

Global Perspectives on Colour Symposium

The inter-disciplinary one day symposium, *Global Perspectives on Colour*, investigates the multi-faceted nature of colour exploring its meanings and impacts across cultures, periods and media, showcasing research from emerging scholars in particular.

The symposium is organised by Liz Stanford and Josephine Rout, recent graduates from the RCA/V&A MA in History of Design, with Dr Christine Guth, Head of the Asian Design History and Material Culture specialism at the RCA/V&A, in conjunction with Professor Haruhiko Fujita, Professor of Aesthetics at Osaka University.

We gratefully acknowledge funding and support from Osaka University and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

Booking Information

Date: Friday 22 February 2013

Venue: Royal College of Art, Humanities Seminar Room, Stevens Building, Kensington Gore, London. SW7 2EU

Email liz.stanford@network.rca.ac.uk to book your free place by **15 February 2013**. Places are limited.

Colour is a problematic concept that defies easy classification. It has been explored from a variety of perspectives - symbolic, psychological, historical, material, linguistic, physiological, philosophical, and chemical - within many disciplines and geographic contexts. The cultural construction of colour is integral to its perception and results in multiple meanings, with the mediating role of language particularly pertinent.

The importance of colour in design and material culture cannot be underestimated. Once derided in modernism as superfluous and 'feminine', colour has taken on new levels of agency through technological developments such as the introduction of aniline dyes and the seemingly endless possibilities of digital colour. This interdisciplinary symposium explores colour, showcasing research from emerging scholars. Topics range from the cultural heritage of colour in Sao Tome, and the use of silver as architectural colour in the Royal Pavilion in Brighton, to the changing palette of Japanese kimono for the British market.

Dr Jenny Balfour-Paul, writer, artist, curator, lecturer, and author of the acclaimed book *Indigo: Egyptian Mummies to Blue Jeans*, will present the keynote paper. Neil Parkinson, Archives and Collections Manager of the Colour Reference Library at the RCA - one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of colour-related publications and material in the world - will discuss the history, content and use of this resource.

Programme

9.30-10.00 Registration

10.00-10.15 Welcome and introduction (**Dr Christine Guth**, RCA/V&A)

Session 1 - Chair: Dr Christine Guth (RCA/V&A)

10.15-11.00 Keynote speaker - **Dr Jenny Balfour-Paul** (Exeter University):
Indigo: Much More Than A Colour

11.00-11.20 Discussion

11.20-11.40 Tea/Coffee

Session 2 - Chair: Dr Christine Guth (RCA/V&A)

11.40-12.40 **Akaiza Mota** (RCA):
Investigating Cultural Heritage Through Colour (Sao Tome, Lisbon and London)

Liz Stanford (RCA/V&A MA 2012):
Explosive Colours: The Use of Colour in Indian Firework Ephemera

Alexandra Loske (University of Sussex):
"Boldly carved, silvered and tinted...": The Use of Silver As Architectural Colour in the Royal Pavilion, Brighton

12.40-13.00 Discussion

13.00-14.15 Lunch break

Session 3 - Chair: Dr Sarah Cheang (RCA)

14.15-14.35 **Neil Parkinson** (Colour Reference Library, RCA):
Standards and Gems: The Colour Reference Library at the Royal College of Art

14.35-14.45 Discussion

14.45-15.25 **Yuko Takeuchi** (RCA/V&A and Osaka University):
The Importation of Colour Theory from Britain to Japan: Focusing on the Relationship Between Christopher Dresser and Kubota Beisen

Dr Hanna Hodacs (Warwick University):
Eight Shades of Blue: Eighteenth Century Chinese Silk on the

European Market

15.25-15.45 Discussion

15.45-16.15 Tea/Coffee

Session 4 - Chair: Dr Sarah Cheang (RCA)

16.15-17.15 **Dr Charlotte Nicklas** (University of Brighton):
Nile Green, Mexican Blue, and Yokohama Grey: Language, Colour, and Consumption in Mid-Nineteenth Century Women's Fashion

Akiko Yamada (V&A and Osaka University):
Dilute To Taste: Japanese Fashion for the British Market at the beginning of the 20th Century

Josephine Rout (RCA/V&A MA 2012):
Hyper Black: Colour, Class and Conformity in Japanese Uniforms

17.15-17.35 Discussion

17.35-17.50 Closing remarks (**Professor Haruhiko Fujita**, Osaka University and **Dr Christine Guth**, RCA/V&A)

18.00 Drinks reception