

TEXTILE + DESIGN LAB

Case Study Number: 02/2017

Project Title: Colour Complex

Research Team: Rachel Carley and Nooroa Tapuni

Contact: rachel.carley@aut.ac.nz

Project Period: July 2017 - November 2017

Project Description:

Colour Complex was an Undergraduate Spatial Design programme course created for students by lecturers, Rachel Carley and Nooroa Tapuni. The aim of the paper was to encourage and explore relationships between colour as immaterial and material within spatial practices. The students negotiated the spatial conditions of pattern and colour through iterative practice, where colour became an immersive part of the materiality of the object and surface. This approach helped to identify the experiential benefits that colour can add to interior contexts. The Textile and Design Lab was approached to help produce digital prints for the project in the form of wallpapers and fabrics.

Background:

Both Rachel and Nooroa are currently teaching in the Spatial Design School at the Auckland University of Technology. Spatial immersion and colour, specifically polychromatic surfaces and the use of 'darkness', are current themes within their own work.

Process:

The focus of the project was to facilitate technical, conceptual and presentational skills in regards to the brief. The students were asked to produce iterative designs at each class session in response to a personal research question or statement of intent. These were then peer reviewed and developed over several sessions to create an open learning environment. Research into colour theory was also discussed. Learning tools, such as three dimensional mood boards and experimental hands on 'play' with materials, allowed for the investigation of material surfaces and colour – embracing and realising the tactility that surface finish can give to the experiential nature of the space. Issues such as the relationship of scale to pattern and colour were also explored through iterative practice. Shorter deadlines and the use of facilities such as the TDL were implemented to mimic industry/practice based environments.

As part of the project, the students created designs for interior wallpaper, fabrics, door handles and ceramic tiles in response to the colour practices of an artist model of their choice. The TDL facilitated learning around the practice of colour within digital printing processes and produced digital prints for the students on both wallpaper and fabric using its two digital fabric printers. The knowledge communicated by TDL manager, Peter Heslop, in regards to the capabilities of textile print technology and colour management was recognised as important input with regards to the technical learning experience. The timely delivery of print samples was also commended.

Project Outcomes:

The final outcome of the project was to contextualise the work within an apartment space, focusing on the collective synthesis of the designed objects and surfaces as important in communicating the concept and facilitating the multi-dimensional experience of the space. The student projects were

submitted as a requirement of their Studio Practice paper. They were also encouraged to enter their work into the student categories for The *Interior Awards* and *Best Design Awards*. The paper hopes to further the understandings of the polychromatic surface in architecture and spatial design.

Publications:

There have been two abstracts submitted to academic journals relating to the project. An Instagram account exhibiting the work created during the project can be accessed through the link below.

Instagram: colour-complex

http://picbear.com/colour_complex

Images:



As above: Sophie Roberts, textile design inspired by the work of Helen Frankenthaler.



From top to bottom: Thomas Owen, propaganda wallpaper inspired by the artist Aleksandr Rodchenko and Lauren Gibbs, wallpaper inspired by the work of painter Giorgio Morandi.