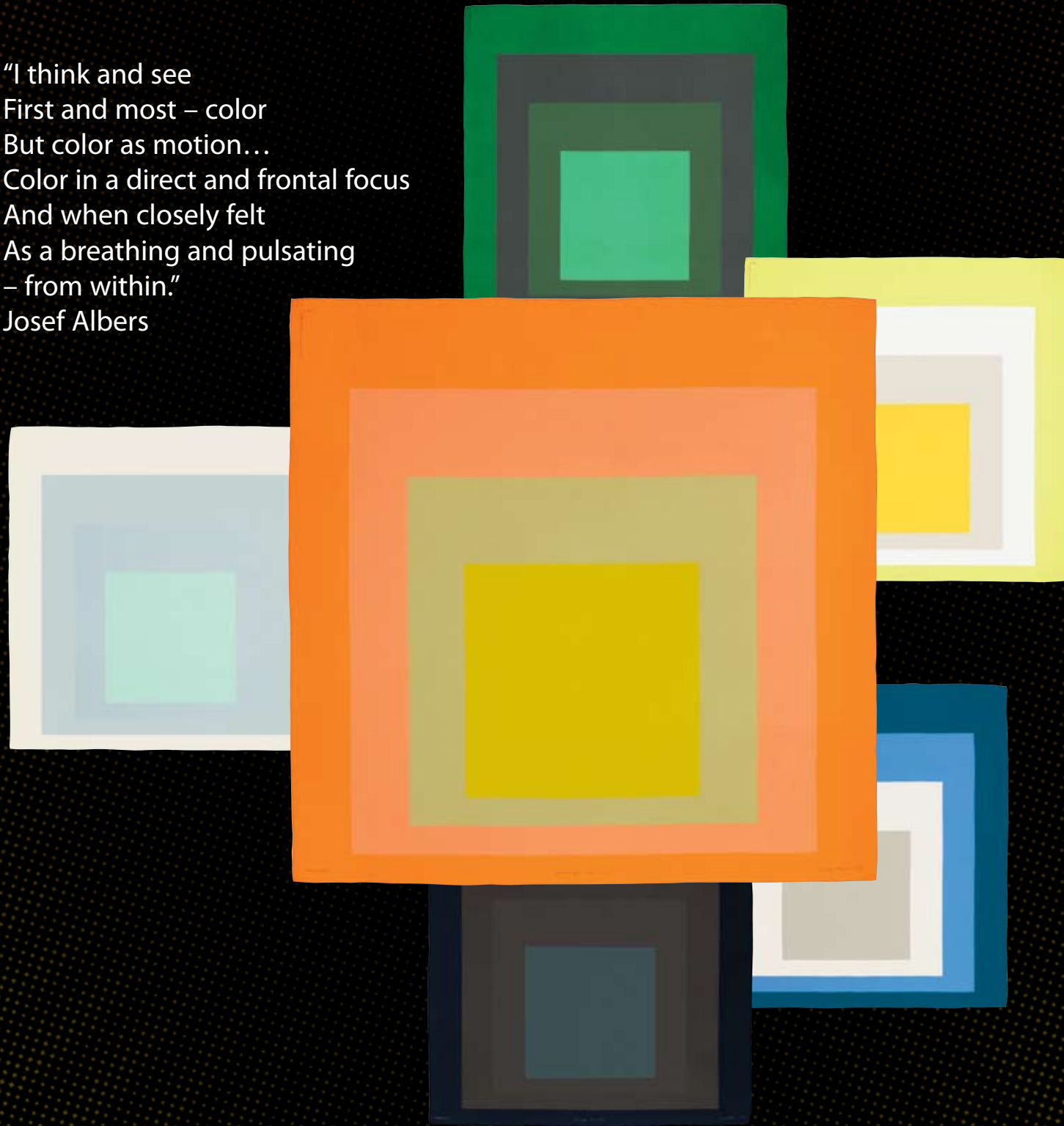


PATTERN

RECOGNITION

words : anna carnick

"I think and see
First and most – color
But color as motion...
Color in a direct and frontal focus
And when closely felt
As a breathing and pulsating
– from within."
Josef Albers



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Artist Josef Albers' (1888 -1976) celebrated abstract series, *Homage to the Square*, is dedicated to achieving infinite chromatic variations using a single shape—the square. This year, French luxury-house Hermès honors Albers with a limited edition silk scarf set based on six of his 100 paintings from that historic series: *Joy, Allegro, Greek Island, Nocturne, Formal Garden and Silver Dawn*.

Albers' *Homage* series originally existed as oils on panel, then as prints (lithographs, then screen-prints) on paper, and then as tapestry (woven by Aubusson). Now, Hermès has put them on silk. The latest incarnation reflects a keen understanding of the artist's work, painstaking attention to detail and skillful execution. Using edge-to-edge frame printing, large swatches of rich color were printed meticulously on the material so that the solid bands of color touch but do not overlap, staying true to Albers' work.

According to Nicholas Fox Weber, executive director of The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, "What the distinguished French firm has done with its interpretation of Josef's art reveals an attention to visual and tactile experience, a mastery of materials and method, and the relentless pursuit of perfection that were the artist's lifelong quest." Measuring 90 x 90cm, each scarf has been printed in editions of 200 and hand numbered. They are available in select Hermès stores.

Pierre-Alexis Dumas, Hermès artistic director and the sixth generation of Hermès family artisans, says, "Josef Albers was not just one of the great theoreticians of color. He was not just a methodical researcher who explored the effects and interplay of different colors. His works—and in particular *Homage to the Square*—are also deep reservoirs of sensations, emotions and feelings that take hold of us even when we do not understand them."

Hermès has been creating silk squares for 70 years now. According to Dumas, "As a child, I used to play on the floor in my grandfather's office, and I would watch him composing these carrés using motifs that he had cut out. Ever since I was little, I have been used to seeing designs and colors on squares. That is my alphabet, and the Hermès alphabet."

What a wonderful way to write.