

Visual Symbols and the Colors of Happiness

Jaruwan Mueangkhwa

Fine and Applied Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand

E-mail: jaruwan.mu@ssru.ac.th

Abstract.

The article Visual Symbols and the Colors of Happiness aims to examine the roles of symbols and color in visual art and their influence on the perception and interpretation of “happiness” within the context of contemporary human experience. The study focuses on the analysis of visual symbols such as forms, elements of nature, living beings, and objects with emotional connotations, together with the use of color, which significantly affects emotions and psychological states.

This study is grounded in theories of color psychology, symbolism, and visual perception in order to explain the relationship between imagery, color, and emotional response. The findings reveal that colors and symbols function not only as aesthetic elements but also as essential tools for communicating abstract meanings, conveying inner experiences, and creating emotional spaces that foster feelings of happiness, calmness, and psychological healing. The article therefore highlights the potential of visual art as a medium that connects individuals with happiness through the language of images and color.

Keywords: Visual symbols, Color, Emotion

1. Introduction

In contemporary society, where individuals are constantly confronted with rapid change, stress, and uncertainty in everyday life, “happiness” has become a significant subject of discussion in psychological, social, and cultural dimensions. Visual art, therefore, no longer functions solely as a medium of aesthetic appreciation but also serves as a space for communicating emotions, feelings, and inner experiences through visual language that can deeply engage viewers.

Visual symbols and color are essential elements employed by artists to convey meaning and evoke emotional responses in artworks. Visual symbols such as forms, elements of nature, living beings, and emotionally charged objects function as representations of thoughts, memories, and inner experiences. Color, meanwhile, plays a direct role in shaping human perception and psychological states, influencing emotions such as calmness, warmth, relaxation, and emotional stimulation.

The composition of an image is an operational concept that leads to its application by creators, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It also serves as a concept for the preliminary analysis of concrete painting works. Self-portrait painting involves the analysis of form and meaning, image composition, communication of concepts and theories, female artists, literal meaning, and implicit meaning. (Techawiriyataweesin, 2022)

The article Visual Symbols and the Colors of Happiness aims to examine the roles and relationships of visual symbols and color in visual art that influence the perception and

interpretation of “happiness” within the context of contemporary human experience. Drawing upon theories of color psychology, symbolism, and visual perception, this study seeks to highlight the potential of visual art as a mediating medium capable of creating emotional spaces that foster happiness, tranquility, and psychological healing for viewers.

1.1 Research Objective

1. How do visual symbols function in conveying and shaping the perception of “happiness” in contemporary visual art.
2. How does color influence viewers’ emotions, feelings, and interpretations of happiness in the context of contemporary visual art.

2. Literature review

Visual symbols and the use of color have been widely examined within art studies, psychology, and aesthetics. Semiotic scholarship emphasizes that visual symbols do not carry fixed meanings; rather, meaning is produced through interpretive processes shaped by artists, viewers, and sociocultural contexts. From this perspective, visual art operates as a communicative system through which emotional and experiential meanings are constructed.

Research in color psychology further demonstrates that color influences emotional responses and perceptual experiences. While certain colors are commonly associated with particular emotions, existing studies highlight that color meanings are not universal but are mediated by individual experiences, cultural backgrounds, and contextual factors. This challenges deterministic interpretations of color symbolism and underscores the importance of situating color within specific social and experiential frameworks.

Additionally, studies in art therapy and healing-oriented art practices suggest that gentle visual symbols and harmonious color relationships can support emotional well-being and foster psychologically safe spaces. Despite extensive research on visual symbolism, color, and emotion, limited attention has been given to happiness as a distinct experiential and symbolic concept within contemporary art practice, particularly from the artist’s perspective. This article addresses this gap by examining how visual symbols and color function as visual languages for constructing and communicating experiences of happiness in contemporary art.

3. Methodology

The research titled *Visual Symbols and the Colors of Happiness* adopts a qualitative research approach. The research methodology is conducted as follows:

1. To review relevant literature, concepts, and theories related to visual symbols, color psychology, visual perception, and emotion in order to establish the conceptual framework of the study.
2. To select and examine contemporary visual artworks that employ symbols and color to convey emotional meaning and representations of happiness.
3. To collect data through observation, photographic documentation, and sketching as supporting materials for analyzing the relationships between imagery, color, and emotional response.

4. To analyze the collected data using semiotic analysis and theories of visual perception to explain the role of symbols and color in communicating abstract concepts of happiness.

5. To synthesize and present the research findings in the form of an academic article and/or artistic presentation within a contemporary art context.

Figure 1. Sketch



Source: *Jaruwan Mueangkhwa*

Figure 2. Creation process using acrylic on canvas technique.



Source : Jaruwan Mueangkhwa

Figure 3. Starborn 2025 Size 60x50 cm Acrylic on canvas



Source : Jaruwan Mueangkhwa

4. Results

The results indicate that visual symbols and color effectively communicate happiness on emotional and psychological levels. The white cat symbolizes purity, gentleness, and emotional safety, while the four-leaf clover represents luck, hope, and abstract happiness. The rounded vessel functions as a nurturing and protective emotional space.

The use of pink, purple, and bluish-violet tones, combined with radiant lighting, creates a soft and dreamlike atmosphere that evokes feelings of relaxation, happiness, and calmness. The findings demonstrate that symbols and color serve as essential tools for emotional communication and for creating experiences of happiness through visual art.

Figure 4. Fluffy Universe Exhibition 2025 at River City Bangkok (3F) Bangkok, Thailand



Source : Jaruwan Mueangkhwa

5. Conclusion

The article Visual Symbols and the Colors of Happiness demonstrates that visual symbols and color play a significant role in conveying the meaning of happiness in contemporary visual art, both emotionally and psychologically. The integration of symbolic imagery and thoughtful use of color enables the creation of emotional experiences that foster happiness, calmness, and psychological healing for viewers.

The findings suggest that visual art functions not only as an aesthetic medium but also as an emotional space that connects inner human experiences with external perception through the language of imagery and color. This study highlights the potential of visual art as a meaningful medium for enhancing well-being and understanding happiness within contemporary society.

Acknowledgment

The researcher would like to express gratitude to administrators of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University to provide fund to support this research for developing the university's personel.

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