

Weekly 2 hour assignments, Colour harmonies, using colour swatches from nature. A very simple relaxing exercise.

Introduction.

During this first year in visual studies you have investigated all sorts of ways of drawing and looking at colour. You have made a book, started to explore your likes, passions and dislikes in a visual diary sketchbook, you have found that some exercises have excited your visual repertoire and some have made you feel disheartened but determined to work at it.

Overall you are drawing and learning how to see and mark make in line and colour, this you will continue to do for the rest of your artistic life. Some areas you will find you have a natural propensity while others are more challenging. Some of you will find choosing colours easy and some of you more difficult.

The last exercise this year is to help you choose and use colour when you are 'imagining' your illustrations. You'll find that these colours work together as a harmonious group if you use the colours that you see in the natural world as a guide. This exercise involves using a plant/flower of some kind. However, you can also use this process to collect a more complex set of colours from a landscape or city scape.

Exercise one; duration one hour

Take your time over this part and make sure your colours are accurate. Choose a plant, flower, twig with leaves, that you can find outside or buy in a shop. Now very carefully examine every colour you can identify on that plant, every shade, tone and slight variation you can see in the highlights and shadows, the petals and stamens of every part of the plant. You will need to be in very good light to do this exercise. You will be amazed at the different colours you can identify. Look carefully at the stem of the flower the varying greys and browns if you have chosen a twig there will be subtle differences in the shades and colours. You will have to concentrate on mixing and blending colour very carefully. You might find very dark almost black blue colours say on a tulip petal and pale creamy green pollen on the stigma.



Above left is an image of an aquilegia flower that I found in the garden. The colour swatches are very close matches to the colours found on the plant. Of course, even with a good scan you cannot see the subtleties of colour on these copies for example, the very dark stem shadow has green in it and there are these beautiful purples in the petals and light yellows and greens in the stamens.

Carefully do a colour swatch that is accurate in tone and hue for every colour that you can find. I want you to identify at least 20 colours and record them so that you know what they are and how you mixed them. You can either do this with pastels, crayons, digitally, with acrylic or watercolour. Remember though that watercolour is more complicated to control tonally for this exercise. You will notice that there is quite a variety of colours that you did not expect to see and that they work together in a very harmonious way. You can use this exercise to create many varied colour palettes to work with for your illustrations in the future. It is very useful if you get stuck sometimes trying to work out your colour theme for a piece of work.



Above; base colours used to create the swatch. I used oil pastels so that I could blend them easily.

Once you have completed your colour swatch photograph the sheet and turn it into greyscale so that you can also easily see and identify the tones of your colours.



Exercise two, duration one hour

Now find a black-and-white tonal image of any subject you wish. It can either be a photo from a book or magazine or even your own black-and-white tonal photograph or an image you have drawn/painted yourself, (you could choose a colour image and change it to grey scale). **For this exercise make sure that it is a tonal image and not a linear one.** Using the colours you have identified from your flower or plant, I want you to now copy the black-and-white image you have chosen using **only the colours** you have identified working as closely as you can with the tones. (use the black and white image of your colour swatches to help you)

suggestion; When you paint your image, try and use the blues and greys and violets to create atmospheric perspective (if you have these colours) Experiment with placing the brighter colours in the foreground. This exercise makes you really concentrate on colour and the extremely subtle changes in hue that occur when you observe colour very closely.

Work for this assignment to be submitted by Monday 3rd May along with all your other work.

- A photo of the plant, flower or twig with leaves, you chose to examine
- The colour swatch you have done with at least 20 colours identified.
- An image of the black and white tonal image you have chosen
- The final painting using your identified colours.



Above an example of a sketch book page using a colour swatch to ascertain the subtle differences in colour in a seascape. Really start to learn to observe colour closely.



Above; Over 500 popsicle sticks painted in gouache by Margrethe Odgaard. Learn to play with colour, really explore it and have some fun

Don't forget the final deadline for Visual studies 2, Semester 2 and the work to be submitted next week, Monday 3rd May at 3:00pm. **For further information refer to the module brief sent out at the beginning of the semester. This brief is also on moodle.**

- Any weekly assignments that need to be completed that you have not finished (the briefs for these are all on moodle and have been sent out to you)
- Images of the pages you have worked on in your hand made book/visual dairy/sketchbook containing ideas sketches and thoughts. (40-page book)
- The three-square book illustrations in full colour on a book of your choice. (please include a few words or lines of text from the book in your presentation that relate to each illustration, please also say which book you illustrated)
- Remember the PowerPoint is to be sent to me as a PDF and please include a self-appraisal. (I will send the self-appraisal sheet to you this week once I have it from Jon)