

Question 5: From the series of Thinking Making research strand lectures, choose a theme, movement, or selection of artists or designers that relate to your practice or interests, and construct a 2,500-word essay. Consider primary themes, key writers, and relevant practitioners.

1801786

BA Surface Pattern Design (Textile for Interiors)

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SKILL

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the meaning of skill as, the ability to do something well; expertise or dexterity. The word expertise (as defined by the English Oxford Dictionary) means, great skill or knowledge in a particular field and dexterity means, skill in performing tasks, especially with the hand.

Phalangeal bones of the hand

Anatomically, the **hand** is defined as the region of the upper limb **distal to the wrist**. The base of the hand contains **8 bones**, each known as a **carpal bone**. The palms of the hands each contain **5 carpal bones**. The digits contain the **phalanges**.

The skeleton of the hand contains **27 bones** which can be divided into **three groups**:

- The **carpus** (the wrist) – comprised of **8** carpal bones
- The **metacarpus** – comprised of **5** metacarpal bones
- The **phalanges** – comprised of **14** phalangeal bones

Approximately 1.8 million people attend Accident and Emergency each year due to hand injuries.¹ The functional impact of an injury to the hand is often out of proportion with the extent of the injury itself. As a result, it is important to have a good understanding of the anatomy of the hand.

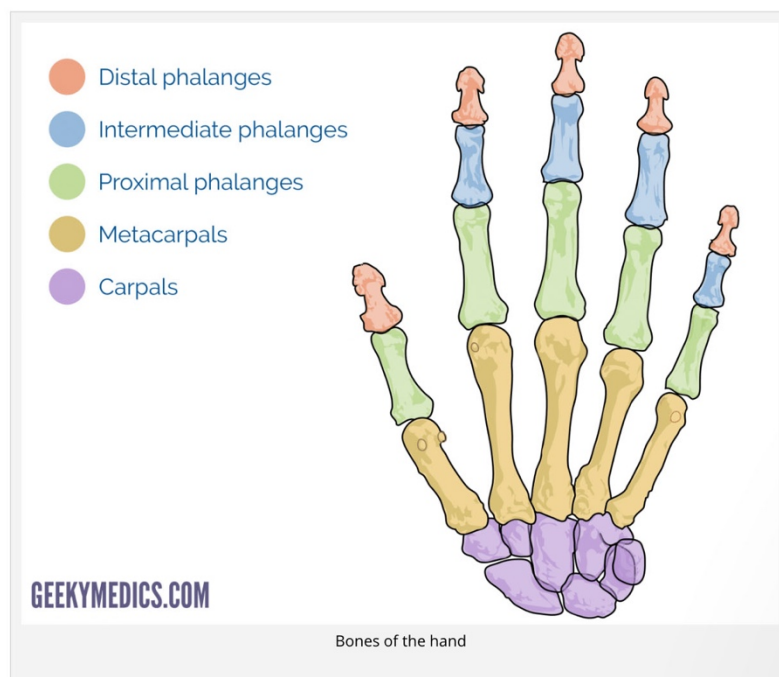


Fig.1

Compared to the hands of primates, the orangutan, the chimpanzee, and the gorilla humans have longer thumbs, we can make a finer grip.

The word grip means, take and keep a firm hold of (OED). Having opposable thumbs (capable of facing and touching the other digits of the hand) give us the ability to grip. Humans are not the only species with opposable thumbs. Other animals with opposable thumbs include the primates as mentioned and other apes. Many birds have digits of some sort to be able to grip and carry their prey. Some species of frogs, koala bears, pandas and possums have an opposable digit of some sort. However, no other species has the ability to grip in the same way as a human hand.

According to Napier (1965) the evolution of the human hand gained two unique grips. Napier called them the precision grip and the power grip, and he depicted them by the grip of a sphere and a cylinder.

The Prehensile Movement of the Human Hand

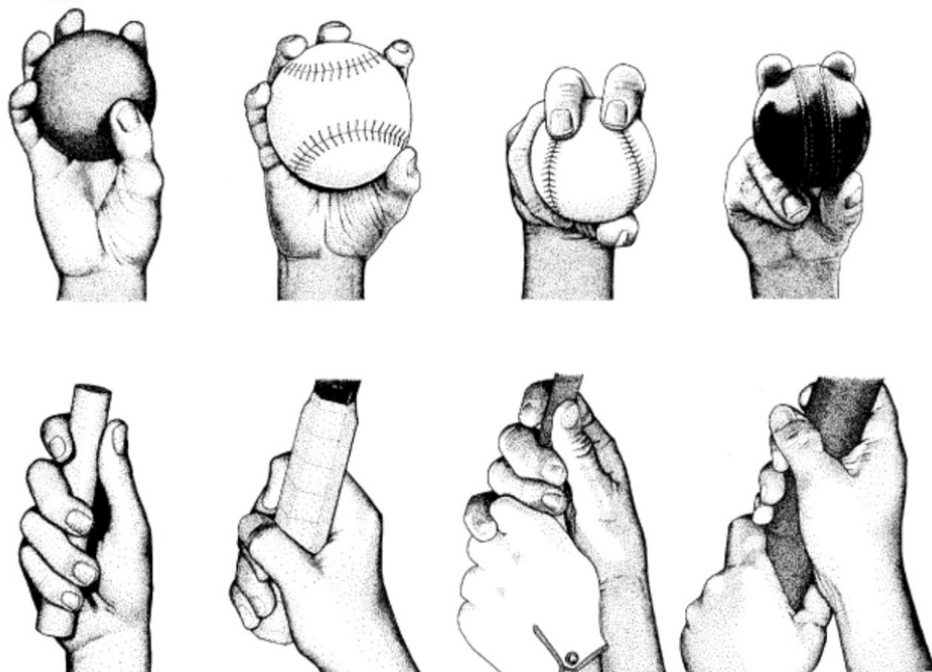


Fig.2

Examples of other types of grip the hand can make: -



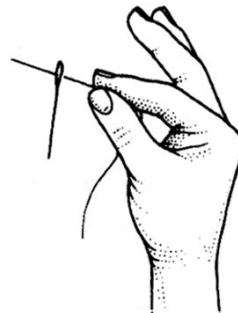
1. Hook grip



2. Scissor grip



Five-jaw chuck



Two-jaw chuck
pad-to-pad



Two-jaw chuck
pad-to-side

3. Precision grips



Squeeze grip



Disc grip



Spherical grip

4. Power grips

Fig.3

Hands are delicate and have a complex structure. Muscles and joints in the hand gives us a great range of movement and precision. Thanks to this structure human beings can do a wide range of things such as grip objects and lift heavy weights, as well as guide a fine thread through a tiny eye in a needle. The right and left hand are each controlled by the opposite side of the brain. Usually one hand is preferred for carrying out complex movements, so we often say people are right or left-handed.

Human beings have used their hands in a skilful way since pre-historic times. During the Stone Age in Europe 2.6 million years to 3000 BC early humans learned that by using wood or stone they could re-shape larger stones into handmade axes or tips for arrows. These implements marked the first in a series of major toolmaking advances among early human hunter-gatherer societies. Early man became more proficient at hunting with the use of stone.

LITHIC TECHNOLOGY



Fig.4

Major developments of the stone age also included needles made from bone, the awl was invented so animal hides could be punched, the hides of the animals were scraped using sharp tools to remove away the debris from inside then dry the skins and use them to make clothes by stitching them together with sinew, to help keep warm.

All these actions required the hand to grip objects, it is this ability that allowed human beings to become skilled at making axes, awls, needles etc. By the end of the stone age 3000 BC human beings had taught themselves many skills, besides clothing themselves they also made footwear. They also learned to cultivate crops, they domesticated livestock, taught themselves spinning, and hand weaving. They also made functional objects into adornments, possibly the first crafted items that were ever made to be enjoyed.

During this period there is evidence of cave art. The Sulawesi cave art consists of hand stencilling dating back to 37,900 BC. It was one of the oldest paintings of it's type ever discovered in the world.

Hand Stencils, Sulawesi, Indonesia



Fig.5

(Sample 2014) The paintings were made with natural mineral pigment ochre – probably ironstone haemite – which the hunter gatherers ground to a powder and mixed with water or other liquids to create paint. Common amongst art works are ghostly hand markings made by blowing spraying or spitting a mouthful of paint over an outstretched hand. The result is a hand stencil, the negative of a conventional print made by dipping the hand in paint and an enduring personal signature on a wall.

The researchers dated 12 hand stencils and two figurative paintings of animals in seven caves near Maros. The paintings of wild animals are most fascinating because it is clear they were of particular interest to the artists themselves. The paintings are feats of great imagination and they provide the first real insight into the artistic culture and symbolic conventions of early modern humans in Asia. From early cave paintings by hand and skills learned by early man history shows us how human beings have progressed in the world of art and craft.

According to Diderot's Encyclopedie 1751 -80

CRAFT.

This name is given to any profession that requires the use of the hands and is limited to a certain number of mechanical operations to produce the same piece of work made over and over again. I do not know why people have a low opinion of what this word implies; for we depend on the crafts for all the necessary things of life. The poet, the philosophe, the orator, the minister, the warrior, the hero would all be nude, and lack bread without this craftsman, the object of their cruel scorn.

During the Middle Ages the skilled maker or artisan as he was known was protected by The Medieval Guilds. Artisans were Saddlers, blacksmiths, furriers, shoemakers, goldsmiths, jewellers, masons, architects, all very skilled at what they did, unlike urban workers such as shepherds, reapers, wool workers etc.

The guilds were a very interesting feature of medieval life. Guilds oversaw the training of apprentices. In the absence of labour unions and laws protecting workers the guilds set aside money to look after the poor and needy and widows and probably exerted influence in local politics, all that was destroyed by the Industrial Revolution.

(Marx 1847) The Manifesto of the Communist Party, first published 1848 states, The Bourgeoisie has stripped of it's halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into it's paid wage labourers. The need for a constantly expanding market for it's products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.

The Industrial Revolution took place from the eighteenth Century up until the mid-nineteenth century, marking a process of increased manufacturing and production which boosted industry and encouraged new inventions and innovations. However, with industry came mass unemployment in small villages and towns as people migrated to find work, for those unable to leave for various reasons, small cottage industries appeared.

Mrs. Abigail Pepper, manageress of Langdale Linen Industry ,1897

Langdale Linen Industry



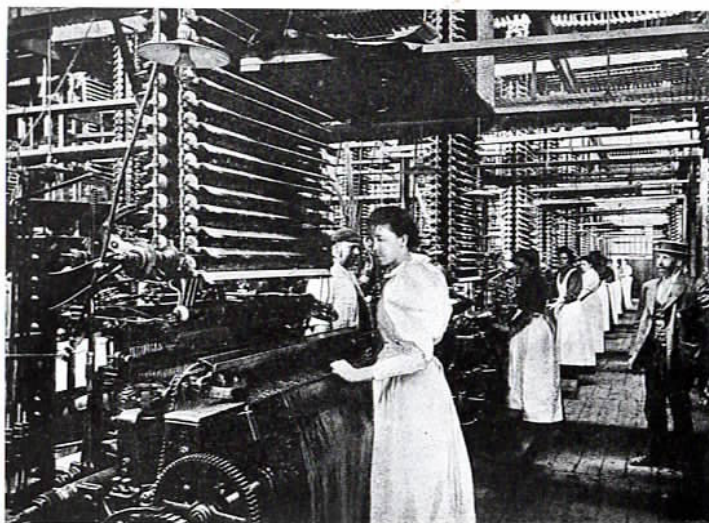
116. Mrs Abigail Pepper, manageress of the Langdale Linen Industry, 1897.

Fig.6

(Parry 1988) Small cottage industries sprang up to provide employment in the hamlets. Langdale Linen Industry was established 1885 by Albert Fleming, with encouragement from his friend John Ruskin. Spinning lessons were given to local people. Hand-spun and hand-woven linens and some silk were produced at Langdale. For a time, local people became skilled in these practices. Mrs Pepper (as shown in the picture) took over the running of this enterprise in 1888, she developed vegetable dyeing and embroidery and leading artists were encouraged to provide design. The Industry utilized historic embroidery techniques, particularly reticella and Greek insertion work which they called 'Greek Lace'. This term as well as "Ruskin Linen," and 'Ruskin Lace' refers to this style of embroidery, which was eventually worked throughout the Lake District, but particularly at Langdale.

(Parry 1988) With a less exclusive approach to art and the consequent broadening of their design activities, artists became aware of the conditions in the industries for which they designed, and many found these conditions not to their taste. William Morris alerted to them by Ruskin, criticised a system that allowed British craftsmen to lose both their skills and their self-respect while at the same time become rich by manufacturing technically brilliant yet artistically dead products.

Women working at Tomkins and Adam, Kidderminster.



148. The Axminster looms at Tomkinson and Adam, Kidderminster, c.1899.

Fig.7

C.F.A Voysey was one of the most influential exponents of the Arts and Crafts Movement, along with two of the most important thinkers William Morris and John Ruskin. They promoted the importance of craftsmanship, a return to a simpler way of life and the improvement of everyday life through design. The movement was anti-industrial. It had a strong influence on the arts in Europe until it was displaced by Modernism in the 1930's.

Sennett (2008) states, as machine culture matured, the craftsman in the nineteenth century appeared ever less a mediator and evermore an enemy of the machine. Now, against the vigorous perfection of the machine, the craftsman became an emblem of human individuality, this emblem composed concretely by the positive value placed on variation flaws, and irregularities in handwork. Eighteenth century glassmaking had foreshadowed this change in cultural values: now the writings of John Ruskin, the great romantic analyst of craft, regretted the loss of the workshops of the pre-industrial past and made the craftsman's labours in his own blazon of resistance – resistance to capitalism coupled with resistance to machines.

These cultural changes remain with us. Culturally we are still struggling to understand our limits positively, in comparisons to the mechanical; socially we are still struggling with anti-technologism; craftwork remains the focus of both.

Conversely the arts did not suffer as did crafts during the industrial revolution with the need to make all things on a mass scale. Art is a boundless form of work that expresses emotions, feelings and vision, it was not reproducible in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and whilst famous paintings (or not so famous paintings) can be reproduced today as posters, ready printed canvases etc. art in it's true form cannot be exactly reproduced, not even by the original artist themselves. The artist and sculptor are safe from the machine, for now at least. The potter making one off crafted items has also escaped the machine, but tableware and some decorative ceramics can now be produced commercially on an industrial level.

Surface Pattern Design cannot be automated or mechanised, the printing of the designed fabric, laser cut object, any material that has the design printed on it can be mass produced. Designs can also be made digitally by the designers working as a team but that hardly counts as being mass produced or automated. Design is at the forefront of every object made, manually or

commercially by machine. Even the very early stone objects made for hunters and gatherers were crude forms of design.

What does a surface pattern designer do? In simple terms these artists design patterns for just about everything you see in your daily life. They create patterns, illustrations, hand lettering etc. Look around your house, every surface that you see that has a pattern on it means that a designer somewhere has designed it, from bed linen to birthday cards, from cushions to throw rugs and so on. Next time you are browsing in a store think about the design that you are seeing or when you are sitting in a bus or on a train, who designed the surfaces? They can design anything for any surface not just for fabrics or clothing or household goods; think about everything around you, someone somewhere put in a lot of time, effort, possibly sweat and tears too not to mention money – designing.

Surface Pattern Designers research all sorts of ways to inspire their designs, from everyday observation of their surroundings, to artists of all eras. For the Surface Pattern Designer especially during their student years, artists such as David Hockney with his colourful paintings and Olafur Eliasson an artist well known for his sculptures and large-scale installations are popular choices.

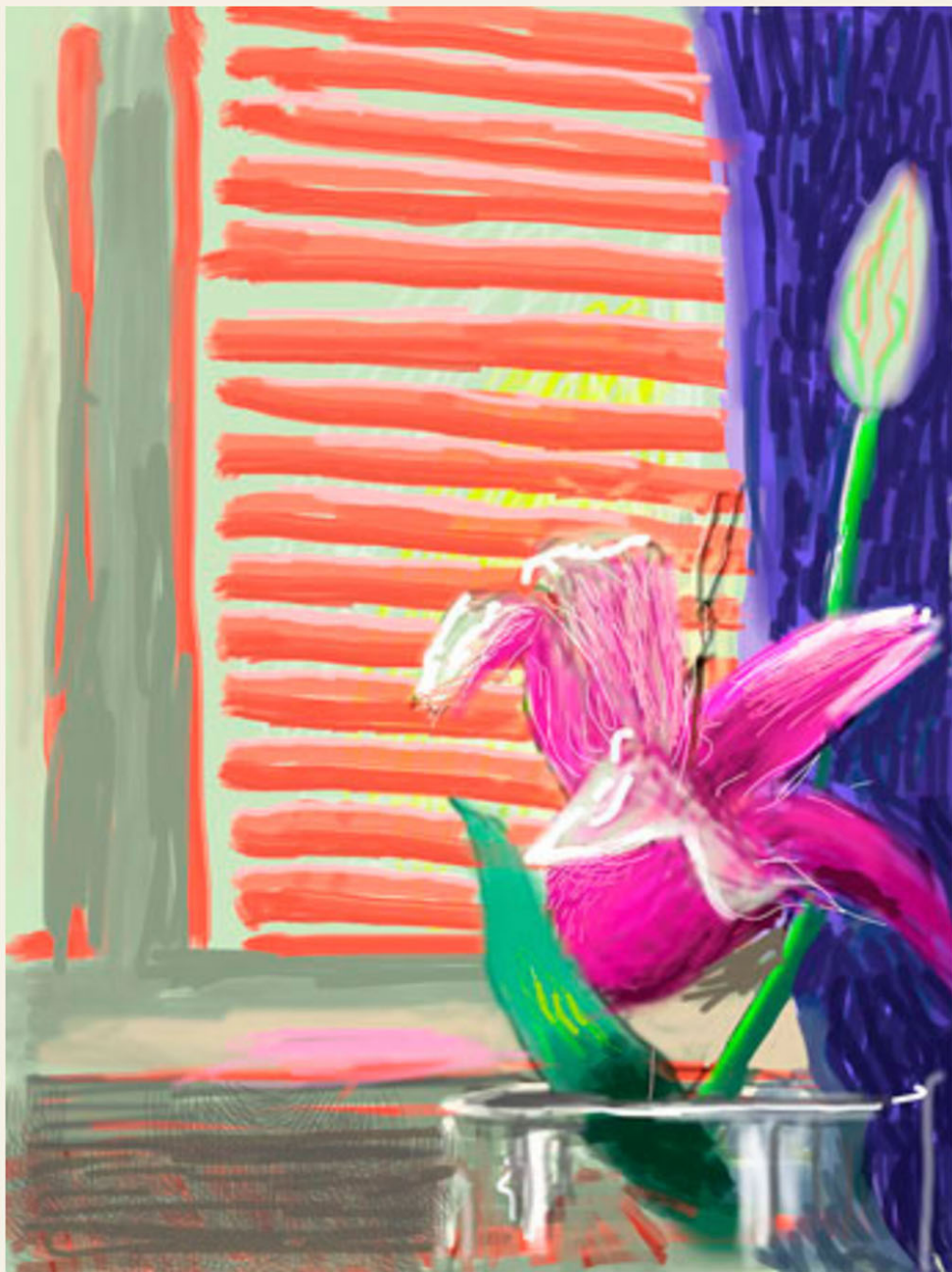
DAVID HOCKNEY

David Hockney is an English painter, draftsman, printmaker, stage designer and photographer. He was born July 1937 and his periods include Pop art, Cubism and Modern Art. He is an important contributor to the pop art movement of the 1960's, he is considered one of the most influential British artists of the twentieth century.

For the designer David Hockney's work is full of colour and pattern, that applies to many artists of course, but David Hockney's style and composition is so varied that he leads you on a journey as you study his work, through pop art, cubism and modern art. He is still painting today and trying lots of new things, some of his recent work include paintings he created on the iPad (Miller 2014).

His iPad drawings were included in an exhibition in San Francisco at the de Young Museum 2014

David Hockney Untitled 2010 (iPad drawing)



Untitled, 182, 2010 - iPad drawing

Fig.8

David Hockney – Big Waves 1989



Fig.9

David Hockney – Geometric Waves



Fig.10

The two David Hockney works shown (Fig.9 and Fig.10) were created using gouache, ink, felt marker, crayon, xerox, collage on paper. They are part of the David Hockney Foundation collection. The two examples, Big Waves and Geometric waves are a series of similar works made in 1989. An example of work that is full of pattern and shapes and it is easy to understand why David Hockney's work is such a popular choice for inspiration for surface pattern students and designers.

OLAFUR ELIASSON

Olafur Eliasson is a Danish-Icelandic artist known for his sculptures and large-scale installations. He is passionate about the environment, especially the glacier. His online website Studio Olafur Eliasson has an abundance of information about his glacier melt series, his ongoing project to document the natural phenomenon of the glacier can be currently seen at the Tate, London.

According to the information on his website Studio Olafur Eliasson, a team of people consisting of craftsmen and specialised technicians, architects, archivists and art historians, web and graphic designers, film makers, cooks and administrators are involved in his work ; they help him to develop, produce and install artworks, projects and exhibitions as well as on experimentation, archiving, research, publishing and communications. Eliasson and the studio work with structural engineers and other specialists and collaborate world-wide with cultural practitioners, policy makers and scientists. The studio hosts workshops and events in order to further artistic and intellectual exchanges with people and institutions outside the art world.

This weekend he celebrates the fact that he has sold his millionth Little Sun, a solar power lamp he designed. This lamp is bringing solar energy into 10 African countries, areas without electricity, and the number is rapidly growing.

LITTLE SUN 2012 CHILDREN STUDYING IN ETHIOPIA



Fig.11

GREEN LIGHT – AN ARTISTIC WORKSHOP (2016)



Fig.12
IN REAL LIFE 2019

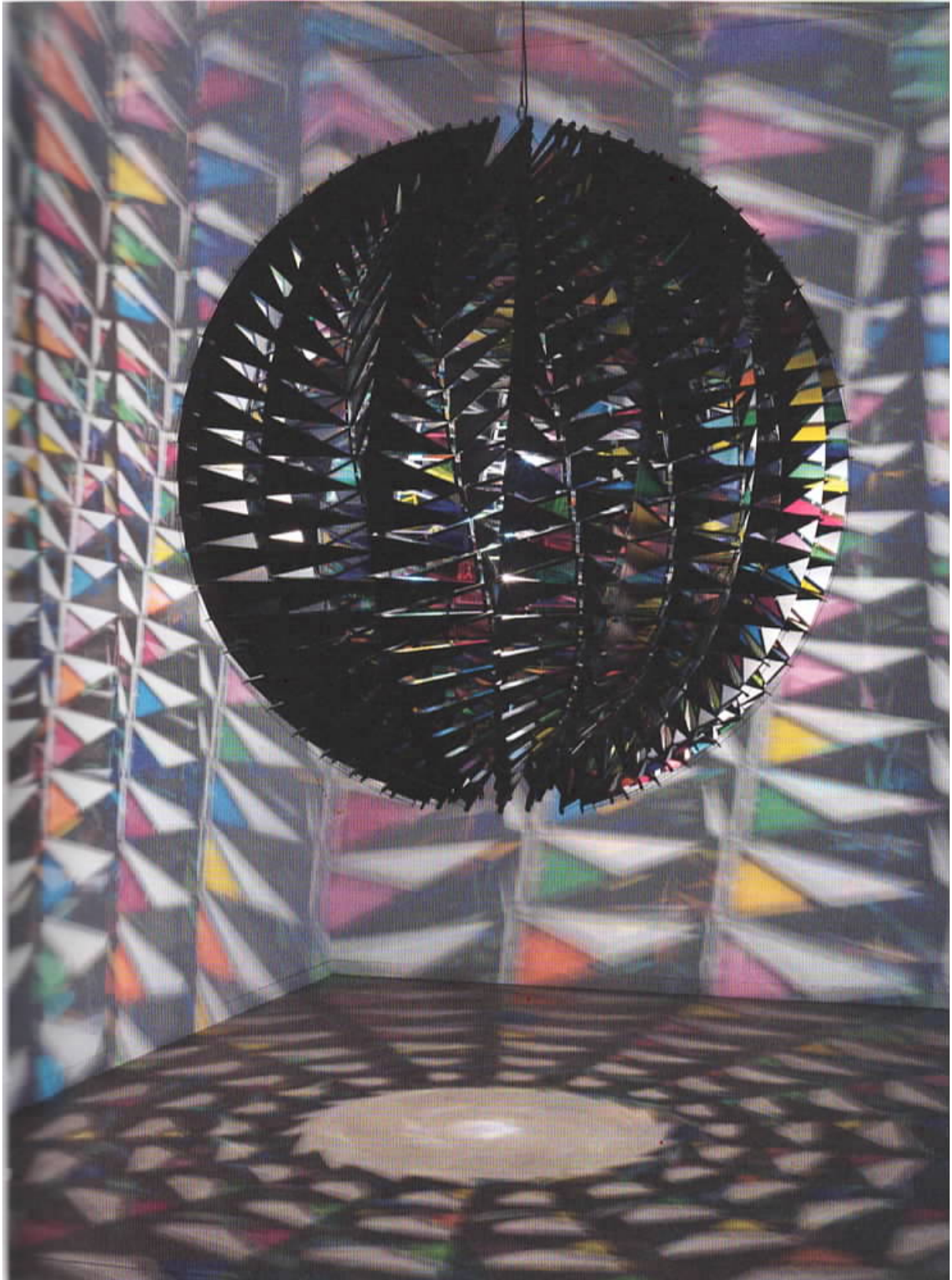


Fig.13

The 'In real life' sphere is made from aluminium, colour effect filter glass (green, yellow, orange, red, pink, cyan), led light. It was in a recent exhibition in the Tate, London (2019). It is a feat of engineering; it is lit from within and the coloured glass casts coloured geometric shapes on the wall and floors.

Both David Hockney and Olafur Eliasson are both obviously experts in their field. David Hockney has spent his whole career from 1953 to the present-day questioning, exploring and depicting everyday life. He has had numerous solo exhibitions during his career as an artist. As an artist he is part of that which is called 'the arts'. He would not be called a craftsman even though his work done by his hand, his expertise is unquestionable. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the meaning of skill as, the ability to do something well; expertise or dexterity, but our culture today sees him as an artist, he is not seen as a craftsman or maker, even though his work is done "by hand"

Olafur Eliasson, also described as an artist is possibly more a craftsman and maker, albeit with a huge team of people behind him. His sculptures are made by hand, constructed by hand, possibly with the use of machinery but his pieces are not mass produced except for the Little Sun solar lamps that are helping people across the globe to have light where there is no electricity. The skill of all his team help him to create his ideas and designs into solid pieces of art. Olafur Eliasson is as much an inspiration to surface pattern designers with his use of colour and skilfully put together sculptures as David Hockney's artwork is.

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Visual Images List

Fig 1 Phalangeal bones of the hand available at:

<http://www.geekymedics.com/bones-of-the-hand> (accessed:7 December 2019)

Fig 2 Napier JR (1956) *The Prehensile movement of the human hand* available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1571064> (accessed: 8 December 2019)

Fig.3

Fig 4 Encyclopaedia Britannica (2006)

Fig 5 *Leang Sakapal hand stencils, Sulawesi, Indonesia* (2014) available at https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Leang-Sakapao-hand-stencils-Sulawesi-Indonesia_fig9_268689709 (accessed 10 Dec 2019)

Fig.6 Parry.L (2005) *Textiles of the Arts & Crafts Movement* London: Thames and Hudson p.132

Fig.7 Parry.L (2005) *Textiles of the Arts & Crafts Movement* London: Thames and Hudson p.148

Fig.8 David Hockney (2010) *Untitled* available at <http://www.hockney.com/index.php/works/digital/ipad> (accessed 7 Dec 2019)

Fig.9 David Hockney *Big Waves* available at <http://thedavidhockneyfoundation> (accessed 7 December 2019)

Fig.10 David Hockney *Geometric Waves* available at <http://thedavidhockneyfoundation> (accessed 7 December 2019)

Fig 11 Olafur Eliasson (201) *LITTLE SUN 2012 CHILDREN STUDYING IN ETHIOPIA* London; Tate Enterprises p.28

Fig 12 Olafur Eliasson (2019) *GREEN LIGHT – AN ARTISTIC WORKSHOP 2016* London: Tate Enterprises p.31

Fig.13 Olafur Eliasson (2019) *GREEN LIGHT – IN REAL LIFE 2019* London: Tate Enterprises p.191