

COLOR SELECTION SYSTEM

[0001] This application claims the benefit of and priority to United States Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/929,744 filed July 11, 2007, the contents of which are herein incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[0002] The present description relates to a color selection system for assisting the selection and combination of colors.

[0003] Color selection tools are used in various sectors, including for example the paint industry, to assist consumers and professional designers in choosing appealing color combinations. The abundance of color choices that are available can make it challenging at times for both normal consumers and experienced designers to select appealing color combinations, even with the aid of existing color selection tools.

[0004] Accordingly, there is a need for a color selection system that can assist consumers or other users in reaching confident and satisfying color selection choices.

SUMMARY

[0005] Embodiments of color selection and display methods and devices are described herein. According to one example embodiment there is provided a computer implemented method for selecting colors comprising: associating, in dependence on a mathematical equation that models a human emotional response to color, a color emotion score with each of a plurality of colors that are numerically defined in a color library; receiving a user input indicating a desired color emotion level; and selecting, from the color library, colors for presentation to the user in dependence on the color emotion scores associated therewith and the desired color emotion level. In at least some embodiments, the mathematical equation is derived from measuring the psychological responses of a plurality of test subjects to a plurality of test colors.

[0006] According to another example embodiment is a color selection device comprising: a controller for controlling operation of the device; a user input device coupled to the controller; a display coupled to the controller; a color library accessible to the controller and comprising numeric data defining a plurality of different colors; the controller being configured for: (a) generating a visual user interface on the display that

includes a color group display region in which a first group of color elements that represent some of the colors defined in the color library are displayed; (b) receiving through the user input device a desired color emotion level for the color elements displayed in the color group display region; and (c) changing the color group display region to display a second group of color elements that represent different colors defined in the color library in dependence on the desired color emotion level and color emotion scores associated with each of the colors, wherein the color emotion score associated with each color is determined in dependence on a mathematical equation that models a specific human emotional response to color and which has been derived from measuring the psychological responses of a plurality of test subjects to a plurality of test colors.

[0007] According to another example embodiment is a computer implemented method for providing feedback on color selections, comprising: providing on a display a visual user interface that includes a plurality of user selectable color elements each representing different colors that are numerically defined in a color library; receiving user input selecting at least two of the color elements as color candidate elements; calculating, using a first mathematical model, a first human psychophysical perception value that represents a first human psychophysical perception of the color combination represented by the color candidate elements; and presenting in the visual user interface a representation of the first human psychophysical perception value. In at least some example embodiments, the first mathematical model has been derived from measuring the psychophysical responses of a plurality of test subjects to a plurality of test colors.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] Embodiments will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the attached Figures, wherein:

[0009] Figure 1 is a block diagram of a color selection device to which embodiments described herein can be applied;

[0010] Figure 2 shows an example of a first graphical user interface that can be used with the mobile electronic device of Figure 1;

[0011] Figure 3 shows an example of an image showing a three color wheel used in testing for developing a color harmony model;

- [0012] Figure 4 is a table illustrating color samples used in testing to develop color harmony and color emotion models;
- [0013] Figure 5 shows an example of an image showing a single color patch used in testing for developing a human response model;
- [0014] Figure 6 shows an example of an image showing a three color wheel used in testing for developing a human response model;
- [0015] Figure 7 shows an example of an image illustrating adjacent and non adjacent colors;
- [0016] Figures 8A-8D illustrate data used to represent color groups in a color library;
- [0017] Figures 9, 10 and 11 each show the user interface of Figure 2 displaying different color groups;
- [0018] Figure 12 shows the user interface of Figure 2 displaying a harmony subgroup of a color group;
- [0019] Figure 13 shows another example of the user interface of Figure 2;
- [0020] Figure 14 illustrates a new color library sorting function; and
- [0021] Figure 15 illustrates a dynamic link library routine.
- [0022] Like reference numerals are used throughout the Figures to denote similar elements and features.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

- [0023] Example embodiments of the present invention relate to a color selection system for assisting consumers and designers to search desired colors and develop color schemes that can evoke specific emotions and create harmony. Figure 1 shows a block diagram of an example of a color selection device 10 to which example embodiments of the described invention may be applied. In at least some example embodiments, the device 10 can be implemented by a suitably configured digital computing device, including for example a personal computer such as a desktop computer or lap top computer, or a mobile computing device such as a personal digital assistant, smart phone, or other small size or hand held computing device.
- [0024] In at least one example embodiment, the device 10 includes a controller 38 that can include one or more microprocessors that control the overall operation of the

device. The controller 38 interacts with device subsystems such as a display 22, persistent storage 24, random access memory (RAM) 26, keyboard or keypad 32, speaker 34, auxiliary input device 28 (for example a mouse, touch screen, scroll-ball, scroll-wheel, multi-directional navigation key, touchpad, microphone, and/or other user input devices) and other device subsystems.

[0025] Operating system software 54 and various software applications 58 used by the controller 38 are stored in the persistent storage 24 (which for example may include a hard drive or flash memory or other persistent store). In example embodiments, a color selection software application 60 is stored in the persistent storage 24 for configuring the controller 38 and device 10 to perform the color display and selection functions described below. A color library 62 which contains color data is also stored in the persistent storage 24. Parts or all of the color selection application 60, the color library 62, the operating system 54, and specific device applications 58 may be temporarily loaded into a volatile store such as RAM 26 and executed by the controller 38.

[0026] In example embodiments, CIELAB color data is stored in or derived from color library 62 for use in psychophysical perception models as described below. In at least some example embodiments such as CIELAB data represents values that correspond to colors viewed under a D65 illuminant at the standard observer angle of 10 degrees.

[0027] In at least some example embodiments, the display 22 of the device 10 includes a calibrated display screen that has been preconfigured and tested to display colors within strict tolerances to represent actual colors as viewed under predefined lighting conditions. For example, such a calibrated display 22 could be provided on a color selection device 10 located at a retail outlet such as a paint store. In some embodiments color selection device 10 may be device owned and operated by an interior designer or a typical consumer, without a specially calibrated screen.

[0028] Having provided an overview of example environments in which the color selection system can be implemented, the operation of the color selection system in the context of a color selection application 60 and color library 62 stored on a color selection device 10 as shown in Figure 1 will now be discussed in greater detail. In this regard, Figure 2 shows an example of a color selection visual graphical user interface 200 which may be displayed on a display 22 of the device 10. The visual interface 200

includes first and second color display regions 202 and 204. The first color display region 202 displays a color palette or group of user selectable colors as an array of color elements 211 which each represent a unique color. In one example embodiment, the color elements 211 are presented as an electronic version of a fan deck in which the colors elements are arranged vertically by color depth (increases from top to bottom – as color depth increases, chroma changes and lightness drops) and horizontally by hue angle, although other schemes can alternatively be used to arrange the color elements 211, and the elements need not be displayed in an array format – for example the color elements 211 in the color group display region 202 could alternatively be arranged in a color wheel or using some other color presentation method.

[0029] The visual interface 200 includes a navigation and selection marker 230 that is moved on display 22 in response to user inputs through user input devices 28 and/or keyboard 62 to facilitate user selection of color elements 211 and allow the user to select and use the various features of the visual interface 200.

[0030] In one example embodiment, different color groups can selectively be displayed in the color group display region 202 and interface 200 includes a “color group” tool bar 205 that allows a user to select which color group is displayed. In the illustrated embodiment, the color group tool bar permits a user to select a color group for display region 202 in dependence on (i) an emotional response that the colors evoke (“color emotion”) and (ii) a level of color harmony for the colors. With respect to color emotion, the color group tool bar 205 includes a primary group selection option in the form of an “Exciting-Calming” scale 208 which has four discrete user selectable levels, each of which is associated with a different color group as will be explained in greater detail below. With respect to color harmony, the color group tool bar 205 includes a secondary group selection option in the form of user selectable “All Colours” or “Harmony” choices 210 which respectively allow the user to either view all color elements 211 for the selected “Exciting-Calming” color group or to only view a subset of the color elements 211 that fall within a predetermined level of harmony, as will be explained in greater detail below.

[0031] The second display region 204 in visual interface 200 functions as a working area for color evaluation of user selected color candidates. In one example embodiment, a user can select desired colors from the color elements 211 displayed in

the first display region 202 using the marker 230 (for example by double clicking on the desired color element 211, or dragging and dropping the desired color element). Once a user selects a color element 211 from the color group display region 202, an enlarged corresponding color candidate element 228 representing the selected color is displayed in the second display region 204. In the illustrated example, three user selected color candidate elements 228(1), 228(2) and 228(3) are shown in the second display region 204, which may also include further information about the selected color elements, including color names 232 and color ID codes 234 for example.

[0032] The interface 200 also includes a third display region 206 which includes a number of different bar scales for displaying information to the user about the color harmony of the selected color candidate elements 228 and emotions evoked by the selected color candidate elements. In particular, the illustrated third display region 206 includes a color harmony scale 212, and the following color emotion scales: Inviting-uninviting 214; exciting-calming 216; warm-cool 218; light-dark 220; clean-dirty 222; happy-depressing 224; and fun-serious 226. In the illustrated version of interface 200, only the first word in each of the color emotion scales is displayed. Fewer, additional, or different harmony and/or color emotion scales can be included in feedback region 206 in different embodiments. In some embodiments, the color harmony scale may be omitted, and in some embodiments the color emotion scales may be omitted.

[0033] As will be appreciated from the above description, the visual interface 200 relies on color harmony and color emotion scores to display color groups or provide feedback on selected colors. In example embodiments, the color harmony and color emotion scores used to render the visual interface 200 are determined in dependence on quantitative mathematical models derived from psychometric data obtained from actual test subjects based on their psychophysical reactions to colors. In order to facilitate a further understanding of the color selection system presented herein, an explanation of the color library 62 and the quantitative models used to determine the color harmony and color emotion scores will now be provided.

[0034] Color Harmony and Color Emotion Models

[0035] In order to provide some background for the color harmony and color emotion models, reference is made to following four documents which describe

examples of color harmony and color emotion models and how such models are derived. The following references are incorporated herein by reference:

[0036] (1) Ou, L., Luo, M. R., Woodcock, A., and Wright, A., "A study of colour emotion and colour preference, Part I: colour emotions for single colours", Color Research and Application, Volume 29, number 3, pages 232-240, June 2004.

[0037] (2) Ou, L., Luo, M. R., Woodcock, A., and Wright, A., "A study of colour emotion and colour preference, Part II: colour emotions for two-colour combinations", Color Research and Application, Volume 29, Number 4, pages 292-298, August 2004.

[0038] (3) Ou, L., Luo, M. R., Woodcock, A., and Wright, A., "A study of colour emotion and colour preference, Part III: colour preference modelling", Color Research and Application, Volume 29, Number 5, Pages 381-389, October 2004.

[0039] (4) Ou, L., Luo, M. R., "A colour harmony model for two-colour combinations", Color Research and Application, Volume 31, Number 3, pages 191-204, June 2006.

[0040] A further reference that is incorporated herein by reference is: (5) N. Moroney, M. Fairchild, R. Hunt, R. Luo and T. Neuman, "The CIECAM02 Color Appearance Model", IS&T/SID Tenth Color Imaging Conference, November 12, 2002, ISBN:0-89208-241-0.

[0041] In one example embodiment, the models used in the color selection system according to example embodiments of the present invention model human psychophysical perceptions of colors and color combinations and were developed using data obtained from test subjects who were presented with single colors and combinations of up to three colors and requested to assess the colors by making categorical judgements using bi-polar color emotion scales and color harmony scales. By way of example, in order to develop a model for color harmony for 3-color combinations, a psychophysical perception experiment was conducted to have test subjects assess 6545 three-color wheels that included all possible three color combinations generated from 35 different color samples (see Table 1 of Figure 4) that were each selected from the CIELAB color space (with illuminant D65 and standard observer (10 degrees)). The 35 different color samples were selected to cover a large color gamut of the CIELAB color space. Figure 3 illustrates a screen layout for the experiment in which each observer was presented with color wheels displayed

individually on a calibrated CRT monitor in a darkened room. Each observer assessed the degree of harmony for each color wheel using a 10-category scale ranging from “extremely harmonious” to “extremely disharmonious” after being advised that harmonious means “forming a pleasing or consistent whole” and disharmonious means “lack of harmony”. Torgerson’s Law of Categorical Judgement [Torgerson, W. S., “Theory and Methods of Scaling”, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1958] was used to transform the experimental data onto an interval scale. The resulting scale values are called *colour harmony scores*, indicating the degree of harmony for each colour wheel; the higher the score, the more harmonious the colour wheel appeared to the observers. Based on the results of such testing the color harmony model discussed below was developed.

[0042] Similar testing was performed to develop models for each of the seven color emotions scales 212-226 discussed above. For example, for developing color emotion models, a psychophysical experiment was carried out using 35 single color patches (using the colors shown in table 1 of Figure 4) and 90 three-color wheels as stimuli. Figures 5 and 6 respectively show examples of a single color patch and a three color wheel presented to a test subject on a calibrated CRT monitor in a darkened room. Each observer assessed the degree of color emotion for each color patch and each color wheel using a 10-category scale for each of the seven color emotion scales after being advised of the following dictionary meanings associated with each of the scales:

[0043] (1) Exciting-calming:

exciting: causing great enthusiasm and eagerness

calming: making (someone) tranquil and quiet

[0044] (2) Inviting-uninviting:

inviting: offering the promise of an attractive or enjoyable experience

uninviting: unappealing; unattractive

[0045] (3) Warm-cool:

warm: of or at a fairly or comfortably high temperature

cool: of or at a fairly low temperature

[0046] (4) Light-dark:

light: having a considerable or sufficient amount of natural light

dark: with little or no light

[0047] (5) Clean-dirty:

clean: free from dirt, marks, or stains

dirty: covered or marked with an unclean substance

[0048] (6) Happy-depressing:

happy: feeling or showing pleasure or contentment

depressing: causing or resulting in a feeling of miserable dejection

[0049] (7) Fun-serious:

fun: amusing, entertaining, or enjoyable

serious: acting or speaking sincerely and in earnest, rather than in a joking or halfhearted manner

[0050] Based on assessments provided by the test participants, the following human psychophysical perception models have been developed and are used in example embodiments of the present invention to determine color emotion scores:

[0051] (1) Exciting-calming:

[0052] For a single color, the model used for determining a color emotion human psychophysical perception score on the "Exciting- Calming" scale is:

$$\text{Exciting} = -1.13 + 0.02 \left[(L^* - 40)^2 + \left(\frac{a^*}{0.37} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{b^*}{0.60} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad \text{Equation (1)}$$

where L^* , a^* and b^* represent the three CIELAB coordinates for the color considered. As known in the art, The three parameters L^* , a^* and b^* in the CIELAB model represent the three dimensions of a color space as follows: L^* - the lightness coordinate indicating the lightness level of the color; a^* - the red/green coordinate, with $+a^*$ indicating red, and $-a^*$ indicating green; and b^* - the yellow blue/coordinate, with $+b^*$ indicating yellow, and $-b^*$ indicating blue. The CIELAB model is further described in the CIE (*commission internationale de l'éclairage*) publication "Colormetry", 3rd Edition, Publication CIE 15:2004, ISBN 3 901 906 339.

[0053] (2) Inviting-uninviting:

[0054] For a single color, the model used for determining a color emotion human psychophysical perception score on the "Inviting- uninviting" scale is:

$$\text{Inviting} = -1.6 + 0.009 \left[(L^* - 13)^2 + \left(\frac{a^* - 3}{0.19} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{b^* - 19}{0.29} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} + 0.015L^* \quad \text{Equation (2)}$$

where L^* , a^* and b^* represent the three CIELAB coordinates for the color considered.

[0055] (3) Warm-cool:

[0056] For a single color, the model used for determining a color emotion human psychophysical perception score on the “Warm-Cool” scale is:

$$\text{Warm} = 0.02 + 0.12(C^*_{ab})^{0.6} \cos(h_{ab} - 45^\circ) - (1.5 \times 10^{-8})(L^*)^{3.9}$$

Equation (3)

where C^*_{ab} , h_{ab} and L^* represent CIELAB chroma, hue angle and lightness for the color considered.

[0057] (4) Light-dark:

[0058] For a single color, the model used for determining a color emotion human psychophysical perception score on the “Light-Dark” scale is:

$$\text{Dark} = -2.1 + 0.05(100 - L^*) \quad \text{Equation (4)}$$

where L^* represents the CEILAB lightness value for the color considered.

[0059] (5) Clean-dirty:

[0060] For a single color, the model used for determining a color emotion human psychophysical perception score on the “clean-dirty” scale is:

$$\text{Clean} = -1.8 + 0.043 \left[(L^* - 28)^2 + \left(\frac{a^* - 3}{1.18} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{b^* - 27}{1.27} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad \text{Equation (5)}$$

where L^* , a^* and b^* represent the three CIELAB coordinates for the color considered.

[0061] (6) Happy-depressing:

[0062] For a single color, the model used for determining a color emotion human psychophysical perception score on the “happy-depressing” scale is:

$$\text{Happy} = -1.3 + 0.025 \left[(L^* - 14)^2 + \left(\frac{a^*}{0.73} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{b^* - 12}{0.85} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad \text{Equation (6)}$$

where L^* , a^* and b^* represent the three CIELAB coordinates for the color considered.

[0063] (7) Fun-serious:

[0064] For a single color, the model used for determining a color emotion human psychophysical perception score on the "Fun-Serious" scale is:

$$Fun = -1.8 + 0.027 \left[(L^* - 10)^2 + \left(\frac{a^*}{0.45} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{b^* - 10}{0.61} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

Equation (7)

where L^* , a^* and b^* represent the three CIELAB coordinates for the color considered.

[0065] Color Emotion Scores for Color Combinations

[0066] For modeling color emotion scores for two and three color combinations on six of the seven color emotion scales noted above (excluding the "inviting-uninviting" scale), an additivity property is employed in that the color emotion scores are calculated individually using the above models for each of the colors in the combination, and then averaged to determine a color emotion score for the combination. In particular, for a two color combination the color emotion score for the two color combination can be determined as follows:

$$E = (E1 + E2) / 2 \quad \text{Equation (8)}$$

where E stands for a color emotion score for the two-color combination; and E1 and E2 represent color emotion scores of the two constituent colors in that combination.

[0067] Similarly, for a three color combination the color emotion score for the two color combination can be determined as follows:

$$E = (E1 + E2 + E3) / 3 \quad \text{Equation (9)}$$

where E stands for a color emotion score for the two-color combination; and E1 to E3 represent color emotion scores of the constituent colors in that combination.

[0068] Thus, the color emotion score in the exciting scale for a combination of two or three colors can be determined by averaging the "exciting-calming" color emotion scores determined individually for each of the constituent colors in that combination. The color emotion scores for color combinations on each of the other color emotion scales (excluding the "inviting-uninviting" scale) can similarly be determined. It is projected that in at least some embodiments, color emotion scores for combinations of greater than three colors can be assigned by using similar averaging methods such that the color emotion score for a color combination can be determined by averaging all the emotion scores of all the colors in the combination.

[0069] Color Emotion Scores for Color Combinations using the "inviting-uninviting" scale

[0070] Although in some example embodiments straight averaging of the individual color "inviting-uninviting" scale color emotion scores can be used to determine an approximate "inviting-uninviting" scale score for the combination, test results have indicated that the correlation between modeled results and actual measured test results for color combinations using averaging is not as accurate for the "inviting-uninviting" scale as it is for the other six color emotion scores. Accordingly, in at least some example embodiments, a different model is used for determining color emotion scores for color combinations on the "inviting-uninviting", and a distinction is made between adjacent and non adjacent colors, and in this regard reference is made to Figure 7 which illustrates a three color combination including Color A, Color B, and Color C. Color B is adjacent to both Color A and Color C. As Color C and Color A are separated from each other, they are non-adjacent.

[0071] The "inviting-uninviting" combined color model consists of two parts, one (Inviting_A) dealing with adjacent colors and the other (Inviting_N) nonadjacent colors, as shown in Equations (10) and (11), respectively.

[0072] For adjacent colours:

$$\text{Inviting}_A = -0.15 + 0.14 I_C + 0.89 I_{Lsum} + 0.74 I_{\Delta L} + 0.51 I_H \quad \text{Equation (10)}$$

where

$$I_C = 0.6 \tanh(1.8 - 0.05 \Delta C_I)$$

$$\Delta C_I = \left[(\Delta H^*_{ab})^2 + (\Delta C^*_{ab} / 0.84)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

$$I_{Lsum} = -1.2 + 0.012 L_{sum} \quad \text{in which} \quad L_{sum} = L^*_1 + L^*_2$$

$$I_{\Delta L} = 0.15 + 0.16 \tanh(-2 + 0.19 \Delta L) \quad \text{in which} \quad \Delta L = |L^*_1 - L^*_2|$$

$$I_H = I_{SY1} + I_{SY2}$$

$$I_{SY} = E_C(I_S + E_Y)$$

$$E_C = 0.5 + 0.5 \tanh(-2 + 0.5 C_{ab}^*)$$

$$I_S = -0.08 - 0.14 \sin(h_{ab} + 50^\circ) - 0.07 \sin(2h_{ab} + 90^\circ)$$

$$E_Y = [(0.22 L^* - 12.8)/10] \exp\{(90^\circ - h_{ab})/10 - \exp[(90^\circ - h_{ab})/10]\}$$

[0073] where L^* , C_{ab}^* and h_{ab} stand for values of lightness, chroma and hue angle in CIELAB system, respectively (with subscripts 1 and 2 each used in the above variables to denote scores associated with the first and second colors respectively in the two color combination).

[0074] For nonadjacent colours:

$$\text{Inviting}_N = -0.16 + 0.41 I_C \quad \text{Equation (11)}$$

[0075] The model for determining the “inviting-uninviting” color emotion score for colour combinations considering both adjacent and nonadjacent colors is:

$$\text{Inviting} = \frac{1}{n} [\sum (\text{Inviting}_A) + \sum (\text{Inviting}_N)] \quad \text{Equation (12)}$$

[0076] Color Harmony Models:

[0077] With respect to color harmony, based on the assessments provided by the test subjects, the following models have been developed and are used in example embodiments of the present invention to determine color harmony scores for color combinations. Again, in at least some example embodiments a differentiation is made between adjacent colors and non adjacent colors in color combinations, and thus the color harmony includes two parts, namely CH_A for assigning a color harmony score for a pair of adjacent colors in a color combination (see Equation 13 below), and CH_N for assigning a color harmony score for a pair on non-adjacent colors in a color combination (see Equation 14 below). Once color harmony scores for all color pairs within a color combination are determined, the scores are averaged as indicated below to determine a color harmony score for the entire combination (see Equation 15 below).

[0078] In example embodiments, color harmony (CH_A) for two adjacent colors is determined using the following equation:

$$CH_A = H_C + H_L + H_H \quad \text{Equation (13)}$$

in which

$$H_C = 0.04 + 0.53 \tanh(0.8 - 0.045 \Delta C)$$

$$\Delta C = [(\Delta H^*_{ab})^2 + (\Delta C^*_{ab} / 1.46)^2]^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

$$H_L = H_{Lsum} + H_{\Delta L}$$

$$H_{Lsum} = 0.3 + 0.5 \tanh(-4 + 0.029 L_{sum}) \text{ in which } L_{sum} = L^*_1 + L^*_2$$

$$H_{\Delta L} = 0.14 + 0.15 \tanh(-2 + 0.2 \Delta L) \text{ in which } \Delta L = |L^*_1 - L^*_2|$$

$$H_H = H_{SY1} + H_{SY2}$$

$$H_{SY} = E_C (H_S + E_Y)$$

$$E_C = 0.5 + 0.5 \tanh(-2 + 0.5 C^*_{ab})$$

$$H_S = -0.08 - 0.14 \sin(h_{ab} + 50^\circ) - 0.07 \sin(2h_{ab} + 90^\circ)$$

$$E_Y = [(0.22 L^* - 12.8) / 10] \exp\{(90^\circ - h_{ab}) / 10 - \exp[(90^\circ - h_{ab}) / 10]\}$$

where ΔH^*_{ab} and ΔC^*_{ab} represent CIELAB colour difference in hue and chroma, respectively; L^* , C^*_{ab} and h_{ab} represent CIELAB lightness, chroma and hue angle, respectively (with subscripts 1 and 2 each used in the above variables to denote scores associated with the first and second colors respectively in the two color combination).

[0079] In example embodiments, for two non-adjacent colors, a color harmony value CH_N is determined using the following equation:

$$CH_N = H_{C, N} \quad \text{Equation (14)}$$

in which:

$$H_{C, N} = 0.2 + 0.65 \tanh(1.7 - 0.045 \Delta C_N)$$

$$\Delta C_N = [(\Delta H^*_{ab})^2 + (\Delta C^*_{ab} / 1.30)^2]^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

where ΔH^*_{ab} and ΔC^*_{ab} are CIELAB colour difference values between the non-adjacent colors in hue and in chroma, respectively.

[0080] The color harmony values for the entire color combination can then be determined by averaging the CH scores for all color pairs (both adjacent and non-adjacent) as follows:

$$CH = \frac{1}{n} [\sum(CH_A) + \sum(CH_N)] \text{Equation (15)}$$

where n is the total number of color pairs in a colour combination; and CH_A and CH_N are harmony scores for adjacent and nonadjacent colors, respectively.

[0081] Equation (13) for determining color harmony for two adjacent colors incorporates the following assumptions:

- (a) *Equal-hue and equal-chroma*. Any two adjacent colors varying only in lightness tend to appear harmonious when combined together.
- (b) *High lightness*. The higher the lightness value of each constituent colour in an adjacent color pair, the more likely it is that this pair will appear harmonious.
- (c) *Unequal lightness values*. Small lightness variations (i.e. less than around 15 units of CIELAB colour difference) between the constituent colors in an adjacent colour pair may reduce the harmony of that pair.
- (d) *Hue effect*. Among various hues, blue is the one most likely to create harmony in a two colour combination; red is the least likely to do so. In addition, bright yellows more often create harmony in an adjacent two-color combination than dark yellows. (e.g. khaki colors).

[0082] On the other hand, of the four color harmony principles described in the previous paragraph, only "(a) the equal-hue and equal-chroma principle" was found to play a significant role in the harmony of non-adjacent colors, which is incorporated into equation (14).

[0083] In alternative embodiments, color emotion scores and color harmony scores can be modeled using equations other than those discussed above, which are provided as one example of how human responses to colors can be modeled. For example, it will be noted that each of the above equations includes constants - in some embodiments the values used for the constants can vary from those stated above. For example, in at least some configurations for each of the models other than the "warm-cool" model, the constants in the above equations can vary from 50% to 150% of the values stated above. In at least some configurations for the "warm-cool" model, the

constants in the above equations can vary from 50% to 110% of the values stated above. In other embodiments, different psychophysical perception models can be employed other than or in addition to those set out above.

[0084] As noted above, the models used to implement the color selection methods and devices described herein model human psychophysical perceptions of color emotion for colors and color combinations. Color harmony applies to a combination of colors, while the seven color emotions described above can apply to both individual colors and combinations of colors. In this regard, as used herein human psychophysical perception refers to a response of a human to a color or color combinations, as opposed to a more basic sensory perception such as a basic color perception. By way of example, perceiving that a color is “warm” or a color combination is “harmonious” is a reaction or feeling and hence a human psychophysical perception, whereas perceiving that a color is “green”, or has a particular “hue” or “chroma” is a more basic sensory perception. By using mathematical models of human psychophysical perceptions that are based on response data gathered from a plurality of test subjects, the embodiments described herein simulate typical human reactions to colors and combinations of colors and use that information to assist users with color selection. Thus, in example embodiments the color selection methods and devices described herein can provide a virtual second opinion to the user’s own feelings or color emotions, which may improve the user’s color selection confidence especially in environments where users can be inundated with multiple colors in a short time period. Furthermore, in example embodiments the color selection methods and devices described herein can be used to filter the number of possible color selections presented to user and thereby reduce confusion at being presented with a myriad of color choices.

[0085] Color Library

[0086] The color library used in example embodiments of the invention will now be discussed in greater detail. In one example embodiment, the color library 62 is divided up into four different color groups (E1, E2, E3, E4) using the results of exciting-calming equation (1). Each color group which is associated with one of the four possible positions on the “Exciting-Calming” color scale 208 presented in the color group toolbar 205 of visual interface 200. In this regard Table 2 of Figure 8A represents a portion of a color library file 62-1 for a group of colors (Color Group E1) that is associated with the

left most button on “Exciting-Calming” color scale 208. As shown in Figure 8A, the color library file 62-1 includes for each listed color: (a) a unique color code (in the column labelled “code”); (b) a color name; (c) the CIELAB values for the color, including the three CIELAB coordinates for the color (L^* (lightness), a^* and b^*), as well as CIELAB values C^*_{ab} (chroma) and h_{ab} (hue angle). As well, an exciting-calming color emotion value E calculated using equation (1) is shown for each color in Figure 8A, although that information could be omitted from the library file as it can be determined from the CIELAB values. Turning briefly again to Figure 2, in the illustrated embodiment the color elements 211 displayed in the color group display region 202 are arranged in rows and columns – in at least one example embodiment, the color library file 62-1 includes information for each color identifying the location of that color in the array of color elements 211 (represented in Figure 8A by the left-most column labelled “Row-Column”). In the illustrated embodiment, the each column represents a color page or paint strip that includes multiple colors arranged by color depth, and the colors included in each column have been manually selected. When classifying the library into color groups, the mean “exciting-calming” score for each color page or column is calculated, and the color columns are then assigned to a respective color group based on the mean “exciting-calming” score.

[0087] Figures 8B, 8C and 8D each show portions of respective color library files 62-2, 62-3 and 62-3, each of which represents a different group of colors falling within a unique range on the exciting-calming color emotion scale. Accordingly, color group E1 (library file 62-1) represents “very exciting” colors (in one illustrative example, group E1 includes 259 colors having a mean “exciting-calming” value of 0.78); color group E2 (library file 62-2) represents “slightly exciting” colors (in one illustrative example, group E2 includes 273 colors having a mean “exciting-calming” value of 0.15); color group E3 (library file 62-3) represents “slightly calming” colors (in one illustrative example, group E3 includes 249 colors having a mean “exciting-calming” value of -0.21); and color group E4 (library file 62-4) represents “very calming” colors (in one illustrative example, group E4 includes 189 colors having a mean “exciting-calming” value of -0.50). Although in the illustrated embodiment, the four color groups E1, E2, E3 and E4 are each specified in separate files of color library 62, in other embodiments they could be specified in a single file, and categorized into the respective color groups by the color

selector application 60 based on their respective calming-exciting scores (or based on mean calming-exciting scores for sub-groups such as color columns).

[0088] Visual Interface

[0089] A. Color Group Display Region

[0090] Turning again to the visual interface 200 of Figure 2, in the illustrated embodiment, when the leftmost button on the “exciting-calming” scale 206 is selected, color elements 211 corresponding to the “very exciting” color group E1 (library file 62-1) are displayed in color group display region 202. When the second button on the “exciting-calming” scale 206 is selected, color elements 211 corresponding to the “slightly exciting” color group E2 (library file 62-2) are displayed in color group display region 202, as shown in Figure 9. When the third button (i.e. second from the right) on the “exciting-calming” scale 206 is selected, color elements 211 corresponding to the “slightly calming” color group E3 (library file 62-3) are displayed in color group display region 202, as shown in Figure 10. When the right-most button on the “exciting-calming” scale 206 is selected, color elements 211 corresponding to the “very calming” color group E4 (library file 62-4) are displayed in color group display region 202, as shown in Figure 11.

[0091] As noted previously, the color group displayed in the color group display region 202 can be further limited by selecting the “Harmony” mode option from the “All Colors” and “Harmony” choices 210. In Harmony mode, the colors displayed in the color group display region 202 are limited to the colors from the group that are determined to meet certain harmony thresholds. As apparent from harmony equation (13) above, when determining the harmony between a pair of colors, the “lightness sum” factor (i.e. H_{Lsum}) plays an important role in the determination of color harmony scores: the lighter the colors, the more likely it is for them to create harmony. In the illustrated embodiment, the color elements 211 are arranged vertically by color depth, and horizontally by hue. Accordingly, in order to limit the color group to colors that have a high likelihood of being harmonious, in one example embodiment the “darker” colors are dropped from the color group display region 202 in harmony mode. For example, in one embodiment, selecting the harmony button from options 210 results in the interface 200 being modified so that only the top four rows of the selected color group is displayed. Figure 12 shows an example of the interface 200 in “Harmony” mode displaying the top four

rows of color group E1. Similarly, when each of the color groups E2-E4 are respectively displayed in harmony mode, only their top four rows are shown in the color group display area 202.

[0092] One possible method for measuring the harmony of a group of colors is to use harmony equation (13) to calculate a harmony score for every possible color pair combination within the group, and then determine the percentage of color pair combinations in the group that have a positive harmony score. By way of illustrative example, using such a group harmony calculation method provides a color harmony score of approximately 88% for color group E1, 80% for color group E2, 77% for color group E3, and 61% for color group E4. When each of the four color groups are limited to their top four rows, the group harmony calculation provides a color harmony score of approximately 94% for color group E1, 97% for color group E2, 99% for color group E3, and 99% for color group E4. Accordingly, in the illustrated embodiment, selecting the harmony mode option from options 210 results in a displayed color group having a color harmony score of at least 94% or higher.

[0093] Although only two discrete choices 210 ("All Colors" or "Harmony") are shown in interface 200 of Figure 2, the two discrete choices in tool bar 205 could be replaced with either a discrete scale with more than two options on the harmony scale, or a continuous sliding harmony scale (similar to scale 212), or a numeric pull down scale that allowed a user to select a desired color harmony level for the color group. Only the colors from the currently selected color group meeting the user selected color harmony level would then be displayed as color elements 211 in color group display area. For example, the user may specify that they only want to see colors from color group E1 having a color harmony score of 90% or higher, which would result in fewer group E1 colors being displayed in region 202 than are shown in Figure 2, but more than are shown on Figure 12. Alternative methods can be used to determine a harmony score for a color group. For example, while the above-described color group harmony quantification method merely takes into account the number of positive harmony scores for every possible color pair combination within the color group, a weighted method could be used to take into account the magnitude of positive harmony scores in addition to the number of occurrence of positive harmony scores.

[0094] Thus, it will be appreciated that user interface 200 allows a user to filter the color elements 211 displayed in the working group region 202 based on desired levels for color perception characteristics that are inputted by the user (e.g. an exciting – calming level and/or a harmony level).

b. Working and Color Information regions

[0095] Turning again to Figure 2, as noted above users can select color elements 211 from the color group region 202, with selected color elements them being displayed as color candidate elements 228 in the working region 204 of interface 200. Under control of the color selection application 60, the controller 38 calculates color harmony and color emotion scores for the color candidate elements 228 in the working region 204 using the harmony and emotion modelling equations (1) – (15) discussed above. The results graphically are presented on the scales harmonious-unharmonious 212, inviting-uninviting 214, exciting-calming 216, warm-cool 218, light-dark 220, clean-dirty 222, happy-depressing 224, and fun-serious 226 of color information region 206. Although the scales shown in Figure 2 are each represented as continuous horizontal bars that are filled in to represent the magnitude of the respective color harmony or color emotion score that they represent, the color harmony and color emotion information can be presented in alternative formats in different embodiments. By way of non-limiting example, actual numerical values can be presented, discrete scales can be used rather than continuous scales (for example, a discrete scale could look like scale 208), and/or vertical scales can be used instead of horizontal scales.

[0096] Each time the combination of colors candidate elements 228 in the working area 204 changes (for example through addition or removal by a user of a color candidate element 228), the information displayed on the scales of region 206 is updated to reflect the current color combination. In an example embodiment, when just a single color candidate element is in working area 204, the harmony scale 212 displays a null value, but the color emotion scales display the respective color emotion scores for the single color.

[0097] As noted above, for most of the color emotion models, when multi-color combinations are considered it is not relevant if the candidate colors are adjacent to each other or not. However, at least in the case of the color harmony and the color emotion scale “inviting-uninviting”, the scores determined for the color candidate

combination are dependent on the relative orientation of the colors candidate elements. Accordingly, in example embodiments the relative positioning of the color candidate elements 228 in the working area 204 is taken into account when calculating the scores for the harmony scale 212 and the color emotion scale "inviting-uninviting" 214. By way of example, in the interface 200 as illustrated in Figure 2, the color candidate element 228(2) is adjacent both of the color candidates 228(1) and 228(3) which are non-adjacent each other, and this relative positioning is reflected in the harmony scale 212 and the color emotion scale "inviting-uninviting" 214. Figure 13 shows interface 200 with the exact same color candidate elements from Figure 2 in working space 204, however in this case the positions of color candidate elements 228(2) and 228(3) have been reversed, resulting in different scores on the harmony scale 212 and the color emotion scale "inviting-uninviting" 214, while the remaining color emotion scales 216-226 that are not dependant on the relative positioning of the colors stay the same. In example embodiments, a user can reposition the color candidate elements 228 within the working area 228.

[0098] In one example embodiment, the color selection device 10 is configured to generate an alert or indicator when selected color combinations in the working area 204 fall below predetermined color harmony threshold, which may be preset, or may be a user configurable value. By way of example, the bar used to represent the harmony scale 212 may change color depending on whether the calculated harmony score is above or below the threshold, with a green bar being used for above threshold color combinations and a red bar being used for below threshold color combinations. Figure 13 illustrates a combination for which a color harmony alert has been generated in the form of a darker colored bar appearing on the harmony scale 212 than on the other scales (or on the harmony scale 212 shown in Figure 2 for the same colors in a different order). The harmony alert could take different forms, including for example other or different visual and/or aural stimulation being issued by the color selection device 10. Furthermore, the color selection device 10 can also be configured to provide threshold alerts for all or selected ones of the color emotion scales shown in region 206 in the event that the corresponding color emotion scores fall below threshold levels. In at least some example embodiments, the scales for which alerts are provided and the

thresholds for determining an alert are user configurable with default values set by a designer involved in configuration of the color selection application 60.

[0099] As indicated in Figure 13, in one example embodiment, the interface 200 includes a “print” option button 231 that a user can select to print out the color candidate elements 228, color names 32 and color IDs 32 contained in working area 204.

[00100] In some embodiments the color selection application 60 allows users to import a new color library 62, and sorts the colors into respective color groups (eg. into color groups E1, E2, E3 and E4) based, for example, on where the colors fall within the Exciting-Calming scale and the hue and lightness of the colors, as represented in Figure 14.

[00101] In at least some example embodiments, the color data specified in color library 62 may take a form other than CEILAB data, including for example XYZ data (under either D65, A, F2, TL 84 or other predefined light source) or reflectance data (R%). In such cases, the different color data format can either be converted to CEILAB format and then used in the above equations, or alternatively the equations modified for the different format. By way of example, in one embodiment a dynamic link library (DLL) is used to calculate specific color emotion (CE) or color harmony (CH) values as shown in Figure 15.

[00102] In some example embodiments, discrete scales are used to represent color harmony and color emotion values, for example using the numbers 1 to 10 represent discrete degrees for each scale; 10 means highest degree for the first term in each word pair, i.e. “light”, “warm”, “exciting”, “fun”, “happy”, “clean”, “inviting” and “harmonious”; 1 means highest degree for the second term, i.e. “dark”, “cool”, “calming”, “serious”, “depressing”, “dirty”, “uninviting” and “disharmonious”. Table 6 below shows cell values that define the range of CE or CH values that correspond to a discrete degree shown in the left column.

Table 6 Determination of discrete scales for CEs and CH

	dark-light	warm-cool	exciting- calming	fun- serious	happy- depressing	clean-dirty	inviting- uninviting	harmonious- disharmonious
1	< -1.23	< -1.04	< -0.23	< -1.12	< -0.85	< -1.28	< -0.72	< -0.98
2	-1.23 ~ -0.95	-1.04 ~ -0.72	-0.23 ~ 0.18	-1.12 ~ -0.80	-0.85 ~ -0.52	-1.28 ~ -0.91	-0.72 ~ -0.29	-0.98 ~ -0.71
3	-0.95 ~ -0.48	-0.72 ~ -0.40	0.18 ~ 0.58	-0.80 ~ -0.09	-0.52 ~ -0.16	-0.91 ~ -0.54	-0.29 ~ 0.15	-0.71 ~ -0.45
4	-0.48 ~ -0.10	-0.40 ~ -0.07	0.58 ~ 0.98	-0.09 ~ 0.42	-0.16 ~ 0.15	-0.54 ~ -0.17	0.15 ~ 0.58	-0.45 ~ -0.19
5	-0.10 ~ 0.28	-0.07 ~ 0.25	0.98 ~ 1.39	0.42 ~ 0.93	0.15 ~ 0.49	-0.17 ~ 0.21	0.58 ~ 1.01	-0.19 ~ 0.08
6	0.28 ~ 0.65	0.25 ~ 0.57	1.39 ~ 1.79	0.93 ~ 1.45	0.49 ~ 0.83	0.21 ~ 0.58	1.01 ~ 1.45	0.08 ~ 0.34
7	0.65 ~ 1.03	0.57 ~ 0.88	1.79 ~ 2.19	1.45 ~ 1.98	0.83 ~ 1.18	0.58 ~ 0.95	1.45 ~ 1.88	0.34 ~ 0.60
8	1.03 ~ 1.40	0.88 ~ 1.21	2.19 ~ 2.59	1.98 ~ 2.47	1.18 ~ 1.50	0.95 ~ 1.32	1.88 ~ 2.31	0.60 ~ 0.86
9	1.40 ~ 1.78	1.21 ~ 1.53	2.59 ~ 3.00	2.47 ~ 2.98	1.50 ~ 1.84	1.32 ~ 1.69	2.31 ~ 2.75	0.86 ~ 1.13
10	> 1.78	> 1.53	> 3.00	> 2.98	> 1.84	> 1.69	> 2.75	> 1.13

[00103] In example embodiments the color selection system embodiments described herein may be used to assist people with paint selection, however it can also be applied to other areas where color coordination is of value, such as in selecting fabrics for furniture, wall covering colors, broadloom colors, and appliance colors, to name but a few possible applications.

[00104] In some example embodiments some or all of the color emotion and color harmony scores for colors and color combinations may be predetermined and stored in look-up-tables that are part of or associated with color library 62.

[00105] A number of different features have been described above in respect of various example embodiments. It will be appreciated that a number of the features can be applied across all of the example embodiments even if not expressly stated above. The above-described embodiments of the present application are intended to be examples only. Alterations, modifications and variations may be effected to the particular embodiments by those skilled in the art without departing from the scope of the application, which is defined by the claims appended hereto.

What is Claimed is:

1. A computer implemented method for selecting colors comprising:
associating, in dependence on a mathematical equation that models a human emotional response to color, a color emotion score with each of a plurality of colors that are numerically defined in a color library;
receiving a user input indicating a desired color emotion level; and
selecting, from the color library, colors for presentation to the user in dependence on the color emotion scores associated therewith and the desired color emotion level.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the mathematical equation is derived from measuring the psychological responses of a plurality of test subjects to a plurality of test colors.
3. The method of claim 2 comprising:
displaying the selected colors as user selectable color elements in a first display region of a visual user interface.
4. The method of claim 3 comprising displaying in the visual interface an indication of the desired color emotion level as inputted by the user.
5. The method of claim 3 wherein the user input comprises user selection of the desired emotion level from a displayed color emotion scale having a plurality of discrete selectable levels.
6. The method of claim 3 wherein the color elements are arranged in an array organized by color depth along one axis and by hue along another axis.

7. The method of claim 3 comprising:
 - receiving user input selecting at least one of the color elements from the first display region; and
 - displaying in the visual user interface a color candidate emotion score for the color represented by the selected at least one color element, wherein the color candidate emotion score is determined in dependence on a mathematical equation that models a human emotional response to color.
8. The method of claim 7 including displaying on a second display region of the visual user interface a candidate color element that represents the same color as the selected at least one color element.
9. The method of claim 8 including displaying in the second display region a plurality of candidate color elements representing different colors, wherein displaying in the visual user interface the color candidate emotion score includes calculating a combined color emotion score for the plurality of candidate color elements in dependence on color emotion scores calculated individually for each of the candidate color elements and displaying the combined color emotion score as the color candidate score.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein when three or more candidate color elements are displayed in the second display regions, and wherein the combined color emotion score for the plurality of color candidate elements is calculated in dependence on the relative locations of the color candidate elements to each other.
11. The method of claim 9 wherein when three or more candidate color elements are displayed in the second display regions, the combined color emotion score for the plurality of color candidate elements is calculated in by averaging color emotion scores for each of the color candidate elements.

12. The method of claim 9 comprising calculating a plurality of color candidate emotion scores for the plurality of candidate color elements, each of the color candidate emotion scores representing a different human emotional response and being calculated in dependence on a respective mathematical equation that models the respective human emotional response.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein at least one of the color candidate emotion scores represents one of the following human emotion pairings: inviting-uninviting; exciting-calming; warm-cool; light-dark; clean-dirty; happy-sad; or fun-serious.

14. The method of claim 3 comprising:

receiving user inputs selecting at least two of the color elements from the first display region; and

displaying in the visual user interface a color harmony score for the combination of colors represented by the selected color elements, wherein the color harmony score is determined in dependence on a mathematical color harmony equation that models a human perception of color harmony.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the mathematical color harmony equation is derived from measuring the psychological responses of a plurality of test subjects to a plurality of test colors.

16. The method of claim 3 including receiving user inputs selecting at least three of the color elements from the first display region; and

displaying in the visual user interface a color harmony score for the combination of colors represented by the selected color elements, wherein the color harmony score is determined in dependence on (a) a mathematical color harmony equation that models a human perception of color harmony and (b) a relative position of the color elements to each other.

17. The method of claim 3 comprising:

receiving a user input indicating a desired harmony level for all of the color elements displayed in the first display region and selecting the colors elements displayed in the first display region in dependence on the desired harmony level, wherein harmony for the selected colors is determined in dependence on a mathematical equation that models a human perception of color harmony.

18. The method of claim 3 wherein receiving the user input indicating a desired color emotion level, selecting colors for presentation to the user in dependence on the color emotion scores associated therewith and the desired color emotion level, and displaying the selected colors as user selectable color elements in a first display region of a visual user interface each occur at a single computing device.

19. The method of claim 1 wherein the colors are numerically defined in the color library using CIELAB values and the color emotion score for each of the colors is pre-stored in the library.

20. The method of claim 1 wherein the color emotion score associated with each color represents a value on an exciting-claming emotion pairing, and the mathematical equation for modeling the emotional response uses the CEILAB color coordinates L^* , a^* and b^* as inputs.

21. The method of claim 21 wherein the color emotion score associated with each color is determined by the equation:

$$\text{Exciting} = -1.13 + 0.02 \left[(L^* - 40)^2 + \left(\frac{a^*}{0.37} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{b^*}{0.60} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

where L^* , a^* and b^* represent CIELAB coordinates for the color.

22. A computing device comprising a storage element and a controller for executing instructions stored on the storage element, the storage element having stored thereon computer instructions configuring the computing device to perform the method of any one of claims 1 to 21.

23. A color selection device comprising:

a controller for controlling operation of the device;

a user input device coupled to the controller;

a display coupled to the controller;

a color library accessible to the controller and comprising numeric data defining a plurality of different colors;

the controller being configured for: (a) generating a visual user interface on the display that includes a color group display region in which a first group of color elements that represent some of the colors defined in the color library are displayed; (b) receiving through the user input device a desired color emotion level for the color elements displayed in the color group display region; and (c) changing the color group display region to display a second group of color elements that represent different colors defined in the color library in dependence on the desired color emotion level and color emotion scores associated with each of the colors, wherein the color emotion score associated with each color is determined in dependence on a mathematical equation that models a specific human emotional response to color and which has been derived from measuring the psychological responses of a plurality of test subjects to a plurality of test colors.

24. The color selection device of claim 23 wherein the controller is configured for receiving a through the user input device a desired color group harmony level for all of the colors displayed in the color group display region and modifying the displayed group

of color elements to indicate the color elements that collectively achieve the desired color group harmony level.

25. A computer implemented method for providing feedback on color selections, comprising:

providing on a display a visual user interface that includes a plurality of user selectable color elements each representing different colors that are numerically defined in a color library;

receiving user input selecting at least two of the color elements as color candidate elements;

calculating, using a first mathematical model, a first human psychophysical perception value that represents a first human psychophysical perception of the color combination represented by the color candidate elements; and

presenting in the visual user interface a representation of the first human psychophysical perception value.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein the first human psychophysical perception value is presented on a scale.

27. The method of claim 25 wherein the first human psychophysical perception corresponds to a human emotional response to the color combination.

28. The method of claim 25 wherein the first human psychophysical perception corresponds to a human perception of color harmony achieved by the color combination.

29. The method of claim 25 the user selectable color elements are arranged in an array organized by color depth along one axis and by hue along another axis.

30. The method of claim 25 wherein the first mathematical model has been derived from measuring the psychophysical responses of a plurality of test subjects to a plurality of test colors.

31. The method of claim 25 comprising:

calculating, using a plurality of further mathematical models, a plurality of further human psychophysical perception values that each represent a further human psychophysical perception of the color combination represented by the color candidate elements; and

presenting in the visual user interface representations of the further human psychophysical perception values.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein the human psychophysical perception values include values that corresponds to one of the following human emotional response pairings: inviting-uninviting; exciting-calming; warm-cool; light-dark; clean-dirty; happy-sad; or fun-serious, and a value that corresponds to a human perception of color harmony achieved by the color combination.

33. The method of claim 31 including providing in the visual user interface a first display region in which the user selectable color elements are displayed, a second display region in which the user selected color candidate elements are displayed, and a third display region in which the representations of the human psychophysical perception values are displayed.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein the mathematical model used to calculate the human psychophysical perception value for at least one of the human psychophysical perceptions distinguishes between adjacent and non adjacent candidate elements in the second display region.

35. The method of claim 33 wherein one of the mathematical models is a color harmony model used to calculate a color harmony human psychophysical perception value for the color combination and under the color harmony model when there are three or more color candidate elements, the color harmony psychophysical perception values is determined as follows:

- (a) for each unique pair of adjacent color candidate elements in the second display region, a color harmony value CH_A for the pair is determined using a first equation and in dependence on numeric attributes assigned to each of the pair of adjacent color candidate elements,
- (b) for each unique pair of non-adjacent color candidate elements in the second display region, a color harmony value CH_N is determined using a second equation and in dependence on numeric attributes assigned to each of the pair of non-adjacent color candidate elements , and
- (c) the color harmony perception value for the entire color combination represented in the second display region is determined by averaging the color harmony values for all unique color pairs as follows:

$$CH = \frac{1}{n} [\sum(CH_A) + \sum(CH_N)]$$

where n is the total number of unique color pairs in the colour combination, and CH_A and CH_N are harmony scores for adjacent and nonadjacent color pairs, respectively.

36. The method of claim 33 wherein one of the mathematical models is a color emotion model used to calculate a color emotion value that corresponds to a human emotional response, wherein when three or more color candidate elements are present in the second display region the color emotion value is determined as follows:

- (a) for each unique pair of adjacent color candidate elements displayed in the second display region, a color emotion value ($Emotion_A$) is calculated using a first equation and in dependence on numeric attributes assigned to each of the pair of adjacent color candidate elements,

- (b) for each pair of non-adjacent color candidate elements, a color emotion value (Emotion_N) is calculated using a second equation and in dependence on numeric attributes assigned to each of the pair of non-adjacent color candidate elements, and
- (c) a color emotion value for the color combination considering both adjacent and nonadjacent color candidate elements is determined as follows:

$$\text{Color Emotion Value} = 1/n[\Sigma(\text{Emotion}_A) + \Sigma(\text{Emotion}_N)]$$

where n is the total number of unique color pairs in the colour combination

37. The method of claim 33 wherein when there are three or more color candidate elements displayed in the second display region, at least one of the human psychophysical perception values for the color combination is determined by calculating a color emotion score for each color in the color combination and then averaging the color emotion scores.

38. The method of claim 33 wherein one of the human psychophysical perception values represents a value on a warm-cool emotional response pairing for the color combination, and when there are two or more color candidate elements displayed in the second display region, at least one of the psychophysical perception values for the color combination is determined by:

- (a) calculating a color emotion score for each color in the color combination according to the equation:

$$\text{Warm} = 0.02 + 0.12(C^*_{ab})^{0.6} \cos(h_{ab} - 45^\circ) - (1.5 \times 10^{-8})(L^*)^{3.9}$$

where C^*_{ab} , h_{ab} and L^* represent CIELAB chroma, hue angle and lightness for the subject color, and

- (b) then averaging the color emotion scores.

39. The method of claim 25 wherein the first human psychophysical perception corresponds to a perception of color harmony achieved by the color combination, the

method including determining if the first human psychophysical perception value falls beneath a threshold and if so generating an alert to the user.

40. A computing device comprising a storage element and a controller for executing instructions stored on the storage element, the storage element having stored thereon computer instructions configuring the computing device to perform the method of any one of claims 25 to 39.