

## **Assignment 3 – Colour**

This assignment is a long time coming! Work commitments have gotten in the way of completing my submission photographs but I am glad I took the time to really get into the assignment and not add images just for the sake of it. That being said, I found myself getting quite frustrated at times; given my tutors feedback on Assignment 2 I was really working hard to avoid 'record shots'. I wanted all of the submissions to be my own work and not simply capture someone else's colours. Painted surfaces have been deliberately avoided and I spent a long time searching out colours occurring naturally and deliberately using colour to achieve quality submissions.

The photographs have been divided into x4 series in order to vary the subject matter and also provide separate themes to work to; staged scenes; autumn hues; still life; found scenes. All photographs have been taken with low ISO settings so that I was in control of the colour and, at my tutor's suggested, RAWs edited in Adobe Lightroom. Also, given my love of experimenting, I have played with using light to affect colour in the way I please. I will discuss Von Goethe's colour theory and you will see that I have both used it and deliberately ignored it.

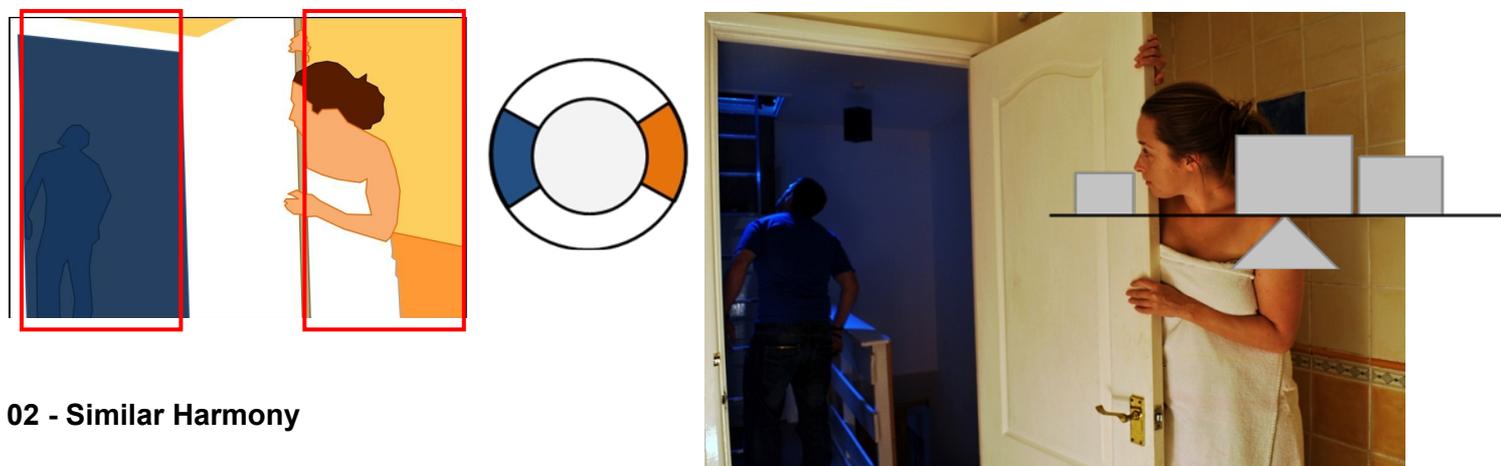
### **Series 1: Staged scenes, inspired by the work of Gregory Crewdson.**

If you look back to my learning log entry about my visit to the V&A museum, you will see that I was captivated by the large, elaborate scenes created by Gregory Crewdson. I went on to purchase a book of his Twilight series and though my work is far less grand in scale, I have used light to create colour in these staged scenes. You're not really supposed to figure them out, they're there for your interpretation.

#### **01 – Complimentary harmony**

For this first photograph I have to say thank you to my friend for her modelling and you will see her in x3 photographs for this assignment. In the background you will see a male figure; that's me!! The camera is mounted on a tripod on a bathroom window-sill where I painstakingly composed the image. After this I set the exposure to timer so I could get into position. There is a light set up on the toilet seat with a home-made diffuser and a second light set up in the loft with a blue colour-gel so flood the hallway with blue light. The white balance is set the tungsten to take the edge off the orange light and intensify the blue in the hallway. The aperture is set at f.5 to let in as much light as possible. This has reduced the depth of field, however this was not a concern as I did not want the background in sharp focus; it does not need to be.

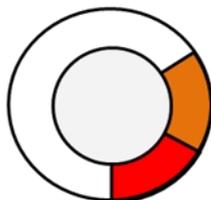
The orange tiles and the model's skin-tone creates a 1:1 ratio of colour between itself and the blue-lit hallway, strongly separated in the frame by the open door. Von Goethe's theory suggest a 2:1 ratio between blue and orange, however the frame elements balance the frame instead of the colour, as shown on the scale below. Also, the two blocks of colour are well balanced into thirds with the addition of the door in the centre of the frame.



#### **02 - Similar Harmony**

The second image in this series has a much darker setting with several different elements of red and orange hues. I narrowed the aperture to reduce the amount of light getting to the sensor, eventually reaching f.11.

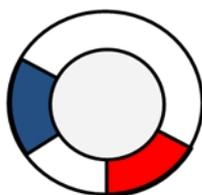
The colour theory suggests a ratio of 3:4 of orange and red, however this has again been ignored; there is more orange than red. The balance is achieved with the two main elements; the model as one element turning away from the second of the lit-up cupboard. She appears to be shamefully ignoring the happenings of the right-hand side of the frame but again this is open to your interpretation. I really like the composition I have achieved here however if I were to critique it the focus is not 100% correct. The model is out of focus by just a little, though overall the frame still works for what I wanted to achieve.



### 03 - Colour Contrast

Here I present probably the most disturbing photograph I have taken for this assignment if not to date. My friend Chris is posing here wearing a respirator and is clutching something you can only guess at. Blue cellophane was put in the wall lights, a blue filter used over a high-powered light and tungsten white balance set to 'paint' the otherwise white walls blue. Inside the room Chris is standing is a bright red bulb that has had some of its intensity dulled by the tungsten white-balance. Again, several exposures were taken, reducing the aperture until the right brightness was achieved. I did not require much depth of field here so I could of sped-up the shutter speed instead, but hind-sight is always 20/20.

Here, Von Goethe's colour theory is satisfied with a balance of 2:3 which is emphasised with a strong central composition of red. Chris and I had great fun creating this photograph (with many a beer had post-exposure) and I would like to do something like this again. I am hoping that the next chapter on light will give me opportunity to try something much more elaborate like the work of Joshua Hoffine.



### 04 - Colour

#### Accent

When I started experimenting with the possibilities for a colour accent the first thing that struck me was that the best accent could be achieved using either complimentary colours or a contrast; similar colours may not stand out as in the frame, as if it were 'lost' in the dominating colour. Indeed, all of my colour accents for this assignment use contrasting colours to help the accent stand out.



This first photo for colour accents uses a small patch of yellow in an overly red frame (imagine if it were orange; it would not be obvious were the accent was). I got the idea for this photograph whilst playing with the different white balance setting on my Nikon. When I set it to 'Shade' I noticed that it made the white walls of the flat look a brown-ish red hue. This is the light balance I used for to create this overly red frame. In addition, I set up a bulb in a lamp to light up the figure and furniture so that they were not silhouetted.

The main light source is the outside daylight that creates x1 yellow accent against the curtains. The second comes from the ceiling light. Obviously all of the colour accents for this assignment will not fulfil Von Goethe's colour theory.

The aperture was set to f.13 to create a decent depth of field to keep all of the details sharp and the shutter set to 1/2 sec to allow the right amount of light through such a narrow aperture. The lack of light reaching the sensor has created a dark, moody scene with a lot of contrast and shadows which adds to the figures brooding pose. The balance is achieved with the 'heavy' placement of the chair in the foreground that is evened out by the figure and furniture equally opposing the 'weight'.

