



Secret Language of Color: Science, Nature, History, Culture, Beauty of Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, & Violet

By Joann Eckstut, Arielle Eckstut

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In this beautiful and thorough investigation, *The Secret Language of Color* celebrates and illuminates the countless ways in which color colors our world.

Why is the sky blue, the grass green, a rose red? Most of us have no idea how to answer these questions, nor are we aware that color pervades nearly all aspects of life, from the subatomic realm and the natural world to human culture and psychology.

Organized into chapters that begin with a fascinating explanation of the physics and chemistry of color, *The Secret Language of Color* travels from outer space to Earth, from plants to animals to humans. In these chapters we learn about how and why we see color, the nature of rainbows, animals with color vision far superior and far inferior to our own, how our language influences the colors we see, and much more. Between these chapters, authors Joann Eckstut and Arielle Eckstut turn their attention to the individual hues of the visible spectrum?red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet?presenting each in fascinating, in-depth detail.

Including hundreds of stunning photographs and dozens of informative, often entertaining graphics, every page is a breathtaking demonstration of color and its role in the world around us. Whether you see red, are a shrinking violet, or talk a blue streak, this is the perfect book for anyone interested in the history, science, culture, and beatuty of color in the natural and man-made world.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Where does the phrase blue blood come from? Why do most doctors wear green scrubs? These and other questions are answered in the Eckstut's fascinating study of color. After throwing readers into the deep end with scientific explanations about how our brains process information and declarations like wavelengths of light do not exist as color until we see them, the authors move on to more accessible and lively examinations of colors and the roles they've played in history as well as evolution. Each hue gets a biography of sorts, as the authors examine its cultural (the Egyptians placed a high value on blue and it was one of the first synthetic pigments) and in some cases biological significance (different colors attract different animals). The science behind rainbows and why they never appear the same way to two people; why the grass is always greener across the street (you're not seeing the imperfections); and a litany of other color-related trivia round out the book. The book's dynamic design and short entries make it easy to skim, but it's likely that those intending just a casual perusal will find themselves engrossed by this terrifically entertaining and informative volume. Illus. Agent: Jim Levine, Levine Greenberg Literary Agency. (Oct.)

Review

The evanescent phenomenon of colour has gripped great minds from Plato to Isaac Newton, all the way through to researchers who now probe the links between blue light and circadian rhythms. In this many-hued tome, Joann and Arielle Eckstut zip through optics and electromagnetism. They then explore colour in art, such as the pointillist work of George-Pierre Seurat, and in nature, from minerals to nebulae. Fact-filled and flamboyantly illustrated. -- *Nature*, October 2013

In *The Secret Language of Color*, Joann and Arielle Eckstut offer a thorough survey of social and cultural lore, with bright daubs of science along the way to add information—and fun. The "secret" they set out to celebrate is that the language of color is irreducibly subjective—its expressive power a product as much of slippery psychology as of intricate physics and chemistry. The retina, as they explain, discriminates among millions of light-wave combinations, converting radiant energy into electrochemical energy. The brain then synthesizes and interprets the stimuli as colors. So external conditions, such as lighting and texture, aren't the only factors that cause color to behave in the bizarre ways it does. What happens in our heads makes all the difference: there is no such thing as color independent of the human system of visual perception. And that system encompasses everything from optical quirks (like contrast effects) to emotional, cultural, and even political associations. (Why are English speakers "green with envy," while Germans are not just green but also yellow, and Chinese speakers are red?) Glossy primers destined for coffee tables, these are guides guaranteed to trigger delight and surprise in all ages. -- *The Atlantic*, December 2013

About the Author

Joann Eckstut is a leading color consultant who works with a wide range of professionals including architects, developers, and manufacturers of name brands. She is founder of The Roomworks, a prominent NYC interior design firm and is one of 12 designers chosen by the Color Association of the United States to create the yearly interior/environmental forecast that is bought by major industries to keep up with color trends. She is the author of *Room Redux: The Home Decorating Workbook* and *The Color Palette Primer: A Guide to Choosing Ideal Color Combinations for Your Home*. She lives in Rensselaerville, New York.

Arielle Eckstut is the author of 8 books including *The Essential Guide to Getting Your Book Published*. She is co-founder of The Book Doctors with her husband David Henry Sterry, a company dedicated to helping writers successfully publish their books. She is also co-founder of the iconic company, LittleMissMatched, which has become a national brand with stores all over the United States including Disneyland, Disney World, and Fifth Avenue in New York City. She lives in Montclair, New Jersey.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Susan Roundy:

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