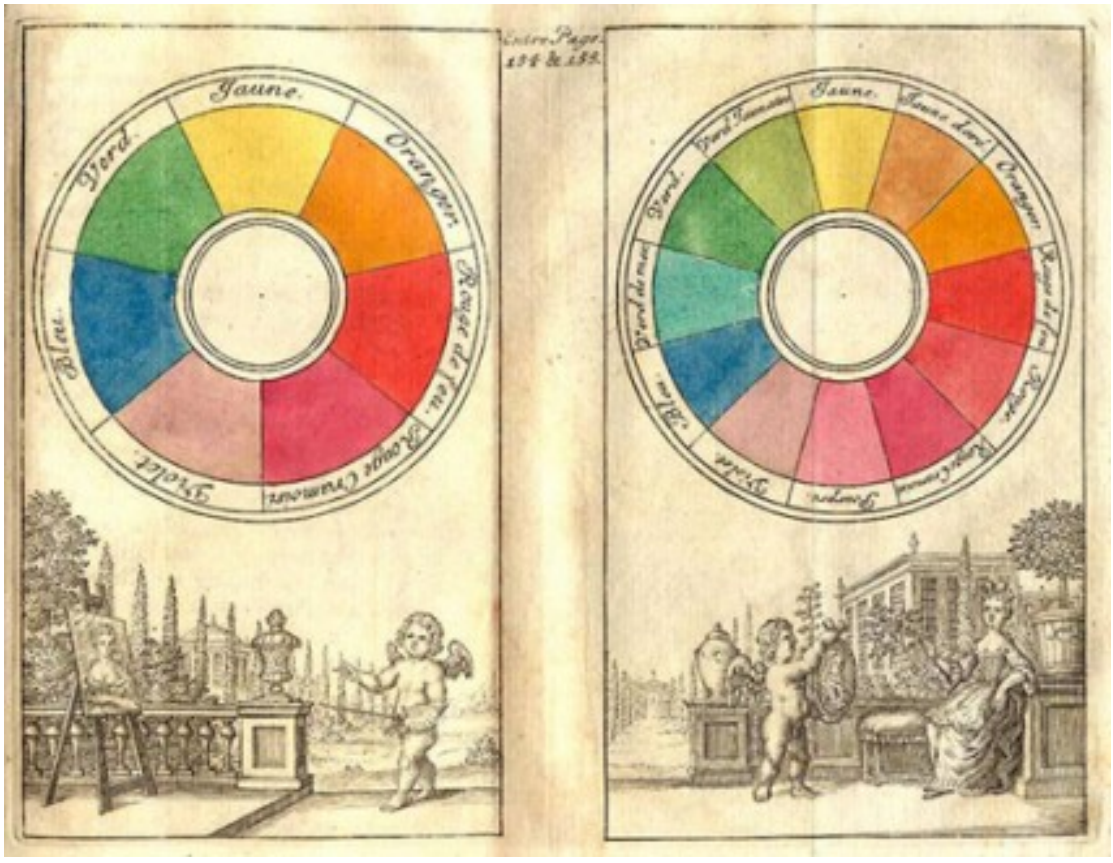
Red and Green should not be seen.....

....without a colour in between as the saying goes. Not sure why it isn't " blue and orange" or "yellow and purple" but I suppose that there are no rhymes in English for those two words (and I am not accepting door-hinge, hurple or curpal by the way).

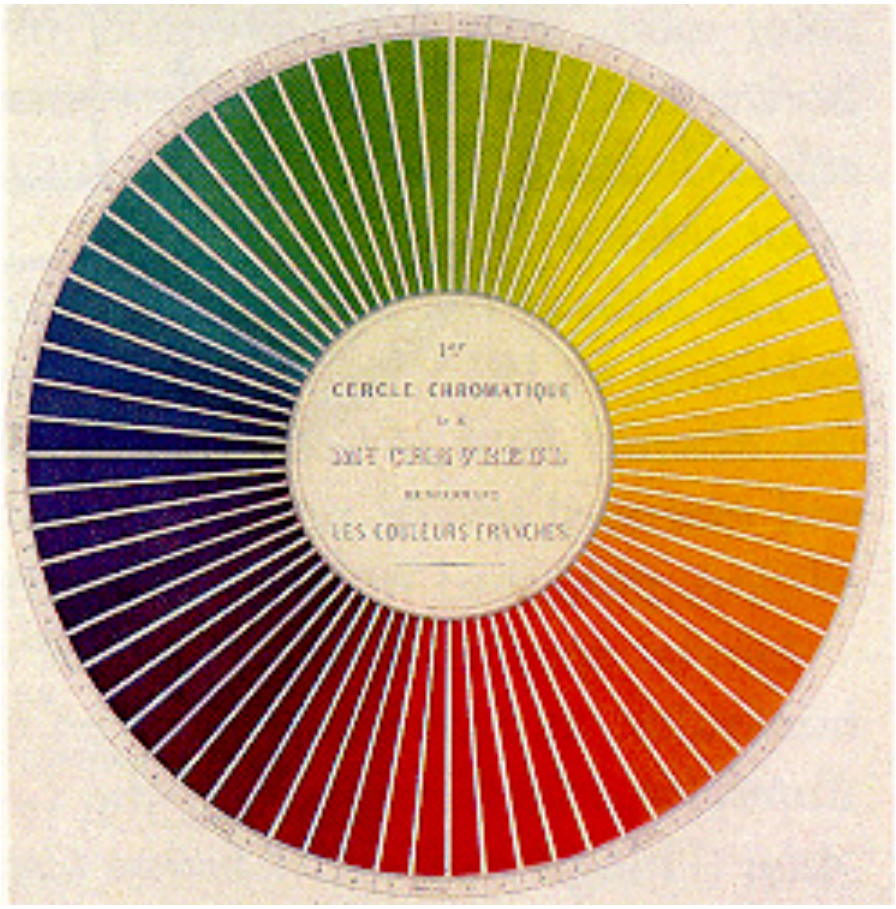
Colour theories create a logical structure for colour and encompass the colour wheel, colour harmony and the context for the use of colours and are therefore essential for artists in any medium including interior decorators.

Sir Isaac Newton created the first colour wheel in 1666 after he discovered using prisms that white light was made up of all the other colours. Goethe and others further developed the colour wheel mainly for artists and textile dyers to establish colour harmonies, tints and hues.



French seventeenth century colour wheel

The colour wheel is really a way of showing 'all' the colours of the rainbow and bending them around to make a complete circle or wheel. The wheel helps us to visualize the hues and easily shows how they relate to one another, as well as how mixing two or more colours produces new colours. Simple wheels show pure colours, which are hues that don't contain any black, white or grey. More complex wheels can show pure colours along with tints (adding white), shades (adding black), and tones (adding grey).



Chevreul's Colour Wheel 1839 – Chevreul was a chemist working for the carpet and tapestry maker Gobelin. His work emphasizes the brain's active role in perceiving colour and showed that a colour will give the colour next to it a complementary tint, so that yellow next to green will receive a violet tint.

Primary colours are red, blue and yellow, which can be mixed to create the secondary colours orange, green and purple. Tertiary colours or hues are made by mixing a primary with a tertiary colour to make, for example, blue-green.

Primary, secondary and tertiary colours make up 12 colours. If white is added to lighten the colour we create a tint, if black is added a shade and if grey is added then a tone.

So how many colours can we see or rather can our brains recognise? Well it depends on the light, reflection and our retinas but scientists say somewhere between 100,000 and 10,000,000. That is quite an amazing number!

Spectrum Glass say that a glass artist can create over 600 shades and hues from their range of transparent glass. That is probably an understatement given that some pieces may have more than three layers of glass. No wonder it is so challenging to create a piece of art glass that is attractive to everybody.