VII 2 different colors look alike—
subtraction of color

The fact that one and the same color can perform many different roles
is well known and is consciously applied.

Less well known is the possibility in the previous exercise
of giving a color the look of reversed grounds.

Still more exciting is the next task, the reverse of the first:
to make 2 different colors look alike.

In the first exercise it was learned that the more different
the grounds, the stronger is their changing influence.

It has been seen that color differences are caused by 2 factors:
by hue and by light, and in most cases by both at the same time.

Recognizing this, one is able to "push" light and / or hue,
by the use of contrasts, away from their first appearance
toward the opposite qualities.
Since this amounts virtually to adding opposite qualities,
it follows that one might achieve parallel effects
by subtracting those qualities not desired.

This new experience can be achieved first by observing
3 small samples of 3 reds on a white ground.
They will appear first of all—red.

Then when the 3 reds are placed on a ground of another red
their differences, which are differences of hue as well as of light,
will become more obvious.

Third, when placed on a red ground equal to 1 of the 3 samples,
only 2 of the reds will "show," and the lost one is absorbed—subtracted.
Repeated similar experiments with adjacent colors will show
that any ground subtracts its own hue from colors which it carries
and therefore influences.

Additional experiments with light colors on light grounds
and dark colors on dark grounds prove that the light of a ground
subtracts in the same way that its hue does.

From this, it follows that any diversion among colors
in hue as well as in light-dark relationship
can be reduced if not obliterated visually on grounds
of equal qualities.

Such studies provide a broad training in analytical comparison
and usually evoke surprising results, leading the student
to an intense study of color. (See plates VII-4, VII-5, and VII-7.)