliness did not make any sense."\*

This beauty is deeply inherent in all manmade things that were every done in this spirit, and we still see it in societies where traditional values fulfill a fundamental role. In these societies artifacts are not considered passing "guests" and real relations are established between the maker and the made. This notion of beauty is challenging the present trends of aesthetic thought in which the realm of feeling--the sensuous realm of beauty--became relegated to the field of metaphysics, leaving the appearance to be the only essence. Thus, aesthetics exiled the content of beauty which contains feelings and values out of its domain.

In order for feelings to regain their proper place, the role and the importance of intuition needs its own inquiry. There are two aspects of any given event: the relational and the qualitative.\*\* The method

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\*For some interesting examples in the realm of pottery, see The Unknown Craftsman by S. Yunagi, pp. 127-157.

\*\*See B. Croce, Aesthetics as Science of Expression and General Linguistics, chapter 2.

of knowing the relational aspects is called analysis, while the method of knowing the qualitative is called intuition. Therefore, knowledge has two forms--intuitive knowledge and logical knowledge. Pure analysis becomes abstract and sacrifices true contact with the event whose quality is our concern. It is the whole that determines the quality of the parts: a work of art may be full of concepts but the total effect is gained by an act of intuition. The difference between the intellectual fact and the intuitive fact lies in the differences between the total effect and the abstract parts.

There are a few reasons for the attention given to Croce's ideas about intuition in this paper. The most obvious one is its relevance and correlation to some of the ideas we appealed to through our sessions. But there is another reason: Recently, when I was reading the book by Jack D. Flam, Matisse On Art, I found out that there are indeed similarities between certain aspects of Matisse's thought and Croce's. During the studio it became almost a habit to refer to Matisse, whose works we found to be both nourishing and educating at the same time. Matisse, whose paintings are profound examples that this beauty does not belong exclusively to the past, had said in his "Notes of a Painter" that "the goal of the process is to arrive at an absolute." Thus Matisse, who could not repaint any picture in the same way, followed a process "in which an absolute can be reached by intuition, whereas the rest [of our knowledge] arises out of analysis. . . . We here call intuition the sympathy by which one transports oneself to the interior of an object in order to coincide with its unique and therefore ineffable quality."

I introduce this short deviation as an opportunity to learn some of Matisse's notions about the metaphysics of painting, whose relevance

to our studies is very clear. The overall importance of intuition as a channel through which one can appeal to the value of wholeness will be demonstrated shortly in great detail. This kind of beauty is essentially a sense of values, and if values are confused, if there are no standards, no viewpoint, then seeing is no different from not seeing.

In painting, the virtue which is the hardest to obtain is the skill of letting the intuitive knowledge perform. It is our mind's reliance upon intuition as the means of choosing among feelings the one feeling whose valuableness deserves expression. As we shall soon see, there are two stages in which we ought to use the intuitive judgment: the first one, which takes place before we lay the first color, and the second stage, through the actual process of painting. In these two stages a true dialogue has to be carried out between the painter and his painting. The nature of this dialogue is the subject matter of the following chapter.



## 7. The Dialogue Between the Painter and His Painting

The shift from painting concepts to the rendering of feelings occurred in the course of the first weeks of the studio. This does not imply that the painting had become beautiful overnight, but that some faith in an alternative value was established.

The works that were presented today (figure 7) were very different from those we saw in the last meeting. They are less original but more calm. It seems like a hidden pressure was released, which enabled different paintings to come forth. The quality achieved today must reflect the relief from the need to be original. The feeling that we serve the painting, rather than it serving us must have made the change. Furthermore, knowing that



Figure 7: A Vase. Painted during seminar. Gouache on paper.

" . . . the works . . . were less 'original' but more calm . . . like a hidden pressure was released. . . ." (Page 26)

all of us were after the same thing probably made it even easier to work in peace. This attitude toward painting helped us overcome the fear of using colors which are truly ours, and not chosen according to other considerations. Otherwise, some of the beautiful pinks and purples would have probably never materialized. Referring to colors as having feelings has removed the fear of kitch, and being too childish. (Remarks)

When the fear of painting was removed, we were free to confront the fundamental issues in the process of painting. The first issue is the "subject of inspiration" which enables me, the painter, to possess the matter of which a painting may be built.

Painting with inspiration is painting with emotions: it is the painting of one's own self. Without emotions to materialize, one is better off not painting. But to enable the painting to possess inner light, inspiration is not sufficient because the painting should be "moving by its own right" and not just moving my own heart. There are two obstacles which prevent my intuition from being in tune with the objective value of the painting:

The desire to create a work of Art is undermining the ability to make valuable painting. Pure attachment is not desirable due to its paralytic effect on one's capability of distinguishing between one's emotion and "its" emotion. If one knows that there is an objectivity given, then the ego is pushed to a second place. Analyzing one of the paintings that failed to have any emotional substance, it was clear that there are only two or three ways one may approach in order to reconstruct it. As long as the phenomenon is grasped as an objective one, personal opinions might lack any real relevance. (3/11/85, Session)

Yet the emotional substance which the painter embeds in his painting does not necessarily contain the quality "to move the heart." The way to predict if a painting may last for long in "moving the heart" is to conform in the most sincere manner whether any line, any touch of color may nourish me for a long period of time. In these two acts-- the act of inspiration (from me to the painting) and the act of nourishing



(from the painting back to me)--intuition plays a crucial role. Through intuition we are able to reveal the feeling with utmost authenticity and valuableness. Furthermore, it is the same faculty which helps us to act almost like a weather forecaster, to foresee whether the actual color and shape into which we choose to embody this valuable feeling may be a source of nourishment.

In this manner a real dialogue is being established between the painter and the painting. This dialogue, when carried out in a sincere fashion, is capable of revealing more truth than any monologue in which "I the painter am now painting a picture." This latter attitude maintains the dualistic state of affairs, which cannot produce beauty. On the other hand, the "one way of painting" defines judgment and creation as two different concepts in form but identical in substance.

The common difficulty all of us faced as in selecting a valuable vision of a color. In one of the cases, a painting of a small red chair, it seemed that the right way to paint was to be in tune with the experienced of a real chair. To be loaded with feeling about the chair, pouring the self into the object, transforming it into a "loaded chair," without the distinction between it and us. It is possible to do so because other experience confirms a special ability we possess. If we were to imagine the same person in front of two different colored walls, the vision we shall acquire would be of two different people. There is a difference of feelings because we experience two different emotional wholes. It is hard to distinguish between the structure and the emotional reality, but the experience is basically emotional, because one can realize an emotional substance still without knowing the structural details. In the real "thing" the details compose the whole, but we are able to possess this emotional substance regardless of the physical entity. Therefore, this emotion, in the realm of colors, is the real issue in the process of painting, otherwise the structural entities would have no inherent value.

The first selection should occur in the mind: you search and search until you find something valuable. You stop the minute it has a human substance of any kind, as long as it is authentic. This valuableness exists in the mind, therefore the criteria is nothing

but "Does it move me?" "Does it touch the heart?"  
 "Is the painting moving by its own right?" The way to produce this quality is by reaching the level where what one thinks is moving and what is really moving is nothing but one.

These questions should be asked again and again throughout the entire painting and not just at the beginning. It should intensify the vision of any color, knowing what it feels like. Producing it by the right mixture is of lesser difficulty. Using this criterion is the way to bring about emotional substance into the painting. (3/5/85 session)

The more we comprehended and valued this way of painting, the more concerned we became about its validation in the field of Architecture.

Concerning the production of this quality, the way described today by Chris, reminded me of discussions we had during another studio concerning an architectural project. Closing the eyes and choosing the vision of a painting that has this quality of inner light is similar in its essence to a method we were using then. In that method, we were to keep doing sketches of a building, until we realized a glimpse of true quality. Then it was our task not just to maintain this quality, but to enhance it in every stage of the process. To a great extent it reminds me of what we should do with colors. (Remarks)

One day in the very last week of the work on this architectural project we showed Chris our model on which we had worked for days. He criticized it as being stiff and not beautiful, and compared the ability to make beauty with a game of golf: "When you play golf you always have to keep your eyes upon the ball during your swing. It is very simple yet very difficult to do. What you have to see in your model is just like this golf ball. It is not something mysterious and difficult to see, but very hard to keep on watching." This golf ball, which is so hard to concentrate on, is the persistence in producing nothing but beauty, nothing but that which can nourish us and substantiate our emotions. This search for a structure capable of embodying harmony is by no means exclusively related to the realm of color. Enhancing the emotional substance should be the goal in any man-made object, including Architecture, for the same reasons we found it to be valid in painting.

Therefore, the same process may be used with the necessary compliances.

One of the studio's assignments, "to make a drawing of a door for the seminar room, a door with emotional substance," may help in grasping this notion.

We produced a bunch of pretty stylish doors. None of them seemed to fit our seminar room with its own character as part of Wurster Hall. What is it to make a door with Emotional Substance? First we tried to clarify what this "Emotional Substance" is about, using a long list of definitions: "the quality of life"; "forces of being"; "the best of me"; "alive and pleasing"; "spiritual impact," etc. There were a lot of very beautiful words, but none of them had an operational nature, capable of answering the simple question: "Would our seminar room be better?" This is the real essence of this design problem. It is not to dream about the world: it is to make a simple door to become a harmonious part of our room and not one that stands out for itself. When a student feels emotionally more substantiated, when he is satisfied with his feelings and not with the feeling in the door, then we may say that the new door has emotional substance. It is to find emotional substance without going to the opera. Such a door would be appropriate, modest, pleasant, very relaxed and ordinary; it would not be cute. It may be further elaborated in example: try to imagine which one of the following cups--a fancy porcelain glass, a styrofoam cup, or a fine tin mug--will help you feel the most comfortable. The porcelain glass has its own limitations, being too delicate and brittle; the styrofoam is cold and alienating. The tin mug, being a fine, unpretentious container, is the cup that in the long run can give you the most comfortableness of feeling. In such a way it may solidify one's emotions. This solidification is the very essence of the emotional substance. In some particular manner, this mug and Matisse's finest paintings are very similar in their movement toward comfortableness, due to Matisse's achievement of the ordinary with non-ordinary efforts. Making a mug to be beautiful is only the starting point. (3/14/85 Session)

Earlier I mentioned the critical function of the dialogue between the painter and the painting. The adequate inspiration is in the form of emotional substance; we found the painting to be "moving in its own right" through its capacity to substantiate our emotions in the future, as well as in this moment. This is where the notion of "nourishment"

comes into the picture.

For this meeting we had to paint, after a long time of rendering nothing but B & W drawings. We have discriminated among the paintings by creating two categories: those which may nourish the self, and the rest. The discussion runs as follows: The better paintings (Figure 8) leaves your spirit alone, without disturbing it. It is not an act of indifference; at the same time it does substantiate the self. There is a story by an American traveler who went to Turkey to learn from a Sufi master. Taking leave from one master, the latter gives him a glass bottle with yellow powder. "What is this powder?" asks the student. "This yellow powder is the exact reflection of your soul," the master replies. "If you feel the need, just look at it."

A work of art should contain the reflection of the soul; it may help the spirit to become whole again. This capacity, to heal the unhealed, is what a painter, or any maker, should be often after his work. To like the painting is not good enough. Think of a bellmaker: He may like the bell but he does not like the sound of the ringing. It is the quality of the music that matters, when your spirit and the sound become one. The sound of the painting, the way one can return to it, and be nourished again and again is the object of our search.

Painting is well defined process, but not necessarily as a process to make a painting as the bell, capable of making this valuable sound. Therefore, in the process of painting when we try to make some red chair, loaded with emotional substance, we have to check very carefully if the new color we are about to add is really doing something to us: does it, in return, substantiate one's own emotion? Does it do to you what the yellow powder was to do to the Sufi student? To know for sure takes years, but well tuned intuition can produce the right color as a source of nourishment. (4/25/85 Session)

Each move we do in the painting is to increase the sense of nourishment. Once again, as happens when we try to define a tactic notion we recognize the limits of words because the minute we think we get a hold on some truth, immediately another question emerges: what is it that nourishes one's self? This work proposes that beyond different personal preferences, harmony is the ultimate and intimate source of nourishment.

But what kind of decision can one make in light of this suggestion?

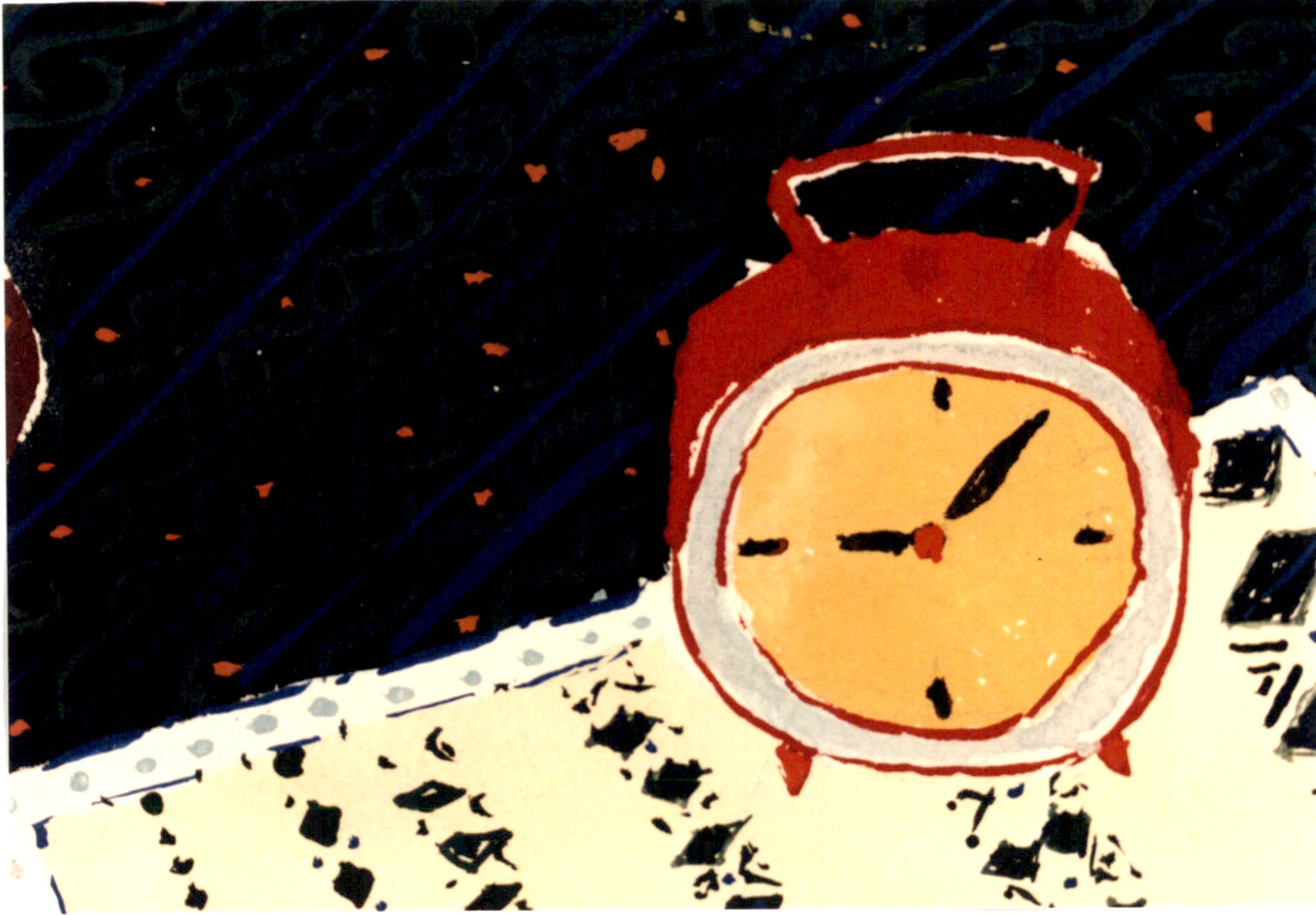


Figure 8: An Alarm Clock. Gouache on paper. Painted during seminar.

"Do the color substantiate one's own emotion?" (Page 31)

A true insight may spring only from one source which is one's own self. Then the response to such a need may bring forth an unexpected solution. In a process where each step we take corresponds to the question "Is it a good move or not?" there are not preconceived objectives towards which we direct our painting. At any stage of the picture, a decision upon a new color is dictated by that which exists while the new color interacts within it. If we foresee it as nourishing we may proceed. In such a process there is no way or need to identify in advance the final goal. The "light house" is this process itself and not the details of the final result which will remain obscure to the end. Even without defining the essence of nourishment in words, it seems that this criterion governed by intuition may contribute to produce more wholesome paintings.



#### 8. A Two-Stage Process

A painting is embodied in the course of a process. This process is a step by step movement, guided by some force. It cannot be, nor should it be a pre-inspired act of the final result. In one of her beautiful paintings, Regina (one of the students in the seminar) had started with the impression of one color (blue), which she decided upon before holding the brush. It did not have any particular geometrical form, and she explored this impression through painting several blues, before arriving at the desirable one. In what form does the color exist in the mind? To answer this question we explored the following suggestions:

1. There is a physical image, of a subject or an object, or a topic.
2. There is a guiding emotion concerning the color.
3. It is simply a process of pulling a color and waiting for the color to tell what the following color should be like.

The only suggestion of a process capable of producing authentic and strong results seem to be #3, i.e., what feelings does one possess about the color? Chris brought

forth his own experience. It concerned the colors of huge columns in the great Hall in Eishin University in Japan. The feelings he had of the building called upon bright colors glowing in the darkness. He had an image in his mind; the feeling of the image--not an image of a particular color but rather of the feeling to which a color may contribute. Trying to materialize the feeling by exploring different colors, he finally decided upon a certain black color. Therefore, the suggestion based upon Chris's experience in Japan and on our own experience through painting, is the following: to define a feeling of a color, without forming a specific color and without having a materialized form. It is a two-stage process.

1. Awareness to the feeling of the color in general terms, concrete feelings about its emotional impact.
2. By trial and error, finding what color, and what cooperation of colors, will produce this impact.

Following this process, the painting is a mirror of real feelings and not of concepts. It has true feelings as the guiding force that one may materialize. These feelings are not of happiness or sadness. It is more of feeling these feelings: as the subjectance of the feeling faculty. There can be a feeling associated with blue, but the real color that will produce this bluish feeling is green! When this emotional power appears we have to hold it tight and to anchor it to the painting. The sense of comfortableness that occurs when this desirable emotion is captured is the indication we reached the right color. In order to be left only with the impression of the emotion, we have to produce the valuableness of the impression in a very concrete manner, and not just roughly. Otherwise, we shall be left with nothing but another pretty color, and not with the valuableness of the experience. (2/28/85 Session)

The introduction of methods like "trial and error" into the domain where Muse alone accounts to govern may sound like heresy. There is even more heresy in what follows:

Some of the paintings had a sort of nice feeling, and yet they contained some disturbance. The colors were working well with each other, but did not cause the whole painting to come to life. This disturbance could be removed by creating new boundaries to the painting. Boundaries that are to capture the piece of the painting that has the right amount of colors, just enough to unfold this "inner light." Thus we found two operational guidelines: (1) which color can bring to life the one that is already painted? and (2) we were looking

for colors and relative amounts. There is one spot, one balance, in which this inner light occurs. (1.31.85 Session)

As a conclusion to these guidelines, I wrote the following remarks:

The experiment about the color's amount made it clear that the way is through "trial and error." It is like adapting a scientific tool to a process which is commonly believed to be governed by pure talent. It seems that the talent is to see and not to create in first try.

By having succeeded in locating the spot that enabled the painting to possess more inner light, the following conclusions may be drawn. The phenomenon exists to a greater or lesser degree, a fact which makes it measurable. By applying this criterion one may actually rank a group of paintings according to the amount of inner light that they possess. (Remarks)

This conclusion, about the relations between a color and its amounts, is the first hint of the quality's structure whose properties were the subject of our inquiry later on in the studio (see Chapter 12). Meanwhile, we may conclude our experience in using the two-stage process:

We had seen the process in two stages:

1. To see the thing emotionally;
2. to search for the real color which will embody this emotion.

The second stage is to make a thing in a way that anchors the valuableness of the impression. One cannot copy the red in the mind: materializing the red is the subject matter of the second phase. It is most likely that the actual red will be of real substance as long as the color we visualized has this quality. There is a need to visualize colors without painting hundreds of them in order to find, just by accident, one that works. Whenever a color is examined in the mind and contains no real feeling, one is precluded from opening his color box. This way prevents the process from becoming exhausting in vain. Otherwise it may become an ugly experience instead of being a pleasure, and as such the process is losing its driving force. (3/7/85 Session)



## 9. Comfortableness

For the last session of the studio we were asked to write about



significant successes and failures in order to find out what are the relevant variances in painting. Recalling the history of two of my good paintings, I found that "in those two cases, whenever a color was chosen it was due to a sensation which was felt as a result of a real and concrete event of fitness which merged out of the color itself. That special energy is what I call and know to recognize as comfortable-ness.

Throughout the report I keep repeating this word again and again. The sensation is concrete and needs no names. The reason I do conceptualize it is for tactical and operational reasons. I found this concept to express in the utmost accuracy a word may permit my feelings when I am confronted with work which possesses the quality of harmony. It is a real state of mind by itself for itself, in which one easily forgets himself and for a split second is not concerned with his own bias. It is not a result of the relief of some burden or distress, but a thing by itself which turns into "being" due to a "positive" value and not the removal of some "negative" pressure. This sensation of comfortable-ness is accompanied by a kind of happiness. It is prue and modest in volume, calm in its nature; like the one a child has when he has finished his homework in a winter evening earlier than he has expected, and goes out to ride his bicycle.

Good Architecture may ease the appearances of these moments, just like any other qualified art or event may do. The notion of comfort is easily misused and has many more meanings but none of them goes as deep as the notion of genuine comfort may penetrate. The remarks about the session of 2/4/85 say:

I found the use of the word "comfortableness" helpful.  
It is hard to imagine a painting being done but by the

painter. There must be something in this physical touch through the brush, between the drawing and the painter (who knows what this "comfortableness is) that enables its transformation into a good painting. Probably through the making of the painting one can transfer one's inherent knowledge of what "comfortableness" is into the new object. If this is true, then in addition to the knowledge there is a certain manner of materializing this understanding into an artifact. This idea sheds some light on the relationships between this inner light in the realm of color and the realm of Architecture, in which we feel this comfortableness. The relationship between the building and the "being built object" were such that enabled the maker to pour by physical contact at the site, his own dynamic understanding of harmony into the building. It might be that this is one of the common virtues of this phenomenon. (Remarks)

In "Notes of a Painter" I found that Matisse had said that "what I dream of is an art which could be a soothing, calming influence on the mind, something like a good armchair which provides relaxation. . . ." This armchair effect may easily be mistaken for the desire of painting merely as a means of relaxation or entertainment. But what an artist like Matisse probably meant must be a belief that art is a medium for "the elevation of the spirit above and beyond yet rooted in the experience of everyday life."

This effort to title sensation and to be scientific in analyzing it may unfold more of the phenomenon's structure. Nevertheless, it has to be absolutely clear that by defining a sensation or a depth of feeling the act of making is not a tool to materialize this definition. Art is not a vehicle to reconstruct childhood memories of harmony. Any definition of the valuableness of comfortableness may just take advantage of one's own experience and memory in directing him to the domains where his sense of value is most likely to be found. Yet there is nothing in this definition to insinuate about the value itself which naturally is beyond any verbal expression.

I may compare this to a children's game in which the course of finding some hidden object is directed by other children's calls. If the searcher is close to the object, they say "hot," "very hot," "boiling," or "getting cold," etc. There is nothing in these words to tell the object's location; they just guide the searcher, as the sensation of comfortableness may guide me. There are complicated cases when the notion of comfortableness does not help. But just as a musician starts his training by playing simple notes, so any maker should take advantage of what he truly knows.



#### 10. Structures as Defined by Color Relationships

Now that we are equipped with some notions about the process of painting and its nature, we may proceed with the inquiry into the quality which we have unfolded. The key for understanding the structure of this quality is in grasping the crucial role of relationships in the construction of a harmonious whole. In the construction of "the pattern language," C. Alexander developed the notion of beauty as a set of relations rather than things. He sees the actual substance out of which the environment is made to consist of relations or patterns rather than objects.

"This substance is actually generated by the implicit language, like systems of rules which determine their structure." These rules represent relations between patterns "which correspond to the holistic perception of the structure."\* Thus we may look at an object (a painting or a building) as made up of a complex ensemble of overlapping and interacting relations between its components.

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\*C. Alexander, "The Search for a New Paradigm of Architecture."

This notion is most clear in the realm of colors. In visual perception, color is almost never seen as it physically is. This fact makes color the most relative medium in art. Instead of mechanically applying or merely implying laws and rules of color harmony, there is a need to develop the eye for the color: seeing color action as well as well as feeling color relatedness. The actual feeling of colors merges out of the total interaction of the colors in the painting, and not from our impression of each of them individually. Thus in the realm of color we face interacting relations. The colors, which already by themselves are forces, radiate energies that affect us positively or negatively. Groups of colors whose effect is pleasing we call harmonious. Such a harmony implies balance, symmetry of forces which affect us positively.

In one of the classic researches\* ever done about colors, M.E. Cheveral wrote, "the eye undoubtedly takes pleasure in seeing colors . . . according as the painter has assorted the colors well or ill. Nothing can give us so exact an idea of the pleasure we derive through the sense of sight as the distinguishing, with reference to the colors themselves, the several cases in which we experience agreeable impressions." Cheveral determines five cases:

First Case - "View of single color" There is individual beauty in each of the colors of the spectrum, whether it be in light or in opaque substance.

Second Case - "View of different tones of the same scale of colors" The sight of various tones (tints and shades) of the same hue is "undoubtedly an agreeable sensation." This is a monochromatic harmony.

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\*M.E. Cheveral, The Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colors and Their Application to the Art.

Third Case - "View of different colors belonging to scales near to each other and assorted conformably to contrast" Colors which lie as neighbors on a pure color scale are also agreeable. This is the harmony of adjacents.

Fourth Case - "View of quite different colors belonging to scales very widely separated, arranged conformably to contrast" Colors that are complementary are harmonious. This is the harmony of opposites or complements.

Fifth Case - "View of various colors, more or less well assorted, seen through the medium of a feebly colored glass" There is a harmony of a dominant hue, a dominant light, an effect that is as if an assortment of colors were seen through a "feebly" colored glass.

As the edition of this book says, "today every book on color that takes up the subject of harmony will be found to report the above principles (and) make them part and parcel of traditions of beauty in color arrangement." From the above cases we may conclude that there are "five distinct harmonies of colors, comprised in two kinds--harmonies of analogous colors, and harmonies of contrasts." The first kind consists of the harmony of closely related tones of a single hue; the harmony of similar tones (or values) of adjacent hues; the harmony of a dominant light. The second kind consists of the harmony of two widely different tones (values) of the same hue; the harmony of widely different tones (values) of adjacent (contiguous) hues, and the harmony that brings together colors that are complementary.

I brought forth these notions of harmony to demonstrate the differences in the content of harmony, and the attention we have to pay to these variances. I see these notions of harmonies as a frame of "bylaws,"

in comparison to the harmony which is more of a "constitution." Using these principles without any context to refer to may bring forth nothing more than prettiness. Furthermore, I believe that the sole use of solely mechanistic rules may erase the glimpse of genuine real life in the painting. "What a miserable fate for a painter who adores blondes to have to stop himself from putting them into a picture because they don't go with the basket of fruit!" (related to Picasso). When seeing is different from not seeing, as in the cases of artists like Delacroix, Pissaro, Monet, and Van Gogh, who learned Cheverel very thoroughly, these rules become nothing more than efficient bylaws. Thus, the recognition that the identity of a color does not reside in the color itself but is established by relation is necessary but not sufficient.

To achieve inner light, the overall relationships between the colors must possess certain properties which characterize the total arrangement of color and geometry in the painting.



## 12. Color Properties

The manner through which color materializes its utmost force is by achieving "not separatedness"--i.e., a degree of harmony. It is important though to remember that:

In reality colors are not necessarily an artistic production: nature is full of colors. For generations color had a legitimate daily role, it did not belong to the Art world, it was part of life, and carried a lot of emotional force. It is hard today, in the age that prefers the natural appearance of any material, or the use of pastel colors to imagine the beautiful white marbles of the Acropolis covered with color, the way they were. This fashion is responsible for the homogeneous grey concrete walls that carry no positive feelings whatsoever. (4/2/85 Session)

In the realm of colors wholeness is embodied by the phenomenon which we called "inner light." It is a condition in which space is glued together. This togetherness is the necessary and sufficient condition to obtain harmony rather than "harmonies," like those mentioned in the last chapter. It is the information about the arrangement of these "local harmonies" that is missing: an insight into the complexity of the overlapping and interacting relations between the painting's components. The manner in which components are glued together is the issue to be described in the following pages.

The "gluing together" depends on a limited number of relations that might be defined empirically. Inner light occurs in space as a product of the interaction of several properties of the color arrangement. Each of these properties has the virtue to form wholeness by binding space together:

1. Hierarchy of colors.
2. Colors sum to white.
3. Black and white contrast.
4. Hair line boundaries.
5. Clarity of the individual color.
6. Variation of colors.
7. Families of color.
8. Mutual embedding.

This set of properties contains no information regarding the colors to use. They all refer to the manner by which the colors have to be arranged and formed. Nevertheless, these properties are not mechanistic rules and could not be implied successfully without "seeing." They may help to contrast the structure of the quality to the extent that

their use is derived from the desire to produce harmony. The adequate process will be fully grasped in the chapter about "centers." The dialectic nature of this process was already clarified but further aspects still merit clarity and coherence. The relationship between the painter and painting was described as a dialogue where the painter tries to foresee if the way he renders his feelings has an actual existence outside the domain of his own consciousness. These properties may actually help in doing so because the presence of harmony may be identified in terms of specific properties of arrangement--exactly those mentioned above.

Another property, different in nature, is the one titled "subdued brilliance." Its content is the quality of the overall impression of the colors. Technically speaking it is the hardest task to perform, and intuition must solely rule its process. To have an overview of the reasons for this efficiency, the inquiry into the matter would be moved forward toward the chapter about simplicity and ordinariness. Yet the shadow of this super-property is felt in any arrangement that the properties produce.

Each of these properties is strongly related to a property in the realm of geometry.\* This set of geometrical properties composes what C. Alexander named "15 types of glue." Each group of properties was analyzed and derived empirically without reference to the other properties. "Their similarity is a discovery, not an assumption." The meaning of this discovery will be clarified in the end of this chapter. Each of the color properties will be followed by its corresponding properties in the realm of geometry.

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\*See C. Alexander, "The Nature of Order," unpublished manuscript, Berkeley, 1981.



## 1. Hierarchy of Colors

This property is structurally the most important one. It contains a strong geometrical quality and crucial implications regarding the manner in which colors interact with one another. Its significance goes from mathematical relations to a profound understanding of those relations:

### (a) Mathematical

There is a clear hierarchy in the amount of different colors: the largest amount does not conduct the entire painting but rather prepares the way for the smaller amounts. (Figure 9.1) This sequence ends in one small amount of the most important color, a small amount that is energizing the whole painting. It is a focal point that attracts the eye, but does not end the eye's journey around the painting. A different, more elaborate version is by dividing one color into smaller pieces spread around the painting. Still the total amount of each individual color will sum arithmetically to a certain relation, confirming this hierarchical notion.

(b) This hierarchy should define how intense the color is in relation to its amount. (Figure 9.2) The smaller the amount, the more intense the color is. These weights, of colors and amounts, keep the painting in balance. It is the interaction between the colors and their relative amounts that prevent the painting from falling apart. This not-separatedness is the seed of harmony. These are the geometrical shapes that together compose the whole painting which construct a preliminary field of balance, while colors may carry it further. Thus a combined effort of geometry and color is capable of granting the painting an emotional substance. There is something in this hierarchy deeper than a mere 3:2:1 ratio.

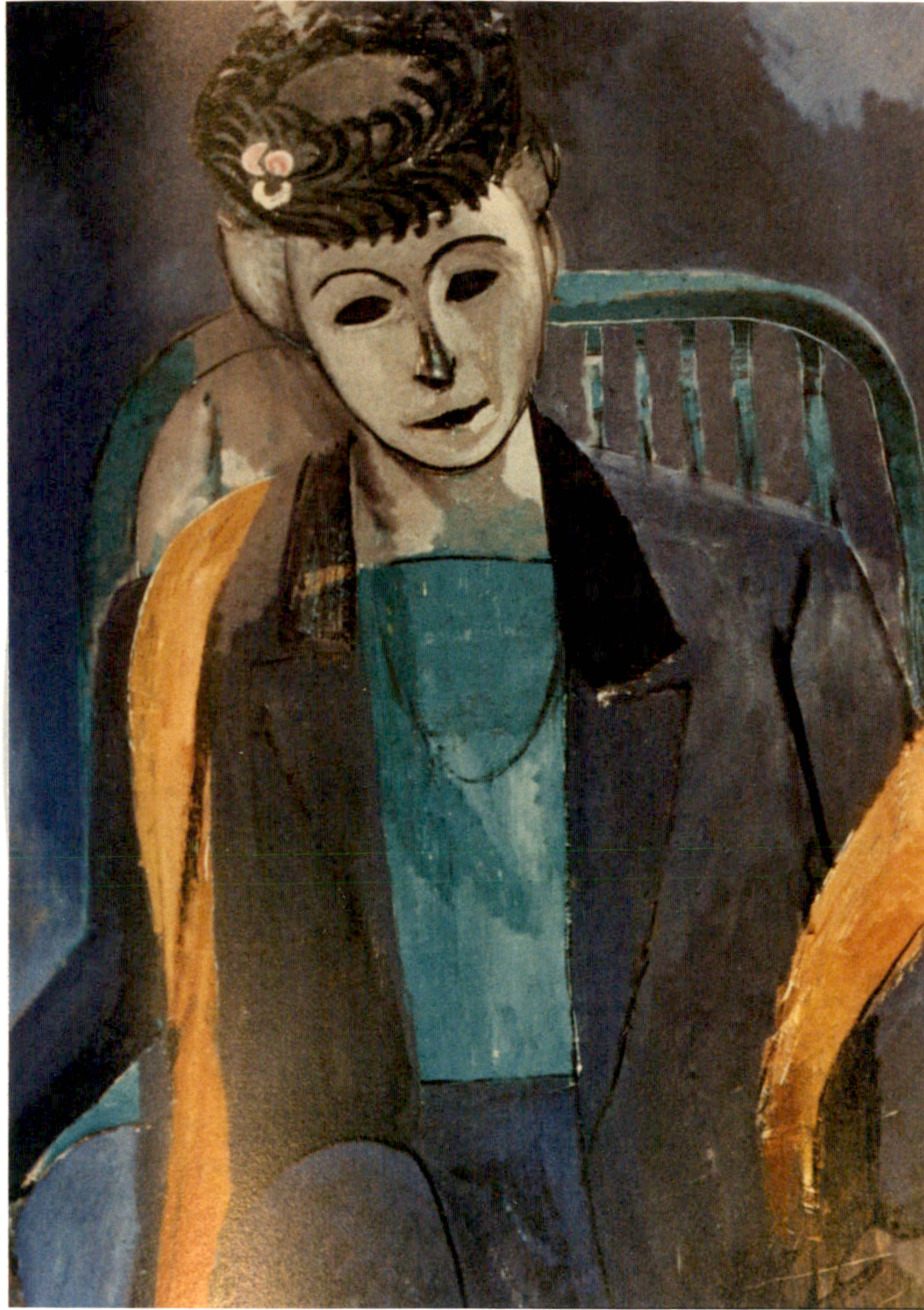


Figure 9.1: Portrait of Madame Matisse. 1912. Oil on canvas. H.Matisse.

". . . there is a clear hierarchy in the amount of different colors. . . ." (page 43)



Figure 9.2: A Vase with Yellow Board. Painted during seminar.  
Gouache on paper.

". . . the smaller the amount, the more intense the color is. . . ." (Page 43)

The movement downward is in a feelable sequence; it is hierarchy of experience.

(c) The sequence is a definite feeling of moving from one color to the other. This motion, related to the variation in color amounts and types, creates the feeling of a pleasant movement. It has the feeling that one is capable of going there again and again. It is similar to a hierarchical structure of subjects, being built up gradually, in which the main subject or the focus does not end the exploration, but rather puts in motion a new circle of movement. It is not necessarily a linear process but it does go towards a center, in a real sequence of movement between color pairs.

(d) This movement is from one color to another, or rather from one pair of colors to the next. This indicates that rarely do we find individual colors without counter-colors. There is a strong relation between the pairs, which builds up the structure of the painting. Relatively small numbers of "passes" occur between the pairs. In some beautiful miniatures we have found, for example, just two pairs and one center (Figure 10). There is a geometrical order in the passways which feels like an ordered favorite "walk." The substance of these pairs of color is the content of another property--colors sum to white. Grasping the significance of this property leaves no choice but to construct the drawing for the painting very carefully. This understanding clarifies Matisse's words: "Given a correct fundamental attitude, it would turn out that the procedure of making a picture is no less logical than that of building a house." This property corresponds to the geometrical property "many levels of scale": "within any given whole there are many discernible levels of scale, and wholes exist at many levels ranging

from the largest to the smallest."

## 2. Color sum to white

The idea underlying this property is much more elaborate than just the phenomenon of complementary colors. It tries to define a kind of relation capable of creating the effect of being complementary in more subdued and subtle colors (Figure 11). There are blues and greens that do interact in this manner but by no means are they complementary colors. Analyzing these pairs, one realizes that the colors are intense as one can imagine them to be in this relation, yet they are inseparable. The complementarity acts like a positive-negative relation: each color is strong and alive, pure and intense, as it may be even with the subdued colors. Each color is well-defined as a part of the painting by its own right. The two sides of each line live very strongly; the interaction purifies the whole. If we compare this property to another property, "families of color," where deliberately we move the colors toward each other, this property aims at stretching them as far as possible. Later on in this report we shall elaborate on this "contradiction."

The "sum to white" is related strongly to "positive space." "Every whole has another whole next to it, so that the wholes and spaces between wholes form an unbroken continuum."

## 3. Black and white contrast

This property has strong implications on the geometric structure of the painting. It does not call upon more black and white contrast to exist in the painting while the overall amount of each of these tones has no valuable shapes. By comparison to the other painting (Figure 12), each of the two categories bring the other one to life. In this sense, this property is similar to the one we know from the realm of



Figure 10: Madhu Madhavi Ragini. Color on paper. India, mid-seventeenth century.

" . . . a definite feeling of moving from one color to the other . . ."  
(Page 44)



Figure 11: Table with Vase. Painted during seminar. Gouache on paper.

". . . the colors are intense as one can imagine . . . yet they are inseparable. . . ." (Page 45)



Figure 12: Chair Near a Window. Gouache on paper. Painted during seminar.

". . . it is the 'areas' occupied by light and dark tones and the way they interlock which is the real essence of the 'black & white' contrast."  
(Page 45)



geometry, which we call "positive spaces." It is the "areas," occupied by light and dark tones, and the way they interlock which is the real essence of this property. The other aspect of this property is the different tones in the contrast, or the hierarchy of tones. Let us imagine as a simple case a painting with three main tones: black, gray and white. Then any organization of these tones like the darkest and the rest, or the lightest and the rest, should create positive spaces. This of course is done in addition to the fine interlock between the main three zones. To achieve this quality, it is very helpful to make small drawings, in black and white, where one will distinguish successfully between the main tones in the manner we have described above.

"Contrast" is the corresponding geometrical property: "There is pronounced contrast between neighboring wholes."

These first three properties are the most fundamental in the creation of "inner light." They all contain strong geometrical applications and eventually create the organization of shapes that produce the foundations of the structure. In a sense the composition is a true creation of the colors' relations and not as commonly maintained the other way around. The integration between the shapes enhances the interaction between the colors; geometry intensifies color, and color intensifies geometry.

These properties can help in the first steps of the process of painting. They help to materialize correctly the vision into its proper arrangement, inherent with the order capable of putting the painting into a true motion.

#### 4. Hair line boundaries

Whenever "inner light" occurs, there is a repeated use of boundaries, to enhance the interaction of adjacent colors. These hairline boundaries

have a strong impact when they have a nature of beautiful detail. These boundaries both unite and separate the two colors on either side of them (Figure 13). Beautiful boundaries are "things" in their own right. The related property in the realm of geometry is "Boundaries": "every thing has a boundary. Each whole has a boundary that itself is made up of wholes, and the wholes which form the boundary are almost as big and dominant physically as the whole which is being bound."

##### 5. Clarity of individual colors

"The clarity of a color" has to respond to the process of painting, where we add a color to a painting and weigh its value in relation to the existing colors. The addition must intensify the rest. A misjudgement cannot be corrected unless the color be erased. Thus there ought to be a clarity of effect by the introduction of every new color.

The final result, which remains unknown until the last stroke of the brush, has to contain clear, bright colors, yet subdued. Colors have to shine, not to absorb. Adjacent colors should differ from one another in a manner that will call for the use of boundaries which create more wholes, i.e., contribute to the hierarchy of colors. Such differentiation is best embodied by enhancing the color's clarity to such a degree that the boundary will contribute to the wholesome feeling through harmonious adaptation. This property carries some geometrical implications due to the fact that color is not thought of in this process as a surface cover but rather as a matter. Therefore "clarity of color" means the coherence of the color's form.

This property is strongly connected to "good shape": Every part of every whole has some kind of "good shape" which is a strong entity and displays regularity--as opposed to amorphous, vague shapes.



Figure 13: Three Vases. Gouache on paper. Painted during seminar.

"Beautiful boundaries are things in their own right. . . ." (Page 47)

## 6. Variation of colors

This property reflects the search for a color in the realm of the individual color. It is vivid and useful in bringing light into the painting. The roughness or the sense of irregularity comes forth due to the "never-ending" process of adjustment through any addition of color, even within its own hue. This property prevents the appearance of big, monotonous planes of one color. It keeps us in the state of awareness and enriches the feeling of "making." One should not try to deliberately produce the effect of roughness: a genuine use of color will produce the quality in its true form. It may occur when the mind is free of any attachment to both "perfect" and "imperfect" notions; when we are just making what we are making (Figure 14). The property refers to the geometrical property of "roughness": "Every thing which is whole has a roughness and unevenness among its parts."

## 7 & 8. Families of colors

These two properties contribute in a similar way to the togetherness of the whole. Their different contributions may be conceptually demonstrated as follows:



In mutual embedding we can decorate a color with dots, diamonds, and other small touches of its counter color. While the "families of color" property calls upon using a third color, C, in order to move the colors



Figure 14: Colored sketch. Painted during seminar. Gouache colors

"The roughness . . . comes forth due to the 'never-ending' process of adjustment through my addition of color. . . ." (Page 48)

one toward the other, by creating a common denominator. These two properties are related in two geometrical properties: echoes (family of color):

"In any whole, it is noticeable that the various smaller wholes of which it is made have echoes of one another, so that there are various internal similarities visible among the parts." Deep interlock (mutual embedding):

"Interlock unifies two areas and makes them inseparable."

These are eight properties of the realm of color. Together they produce a description of the invariant properties of the relation between the painting components when it reaches a harmonious stage. The "harmonies" and their inter-relations (see p. ) are well adapted. The similarity of the properties may suggest some deeper relationships between the realm of color and the realm of geometry. It solidifies the confidence that colors depend on the organization of space, and that geometry may bring colors into life. The next chapter will anchor these properties in the phenomenon of wholeness to which they seem to correlate very strongly.

By ranking the properties according to their impact on the production of inner light, we may construct the following two lists. The first list will rank the properties according to their contribution to the revealing of "inner light." None of the properties can work just by itself.

1. Colors sum to light
2. Hierarchy of colors
3. Black and white contrast
4. Clarity of individual colors
5. Variation of color
6. Families of color

7. Hair line boundaries
8. Mutual embedding

The second list is concerned with the order of paying attention to the different properties in relation to the stage the painting is in, in sequence of step by step modification.

1. Hierarchy of colors
2. Black and white contrast
3. Colors sum to light
4. Clarity of individual colors
5. Variation of color
6. Families of colors
7. Hair line boundaries
8. Mutual embedding of color

The two lists are ranked in a similar manner, a resemblance that may indicate that the farther we are in the process the narrower the pass becomes. Whenever we feel that the possibilities we can choose from are getting wider instead of narrower, it means that we have lost track of the right path. It is a mistake to leave unagreeable colors to compromise in a hope that the following colors will correct them. It rarely happens and more often it is the beginning of the "painting's end."

To conclude, we may say that the insight into the structure of the quality has supplied an arrangement of color patterns to the spiritual "hands" of the process (emotional substance and nourishment). Nevertheless, it was the introduction of the concept of "centers" which transferred these fragments into a coherent, single process.

## 12. The Field of Centers

As the studio's sessions proceeded, the issue of the relationships between color and geometry had become a regular topic of discussion. The notion that "inner light" is being created solely by color ceased to satisfy our minds. The role of geometry as a co-attribute of harmony happened to be an inseparable part of painting and as such the inquiry into the "field of centers" concept was a desirable study.

The conclusions drawn from the first three "color properties" had already implied these strong relationships:

The properties demonstrate the strong interaction of color and geometry. In painting every stroke of the brush either creates a colored shape, or fills in a shape made out of lines, which are shapes by themselves. Therefore it is a valid question to ask about the effect of geometry and colors. Is there any association between the color going wrong and the quality of the geometry?

A geometrical composition is an organization of shapes. The shapes have to be clear and coherent in their own right, but it is the field of centers which organizes them all in a valuable manner. If one assumes that the grotesque of color is presented in the geometry, then composition that has field of centers should make color better. The geometrical shapes that help the color to shine are simple and straightforward: the complexity of the whole structure is not obtained through complex individual shapes, but rather economic ones. (4/8/85 Session)

What is this "field of centers"? How does it influence the quality of the color? To answer these questions one has to recall a certain notion, repeatedly mentioned throughout this report: the importance of both small details and the whole in the creation of wholesome feelings. Furthermore, depth of feeling is believed to occur as a result of wholeness and the introduction of these concepts of centers may clarify the validity of this belief. A center serves as an intermediary entity amid feelings and wholeness: it is the fundamental characteristic of the quality's structure dealing both with the small and the large. As



such, a center is the "unit" of measuring the effect of wholeness, or in other words, a focus of potential energy. Thus one may say that everything is a center either strong or weak--due to its latent power to influence us. The wholes that enable us to feel the beauty lurking within, to obtain this "comfortableness" are those where the parts are composed in a manner which we call "a field of centers." The motto "The total is more than the sum of its parts" might be misleading, because to achieve harmony mere grouping is far from being sufficient. There is but one code of arrangement which can produce centeredness. The whole is incapable of admonishing poor individual parts; a fact which demonstrates our responsibility to each dot and line we paint. Therefore a center is an entity both in the realm of geometry and that of value. It is not a combination of objective geometry and an attached meaning. It is the thing felt as a whole before we split into subjective and objective forms. Contrary to the elementary way which describes an object as a structure of essential elements, we identify centers by differentiation. First we see the structure as a whole, and then we differentiate it into smaller wholes, which are called centers. These centers are again differentiated into smaller centers: a center is made of centers.

A center is not a point; it is not some geometrical figure hidden in the structure, but a feeling of centeredness which one gets of the structure. "A center is nothing until it produces a field effect"--the effect of centeredness which occurs within me, the observer. To intensify a center means to intensify this centeredness at each level of scale so that it can penetrate through the whole structure.

A few examples can make this concept even clearer:

The assignment for this meeting was to repaint works that were presented in the previous meeting. One of these works was far better and it stood out in the quality of its geometry. We made xerox photocopies from which we drew the new paintings (Figures 15 & 16). Analyzing our experiences made clear the observation that the higher rate of success in re-painting Figure 15 was due to the way the colors interlock. Painting the other drawing was like filling individual shapes with colors, each color at a time. The field of centers, which exists in the good drawing, helps to unify the colors, to become one entity. The two paintings contain a center which is its focus: the lake in Figure 15 and the face in Figure 16. But to make this focus the main feature is almost impossible, even if the shape of the face would be well interlocked with the rest of the painting. It is too big a feature to be the focus. There is more in it than just interlocking: the colors succeed when the field of centers succeeds, and the latter manifests its best when the geometry is good. In a profound case of geometry the things that happen around the focus help to put the main event in repose. (4/2/85 Session)

And another example:

The assignment for this meeting was to paint the notion of "comfortableness" as our guide. The results were not satisfactory. The overall impression was that all the paintings were too muddy. (Figure 17). The individual colors were clear, but the total painting was a bit too muddy. (The reason for this muddiness will be clarified along with the subdued brilliance property.) Further analysis revealed that the quality of the painting was not of a center, i.e., there was no field of centers that the colors could intensify or enhance. To know if a field of centers is presented one has to follow these questions:

1. Is it a center in its own right?
2. Does it have a center?
3. Is the center generated by the field of the other stuff in the painting?
4. Could you apply these questions upon each of the centers in the painting?

Understanding that it is the structure of the painting that makes it so unique, the concept of "field of centers" becomes most useful due to its practical nature. It can be called upon easily--one can fill it out and check if it is there or not. Then the question of how to intensify the field of center (i.e., improving the quality) might lead to surprising solutions, because it is totally different question than how to complete the design. It is the interplay of centers that makes the center. The center, being a field of other centers glued together by the properties creates the structure of the phenomenon. To intensify the quality of the phenomenon is to intensify its field of centers. (4/8/85 Session)



Figure 15: "The Lake." Gouache on paper. Painted during seminar.

". . . the field of centers . . . helps to unify the colors, to become one entity. . . ." (Page 15)



Figure 16: "Mr. Moon." Xerox of a painting by Denise Owen. Painted during seminar.

"Painting [it] . . . was like filling individual shapes with colors, each color at a time. . . ." (Page 53)



Figure 17: A Room with a Woman. Gouache on paper. Painted during seminar.

". . . the individual colors were clear, but the total painting was a bit too muddy. . . ." (Page 53)

In order to practice this growing understanding of "centers," we were to draw a B & W drawing, as a field of centers, without the use of any chromatic color.

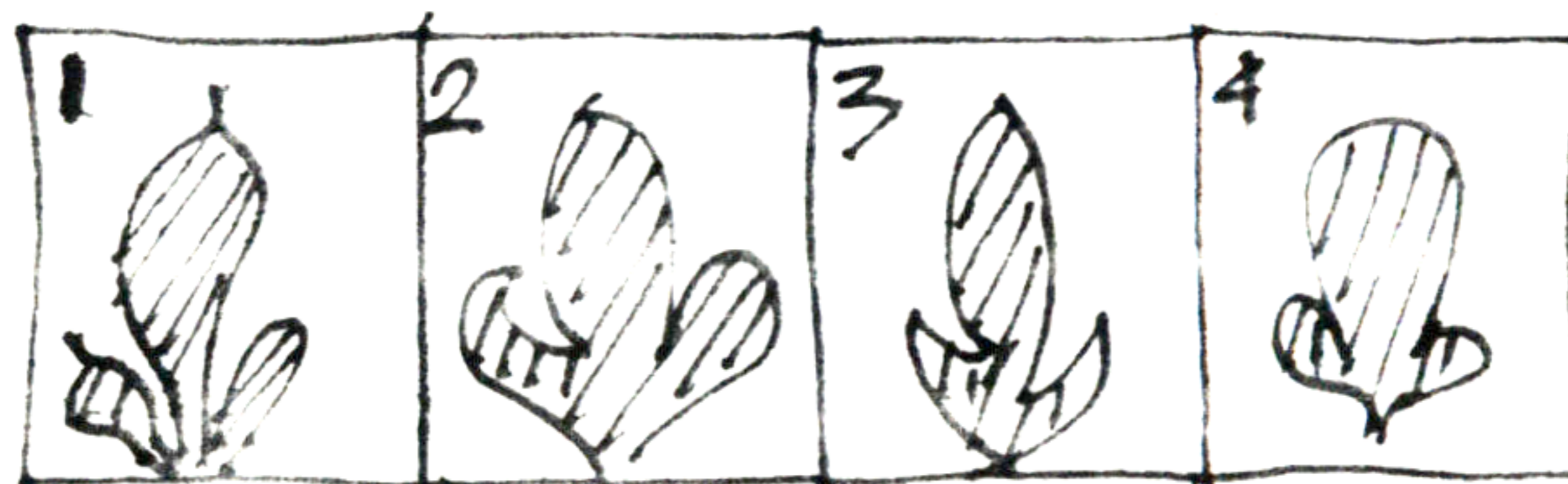
Most of the black and white drawings that were done for this meeting were figurative. Very few of the abstract drawings would have been described as centers, while some of the figurative drawings were very good. These drawings had two virtues:

1. every "thing" in the painting is a center in its own right.
2. the centers support each other.

There is a drawing where a corner of a high building defines a patio. In this case the center is not a "thing," the center is the space that this drawing has captured. The space comes to life by the drawing. This center is the focus of the drawing, but the eye that drew it did not concentrate just in the space itself but rather in the spaces near it in the very time it was working on this center.

Another good drawing depicts a woman sitting in a room with a piano and a vase full of flowers. One can easily imagine the woman in the real room being intensified by the flowers and the piano, and the painting having captured it as a center.

Clarifying the concept of mutual intensification (Virtue #2) Chris used this example:



In what manner can additional leaves intensify the first to be drawn? In most of the cases it is obvious that the new leaves are too big or from another family, therefore incapable of enhancing the big leaf. Those that may succeed are #1 or #3. At first glance #3 looks the best. It has the right shape and the right size, while the shape of the right leaf in #1 is very odd. But this perfection of #3 takes from the original character of the big leaf and creates a totally new shape, while #1, far from being perfect, intensifies the leaf without transforming it into something totally new. This state of imperfection or perhaps roughness is much more appealing and leaves room for further intensification. My own work (Figure 18) was criticized for having too many lines that intensify nothing, or even take away from the centers that do exist, e.g., the vase and the space within the columns. As a specific case of intensification, the column at the right helps to define a space which helps to intensify the vase. This kind of analysis is similar to the "Domino approach" in which the movement of one stone has to influence



Figure 18: Vase on a Table. Pencil on paper.

". . . [It] was criticized for having too many lines that intensify nothing. . . ." (Page 54)

the rest. Chris opposes it strongly. He suggests a different approach in which one center can intensify another, not necessarily through an intermediate, third one, but rather through its special structure. This is hard to grasp, but it is true, that the "Domino approach" is incapable of explaining in a satisfactory manner the centers in a good painting. (4/15/85 Session)

Formulating the link between the structure of the phenomenon and its quality creates the need for re-examining the criterion of Emotional Substance (E.S.):

The E.S. criterion is testing the significance of the painting, its value: does it help to substantiate deep emotions? We are able to do it by creating a structure that possesses the key to our substance. This key is the structure's unique order that communicates directly to our emotions, without the intermediary rationale. This order reveals itself in what we call a "field of centers." The E.S. criterion is practical to a certain extent as the directions we need to follow while painting. It is not always on call and it happens that we have to wait to know the answer. The "field of centers" should help moving in this direction. When a painting has "inner light" the question "Does it have E.S.?" is equal to the question "Does it have a field of centers?" It is this value, the substantiation of the emotions, that will keep the centering process from losing its track. (Remarks)

After using the "field of centers" concept in a few architectural projects at school, I found it very hard to grasp its validity in the two-dimensional level. It seems reasonable that a building should respond to some latent centers in the site, i.e., to the centers of its environment. I have learned to read the quality attached to center in the site, but dealing with a piece of paper seemed different. A painting, being removable and small, appears to have a different substance but not for valid reasons. It is the unclarity of the "zone" in which the small miniature or ornament appears that evokes this "pointless" evaluation about its significance. Therefore it is helpful to think of any small painting as a way of decorating a notebook, a box, a wall. Making the wall nicer, the room more pleasant, the whole house will



have a better quality and in the end the universe itself will be a better place for us to live in.

To grasp this concept of "centers," I find it helpful to think of any line that I draw, any dot I put on a piece of paper as a center. If you think of this dot as having the potential energy to enter the realm of value then its placement on a sheet of paper ceases to be a random act. The sheet of paper is a center by itself, a center we can intensify by placing the dot in a location that will enhance the centers that already exist due to the shape the material and the texture of this particular piece of paper. The dot itself is a center, so we can intensify its centeredness by improving its shape, defining its boundaries, or placing other dots around it that will intensify our dot to the right degree. The more centeredness this paper will possess, the easier it will be for us to anchor ourselves to it, establishing relations of not-separateness inherent in the notion of harmony. (Remarks)

These small ornaments may intensify the centers within ourselves. It may sound out of proportion, but throughout the studio, we have been experiencing that this should be our only state of mind while working.

Thus the distinction between the quality and its structure ceased to exist: the structure is the quality experienced by us.

Centers are not "things." By possessing the energy to "move our hearts" our way of grasping centers is by feeling. The Individual property can be understood rationally, but the interaction of several properties and the evolution of the structure as a whole can not be grasped by rational thinking alone without missing its real emotional depth. These structures are to be seen, not to be thought of. Our deep response to this structure, this experience within ourselves is what we call "the quality without name."\* It is an order inherent in the structure, interpreted as centers by our emotions. By trusting the feelings as the only indication for the presence of this structure, we may compare (without words) the depth of emotions felt on different occasions. Such a comparison will conclude their common denominator as the real substance of this depth of feeling. One can feel this depth by being close to many items that appear to be in great variance with one another. I see no way to understand the phenomenon but by accepting the notion of them having something in common. This common

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\*C. Alexander, The Timeless Way of Building.

quality is the structure mentioned above. The "field of centers" concept is a way of describing the generic nature of this phenomenon. In this analysis centers and feelings are highly related. The "better" the center is, the deeper the feelings are. Therefore, it is a legitimate effort to deliberately try to produce a "field of centers." The color properties help to grasp what the center should feel like rather than look like. (Remarks)

The above discussions were followed by a few decorating assignments in which we found the distinction between fine arts and applied arts to be impossible. In both, ornaments carry crucial roles in establishing a coherent understanding about the relationships between the realm of color and the realm of geometry. Before we move into this inquiry, it would be adequate to recall the notion of beauty as an attribute of relationships rather than of things. The concept of centers may further clarify this notion and ease the production of beautiful ornaments. In beautiful products the beauty which we feel as a whole is the result of countless layers of beauty coming from its wholesome sub-structures. These multiple layers of beauty produce "the beauty" as opposed to the "beauty-effect."

Thus the concept of centers clarifies the distinction between "beauty" and "beauty-effect." It can be understood then as a certain relationship between the result as a whole and its components, where the "field of centers" expresses these relationships in the case of real beauty.



## COLOR AND GEOMETRY

13. Ornaments and Simplicity

The need for the introduction of the "centers" concept derived from the "dead end" we faced when we treated the forces of color as the sole attribute of the pigments. The value of geometry was missing. We learned the most about how to conduct geometry in the "centering process" through drawing black and white drawings, first figurative and then abstract.

The abstract work did not have the desired quality so we continued the inquiry into the "field of centers" concept. Chris suggested that in all the cases of good art there is but one structure. If you can feel this structure, feel the common denomination (and give it the same name), you can produce it. The way is by deliberately trying to produce the field of centers. Recognizing this one common structure leaves no room for distinction between fine arts and applied arts. A fine pattern of pavement can be as valuable and precious as a painting by Rafael: there is no place for prejudice toward ornamenting and decorating.

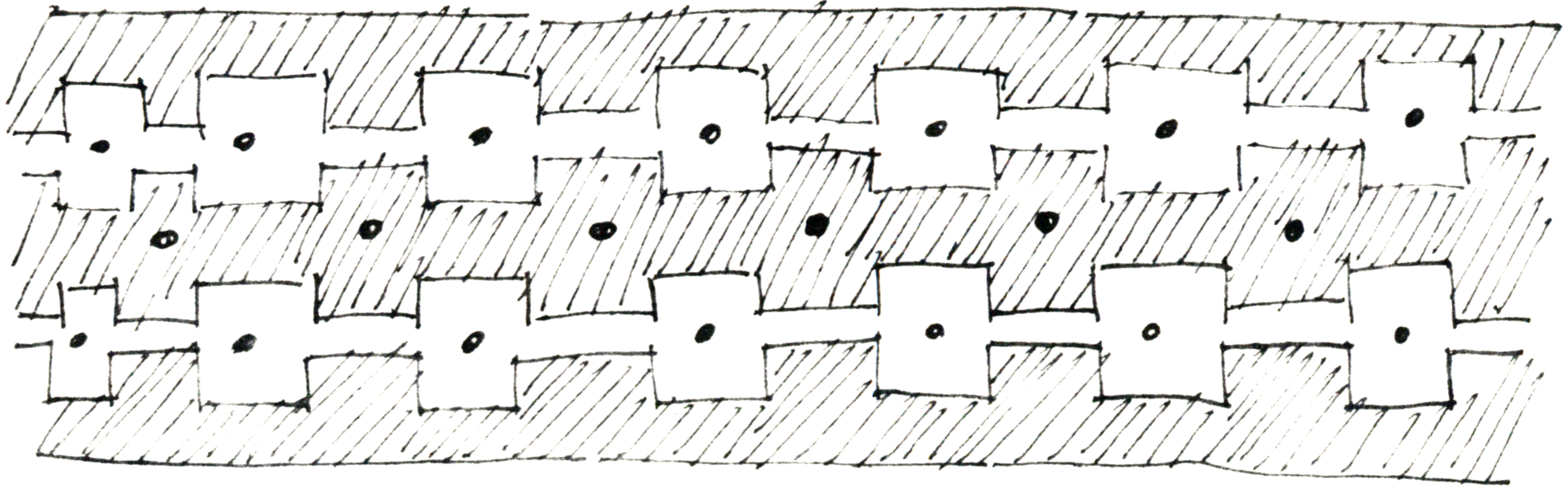
It is unlikely that geometrical inspiration is less accessible. The joy of playing with small elements is crucial for the making of more complex, beautiful things. Without seeing depth in these simple, elementary acts, it is impossible to see depth in art in general. It is the level of enjoyment in simple repetitions in production that is harmonious. It is like a game. Locating posts in a fence is to play with simple repetitious elementary shapes. The game is enjoyable due to the pleasure of attaining a synco-pated and harmonious organization.

The "centering process" is no different than this game. One has to concentrate on this elementary, immediate pleasure of this primitive desire. Thanks to the desire and pleasure of playing basic notes, one can proceed with notes of more complex nature. This basic joy of putting together simple geometric forms in an organized and harmonious manner should be the cornerstone of the architect's pleasure. This valuable pleasure of doing is the gate through which one can grasp that the structure of the quality is one. Without pleasure no movement towards this one structure is possible. This movement, as in the case of the musician playing simple notes, must pass first through the real joy of ornamenting.  
(4/18/85 Session)

The next assignment was to repeat very basic shapes until we arrived

at the level of enjoying it. To begin with mechanical repetitions until some real feeling starts to grow out, then to lead these feelings into a more complex configuration.

The work on the last assignment was extremely enjoyable. Still there as but one drawing where the process of repetitious drawing had produced something worthwhile and pleasant.



Other works, even those in which the fun of doing was clearly present, were not powerful enough and could not confront one as being by itself. Analyzing the good drawing I got the impression that its repetitious nature was the very reason for it to develop from meaningless lines into possessing a value. This endless repetition causes boredom; in order to draw away from this boredom one might get rid of the meaningless shapes which the drawing contains. In this manner the drawing may become richer due to the real substance of the remaining shapes. The simplicity of mind, in attempting to make a beautiful decoration, is much more profound and relevant than the desire to create a work of Art. The prevalent notion that decorating and ornamenting are trivial is undermining and preventing works of art from getting expression. In past eras decorating was inherent in making. Nothing can demonstrate it better than the prehistoric Chinese Bronze (figure 19). These simple geometric shapes still possess the power to move our hearts. These timeless ornaments teach us that one can approach harmony with simple and pure geometric forms. These geometrical shapes are the essence of harmony. (4/22/85 Session)

That which is called simple form or a simple shape has nothing to do with the profound notion of simplicity. It is not the simplicity in the conceptual form which makes it easy to grasp the shape, but that



Figure 19: Fu Xin jue. Late 11th century B.C. Height 22.3 cm.

" . . . these simple geometric shapes still possess the power to move our hearts. . . ." (Page 59)

one which is derived from straightforward feelings in spite of the object's irregularity and roughness. This roughness is not a design concept of achieving beauty through the creation of the imperfect. In that sense irregularity does not refer to a state of being opposed to regular, but that when one does not consciously aim at either there is always a little something left unaccounted for. When one is simply making what he is making, he may obtain a state where he is free of rules, where intuition governs the making. Often when one is trying to make a simple thing by fitting it into a form which he considers simple, the simplicity achieved might be nothing but shallowness. The true nature of simplicity is its capacity to achieve intensity with economy of means and not with "implanted" complexity. This notion of economy is not a call for "noble poverty" but for conditions in which the means and the way in which they are used are respected as well as the final result.

The discussion about emotional substance brought forth the ordinary as a positive characteristic of the door for our seminar room. Such an appropriate, modest, relaxed door may solidify our emotions through its simplicity without appealing to any grandness of means. The source of the tin mug's comfortableness (an example used to cohere the ordinariness notion) should be revealed by this inquiry into the nature of simplicity. The beauty of such useful objects, like the door, the mug, fine tea bowl, and many more objects, is not merely contemplated by the mind but is also being experienced as a whole. Objects that fulfill the daily functions of life are often wholesome. These things are done without any sophisticated intentions, without any design conflicts in the process of making. The tin mug is not the manifestation

of the individual personality of the maker; on the contrary, the article itself stands out, without any importance attributed to the creator's identity. It feels like the maker forgot himself when he made these things to be beautiful.

This phenomenon of letting one forget and open himself to another self achieves its utmost materialization in religious buildings. The Alhambra was built to glorify God, not the builder. Its unique beauty achieves the ordinary with extraordinary efforts. The patterns of the Alhambra's ornaments substantiate our emotions in the same manner that the mug does. However, the difference is in the ornaments' location ahead of the mug on the same "vector of movement." This capacity to be nourished both by the mug and by the Alhambra is derived from one common structure the two of them possess--the field of centers.

The centering process has a simplicity seeking process built in. Such a process acquires success when no effort is made to express individuality through the medium of the thing. The aim is to produce things through the medium of man. Intuition, while appealing to the value of harmony, may conduct the making process to obey impersonal laws. It is not enough to seek the sources of beauty in the individual. Beauty is related to laws that transcend the individual: the laws of Harmony. This is the reason for the use of the same pattern by many traditional craftsmen: the pattern was wholesome and therefore there was no question of individual jealousy.

These patterns and ornaments have a unique quality:

It has the quality to become a part of nature by leaving nature alone. These shapes are simple and calm and distinct themselves in the most harmonious way because they do not stand for themselves. The sharp distinction of these shapes aims not to become part of nature, but to leave it alone. (4/25/85 Session)

This kind of harmony does not belong exclusively to the realm of geometry. There are paintings that obtain the quality of this simplicity. Their colors are subdued yet brilliant.



#### 14. Subdued Brilliance

It is the field of centers that makes the whole and it is the whole that nourishes the soul. The most wholesome paintings leave the spirit alone: it is not an act of indifference but of substantiating the self. The paintings that we found doing this the most were those with subdued brilliance (Figure 20). This property was observed in the first session:

Analyzing the painting, we found that among the ones that have this light, the most sophisticated are those that have mostly weak, subdued colors with some strong spots, rather than paintings that are composed totally of strong colors. From the accumulated experience, it was clear that in order to succeed in choosing a color, one has to dare trying the most unexpected colors, otherwise we remain in a flat domain.  
(Remarks)

The highest level of "inner light" comes from subdued colors, due to their capacity to enhance emotion in the most profound way. It is part of the way the whole painting is working, and it should be there from the very first color. The colors are intense, but individually they are not brilliant. Therefore they are bright and subdued at the same time. Like the color phenomenon in nature, when we get the impression of brightness on one of these spring days, while the individual colors are subdued. This subdued impression contributes to the not-separateness from the world. It makes the painting a whole with the world, by being unique and at the same time not standing out for its own sake.

The painting should not stick out as a proof of the painter's skills.





Figure 20: "Wall with a Window." After a detail from "The Conversation" by H. Matisse 1911. Gouache on paper. Painted during seminar.

" . . . the colors are intense, but individually they are not brilliant. . . ." (Page 62)

It has to disappear into the world, to melt away within it. When a painting is capable of being absorbed without any conflict, the existing state of harmony is intensified, and the painter contributes his share of wholeness.

The natural way to possess this value is by using more and more economical or subdued means. The sense of comfortableness derived from this simplicity is the quality we are after. The brilliance that occurs due to the interaction of subdued colors is the inner light--a sign of successful absorption. There were occasions when in order to achieve emotional substance we were seeking this subdued brilliance, quite often without success. The overall impression was that all the paintings were too muddy (Figure 17). The individual colors were clear, but the total painting was very toneless, very muddy. We have analyzed this failure as a result of trying to achieve the "comfortableness" feeling through the subdued quality. Yet, while there were plenty of subdued colors, one could not find brilliance. Thus the colors became absorbing instead of shining. "Inner light" is something which is subdued and brilliant at the same time; like the quality of a geometrical shape that stands out not for itself but as a counterpoint of the subdued "zone" it helps to establish.

Economy and purity of means, both in the process and in its object, result in the simplicity which grant color and geometry their most beautiful structures. Simplicity of form and subdued colors seem to transcend the structure of harmonious objects in an identical manner.



## 15. Color and Geometry

Both color and geometry participate, each in its own particular way, in the creation of harmony. This state of harmony is characterized by a set of properties which define the manner it glues space together. The two sets of properties (the geometrical properties and the color properties) are causally related. As was previously demonstrated, one cannot produce "inner light" in color unless the geometric structure of the painting supports it. When the properties commence to form a field of centers the colors begin to shine and to interact in a unique way. Well ordered geometry effects color positively and in return color enhances space. Thus to achieve a wholesome painting, both geometry and colors are the access through which one may appeal to Harmony.

It is helpful to think of geometry and color as means that have to be used to achieve comfortableness. This notion, however, does not explain the real effect of geometry on color. Within the state of mind, inherent in the making process capable of producing comfortableness, geometry and color are in the same realm. The phenomenon of wholeness, where their inter-relation materializes itself into a structure is beyond this realm. It is where a human being meets something which contains truth, through the unification of the thing and himself. This not-separateness is easy to say but hard to desire, because it undermines ego and originality. In the design of the studio's door, which we used before as an example, the task was to desire to make a door that is inseparable from the world. Trying to desire such a thing is the hardest task of all. (Remarks)

Color and geometry may bring forth harmony due to their power to prevail the order which unfolds wholeness, and evoke the depth of feeling in us, as if this order is the key to our being. These notions are useful, but they do not heal the separation between the realm of color and the realm of geometry. Defining their relationships in this manner is like specifying the necessary pans in baking a pie without mentioning the ingredients. The fact that geometry and color were used in the process

says nothing about their relationship to the object itself and as parts of the process of making. What is their true relationship to the experience of the final object?

Beauty results due to relations between entities: we have found the interaction between colors and centers the course of beauty. To grasp the relationship between color and geometry is to understand two realms which, by themselves, are constituted out of relationships.

When we see a painting as a whole, we grasp the total form before we differentiate it into structural features. We grasp the form which is the visual shape of the content. It is the arrangement of some order that has to do with the form that makes it whole. Form has its own shape and its own color, and yet its substance is the unification of color and shape into a One. This totality is defined by the relations between parts which depend on the structure of the whole. Therefore, one cannot refer to color as an isolated phenomenon: space and color together create the structure. To claim that each center has a color is still to say nothing about the relation of space and color.

The distinction between chromatic and achromatic colors helps to maintain the status of color as an independent entity in the creation of beauty. As a matter of fact, there are other cases where the phenomenon of Inner Light could be found. One may find black and white paintings, like the famous landscapes done by Zen painters, which carry this Inner Light. The old Chinese Bronzes are excellent examples of pure ornaments revealing Inner Light without the intermediary of color. The phenomenon is hard to grasp. The fact that Inner Light could be felt in objects where there are no colors is mysterious. But this "no colors, yet inner light" is the key to insight into the relation between color

and geometry:

Color may carry centers beyond the limits of its geometry, directing the becoming form into its utmost harmonious state of being. The more the color is treated as matter, the more the geometry has to establish itself with respect to this color. It is primary shapes, the tectonic structure of the pattern, that we try to anchor in the beginning of the process: to cultivate the spirit and to be able to lead color into spiritual paths. Thus to leave space for color, geometry has to be controlled so that it may reach its optimum formation rather than mere grand presentation. It is a complex yet simple configuration of shapes, where "simplicity seeking" has become the dominant characteristic of the field of centers. By this organization of a structure we follow a basic principle of gestalt psychology which holds that any visual pattern will tend toward the simplest configuration available to the sense of sight under given circumstances.

This simple yet not-shallow arrangement evokes the needed curiosity within the painter. (It is surprisingly similar to the feeling one may possess toward an interesting configuration of chess pieces.) Within such an arrangement one feels the power of the colors he uses in resolving and enhancing existing order. There is a discovery in each stroke of the brush, while in other cases you feel like filling some grid of lines with color. It is this "simplicity seeking" built into both the geometrical and color arrangements which specifies the relationships between color and geometry. This is one of the reasons for Matisse's paintings being so powerful: their geometry is simple, almost childish, yet complex and beautiful. Colors interact with the shapes and reveal this light which one sees. It occurs when a painter accomplishes a state of optimum

balance between colors and geometry (Figure 21).

The effect of Inner Light is a result of special conditions in space which lead colors to create centers that geometry by itself is incapable of reaching. This is the reason the Chinese Bronzes achieved this field effect which we call Inner Light without using any color. Yet colors have unique emotional forces which no pure geometry may reveal.

This is the very reason for the failure I faced in one of the assignments:

The work I brought to this session (Figure 22), a series of colored patterns of a terrazzo plate I was going to do for a small table. Analyzing these works we found that the geometry extracted itself. It was found that color can no more intensify the pattern, which had its own limits even at the black and white level. In a painting, the main emotion is created by color. The "reason" to make a painting is to enable the color to "speak," so to say; otherwise line drawings do a sufficient job. (2/26/85 Session)

This proposal is far from being a complete answer. It suggests a course where deeper insights into the inquiry may be looked for, and it enables us to see "Inner Light" as a deeper version of the "Field of centers." The return to the crucial role of color has the merit of getting somewhat closer to the heart of things. Yet this heart is beyond the color envelope, just as it is beyond the space envelope.

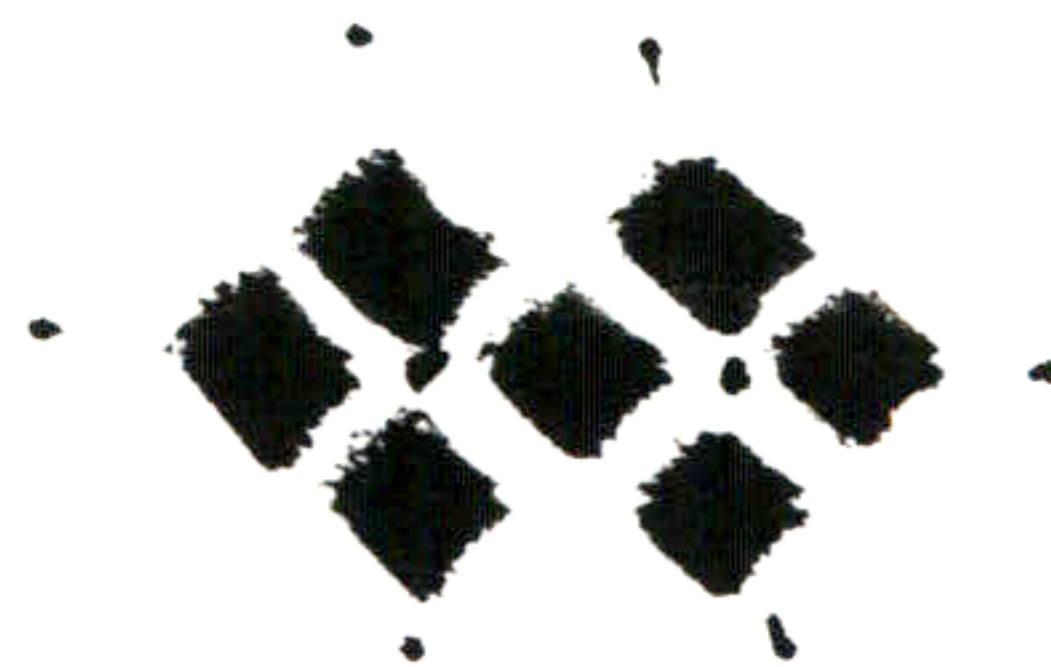




Figure 21: The Dream. 1940. Oil on Canvas. H. Matisse.

" . . . the geometry is simple, almost childish, yet complex and beautiful. . . ." (Page 67)



Figure 22: Studies for terrazzo plate. Painted during seminar.  
Gouache on paper.

". . . the color cannot more intensify the pattern. . . ." (Page 67)



## THE ONE WAY OF MAKING

16. From Painting to Making

Throughout the studio's sessions, we have repeatedly apprehended color and geometry to be inseparable realms. The structure of the harmony they may embody is strongly related; their properties are alike and they share the force of the use of simplicity. Any colored painting whose structure reveals Inner Light also possesses wholesome geometric arrangements of shapes. Therefore, this conclusion will take the liberty to propose that the process titled "the one way of painting" does not necessarily portray painting alone. This "one way" is a generic making process, in which painting is one field of specialization. It reflects a way of understanding the making of things as production of deep order. This method reveals the virtues and skills a maker should be gifted with: it includes a state of mind as well as technical skills. These skills are specific to any particular mode of making. One has to treat them with the utmost respect and love for the craft, but knowing them alone will produce nothing but technicians.

Apart from the proposal that the generic process of any "making" is essentially one, there is a special interest in applying some of the conclusions to architecture. One who follows this process in making a painting will first imagine the whole painting, its color and composition, before he would touch the brush. Then after a series of sketches he would build up the painting with colors. The actual colors may vary from the ones he had conceived in his mind according to their physical effect. Then when the intuition approves a certain color to contain the emotional substance, it will escort the painting until it is completed. This color presented in the painting will affect all the colors that

are painted later in the process. The skill to foresee the quality of each entity is most precious in the making of buildings. In Architecture, the quality which flows out from each divided part is the quality which can go upward instead of downward, all the way from the smallest to the largest whole.

In general, the building process is believed to be divided into two parts: design and construction. It is usually understood that design is the decision-making for construction, and construction is the realization of these decisions. We are supposed to decide something at a certain step following the former step decision, going down to the next step. The design process can be grasped as a flow of narrowing possibilities. If, instead of this flow, each step has its own realm in which we have to seek harmony by feeling directly within this stage, then each step is not a mere preparation for the next step; it works rather individually in order to create the feeling of not-separateness. All we have to keep in this "step by step modification" is the flow of harmonious results in each phase, whether it is in building models of different scales or in the actual construction.

I shall call this generic nature of the process "the one way of making." The reason for the use of the word making and not creating is due to its straightforward meaning. It implies simplicity rather than sophisticated elite of creators. This meaning of making suggests working with one's hands. There is something basic and natural about the hand that the urge to utilize its power will always make itself felt in the made. Handcrafts maintain by their nature a direct link with intuition, where the maker draws the essence of the thing "seen with his own heartbeat."

17. Hindrance

This directness towards making may help to remove the fear which may easily obstruct one from creating. This fear is the main obstacle in the access to creativity: the fear of making while one thinks of himself as an ungifted person. It is the fear of not being original enough, and of objective standards which appear to threaten freedom of expression. Paradoxically when one accepts these laws, his obedience will increase his freedom in the conflict between beauty and ugliness, between being "interesting" and "too traditional." The acceptance of these limits will produce an ease of mind--there is no opposition between the power of these rules and real creativity. One has to overcome these fears so one can be in touch with one's emotional substance, which is the source of the creation of beauty. There is a safe shelter in the intellectual separation of beauty from things that touch the heart, but this shelter may never produce the same depth of feelings.

It is crucial to strip this fear in order to reach emotional substance because in these days of no-tradition the latter is the key to truth in making. Tradition's power is an aggregate power that transcends the individual. This is the non-individual power of tradition. In the absence of tradition the process that may promise beauty is "the one way of making." Therefore the "one way of making" may supply us with a method to overcome both the absence of tradition as well as the fear of using what is thought to be subjective values.

18. The One Way of Making

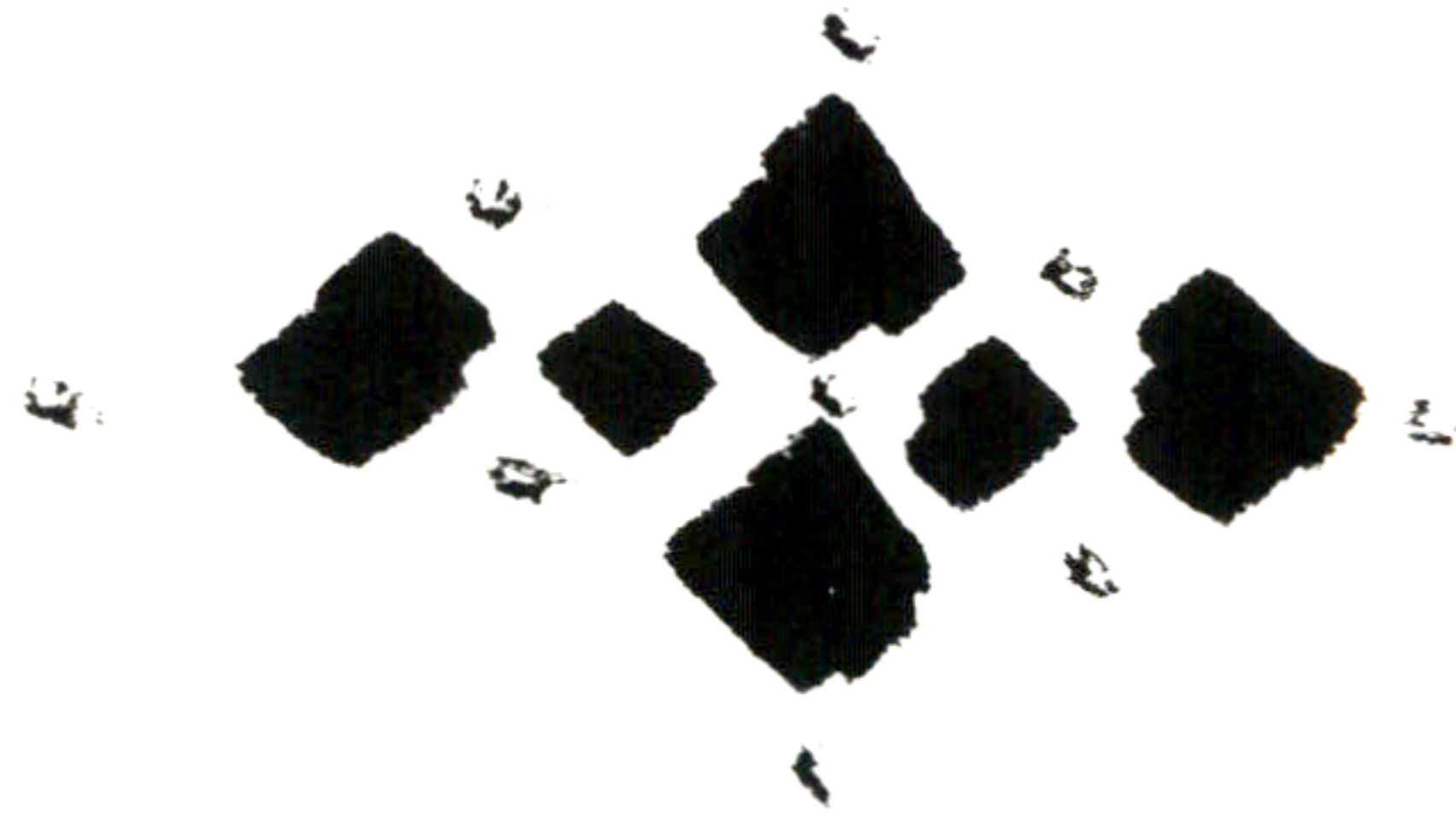
The one way of making contends that there is no separation between

spirit and manner, between value and structure. It is a circular process based on a permanent dialogue between the maker and the made. Perception and action are the two sides of this process. Through the dialogue the maker should assure that what moves his heart is "moving by its own right," and whenever he finds a glimpse of this Inner Light he should anchor it in the painting. Any further step has to intensify this glimpse of Harmony. Each addition of color, shape, or matter has to pass the test of emotional substance to assure its ability to nourish in the future as well as in the present.

One must have a clear vision of the whole from the beginning, otherwise final composition will be merely a grouping of fragments. The way to materialize the vision is by trying to make each spot beautiful through the intensification of that which is already harmonized by creating new centers. By using trial and error it is possible to measure the quality of the becoming centers and direct the process in an adequate manner. When the course is lost, the concept of centers should be called upon and helped to re-find the way, just like the one who draws a circle knows how to complete it. Each step in the making has to have a sense of accomplishing, because once you leave something unsolved, there is no way to correct it but by re-doing it. It is a dynamic process where geometry and color are inseparable realms. By letting the process govern the making, one may forget himself and prevent his own ego from ruling the process. The making starts with a vision which is superior to knowledge. The eye of seeing is intuition, so one may conduct the process by permanent appeal to Harmony. We have to look at things as we see them for the first time; to see things without any distortion. Without this faculty one cannot express himself in

a personal manner. Thus, a painter, before he paints a rose, has "to forget all the roses that were ever painted."

To make is to express that which we have within ourselves and yet to desire that the object made will disappear into the world. This not-separatedness is easy to say but hard to desire, because it undermines ego and originality. Trying to desire such a thing is the hardest task of all.



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