

Yellow

on my mind

The iconic colour that symbolises rebirth, welcoming of spring, or even invokes fear and cowardice; yellow is one of those shades that comprises some of the most baffling, and diversified contrasting references and meanings on a global scale.

While one of Wordsworths' famous poems on human emotions and nature, "Daffodils" is inspired by, yet again, said yellow flowers, thematically representative of the beginning or birthing of humans embraced in the presence of nature itself. In the book, "Wizard of Oz", the yellow brick road metaphorically conceptualises the American immigrant belief that American streets were paved in gold; for Dorothy, it was the path she had to follow to complete her quest.

Post-impressionist, Vincent Van Gogh is most famous for his striking and vivid uses of yellow in his later works, such as "Still Life: Vase with Fifteen Sunflowers" and "The Reaper". Many still question and debate over his obsession with the colour. Some say it was the result of a medical eye condition, while others argue that it was just a stylistic choice. Regardless, these paintings celebrate both sides of the yellow coin.

Biblical references claim "yellow" and its many shades to stand for "fire" and thus, reference to the process of purification, such as "trial by fire". When leaves start to wither, its colour slowly turns from green to yellow, and slowly a shade of orange and brown. For many monks and nuns around the Indian sub-continent, it is why they choose to wear "yellow" robes. It is a constant reminder of the value of not clinging onto things, letting go.

We associate this colour to so many aspects of positive and negative vibes. The most obvious and go-to symbolisms of it correlates it to summers, sunshine, warmth, brightness and happiness. After all, it is rare to find an individual who doesn't have one fond memory of running around and playing under the warm summer sun, let that be on the beach, field, or some version of being outside. Yet, in many parts of Europe, it correlates to hazard, deceit and cowardice. After all, most road signs are always done in yellow to catch the attention of motorists. In fact, once you start driving, one of the first and foremost things you learn is to associate yellow with "danger" or "hazard".

SpongeBob SquarePants, Tweety Bird, The Simpsons, Winnie the Pooh, Pikachu, Pluto, Mr Peanutbutter, Jake the Dog, Joy from Inside Out, the Minions; what do all these characters have in common? This comes as no surprise that most pop culture characters in movies and television are predominantly yellow. No, this is not a racist thing either. Whatever the reason is, with the choice of yellow shade, you cannot ignore the fact that in terms of the colour wheel, on which the primary colours are red, blue and green; yellow comple-

ments blue the most. And for most of these characters, the backgrounds for their settings are always something blue, like skies or seas, against which, yellow works and pops the best on! In terms of how we associate colours with emotions, like red is for rage, similarly yellow evokes energy, or playfulness. On the other hand, in Green Lantern, arch enemy Sinestro wields a yellow ring of fear against Hal Jordan, which poses as the greatest threat to the Green Lantern's green ring of will.

Some of the most iconic moments for yellow in pop culture left us asking for more from Hollywood's female celebrities. For example, when Kate Hudson donned a bright yellow strappy, slinky dress, and turns to reveal a plunging low back cut to Matthew McConaughey in the romantic comedy, "How to lose a guy in 10 days". He was not the only one to drop his jaw. Beyoncé released her second visual album "Lemonade" (yellow references much?), and starred in a mustard dress by Robert Cavalli, in her video "Hold Up," with a baseball bat in her hand. All that sass and femme ferocity, while bashing everything in her sight is, and will be talked about for years to come. All hail the Queen Bee!! (yet another shocker because bees are yellow and black!). In 2015, Rihanna showed up to the Met Gala with all cameras and eyes on her, in a show-stopping yellow gown, with a fur-trimmed cape, which, as magnificent as it was, also went viral as people could not stop churning out enough memes photoshopping the trail to look like a pizza or an omelette. If you are wondering if it was a hit or miss, then just know that whatever Riri does is always a hit, undoubtedly! After all, any publicity is good publicity!!

Who can forget Elizabeth Taylor and her canary yellow wedding dress? In 1964, the eight times married Hollywood legend wore exactly that on her fifth walk down to the altar. The dress was designed by the same person who made all the costumes for the movie Cleopatra. While the marriage was short-lived, the glamour of summery sun shines' still lives on.

Fear, happiness, ailment or energy; yellow is open to a myriad of symbolic interpretations. So, look around you, Falgun's footsteps can be seen, or maybe it is time for that annual booster Hepatitis shot!

By Supriti Sarkar

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Mashiat

Wardrobe: Z&Z by Simily

Jewellery: Kolors of Kathmandu

Make-up: Farzana Shakil's Makeover Salon

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha

