



Perception and Colour

Public experiment within the frame of Mud Vibes course
by Professor Pia Lindman (28.11.-03.12.2016)

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"What colour do you associate with your city of origin?"

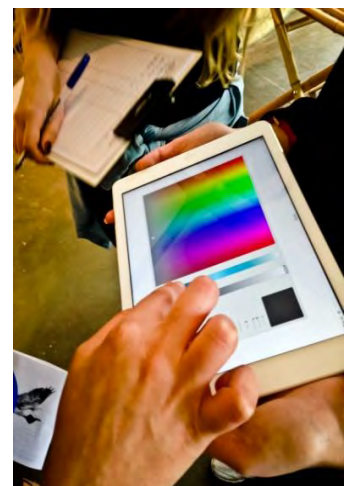
Participants were asked to choose a colour from a digital palette. The experiment took 6 hours and 135 participants were involved in the test - 70 females and 65 males), 68 of whom are from Sao Paolo metropolitan area. There were also participants from Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, and Finland, etc.



Colour is a complex subject and powerful communication tool; it is connected to cultural, political, religious and social influences. Being everywhere and embedded into the environment, the colour affects us constantly. The idea of the experiment was to visualize the variety of opinions in a video form. Conducted in a physical place, rather than online, it shows the perspective from a certain geographical area. A significant part of the experiment was the use of a digital screen for colour selection, as a printed palette imposes more limitations. Therefore, application of a digital display allowed us to perform an experiment, which results depend on the biological ability to distinguish and perceive the colours.

Experimental observations:

- Only 1 person refused to pick a colour and just named abstract blue. In general, people were interested and open.
- It was difficult to reflect on the colour in connection with the city. People tended to name their favourite colour first, hence, consciously tried to choose not the preferable one.
- Some picked the colour they were wearing and some decided not to define the city as grey as they imagine, but to assign green or blue to make the city more vibrant and colourful.
- Participants can be subdivided into two main categories: group that picked randomly, group that found the task complicated and took time to think



Gathered data were processed and, according to the obtained information, the video composed of colourful slides was created. It mostly represents the difference in perception from locals. Firstly, the majority of participants originated from São Paulo area are presented in the colour sequence. Additional map consists of Brazilian cities, and the last part of the video was compiled of responses from all over the world.

Among the all responses the dominant colours are green, blue and grey. From the stereotypical perspective they can be seen as the colours of 'grass' and 'sky' or 'ocean'. Avoiding the simplest explanation, it should be mentioned that the geographical position affects the opinion: "From urban perspective, the colour is one of the basic factors that shape the environment. Colour stimulation received from the exterior world corresponds with a reaction in the inner world - our psyche. To perceive colour means to "experience", to become conscious or aware" (S. Z. A. Idid and Mahdi Torabi Reyhaneh Behbudi, Aceh Development International Conference (ADIC2012), 2012, Malaysia).

In general terms colour is about identity and character - domination of some specific colour gives a distinction to a person or a district; also a mediator between socio-cultural and biological environment.

In today's world, the misuse of colours in many cities has led the colour canvas of the city to such disarranged and confused state which caused a visual disturbance in urban spaces, thus, made a negative impact on the spiritual and mental tranquillity of the citizens (Marjaneh N.G. The Effects of Colors on the Quality of Urban Appearance. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 7. No. 5. 2016).



Colour of the city is often associated with trademarks that operate locally or in the connection with the local attractions, colour scheme of the political parties, football teams, etc. From the marketing perspectives there are researches that point out the color association with the specific destinations. The natural resources and landscape have extreme effect. Hence, the colour and its perceptions are transient - even the colour of the stone is not stable either. Particularly, in São Paulo

the research was conducted on the granite, which lots of monuments and buildings were constructed from (The colour of the granite that built the city of São Paulo, Brazil by Eliane Aparecida del Lama, Lauro Kazumi Dehira, Danielle Grossi, Luciane Kuzmicas). The paper covers a study of selected attractions and colorimetric aspects and changes of the granite.

The work by Dragana Vasiljevic Tomic and Igor Maric, Colour in the city: principles of nature-climate characteristics mentions several experiments in regard to the colour balance in urban environment. Today, the discussion about balance between natural and artificial is inevitable. It involves architecture, technology and choice of materials for design of public spaces. The perception of colour is forms as any other.

Among the global surveys there are some colour movements that help to contribute to the design of a hospital, comfortable cities as the integral part of the society. With the service <http://www.colour-pluscity.com/#home> everyone can make a difference and donate a place to colour. Another global participatory movement that suggests creating of new possibilities through colour <http://www.colouryourcity.com/>

The global movement Colour Your City (www.colouryourcity.com) is dedicated to enriching urban spaces with colour.



Outcome

The research is based on subjective perception and idea of colour that we all imagine in connection with place and environment. The goal was not to prove the similarities or suggestions, but to reveal the opposites.

The diverse opinions represent individuality and distinctiveness of personality.

The video was created and uploaded to the online service: <https://vimeo.com/201110249>