

The Color Wheel Series

1. The color wheel is a device constructed for display of the Pantone Matching System[®], “an international printing, publishing and packaging color language providing an accurate method for the selection, presentation, specification, communication, reproduction, matching, and control of color.” In this series I use the Pantone Color Formula Guide 1000[®], which “contains color standards, color identification names or numbers and printing ink mixing formulas for 1,012 Pantone Colors,” to determine the color of each of three Acting Heads per individual work in *The Color Wheel Series*.

2. In Western Rationalist philosophy, colors are counted among the secondary qualities that inhere in the perceiver rather than in the object perceived. Like sounds, textures, odors, and tastes, colors are subjective modes of perception that can vary from one perceiver to the next, and so do not supply objective knowledge of objects. They stand in contrast to the so-called primary qualities of geometric form: extension, shape, line, etc., which are thought by most Modern Rationalist philosophers to inhere in and so objectively constitute the object perceived. Whereas primary qualities can be perceived only by the mind, secondary qualities such as color are perceived by the sense organs.

3. In Vedanta, the foundational philosophy of Hinduism, there are five *koshas*, or sheaths concealing the true self. These progress from the most material and condensed to the most subtle, pervasive and diffuse. The *annomayakosha* or physical sheath is composed of nutrients. The *pranamayakosha* or energy sheath is composed of breath. The *manomayakosha* or mental sheath is composed of cognition. The *vijnanamayakosha* or intellectual sheath is composed of reason. And the *anandamayakosha* or bliss sheath is composed of intelligence. Beneath all of these layers of illusion is the true self, i.e. ultimate reality beyond the laws of psychology or physics.

4. According to Shankara, a first century B.C.E. Vedantic philosopher, the ego, which is composed of the *annomayakosha*, *pranamayakosha*, and *manomayakosha*, projects these layerings onto ultimate reality. The *koshas* are thus illusory superimpositions, or *adhyasas*. The work of self-knowledge then consists in training consciousness – through meditation, self-inquiry, analysis, reasoning, close observation, etc. – to gradually peel away these *adhyasas* both internally and externally, starting with the *annomayakosha* and moving progressively inward and upward, until the true self is uncovered. Each individual work in *The Color Wheel Series* is a tool for this practice.

5. Each of three Acting Heads per individual work in *The Color Wheel Series* has a different skin color on the Pantone color wheel. No Pantone color

is repeated more than once throughout the entire series. The number of individual works in the series is determined by the number of colors on the Pantone color wheel divided by the number of *adhyasas*. Colors proximate to the Acting Heads that I hold fixed throughout each individual work are Red 187 CVC (the Target Wheel), White (the White Gloves And Masks), and Blue 292 CVC (the Grid). Since white is not really a color but rather the miscegenation of all colors, Red 187 CVC and Blue 292 CVC are the two genuine color constants across the skin color of all individual Acting Heads in the series. This leaves 1,010 Pantone Colors which I arbitrarily distribute among individual Acting Heads. Since there are five *adhyasas*, I assign to each layer of concealment of the true self 202 randomly chosen Pantone colors ($1010 \div 5 = 202$). From this number of colors I distribute arbitrarily three colors per work among 67 individual works per *adhyasa* ($202 \div 3 = 67.33$). There are therefore a total of 335 individual works in this series ($67 \times 5 = 335$), divided into five subsets of 67. These numbers exhaust the possible colors any given Acting Head can be.

6. The Sanskrit text bisecting the intersection of the Fire Wheel and Target Wheel is Mantra #11 from Shankara's *Atma-Bodha* [Self-Knowledge]. It can be translated roughly as follows:

Because we associate the true self with various limiting aspects, we superimpose such ideas as caste, color, and status upon it just as we superimpose flavor, color, etc. on water.¹

7. The photographed statue is of Shiva, the ascetic Hindu god of yoga and dance known as the Destroyer of Illusion. He manifests here in the aspect of Lord Nataraja, the dancer, encircled by a Fire Wheel and dancing on the back of the demon Apasmarapurusha. "The dance of S[h]iva represents the rhythm and movement of the world-spirit. At his dance the evil forces and darkness quiver and vanish. ... Lord S[h]iva rises from His profound silence and begins to dance. The undifferentiated sound becomes differentiated through the vibration set up by the movements of His Damaru or drum [in his upper right hand]. ... The undifferentiated energy also becomes differentiated. ... All the spheres, the atoms and the electrons also dance rhythmically and in an orderly manner. Atoms dance in the molecule and molecules dance in all bodies. Stars dance in time and space. ... Various forms manifest. ... When the

¹Here I have consulted several translations: Swami Nikhilananda (New York, N.Y.: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1989); Swami Chinmayananda (Bombay, India: Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, 1993); and Georg Feuerstein, personal communication, 17 June 2000.

time comes, Lord S[h]iva destroys all names and forms by fire while dancing. There is stillness again."²

8. I assign to each specific viewing occasion (per exhibition or per published reproduction) a different set of specific individual works unique to that occasion. So any published reproduction from this series effectively constitutes an artist's pagework.

9. The *First Adhyasa: Annomayakosha* comprises works

I.1: the mailed announcement for the Paula Cooper Gallery exhibition from 30 November 2000 to 14 January 2001;

I.2 – I.25: Light Jet Photographic prints exhibited at the Paula Cooper Gallery;

I.26 and I.27: digital images at my website, www.adrianpiper.com.

I.28 - 1.37: digital images for print reproduction.

I.38 - 1.44: lightboxes for *Prayer Wheel I.1*, a mixed media installation designed for the Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh;

I.45 – I.66: slide transparencies for talks;

I.67: a 5 x 7" postcard.

10. The *Second Adhyasa: Pranamayakosha* comprises works

II.68 – II.129: artist's page project for *Art Journal's* "Whiteness" symposium;

II.130: newspaper project for Norway's national weekly newspaper *MorgenBladet*.

II.131 – 134: animated video images in *Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago* (2004; video, 1:43:18).

11. The *Third Adhyasa: Manomayakosha* comprises works

III.135 – 201: animated video images in *Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago* (2004; video, 1:43:18).

12. The *Fourth Adhyasa: Vijnanamayakosha* comprises works

IV.202 – 268: animated video images in *Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago* (2004; video, 1:43:18).

13. The *Fifth Adhyasa: Anandamayakosha* comprises works

V. 269 – 335: animated video images in *Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago* (2004; video, 1:43:18).

² Swami Sivananda, *Lord Siva and His Worship* (Himalayas, India: Divine Life Society, 1996), 62-63. The phrase, "name and form," first appears in the *Upanishads* and thereafter in most commentaries to them, beginning with the *Brahma Sutras*. It standardly refers to the illusory world of individuated concepts, objects, and states of affairs.

14. I am grateful to several individuals for their help during the very long time it has taken to produce this project. John Robertson of Campbell Photo and Printing supplied me with my first Pantone Color Wheel and instructed me in the details of offset printing technique in 1991. Mike West, also of Campbell Photo and Printing, offered his ingenuity and resourcefulness with traditional photographic methods when we first started strategizing about how to realize and combine each element in the basic image in 1992. Bob Kasten, Owner and President of New England Reprographics, was generous with his time and wisdom in discussing the subtleties of digital imagery and printing when I was ready and able to start considering those possibilities in 1996. More recently, Kristina McBlain and Michael Westfort, Projects Manager at the Knapp Center for Media and Technology instructed me in Photoshop and initiated me into the arcana of digital printing, and Bob Kasten made available the printing resources of New England Reprographics and Chromacopy for the final print products in 2000. Axis Audio did the sound engineering for all the audio works that stemmed from this project. The Art Institute of Chicago supplied the original footage of my lecture/performance there which structures the video. Argo Video and Fluid helped me edit it into final form. Without Joe Hevener's patience, generosity, and mastery of Photoshop this project would not have been possible.

I also want to thank Paula Cooper for encouraging me to believe that my life as a productive artist was not behind me, and Robert Del Principe for being a good sport.

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