Pattern Research Project: An Investigation of The Pattern And Printing Process - ZigZag

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CULTURE + HISTORY + USE

PREHISTORIC FOSSIL
The recent archaeological discovery of a prehistoric fossil displays a zigzag etching. While not an intentional pattern, the carving highlights the simple nature of the design and the ease with which it can be created (Jacobs, 2014).

GEOMETRIC KRATER
Art of the Geometric Era of ancient Greece is characterized by simple geometric abstractions. In the krater at the left, people are represented by triangles and other basic shapes, the Greek key motif is employed around the rim, and zigzag features heavily, especially as a means of distinguishing registers.

NAVAJO TEXTILE
Navajo blankets feature many patterns, including zigzag. Weaving on a traditional loom with a vertical and horizontal warp and weft is conducive to the creation of geometric designs. String or yarn is dyed before weaving and then woven to create a pattern, (Webster, 1996).

ART DECO ILLUSTRATION
This fashion illustration by the French artist Sonia Delaunay shows Art Deco’s appreciation for the zigzag. The movement was partly inspired by the geometric art of ancient Egypt (Elliott, 2008).

ZIGZAG CHAIR
This famous zigzag chair by the Dutch designer Gerrit Rietveld shows the rudimentary functionality of the zigzag form.

FASHION
Marc Jacobs, for his 2011 Spring Summer collection, included bold, zigzag pattern on the runway. The look both references a past appreciation in fashion of geometric design while stressing its continued relevance (Phelps, 2010).

MY PATTERN
Pattern name: Zigzag
Title: “Chevron Black”
Creator: Tina Raparanta
Place of origin: Ontario, CA
Date of origin: 2011
(Reparanta, 2011)

COLOR
This high-contrast, black and white pattern boldly plays with positive and negative space. Spoonflower creates all textiles through digital printing. Color is applied to a variety of available fabrics such as cotton, silk, and satin. Typically, other zigzag patterns, such as in Figure 5 and 6, contain other high contrast colors such as red and white (Spoonflower, n.d.).

INSCRIPTION
Red and white zigzag features heavily in the hit, cult TV show Twin Peaks. What the pattern symbolizes is not directly addressed in the series, however, fans speculate the floor could illustrate the dichotomy of (and connection between) good and evil (Twin Peaks Explained, n.d.).

ETHICS
In 2012, Urban Outfitters controversially put out a line of clothing which appropriated Navajo patterns and motifs, illustrating a blatant disregard for cultural symbols (including zigzag) and their unique significances (Smith, 2016).

DESIGN
A simple geometric design, “Chevron Black” contains three distinct repeats. The horizontal and vertical repeats take place on a 2 inch grid while the diagonal repeat is on a 1.45 inch grid at a 45° angle. All three scales are small as the pattern is meant to repeat many times when printed on a textile. Although there are no sub-patterns, the pattern could be considered as containing a series of repeated, conjoined chevrons.

The diagram at the right illustrates the concept of applied color.

IMAGES

CRAFT & MATERIALITY
My sample of “Chevron Black” is printed on cotton and is one of the many mass manufactured and continually produced textiles of the custom digital printing company Spoonflower. The cloth itself is simple, tightly woven and slightly rough to the touch. Inks are eco-friendly, 100% biodegradable, and non-toxic, contributing to a sustainable and attractive business model (Spoonflower, n.d.).

The diagram at the right illustrates the three repeats.