

Primary Colors 原色

Brenda Danilowitz
文/ 布蘭達·丹尼羅威茨

That red, yellow, and blue are “primary” colors is based on the idea that the creation of an exhaustive array of color and color nuances occurs when red, yellow, and blue paints are mixed, but that the pigments themselves result from pure, unmixed sources.

紅、黃、藍被視為「原色」是基於這樣一種想法，即，當紅色、黃色和藍色的顏料混合時，就會產生一系列詳盡豐富、差別細膩的色彩，而這幾個顏色本身則是純粹的、未經混合的。

In the reductive compositions of early twentieth-century European abstract art movements, most notably De Stijl in the Netherlands and the Bauhaus school in Germany, these three primary colors were ubiquitous—touted as pure, basic, unadulterated, and radical new ways of signaling a new art. At the Bauhaus, Wassily Kandinsky had attempted to link the three primary colors to the basic forms of geometry—the circle, triangle, and square—and arrived at a blue circle, yellow triangle, and red square. Although there was no consensus, these associations prevailed and have become synonymous with conventional conceptions of color at the Bauhaus.

二十世紀早期的歐洲抽象藝術流派，以荷蘭的「風格派」(De Stijl)和德國的包豪斯最為著名，在這些流派去繁就簡的構圖中，三原色無處不在——它們被奉為象徵着嶄新藝術的一種純粹、基本、無摻雜且激進的方式。在包豪斯，瓦西里·康定斯基(Wassily Kandinsky)試着將三原色與基本的幾何形體——圓形、三角形和方形——結合在一起，由此形成了藍色的圓形、黃色的三角形和紅色的方形。儘管並沒有達成共識，但這些顏色形狀的關聯極為盛行，並成為了包豪斯經典色彩概念的代名詞。

Josef Albers, who had followed how theories about the nature of color played out at the Bauhaus, did not take up the challenge of color until he arrived in the United States and launched the first-ever color course in an American art school, at Black Mountain College, in 1934. In teaching color, he invoked the emphasis on studies of materials and trial-and-error experimentation that he had perfected the previous decade in teaching the Preliminary Course at the Bauhaus. In his simultaneous practice as an artist, Albers applied to his own work the methods and goals to understanding color that he prescribed for his students.

約瑟夫·阿爾伯斯一直遵循在包豪斯發揮作用的那套色彩本質的理論，直至他移居美國後才開始真正接受色彩的挑戰，並且於1934年在黑山學院開設了首個色彩課程。在教授色彩的過程中，他完善了自己過去十年來在包豪斯教授的初級課程，強調對材料研究和反覆試驗的重視。與此同時，在身為藝術家的實踐中，阿爾伯斯將他為學生設置的色彩理解的研究方法和目標應用到自己的工作中。

Albers's holistic view of the world led to his classroom focus on context and relationships as the key to understanding both the outer world of objects and the subjective inner world of the artist. Among all the elements of art he determined that color was the most relative, elusive, malleable, and contingent, and that color relationships were powerfully demonstrable. In a talk to students in 1940, Albers maintained: "How a color is used and related to others . . . is decisive in art."

阿爾伯斯對世界的整體看法，使得他的課堂聚焦於將語境和關係作為關鍵去理解事物的外部世界和藝術家主觀的內在世界。在藝術創作的元素中，他認為色彩是最具相關性、最難以捉摸、最有延展性、最隨情境轉化而不斷變化的，並且色彩關係也是最顯而易見的。在1940年一次和學生的談話中，阿爾伯斯說道：「某種色彩如何被使用、如何與其他色彩產生關聯.....是藝術中最具決定性的要素。」

At the end of 1946, on an extended sabbatical in New Mexico and Mexico, Albers was primed to focus on his painting. As he wrote, "In a clay house, beneath blue skies, finally peace . . . far from education and administration we are able once more to think of ourselves." His focus would be "a strict painting diet" of color—the element of painting that was to be his overriding passion for the next three decades. Painting "day and night" using a palette knife, Albers put down on his chosen surface (heavy permeable paper or composite board) pure color as it arrived in commercially manufactured tubes of artists' oil paint. "What interests me most now is how colors change one another according to the proportions and quantities. . . . Greens become blue, neutral greys become red violet. . . . Dark colors become light. . . . Opaque colors appear transparent only as a result of the way they are combined. . . . [It is] terribly exciting."

1946年底，在前往新墨西哥州和墨西哥的教職休假期間，阿爾伯斯準備專注於自己的繪畫。他寫道：「在一座黏土屋子中，在藍色的天空下，遠離教學和行政.....一切都歸於平靜，我們得以再次思考自己。」他專注地對色彩進行如「嚴格節食般的繪畫計劃」——色彩也在此後三十年間成為了對他而言最重要的繪畫元素。阿爾伯斯用一把調色刀「沒日沒夜」地作畫，他會在選定的表面（重質滲透性紙本或是複合板）上塗上純色，這些純色直接取自商業製造的顏料管中。「我現在最感興趣的是色彩如何根據彼此的比例及數量而產生變化.....綠色變成了藍色、中性的灰色變成了紫紅色.....深色變成淺色.....不透明的顏色因為組合方式的不同而變得通透.....（這）太令人興奮了。」

For Albers color had agency that equaled the agency of living organisms. He wanted, he said, "to make my colors breathe." Color should be active and alive to the viewer who would ideally have "eyes open to see." Color could be sensual—soft, hard, embracing, intersecting, and penetrating. By the mid-twentieth century Albers knew and trusted his material so well that he was able to completely submerge his ego and leave it to the viewer to observe that the artist, having performed his experiments with care and attention, could stand back and allow the material alone to work its magic. "Color is a magic force," he proclaimed.

對阿爾伯斯來說，色彩發揮着與鮮活的生命體類同的作用。他說，他想「讓我的色彩呼吸」。對於那些在理想情況下「睜開雙眼觀看」的觀眾而言，色彩是生動活躍的。色彩可以是感性的——柔軟、堅硬、相擁包容、彼此交叉並且滲入人心。二十世紀中期時，阿爾伯斯熟稔並堅信自己的材料，以至於他能夠將自我全然地淹沒其中，留待觀看者去觀察藝術家如何在小心翼翼地進行了試驗之後向後退隱，並任由材料獨自揮發魔力。「色彩是一種神奇的力量」，他這樣宣告。

Albers understood that “primary colors” were an idealized version of what color is: that color identity was a subjective phenomenon and contingent on the individual viewer. Color wheels and color charts were attempts to codify color in scientific ways that had little relevance for him, and he avoided them. “If one in a group says ‘red,’” he wrote, as a statement for a 1952 exhibition at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New York, “we can be sure that there are as many different conceptions of red as there are individuals in that group.” A red painting was never simply a red painting, and he would prove it by using three or four different reds in a single *Homage to the Square* painting and repeating this practice with a range of reds, over and over again. There is no “primary” red, or blue, or yellow.

阿爾伯斯視「原色」為色彩的理想形式：色彩的身份是一種主觀的現象，而且取決於個體的觀看者。顏色輪盤及色譜表試圖以與他無關的科學方式編纂色彩，而他對此則避而遠之。「如果某個群體中的人說『紅色』」，阿爾伯斯在1952年為舉辦於紐約悉尼·賈尼斯畫廊(Sidney Janis Gallery)的展覽所做的陳述中寫道，「我們就可以肯定，群體中有多少個體，就會有多少種關於紅色的不同理解。」一幅紅色的繪畫從來不只是一幅紅色繪畫，他會在一件《向方形致敬》的作品中採用三四種不同的紅色，並反覆地使用各種紅色一遍遍地實踐，以此來證明這一點。從來沒有「原色」的紅，也沒有原色的藍或黃。

Albers’s genius in adopting a square format for his paintings was to personalize a form as inert and universal as a square by layering three or four square units of progressively smaller dimensions and then to disturb the symmetry of the form by shifting the center of each square downward. Within this format he investigated the subtleties of working with groups of colors. He asked of his audience only that they use their eyes and be prepared to devote time to truly see the visual delights, debates, and enigmas he set before them. The mechanics of color and vision might be firmly based in physics but true seeing transcended reason and led to an awareness of what Albers described as “the discrepancy between physical fact and psychic effect”—the unpredictable point, beyond words, where all the elements coalesce in a painting that mysteriously and magically attains sublimity.

阿爾伯斯極富才情地將方塊的形式運用到自己的繪畫中，他把三四個方形單元以尺寸逐漸變小的方式疊放在一起，使通常略嫌呆板、普通的方形得到了擬人化的處理，然後通過幾個方形重心的漸次下沉，來打破形態的對稱性。在這樣的形式中，他探究了色彩組合發揮作用的微妙之處。他只希望自己的觀眾能夠真切地使用雙眼並做好投入時間的準備，去觀看呈現在眼前的視覺性的愉悅、爭辯及謎團。色彩和視覺的運行機制或許深深地植根於物理學中，但真切的觀看會超越理性，並直抵阿爾伯斯稱之為「物理事實與心理效應間的差異」的意識——那是難以言表而無法預測的，所有元素匯聚於一幅繪畫中，神秘、魔幻地達自崇高之地。