

Dissertation Proposal

3 key words

- Colour
- Pattern
- Culture

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Course: Surface Pattern Design

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Proposal for Dissertation

This dissertation proposal will discuss three key words that reflect my interests and passions within surface pattern design. I will research colour, pattern, and culture, with a view to broaden my knowledge of their application onto cloth and other surfaces. Johannas Itten's theory of colour will be the main focus for colour, as well as Sir Isaac Newton's theory, exploring the emotions that colour creates and the way that colour is perceived in different cultures. Following this, Pattern will be discussed in the way it is created from a motif. Zandra Rhodes and Tricia guild and their designs will be the focus for the discussion of pattern. And, for my third key word culture, I will be focusing on the paisley motif, discussing the timeline of the paisley by Patrick Moriarty, and the culture which the paisley originated from.

Colour

The Oxford dictionary defines colour as "the appearance that things have that results from the way in which they reflect light" (Oxford, n.d).

Colour is everywhere and in everything, it creates the mood and the atmosphere of a person's everyday life, for example, with a colour like sunshine yellow, seeing that colour it brings joy and happiness. And as a designer it is important for me to know and learn about colour, creating designs and keeping up with the colour trends furthermore, good knowledge on colour theories is needed when designing for seasonal products. Sir Isaac Newton's theory on prisms of light and the rainbow will

be researched to further my knowledge. Also, the psychology of colour - Johannas Itten theory on colour having associations with people and seasons, and *Colour and culture book* by John Gages will be looked at. Further to this, I will also look at Pantone, a colour specification company, popular in the design industry, and how they are creating a plethora of colours, and numbering systems that are applied to them and removing names, that are associated with specific colours for example, rouge. With Pantone removing the names from a colour, it takes out the personal feel towards a colour (Finlay, 2009). Colours are now look at with a hashtag and about 5 numbers as a name, which is not easily remembered.

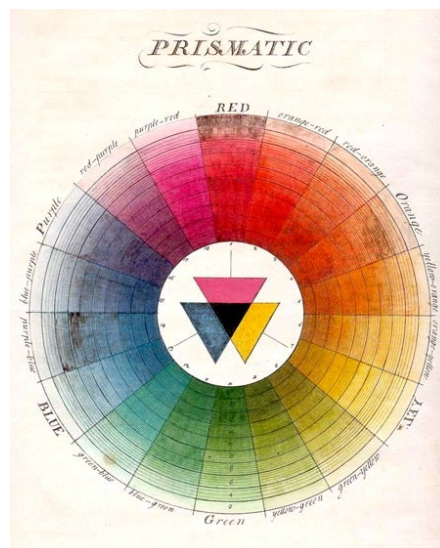


Figure 1 Isaac Newton Colour Wheel
1704

Newton was an English physicist and mathematician; he became a leading figure of the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century. Newton created a base for modern physics, by discovering “White light integrated the phenomena of colours into the science of light.” (Westfall, 2022). When light bounces around raindrops from the sky, and they get divided, into the separate wave lengths known as a rainbow this is

the most known 'physical' causes of colour. This was discovered by Newton in 1666.
(Finlay, 2002, p. 6)

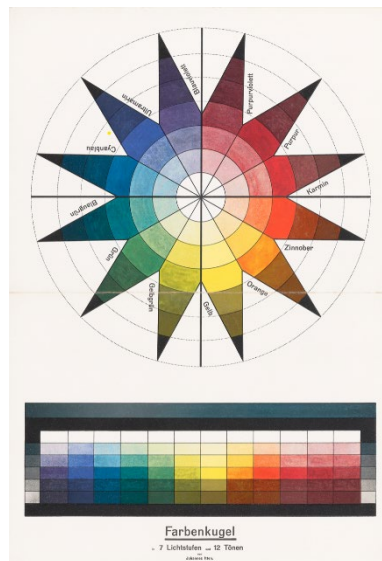


Figure 2 Itten colour Star, 1921

Craig (2014) cites Itten (1970, p12) stating that “Colours are forces, radiant energies that affect us positively or negatively, whether we are aware of it or not”. Itten was a Swiss painter, designer, and teacher. He was a member of the Bauhaus movement and style. He was also one of the first instructors at the Bauhaus from 1919 to 1923. Itten created the theory that colour palettes can be associated with types of people and seasons (Story, 2022), his colour palette can be seen in Figure 2, its used as a visual “His gridded visual experiments reference nature and the seasons to explore theories of colour harmony” (Perryman, 2021, p. 40), developing the colour grid allowed a flexible format to curate colour harmonies, which he told his students, “they must reflect the reflect the personality types of those who composed them” (Gage, 1993). Itten’s colour theory looks at the meaning behind colour, this will be further researched. In figure 2 Itten’s variation of a colour wheel is seen, known as the ‘The Colour Star’, created in 1921, it identifies, hue, light-dark, cold-warm, complementary, analogous, saturation and extension, which these are the seven

categories of contrast (Getty, 2022). Itten's colour theory will be researched as he looks how colour can have the associations with mood and knowing these associations, is important for personal practice, as it can enhance the mood or message that are being aimed in creating my designs.

Pantone is a colour specification company, the book *Colour, travels through the paint box* by Victoria Finlay (2002) will be researched. Finlay looks at the original ways colour was created through dyes around the world, from some colours being accidental to poisonous (Finlay, 2009, p. xi). Furthermore, *The Colour Bible* by Laura Perryman (2021) will be looked at. This source has more of a contemporary view on the world of colour today, with the importance and role in which colour has from milestone industrial processes to social media (Perryman, 2021, p. 6).

Patten



Figure 3 Zandra Rhodes 'All over Lipstick' Motif (1968)

Pattern is, as the Collins dictionary defines, “A pattern is an arrangement of lines or shapes, especially a design in which the same shape is repeated at regular intervals over a surface” (Collins, n.d).

Firstly, motif will be looked at, and how a motif is manipulated and duplicated and then becomes a pattern. So, reviewing how pattern is used in interior settings, the way pattern is applied to interior surfaces such as wallpaper and fabrics will be researched through, using the traditional and modern techniques and its historical and cultural context. And moreover, patterns will be looked at in a similar way to the motif. Finally, this section will discuss the works of Tricia Guild and Zandra Rhodes with the popularity of patterns of their designs focusing on their bold, colourful, and playful patterns. The book *Patterns: Design and Composition* by M.A. Hann and I.S. Moxon (2018), discusses the early forms of a pattern, and the qualities based on circles, squares, triangles, and symmetry, and how simple is it to create a complex design and composition of regular patterns. (Hann & Moxon, 2018). For a surface pattern designer this book is a good resource as it is important to understand the bases on how a pattern is created, from the early stages, to create a composition and develop the design idea.

Tricia Guild is an interior designer and the founder of Designers Guild. Over the years Guild has designed and created a wide variety of designs and patterns, taking her inspiration from places around the world, she is known for her bold designs, and her “extraordinary ability to use colour and pattern” (Guild, 2008).

Pattern by Tricia Guild (2008) is a book that will be looked at. The book discusses the progress of a pattern and how it is created from a motif and developed into a wallpaper and fabric, and how pattern is having a revival in interiors. As well as this,

how traditional motifs are being developed and turned into more modern designs will be added to the discourse. Furthermore, the book discusses techniques such as flock printing, crewelwork, and stencilling. These are the “techniques seen on travels everywhere from Italy to India; all these are vital to her way of working” (Guild, 2008). Similarly, the book *Pattern Design* by Elizabeth Wilhide (2018), also discusses patterns through history and the different cultures, through the motifs, colourway and scales and shows the different types of media used to create the patterns (Wilhide, 2018) These are good sources for a surface pattern designer. Knowing where the techniques originate from is helpful when they are used in practice. It is also good practice to understand how they are applied in their cultural context.

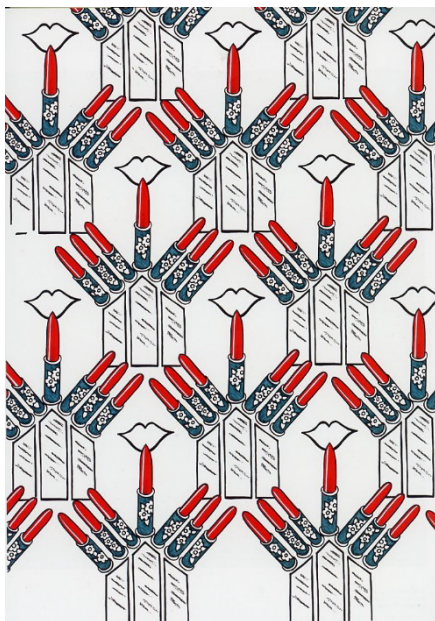


Figure 4 Zandra Rhodes "All Over Lipsticks" Fabric (1968)

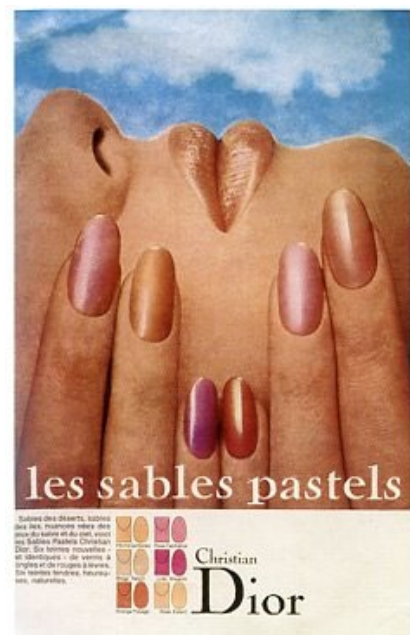


Figure 5 Christian Dior Cosmetics Ad

Zandra Rhodes is a British fashion and textile designer. Rhodes has a creative and vivid energy in both her designs and personality, she also the founder of the British fashion and textile Museum in London. (Nothdruff, 2019). Figure 3, it is a Motif designed by Rhodes, she was inspired by a Christian Dior Beauty advert (seen

above in Figure 5), and it is her interpretation of the advert that she had converted into an original design of hers, and then turned it into a patten design in Figure 4 which she had screen printed onto silk (Buckley, 2017). Seeing Rhodes's development of creating a patten from her inspiration to the motif and the Pattern, as a surface pattern designer, it is good to see where influential designers develop their ideas from.

Culture

The Collins dictionary defines the word culture as "A culture is a particular society or civilization, especially considered in relation to its beliefs, way of life, or art" (Collins, n.d).

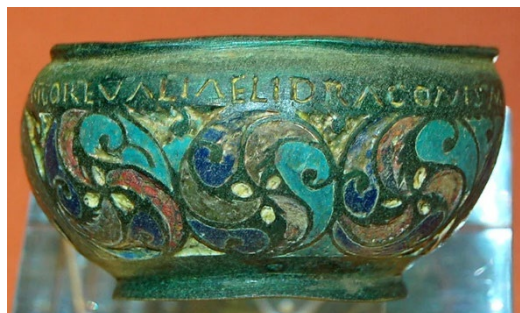


Figure 6 Staffordshire Moorlands Pan (2nd century AD)

Culture as a topic of interest for the way that different civilizations create patterns on cloth will be researched for the final key word. Attention will be applied to the Persian designs – paisley, as well as looking at how paisley is used in designs of other cultures. The design shape of the paisley is a unique shape which is often referred to the shape of a kidney, a comma, a mango, or a teardrop. "This specific type of shape is known as 'boteh' or 'buto' – the Persian word for 'flower'." (Adamley, 2021).

I will be researching and discussing *the timeline of the Paisley Pattern history* by Patrick Moriarty (2014). The timeline dates from the beginning of 4000BC to the present day. The importance of the Paisley pattern, and the development from many countries around the world (Moriarty, 2014) will be included in this discussion. As well as Moriarty's writings, information will be sourced from the History of the Paisley Symbol and Paisley Pattern. This source discusses paisley more in-depth, discussing the origins of the paisley, the French connection, the popularity, the decline of the popularity and then the revival of the Paisly pattern. In Figure 6 seen above it is an example of the paisley pattern on a bronze vessel. The Staffordshire Moorlands pan, is a beautiful example of the pattern on a vessel. The paisley motif was often visually referred back to a cypress tree in Persian, 'Boteh' is the what the symbol was called, which is the Persian word for a cluster of leaves (Moriarty, 2020).



Figure 7 Shawl (1870)

Persian Designs and Motifs for Artists and Craftsmen by Ali Dowlatshahi (1979) will also be researched. This book is an excellent resource for pattern designers as it discusses the rich tradition of all Persian design, from ceramic and incised work to

art and textiles. The designs show the accuracy to symmetry, harmonious pattern and purity of line and form the Persian artists used which created the traditional designs (Dowlatshahi, 1979).

To continue with the research of this topic, *Paisley Patterns a design source book* by Valerie Reilly (1989) will be looked at. This book focuses on the history of the paisley pattern in the fashion and textile industry, it was popularised in Europe towards the end of the 18th century. 'Paisley' is named after the town of Paisley in Scotland, as the town became the main producer of the paisley shawls, when they were the 'new' fashion trend, and they were an essential part of the women's wardrobe. However, the town is no longer in production of the paisley shawl. (Reilly, 1989). Figure 7 above is Kashmir shawl, which was made in Paisley in 1870. Nevertheless, in 1870s the popularity of the shawl decreased, now the shawl is located in The Met Museum in New York however it is not on display (Met, 2022).

Concluding my dissertation proposal, though exploring the three key themes, Colour, Pattern, and Culture, this leads this me to focus on the key theme of paisley for my final dissertation. I will research further into the cultural context of paisley analysing the use of colour and discussing the application of design.

The research will improve existing knowledge on my discipline area and will enhance my outcomes as a surface pattern designer. Since writing this proposal on the key themes, the paisley design and how it is used culturally, traditionally and in contemporary applications has become the main area of interest. I will explore further into paisley as a fashion statement through the decades and looking at how the design starts out as a cultural fashion trend and blends into interiors. In eastern

cultures the use of the motif is consistent, whereas in western cultures there are peaks and troughs with its use, particularly high during hippie culture and possibly including theories of Roland Barthes into the discourse. Further research into trend magazines past and present will be looked at to gain information when the design is in 'trend', as well as sources already looked at.

This has finally led into the possible sub questions I can further explore for the dissertation:

Paisley past and present

Paisley, a timeline

Cultural use of Paisley

Paisley, colour, and application

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Figures

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Figure Two: Itten. J (1921) Colour star

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Figure Four: Rhodes. Z (1968) “All Over Lipstick” pattern [screen print on silk]

fashion and textiles museum

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Figure Six: Staffordshire Moorlands pan (2nd century AD) [vessel]

Figure Seven: Shawl (1870) unknown name [wool] The Met Museum