Film Analysis Color in Film

Procedure (part 1): Watch one of the following films. Select a representative scene, a few scenes or the entire film for analysis. Create a color palette that describes the use of color in that section.

Materials: any media on Bristol Board

      due: week 6   (5 points)

Procedure (part 2): Write a **2-3 page essay** describing and analyzing the use of color in your film. Aspects could include color in relation to mood, character development, symbolism, etc. Relevant documentation (including sketches, film stills, articles and printed references) should be included.

      due: week 7   (15 points)

Films:

Eyes Wide Shut (Stanley Kubrick, 1999)

Buffalo '66 (Vincent Gallo, 1997)

In Dreams (Neil Jordan, 1998)

Tim Burton's *Batman* or the original 1960's *Batman* movie

What Dreams May Come (Vincent Ward, 1998)

The Matrix (Andy and Larry Wachowski, 1999)

House of Flying Daggers (Yimou Zhang, 2004)

Natural Born Killers (Oliver Stone, 1994)

Sin City (Robert Rodriguez, 2005)

Traffic (Stephen Soderbergh, 2000)

American Beauty (Sam Mendes, 1999)

Punch Drunk Love (Paul T. Anderson, 2002)

Three Kings (David O. Russell, 1999)

Moulin Rouge (Baz Luhrmann, 2001)

The Wizard of Oz (1939)

Wings of Desire (Wim Wenders)

Edward Scissorhands (Tim Burton, 1990)

The Purple Rose of Cairo (Woody Allen)

Film Analysis Color in Film

In the following films (as well as many others), the director/cinematographer uses color in a conscious and thematic way. The color aids the plot, differentiates characters and creates mood.

1. Color as a filter:

Payback (Brian Helgeland-director, Ericson Core-cinematographer, 1999)
[opening credits]

Color is used to tint the entire film or specific key scenes. This can be to establish a mood or to create a subconscious difference between places. This color is usually added after the fact through processing or filtering and affects everything in the shot equally.

2. Environmental color:

Amelie (Jean-Pierre Jeunet- director, Bruno Delbonnel- cinematographer, 2001)
[*The Look of Amelie*, scene 11]

Color is used in the props or scenery to create an atmosphere of heightened color. Objects (mis-en-scene) are selected to create a specific and recognizable color scheme or palette. Usually the characters are not aware of this occurring.

3. Color through costume:

Funny Face (Stanley Donen-director, Givenchy, Edith Head-costume designers, 1957)
[*Think Pink!* chorus number]
Costumes are designed to create color contrast or symmetry between the characters and their environment. This balance can change depending on dramatic development or can be used to establish a specific character (e.g. character X always wears green).

4. Isolated color:

Wings of Desire (Wim Wenders-director, Henri Alekan-cinematographer, 1987)
[entrance into the color world of humans]

Pleasantville (Gary Ross-writer and director, 1998)
[*The Art of Pleasantville*, scene 23]

Color used sparingly. This could be one colored character in an otherwise black and white film or one character or scene that is more or less saturated that the rest of the film. This is usually used symbolically, to isolate a specific type of character or event from the actions of the rest of the film.