

Color Fields: Painting Place, Uncovering Chromatic Histories and Futures

Instructor(s): Yasmine El Alaoui El Abdallaoui, M. Arch II '23

Location: Zoom

Max Enrollment: 20

The scope of this course highlights the tangled histories that exist between pigment, art, land, and architecture. Students will be encouraged to uncover chromatic histories and their intrinsic complexities. The goal of this course is to lead towards a renewed understanding of color—one which enmeshes our perception of space by critically relating color spectrums to its presence, sourcing, cultural ideological context, and use. Together we will challenge the overwhelming disregard for polychromy in space, as well as in representations of place. A variety of practice-based and critical approaches will be encouraged, provided they relate to the languages of painting.

This course is for those seeking to develop a conceptual stance regarding their landscapes of interest—the natural, imagined, built, social, political, or digital—specifically through the lens of color. Landscape painters have conventionally depicted natural scenery, especially where the main subject is in wide view, with its elements arranged coherently. Architects borrow this perspective, centralizing their projects and setting their surrounding contexts as background. We, on the other hand, will foreground diverse environments in our compositions, and reorganize our sceneries to recalibrate elements/information into blocks of color, we will ask ourselves: How has color given meaning to our spaces of interest? How can we disrupt our perceptions of place by isolating a color story as a pin hole for posing larger questions related to material, history, geography, and climate?

Date: Jan. 3, Tues Jan. 5, Thurs Jan. 10, Mon Jan. 12, Thurs

Time: 10 – 12 pm 10 – 12 pm 10 – 12 pm 10 – 12 pm

Deliverables

Tuesday Jan. 3: Deconstructing Chromatic Space

Optional Reading: Batchelor, David. "Chromaphobia." The Henry Moore Institute, 2000

- Introductions
- Lecture and Discussion
- Collage Tutorial
- Project 1 Assigned: Collage

Thursday Jan. 5: Color & Materiality

Optional Reading: Mark, Wigley. "Sick Architecture: Chronic Whiteness." E-flux, 2020

- Lecture and Discussion
- Project 1 Class Review
- Painting Tutorial
- Project 2 Assigned: Painting

OPTIONAL* Wednesday Jan. 11: Optional Individual Feedback

- Optional 1:1 Discussions

Monday Jan. 10: Bodies in Space

Optional Reading: Talbot, Margaret. "The Myth of Whiteness in Classical Sculpture." The New Yorker, October 29, 2018.

- Guest Lecture by Tiantian Lou (TBA)
- Project 2 Progress Review

Thursday Jan. 12: Hybrid Space & The Contemporary

Optional Reading: Prado de O. Martins, Luiza. "An Anti-Colonial History of Colors." Futuress: Where Feminism, Design and Politics Meet, June 7, 2022.

- Guest Lecture by Nathan Prebonick (TBA)
- Project 2 Final Review
- Conclusion & Reflections

Course Thematic Outline

Polychromy: Deconstructing Chromatic Space

Sourcing: Color & Materiality

Intersectionality: Bodies in Space

Imagining: Hybrid Space & The Contemporary

Tangible Skill

- Students will gain both hand and digital collaging and painting skills