

SATURATED SPACE

CHROMATIC DISCOURSE

“Moral puritanism and aesthetic austerity, along with resentment and old, stubborn, and underhanded desire to equate drabness with beauty, thus make their righteous alliance and take delight in a constantly reiterated certainty: only what is insipid, odourless, and colourless may be said to be true, beautiful and good.”
The Eloquence of Colour Jacqueline Lichtenstein

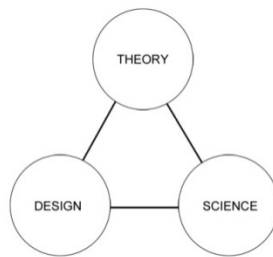
CONTEXT:A Since Plato’s opposition of image to reason, defining image as antithetical to logic, and the consequent antagonisms of rhetoric vs. discourse, painting vs. drawing, and colour vs. form, there has been a consistently strong iconoclastic, de-saturating, purging tendency within Western thought and Architectural discipline. It is a line of reasoning that pits superficiality against depth: a moral analogy masquerading as a logical opposition. Depth is idolised as pure, abstract, white, difficult to grasp, serious and linguistic, while whatever is sensual, eloquent, colourful and essentially non-linguistic is ridiculed as superficial, cosmetic, vulgar, indecent, and even pornographic. That which bypasses the rational mind, and operates directly on the senses is demonised and feared for the potency of its power, and ultimately subordinated by its exclusion from “serious” discourse. Colour in Architectural discipline and theory is necessarily affected by this traditional categorisation, with its legitimacy, although never its power, in perpetual doubt. Through the research of this cluster we will begin the process of re-evaluating and restructuring the frame of this apparent contradiction. The cluster will seek to develop a set of spatio-chromatic methodologies, and form them into a combined figure of complementarity, rather than subordination or opposition, with theoretical and scientific discourse.

“You recognise these joys: to feel the generous belly of a vase, to caress its slender neck, and then to explore the subtleties of its contours. To thrust your hands into the deepest part of your pockets and, with eyes half closed, to give way to the slow intoxication of the fantastic glazes, the bursts of yellows, the velvet tones of the blues...”
Journey To The East Le Corbusier

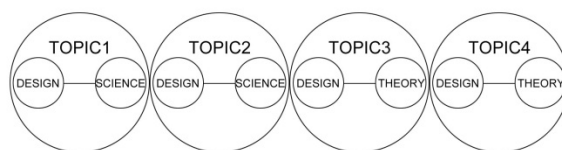
CONTEXT:B Architecture has a multitude of interfaces through which it can engage its occupants. The most immediate and direct of which is through that most highly evolved of our perceptual apparatuses, the eye, whose language is that of light, spoken in a vocabulary of chromatic combinations. Reflected off an inexhaustible range of environments and materials, colour, in all its forms, is the architect’s first and most consistently powerful line of atmospheric influence. As techniques of fabrication, and new modes of materiality proliferate in the arena of Architectural production, a whole new set of possibilities are arising for the orchestration of an unprecedented level of spatial richness. At the same time colour is beginning to be rediscovered as an area of interest in Art theory, as well as in neuroscience and neuroesthetics. With the process of design, fabrication and discussion as the linear core around which to weave these various bodies of knowledge, the Cluster (explained below) will seek to generate and document creative feedback loops between each set of viewpoints (those of four design teams, art theorists & historians, and scientists), with influences and reconsiderations reverberating in both directions.

A R C H I T E C T U R E ' S H U E

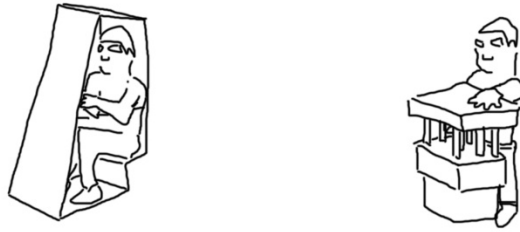
FOCUS:FRAMEWORK The Cluster seeks to reintegrate spatial colouration back into the working methodology of Architecture and Academic discourse, providing the starting shot, and groundwork for further work in the area. This will be done through a process of design, debate and experimentation organised around a few key events. A Seminar will collect knowledge and frame the area of investigation. Four teams, two consisting of designers and a scientist, and the other two designers and a theorist, will develop and build a set of saturated spaces, coloured objects and environments. The scientists and theorists will form the initial core of the Cluster staff, whilst the design teams will be selected based on a body of work and a proposal that shows a practical and clear engagement with the topic, whilst at the same time expressing a distinct and singular approach to experimentation in the subject. These will be exhibited, and events around the exhibition will be used to propose further ambitions for larger scales of research. A concluding publication will not only summarise the cluster's experiments, but provide a space for texts setting out the importance of, and possibilities for colour in contemporary architecture, ending with a set of visionary proposals questioning the role of the medium in society today, and what its manipulation could potentially produce across all scales.



SEMINAR:WORKSHOP An initiatory seminar and workshop will bring together specialists from the three fields of Colour Theory, Science, and Architecture to share thoughts and knowledge on the subject of Colour as an instrumental tool and subject of inquiry in Architectural space. The current status of expertise in the topic will be broadly laid out and introduced to the Association as a specific area of debate. It will be approached simultaneously as an Historical, culturally embedded protagonist in the development of Occidental notions of Space; as a Phenomenological device of Spatial manipulation and poetic tool; and as an objective object study in relation to the human body, its physiology and responses, and hue and texture themselves as responsive molecular constructs. The seminar will feed directly into the creation of four interdisciplinary design teams, two of which will work in collaboration with a scientist, and the other two a theorist. Two teams will be invited by the cluster, and the other two will be selected based on an open competition.

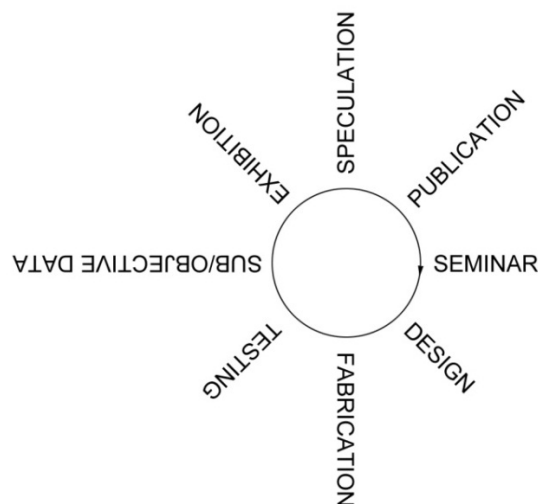


BRIEFS:COMPETITION Following the seminar workshop a summary will be drawn-up, roundly circumscribing the issues raised in discussion, and concluding with a set of categories for investigation in relation to materials and fabrication, design, theory and analysis. These will be formulated as a set of four Briefs, intended as catalysts for one of four interdisciplinary teams to build on each. Two teams will be invited by the Cluster, whilst the other two will be selected through an open competition that will call for ideogrammatic proposals to explore the subject in an immediate and effective way through material experiments and physical constructions. Each group will need to have a specific palette of materials and fabrication techniques that they wish to engage with, and they will all be asked to work at two scales, that of **the object**, and that of **the enclosure**, both of which are to relate intimately to the human body, and remain relatively consistent to its dimensions.



DESIGN:RESEARCH Based on the theme of the group, the scientist in the team will formulate specific question in relation to colour and space for the design element to explore, and the design side will equally formulate questions for the scientist to research. The designers will be required to generate speculative explorations, stories, as well as their concrete space and object, elaborating on the group theme and the questions set by the scientist, while the scientist will construct the framework for experiments based on the designers' questions that will be carried out on the items they have fabricated. While there is a clear dualism here, it is intended that the two sides will work symbiotically, discussing and evolving through each stage from the formulation of the questions through to the development of the tests and the spaces, each adding their clear areas of expertise towards a common experimentation.

BUILD:TEST:EXHIBIT The fabricated colour-spaces, the process leading to their design and build, the equipment used to test them, the findings and conclusions by each of the teams, and comments, musings and responses from the Colour Theorists will be the material used for an exhibition of the Cluster's work in Progress. Artists and writers will be invited to respond to the work in their own fashion, adding a layer of subjective interpretation and impressions to the body of design intention and objective experimentation. This will be an opportunity to reach productive verdicts about the approaches of the teams, of the material gathered by everyone involved and how that material and knowledge related, informed and transformed *into* the actual spaces, and in turn, how those spaces are subjectively received. The exhibition will ultimately act as the basis for the posing of a second generation of questions, further to those that generated the work on display, a series of interesting avenues which could be travelled down at wildly different scales, in completely different contexts.



SUMMARISE:SPECULATE:PUBLISH The Cluster aims to conclude with a publication summarising and describing the topic, and the cluster's processes and research, a publication which itself will conclude with a large body of propositional speculations on the potential places, spaces, materials and uses led to by the second generation questions. These will be produced through a collaboration by all members of the cluster, that will produce a spectrum of speculative and conceptual propositions, at all scales, ranging from the poetic to the practical, the urban to the microscopic, material to digital, all extending out from the ideas and techniques explored during the course of the cluster.