

Research on the Design of Artistic Bedding Based on the Characteristics of Rothko's Works

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This paper aims to explore innovative bedding designs within the artistic home concept by studying the paintings of Mark Rothko, focusing on the application of his color and form. Rothko's Abstract Expressionism style and his unique approach to color usage provide a rich source of inspiration for modern bedding design. The study begins with an analysis of the historical background and developmental stages of Rothko's painting style, clarifying the core values of his art and the formative characteristics and color usage across different periods. Subsequently, the paper proposes four bedding design schemes, themed around the four seasons—Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Each scheme attempts to translate the visual elements and emotional ambiance of a specific Rothko work into the color and pattern of bedding design. By utilizing modern design software, the color blocks, lines, and textures from the art are meticulously replicated and adjusted according to the color atmosphere and design needs of each season, ensuring each bedding set possesses a unique artistic aesthetic and practical value. This interdisciplinary application not only enhances the artistic atmosphere of home environments but also provides new perspectives and creative spaces for modern home design, showcasing the perfect integration of art and everyday life. This research is expected to bring fresh inspiration to the field of artistic home design, promote further integration of art and design, and provide more personalized and artistically valuable home options for consumers who appreciate Rothko's works.

Keywords: Mark Rothko, abstract expressionism, artistic bedding design, color theory, home decor

Introduction

In recent years, with societal development and changes in consumer perceptions, the design of bedding has transcended functional aspects to embrace a direction that emphasizes individuality and therapeutic creativity. Historically, art has evolved from a means of survival to a tool for emotional expression and communication, particularly during the Abstract Expressionism movement of the 1950s in New York, which aimed to delve deeply into human psyche. Mark Rothko, a pivotal artist from this era, provided artistic solace and emotional resonance through his works, addressing the alienation in modern societal interactions. His unique use of color as an emotional trigger continues to influence the art world (Cohen-Solal, 2015).

Furthermore, according to a report by Research and Markets, the bedding market, valued at \$84.59 billion in 2023, is expected to grow at a CAGR of 6.13%, reaching \$128.35 billion by 2030. This indicates an increasing

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demand among consumers for high-quality living essentials that reflect personal creativity and individuality. By integrating Rothko's artistic style and philosophy into bedding design, this trend can lead to unique and competitive products in the market, bridging art with daily essentials and opening new market possibilities.

This study aims to apply Mark Rothko's color usage and abstract composition to the design of artistic bedding, developing products with both creative and artistic value. By incorporating Rothko's color techniques and the emotional depth of his works into the design of Artistic Print Bedding, the goal is to create products that offer both aesthetic pleasure and emotional comfort to users. This process effectively integrates Rothko's artistic philosophy into modern living essentials, allowing people to experience the therapeutic and comforting qualities of his work in their everyday lives. This approach will provide new inspiration in the design field and contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of the bedding market.

The research focuses on the mature phase of Mark Rothko's painting career post-1949, exploring the variations in color and stylistic features that emerged during this period. By analyzing the use of color and formative features in eight of his works from this period, the study examines the correlation between the emotional shifts and psychological states expressed in Rothko's art. The research method includes reviewing literature, academic papers, and websites that discuss Rothko's color and form characteristics, as well as trends in Artistic Print Bedding. The concept for developing Artistic Print Bedding designs is based on these characteristics, using tools like Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop to reimagine and apply these features across seasonal bedding designs.

General Observations

The Historical Context of Mark Rothko

Mark Rothko (1903-1970) was born in Dvinsk, Russia, in 1903 and emigrated to the United States with his family in 1913, which became the place of his upbringing. After World War II, Rothko emerged as a significant figure within the American Abstract Expressionism movement, renowned particularly for his abstract color planes. The essence of his art lies in exploring the expressive power of color, aiming to reveal the ultimate meanings of human existence through this medium (Weiss, 1998).

Rothko's art primarily focuses on the use of color, his works conveying sublimity and spirituality through unique color-form techniques, demonstrating the phosphorescent effects within abstract art. He believed that abstract color surfaces were more than mere formal combinations; they expressed a unity of existence by implying an expanded sensation and abstract feeling, transcending conventional visual boundaries.

Starting in the 1950s, Rothko particularly emphasized the intrinsic meanings of colors, thereby innovating the relationship between space and the pictorial plane. He utilized large canvases to immerse viewers within the artwork, filling the space with a unified luminosity and simplifying color into intense forms of painting. Rothko's art evolved into an environment-like exhibition, where each piece resonated like a solo in an orchestra, emitting unique effects and intensity, creating a harmonious and unified whole, allowing viewers to profoundly experience the deeper meanings of colors and light.

The Formative Features of Mark Rothko's Works

By 1949, Mark Rothko began creating paintings that vividly displayed his personal characteristics, expressing the artistic and visual features of each period. His works are categorized into several phases: 1949-1950, 1951-1953, 1954-1956, 1957-1960.

Early exploration phase (1949-1950). During this period, Rothko's paintings began to exhibit his signature style, characterized by broad and precise parallel color planes. These planes extended from one side of the canvas to the other, forming horizontal, stripe-like arrangements. Key works such as "Number II" (1949) and "Untitled" (1949) marked significant turning points in his abstract color plane approach. These layouts minimized visual distractions, focusing the viewer's attention on the emotional depth conveyed by the colors. The edges of the color blocks were intentionally blurred, enhancing the painting's overall unity and adding depth to the visual perception (Figure 1 (a)).

Refinement phase of color field painting (1951-1953). Rothko's style matured further during this period. His works showcased artistic depth and dynamism through simplified and abstracted color blocks, their interplay, and layered effects. For instance, "Green, White and Yellow" (1951) demonstrated effective use of color contrast and layering, enhancing visual depth and dynamism. This phase marked a reduction in representational elements, focusing instead on the emotional and symbolic significance of color and form (Figure 1 (b)).

Deepening and expansion phase (1954-1956). Rothko's paintings reflected a more minimalistic and pure abstract expression. The artworks like "No.7" (1954) and "Orange and Yellow" (1956) created almost mystical effects through blurred boundaries and strong contrasts between color blocks, simplifying composition and intensifying color purity (Figure 1 (c)).

Achievement and impact phase (1957-1960). Rothko's works during this period, especially evident in the "Untitled" series, simplified forms and deep color expressions reflecting significant personal and environmental changes. The use of darker and cooler tones, with greater freedom in the size and arrangement of color blocks, marked a peak in his artistic style (Figure 1 (d)).

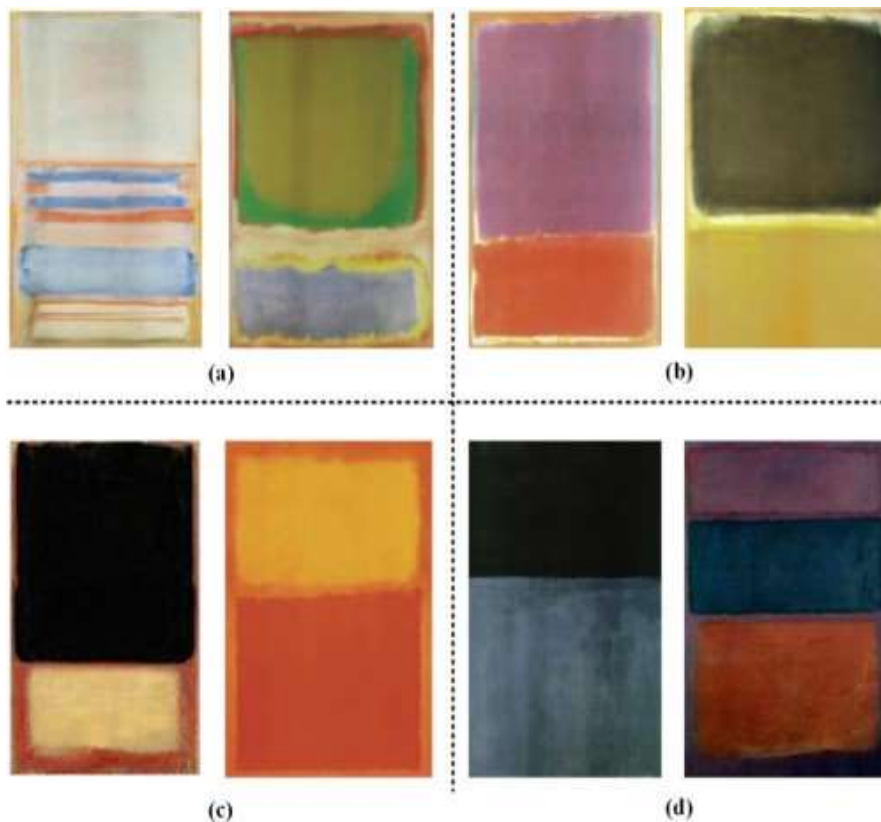


Figure 1. Mark Rothko's works from different periods.

Rothko's extreme simplification and purification of abstract color field art endowed his works with a sublime and timeless monumental quality, positioning him as one of the 20th century's greatest artists. His meticulous compositions, diversity in form, and evolution in expressing profound emotions and philosophical contemplations through color have been highly esteemed in the history of painting. His persistent focus on color solidified his status in the minimalist color field abstraction by the 1950s, with his color fields appearing to float on the plane, embodying the idea that "color is the final stage of maturation" as stated by Matisse—an undoubtedly monumental achievement in the history of 20th-century art.

Consideration of Artistic Bedding

In recent years, world-renowned art exhibitions have been a continuous draw, attracting large crowds to galleries both on weekends and weekdays, reflecting a growing public enthusiasm for art. Since its first publication in 1998, "Understanding Art: The More You Understand, The More You Appreciate" has remained popular. Meanwhile, books such as *Women Who Read Artworks*, *A Millennium of Artworks*, and *Reading Famous Paintings* have become bestsellers. This interest in art not only boosts the investment value and collector base for artworks but also spawns new investment forms like art funds, injecting vitality into the art market. As access to museums and performance venues becomes more convenient, public familiarity with the art domain is gradually increasing (Robinson, 2024).

Against this backdrop, an increasing number of people desire to integrate art into their everyday lives, a trend that has spurred the rise of the "artistic home" concept (Fan, 2024). The artistic home aims to transform living spaces into environments of artistic value, extending beyond furniture and decor to include bedding and other home products. Bedding, especially larger sizes like Queen and King beds, is gaining attention from designers (He, 2024). The Queen size measures 60×80 inches (approximately 152×203 cm), while the King size measures 76×80 inches (approximately 193×203 cm). These beds typically include a fitted sheet, a flat sheet, a duvet, and pillowcases. For a Queen bed, the duvet usually measures 88×90 inches (about 224×229 cm), and the pillowcases measure 20×30 inches (about 51×76 cm); for a King bed, the duvet measures 104×90 inches (about 264×229 cm), and the pillowcases measure 20×36 inches (about 51×91 cm). These dimensions provide ample comfort and warmth, well-suited to the needs of modern households.



Figure 2. "Art Bedding" schematic diagram.

"Artistic bedding" is a representative example within the artistic home concept, serving not only as a sleep tool but also as a means of expressing personal style and aesthetic taste (as shown in Figure 2). Artistic bedding typically features designs that resonate with famous paintings or contemporary art styles, using clever

combinations of colors, patterns, and materials to offer consumers products that are both visually appealing and practical. This dual pursuit of aesthetics and functionality is precisely why modern consumers favor products with a strong design and creative elements. This trend not only enhances the quality of life but also brings art closer to everyday life, making it an integral part of daily living (Nowakowski, 2024).

Artistic Bedding Design Inspired by Mark Rothko’s Works

Bedding plays a crucial role in shaping the atmosphere of a home, and incorporating the works of artists into bedding design is a significant trend in contemporary home design. This study aimed to develop unique and appealing designs by drawing inspiration from the artworks of Mark Rothko, proposing designs that reflect the characteristics of his paintings. Through theoretical examination, the formative characteristics and color elements of Rothko’s works from different periods were identified. Based on these findings, attractive and distinctive bedding designs were proposed using Photoshop and Illustrator, utilizing the formative traits of each era. By examining appropriate bedding sizes and materials, the practical applicability and visual impact of these designs in actual home spaces were maximized. The bedding designs, themed around “Summer”, “Spring”, “Autumn”, and “Winter”, were crafted to create unique and personalized atmospheres in home spaces, enhancing the quality of life and artistic sensibility. Bedding designs inspired by Mark Rothko’s works are expected to play a significant role in exploring new creative possibilities at the intersection of art and home design.

Spring

This design, titled “Spring”, reinterprets the color palette from Mark Rothko’s 1949 work “Untitled”, beginning with a study of Rothko’s background and the stages of his artistic development. This period marked an ascension in his career and creative activity, aligning well with the theme of rejuvenation characteristic of spring. The color block composition of “Untitled” served as the prototype for this design, inspired by the terraced fields of spring. Through form analysis, it was discovered that Rothko’s colors appeared in bright and warm tones. To enhance the contrast of these soft colors, light silk chiffon was chosen as the material.

For the duvet cover, the pattern reflects a 3:2 ratio, adhering to a simplified design approach as much as possible. When applying the pattern to the material, the focus was on bright, warm hues based on the horizontal color block arrangement that emerged from the form analysis. Additionally, the grid pattern was restructured, and vertical color blocks on the edges were identified and arranged in a cross pattern. Throughout this process, care was taken to ensure that newly generated colors did not deviate from the pattern’s color range, maintaining overall tonal harmony (see Table 1 for reference).

Table 1
“Spring” Design Process

Theme name	Theme image	Color	Principle structure	Final work
Spring Morphological features: horizontal color grid array Color features: select the bright color combination of the work “Untitled”			 Weaving method: Plain weave Definition: 60 counts Size: Queen size Duvet cover: 224 × 229 cm Pillow cover: 51 × 76 cm Mattress cover size: 152 × 203 cm	

Summer

The “Summer” theme bedding was created by reimagining Mark Rothko’s 1951 work “Untitled”. The composition and color elements of the artwork were combined and simplified into rectangular shapes to clarify the contours of the color fields. From the horizontal color planes, vertical elements were identified and restructured into a grid pattern to develop a textured pattern. Additionally, the technique of ambiguous contour representation found in the artwork was utilized to draw the final form in Photoshop. The overall form predominantly uses simple silhouettes devoid of decorative elements, combining bright and cheerful color forms to enhance the summer theme. Light blue was used to cut through the lines, emphasizing a refreshing and breathable feel necessary for summer (refer to Table 2 for details).

Table 2

“Summer” Design Process

Theme name	Theme image	Color	Principle structure	Final work
Summer				
Form characteristics: Rectangular division			Weaving method: Plain weave Definition: 60 counts Size: Queen size Duvet cover: 224 × 229 cm Pillow cover: 51 × 76 cm Mattress cover size: 152 × 203 cm	
Color characteristics: The combination of bright colors in the “Untitled” work adds a glossy feel to the edges				

Autumn

The “Autumn” design is inspired by Mark Rothko’s 1954 work “No.7”, which explores the theme of human finitude. The painting uses black, brown, and ivory as its primary colors, which symbolize emptiness, oppression, embrace, death, and purity, expressed through strong contrasts in brightness.

Efforts were made to convey the soft color transitions and ambiguous forms evident in the painting through overlapping different types of stitching. The characteristics of translucent materials were utilized so that varying colors appear depending on the degree of overlap, aiming to represent the spirituality embedded in the painting’s colors.

The design maintains a simple trapezoidal configuration and directly utilizes the segmentation of planes found in the painting, emphasizing the simplicity of composition characteristic of Rothko’s color field abstraction (refer to Table 3 for details).

Table 3

“Autumn” Design Process

Theme name	Theme image	Color	Principle structure	Final work
Autumn				
Form characteristics: Square grid arrangement			Weaving method: Plain weave Definition: 60 counts Size: Queen size Duvet cover: 224 × 229 cm Pillow cover: 51 × 76 cm Mattress cover size: 152 × 203 cm	
Color characteristics: “No.7” Creates a strong contrast in the work				

Winter

The “Winter” design draws inspiration from Mark Rothko’s later works, particularly his 1953 piece “Untitled”. In this painting, Rothko progressively subdued the treatment of light, employing various shades of black to reveal a form of static silence. The use of colors primarily centers on cool tones, with added gradations of warm hues. By combining the composition structure of the work, rectangular forms were used, and their edges were blurred to innovate the texture. The structural ratio primarily follows a 1:1.3:2 scale within the artwork, redesigning by integrating these color elements (refer to Table 4 for details).

Table 4

“Winter” Design Process

Theme name	Theme image	Color	Principle structure	Final work
Winter Form characteristics: Horizontal color block horizontal alignment Color characteristics: Choose the dark color combination of the “Untitled” work				Weaving method: Plain weave Definition: 60 counts Size: Queen size Duvet cover: 224 × 229 cm Pillow cover: 51 × 76 cm Mattress cover size: 152 × 203 cm 

Conclusion

This paper has explored innovative ways of integrating Mark Rothko’s unique style of Abstract Expressionism and his use of color into bedding design through an in-depth study of his artworks. The study began by reviewing the various phases of Rothko’s artistic career, analyzing how his works convey emotional depth and abstract aesthetics, and then transformed these elements into four sets of seasonally themed artistic bedding designs. Utilizing modern design tools, this research not only replicated Rothko’s color blocks and formative features but also adapted these elements to meet contemporary home decor needs, creating aesthetically pleasing and functional bedding solutions for each season.

These design schemes demonstrate how the fusion of art and functionality can enhance modern living environments, making them more than just living spaces but places that reflect the inhabitants’ personalities and artistic tastes. Each bedding design embodies the core aesthetics of Rothko’s works, allowing people to continually experience the power and beauty of art in their everyday lives through this everyday item.

This study proves that art can transcend boundaries and integrate into various aspects of life, especially in home decor. The integration of art not only elevates the quality of life but also inspires a renewed recognition and appreciation of aesthetics among residents. Future research could further explore how other artistic movements and artists’ works could be applied to home design, and how these designs, in turn, might affect people’s emotional and psychological states, thus more comprehensively understanding the interaction between art and everyday life.

In conclusion, applying Rothko’s artistic style and color philosophy to bedding design not only provides consumers with art-valued living essentials but also paves new innovative paths in the artistic home sector, proving that the combination of art and design is boundless.

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