

GLASGOW COLOUR STUDIES GROUP

PROGRAMME 2015-16

The November meeting will take place in the Level 5 Seminar Room, School of Psychology, 58 Hillhead Street, while the February and April meetings will take place in Room 1 (ground floor), English Language, at 12 University Gardens. Refreshments will be available from 4.45 p.m., and the talks will begin at about 5.10 p.m. They usually last for an hour. Everyone is welcome!

Prof. Sophie Wuerger, Professor of Vision Science, Institute of Psychology, Health and Society, University of Liverpool.

Wednesday, 25th November 2015

PLEASE NOTE, LOCATION will be Level 5 Seminar Room, School of Psychology, 58 Hillhead Street, Glasgow.

Colour Vision Across the Life Span: Perception and Brain Imaging

Colour vision starts in the retina where light is absorbed in three different cone classes, sensitive to long-, medium-, and short-wavelength light. The cone signals then feed into three different post-receptoral channels, a luminance channel and two chromatic channels. Interestingly, these two chromatic channels do not correspond to perceptually salient colour mechanisms (red, green, yellow, blue), suggesting that the two sub-cortical chromatic channels are recombined in the visual cortex into orderly hue maps. I will discuss fMRI experiments consistent with the idea of a hue map in the visual cortex.

Secondly, I will report behavioural experiments with a large sample of adult colour-normal observers of a wide age range showing that cortical hue mechanisms are almost invariant with age. In contrast, chromatic discrimination performance declines with age.

Our results suggest that the human visual system is able to compensate for retinal (peripheral) signal changes by adjusting the relative cone weightings of the cortical colour mechanisms. Such an adaptive weighting is useful to maintain colour constancy throughout the life span in the presence of known changes in the ocular media (yellowing of the lens) and retinal sensitivity losses. It may also be responsible for the small inter-observer variability compared to the large differences in the observers' retinal make-up. The mechanism underlying this hue compensation is still poorly understood, but it is likely that it utilises invariant sources in our visual environment.

Prof. Fiona McLachlan, Professor of Architectural Practice; **Dr Heather Pulliam**, History of Art; and **Gordon Brennan**, Art, all of the University of Edinburgh.

Wednesday, 24th February 2016

Colour Collection UK: Who Teaches Colour and How Do They Teach It?

Anyone working with colour, either for research or as part of a creative endeavour, quickly becomes aware of its importance and intrinsically interdisciplinary nature — but to what extent do our teaching curricula and pedagogies reflect this? Over the past academic year, the Colour Collection project has investigated how and where colour is taught within the United Kingdom, focusing on Architecture, History of Art and Fine Art departments. A parallel strand of the scoping project aimed to identify active researchers and research projects, while benchmark visits and interviews sought to understand how colour is taught, the relationship between teaching and research, and possible career paths for students who study colour. This talk discloses our findings and their implications for teaching and researching colour. The project, led by Fiona McLachlan (Architecture), Gordon Brennan (Painting) and Heather Pulliam (History of Art), with Alice Blackwell as research assistant, was funded by the University of Edinburgh's College of Humanities and Social Science Challenge Investment Fund.

Dr Yupin Chung, Honorary Senior Research Fellow, School of Culture and Creative Arts, University of Glasgow.

Wednesday, 20th April 2016

Red, Yellow and Blue: Ming and Qing Monochrome Wares in the Burrell Collection

The aim of the talk is to explore the meaning of colours in Chinese art and literature. What is the significance of the different colours to be found in Chinese porcelain, and what were the connections between the craft and design worlds? The Burrell Collection has a large number of fine monochromes including an extraordinary blue jar from the Tang Dynasty (618-906), a superb example of a copper-red glazed bowl and many refined imperial pieces with 'perfect' yellow glazes.