



COLOR is one of the design elements available to each of us as artists. It is the magical element that surrounds us each day from the moment we wake up until we go to sleep at night. It can create the mood, entice us, calm us, welcome us, or make us want to run for the hills.

Recently, an art group that I belong to made 'color' the discussion topic at our meeting. One of our members gave a brief talk about the generalities that we are all taught about color from a very early age. Then she went on to say how much 'phooey' there is in all the theory of color, and I found myself shaking my head over and over again in agreement as she said we need to abandon theory and learn to see and trust. Then each member had their own opportunity to speak about color and how we portray it and the tools we may use. During this discussion there were members who spoke about the importance of viewing other art, and there were members who spoke of learning about color from their grandmothers, and how color should make us 'feel' not just 'think'. As another member explained, it is thousands of years of shared feeling and when the colors used break with that unconscious understanding of color we just know it doesn't feel right.

COLOR is a strong element that has an enormous effect on the feeling we want to convey in our art. There are some artists that just seem to have a natural understanding of color and are able to make it work it's magic. For others we have to slow down, pay attention and allow the magic to slowly percolate into our consciousness.

To help this process I have created a color book. It has become an invaluable tool for it is here that I collect color in all its forms. It may take the form of a photograph, a picture of a favorite painting, fabric samples, words, lists of color finds. Then to further understand my color choices I analyze what I see and experience about the color. My color 'collection' book is used most often when I am beginning a piece. I can thumb through the pages and get inspired by color usage, but it is the process of collecting and analyzing provides education and guidance and helps to build confidence in your color choices.

I highly recommend this for any aspiring or experienced artists for it helps us to slow down to 'see' and 'trust' our color choices.

Over the next six months I will provide instructions for some of the color exercises I have completed to fill the pages of my own 'color book'. This month you can find a list of materials you need to get started and the first of the instructions so you can jump in and begin to...

DISCOVER COLOR.