THE UNEXPECTED MEETING

How to create unique colour choices for products.

Artistic development work.
Eva-Lena Bäckström

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Abstract

The goal of my artistic development work was to deepen my knowledge in the area of colouring for products. In my practice I have worked with colouring in several fields of product design, in different materials and contexts. Since I started working as an industrial designer in the 90’s the importance of colour for the success of the design has become more obvious in recent years. Colour expertise from material suppliers and trend institutions are regarded as truth and many companies rely on their forecasts. The strategies and choices of colour can be made without the designer.

Scanning through colour history to find ideas related to colour and form I found that this is an area still to be explored.

In this work I have had two different tasks that I wanted to look at. My first challenge was to see if I could make colour suggestions for a product/form regardless of trend and prejudice. My other task was to see if I could find a creative way of working with colour to boost the process. Testing my creativity by performing colour studies conducted by chance.

The intention was to see if these two different approaches would converge in some way by testing new strategies to approach colour and form. I hoped to find a way as a designer to strengthen my professionalism and I also wanted to find out if the exercises were valuable for teaching colour on form as a subject.

Our perception and ways to interpret colour is influenced by experience, social norms and short-lived trends. In my process I wanted to be free from conventional thinking and have a norm critical approach.

Reflecting on the result there is still much to be explored in the field of colour and product. To continue this work I can see many tracks and one would be to explore the connection between function of a product and its colour. Another track would be to look at the intuitive part of the colouring process versus design method.
Background

One of the subjects I teach at UID is "applied colour theory". Course content is based on the knowledge of my work as an industrial designer in both heavy industry and fashion products.

My experience is that to be able to argue and defend the designers position I must master a process and increase the awareness of the colour's significance for the product.

Projects working title - THE UNEXPECTED MEETING will inspire experimentation with colour combinations to form a structure for colour selection regardless of colour trends. In my work I also want to see what occurs if the colouring process involves both chance and control and see what value it has in teaching.

My goals with this work

Practical:

Developing my skills
Performing tests
Implementing it in the education

Theoretical:

Study the theory
Looking for answers
Question and widen the subject
Working with colour

Spaces

First of all I always stress the importance to know the differences between the spaces for design. When I speak of space I mean the working environment for the designer, the digital space and the physical space. The way we perceive colour in these spaces affect how we see colour. It's two different experiences that in many aspects are not compatible.

When I speak about form and product I refer to nondigital products, things we have in our physical environment. That's why it’s important to stress that the colour of an object should be presented in it's own environment. For example the true colour of a car cannot be fully experienced indoors in a digital environment or on a projected screen. The colour of the car can bee developed in the digital space but in the end it has to be presented outdoor in its true environment.

The digital space

The computer is one of the most important tools for the designer. When it comes to colour it puts us in a different environment than real life. The RGB screen is projecting additive colours. Hue appears as a combination of red, green and blue. We see through a screen where colours are light directly reaching our eyes without being reflected on a surface. The effect of looking at a screen enhances the look of a picture because of the backlight. It gives an impression of that the object has a light within thus enhancing the perception of a hue.

The physical space

The physical space is our natural environment. Here the colours are reflected on surfaces and depending on how light hits the surface we can se shadow and structure. The hues appear as subtractive colours basically a mix of red, blue and yellow. This is the space and environment that is accurate for creating and presenting colour suggestions for objects in our physical environment. When printing these colours are magenta, yellow, and cyan with the addition of black to create darker values - CMYK.
The colour wheel and colour circle.

Throughout the history of colour theory the colour circle has developed to order and present the colours we can perceive. This began with Isaac Newton in 17th century, followed by Goethe who formed his theories in 18th and Johannes Itten in 20th century. In there theories they describe the continuing relation between colours in a circle where the complimentary colours mostly are situated straight across the circle. It can embrace all the physical colours we can imagine. In Sweden theories of a colour system formed the NCS (Natural colour system) launched 1978.

Figure 1
Johannes Itten - twelve-part color circle. (Itten, J. & Birren, F. 1970)

Figure 2
NCS Natural colour system - colour circle.
Basics

Basically you can describe the hierarchy of colour from their pureness as a hue. Following are descriptions of the hierarchy of colours in the colour wheel.

- **Primary** – The basic hues red, blue and yellow that cannot be created by mixing other colours.
- **Secondary** - Combinations in between the primary colours like orange, green and violet.
- **Tertiary hue** – Some theorists have described tertiary colours as a limitless number of colours in between the secondary colours in the artists’ spectrum.

Figure 3
Primary, secondary and tertiary colour selection.
Templates for colouring – combining colours in a logical way.

I’ve been looking for a way of creating colour combinations like harmonious chords in music. This would facilitate the choice of colour and be a guide to make a good selection. I’ve found that in graphic design there is a way of dividing and combine colours that are regarded as harmonious. I have found theories about this in literature and it’s included as a template in graphic software.

Templates for graphic programs are described in a mathematical way and the combinations named after how they are made. Following are established terms for describing hues and colour combinations. These descriptions are two-dimensional.

- Complimentary – Two hues perpendicular right across in the colour circle.
- Split complementary – Combination of one set colour and a pair of colours next to the complementary colour forming an isosceles triangle.
- Double complimentary (Tetradic) and square – Colour selection of four complementary hues mirrored in the colour circle forming a rectangle.

Figure 4
Templates for colour combinations - Complimentary, split complimentary and double complimentary colour selection.
• Analogous colour selection – Hues that resides next to each other in the colour tone circle and never more than two primary hues.

• Triad colour selection – Three hues forming an equilateral triangle.

Figure 5
Templates for colouring - Analogous and triad selection of colours.
The 2D colour circle cannot describe the difference in saturation and value. Instead we have to create this in a third dimension stretching the hues in value and saturation.

When describing the chroma / saturation, of a colour we can imagine how strong or diluted the colour is regarding it’s pigment. The value of the colour is determined by how light/white or dark/black the hue is.

- Monochromatic selection. – It can be the same hue in a scale of chroma (saturation) or the same hue in shades of value. A neutral grey scale is a monochromatic non chromatic scale.

Figure 6
Templates for colouring – Monochromatic selection of colours in chroma and value.

These mentioned templates describe colour combinations in a rather technical way. The advantage is that it’s just a description of the combinations without evaluating or adding any esthetical values.

To deepen the discussion when evaluating colour we need more subtle and associative words. The use of the terms warm and cold are established descriptions for the property of a colour. Johannes Itten also suggest to speak of colour combination with the use of contradictions in a deeper sense (Itten, J. & Birren, F. 1970).

Shadow – sun
Transparent – opaque
Sedative – stimulant
Rare – dense
Airy – earthy
Far – near
Light – heavy
Wet - dry

When discussing colour my experience is that the response can be emotional and these subjective words can be useful to give the discussion more depth. These kind of expressions can give us a richer vocabulary when we describe and discuss colour.

**Colour theory in design**

In my study I have searched through the basic theories of colour to find how product design relates to other disciplines regarding colour. My conclusion is that research and theories on this subject in product design is less explored compared to others. Most theories relates to art, architecture, interior decoration, graphic design, light, psychology and physics. Of course colour of a product relate to all these areas in some way. The main difference in my view is that the nearest subjects such as architecture, interior design and graphic design there is an obvious idea about the context either fixed on a surface or situated on a specific place.

Itten described (Itten, J. & Birren, F. 1970). that colour aesthetics could be approached from these three views :
- Impression (visually)
- Expression (emotionally)
- Construction (symbolically)

The way to look at what messages, visually, emotional and symbolical a colour send inspired me to break down the different aspects of the colour of an object. I found three properties aiming at product colour. The object have a quality regarding what it really do technically, it has a function in the aspect of what it encourage the user to do and it’s in a context in a broader social aspect. In reality the industrial design product is most of the time movable, the context shifts, and the situation is unpredictable.

This was my starting point to study the colour of a product from it’s own values.

Property – characteristics like a technical function
Function – user oriented communicative values
Context – area of operation

I would later return to look into these criteria in the workshops with my BFA students.
Exploration

Creating the form ghost

I’ve been seeking to know how colouring works on three dimension objects. My opinion is that the colour of an object many times are chosen for it’s function and brand and that tends to be learnt by behaviour and stated by consumer trends. The reason I created the "form ghost" was to have a blank form to apply colour on. I chose to build a simple form from a selection of standard blocks for hobby purpose. The form ghost is an object that can be associated with a function or an identity but with no immediate likeness with any brand or exciting product. For example could a simple straight rectangular form symbolize a handle or a small spherical piece applied to a surface represent a button. The building blocks were put together with an obvious expression and low complexity. The purpose is to put focus on the colouring and not on the form. The form ghost is not designed in the way that it’s worked in detail. Simply it should represent a form with a function, an abstraction of an object.

To study colour on a three-dimensional form is also valuable because it show how light and shadow affect the volume. The form has a base colour also called "local colour" (free translation). The local colour should not be confused with the colour in the shadow. In presentations students do renderings with shadowing that make it hard to understand what colour is the basic local colour. The rendering actually show how the colour is perceived at a certain moment and context without revealing it's true appearance.

My process started with sketching in Illustrator creating ideas of how to combine and apply the colour. The digital tool provided a variety of ways to conveniently explore and evaluate colour. I could then create a palette guiding me when painting the form ghost. The process then moved from the digital context to the physical space. After processing the findings I translated the result into a physical paint. The hues were made with black, white and the primary colours blue, red and yellow in a warm and a cold version. Ultramarine, Prussian blue, Vermillion, Crimson, Cadmium yellow and Lemon yellow.

Figure 7
Creating the form ghost - Assembling representations of form and function named “form ghosts”.
Figure 8
The form ghost library.
Meeting the unexpected

To challenge my professional way of working with colour proposals I wanted to do this work free of restraints from the assignment that I usually have. I wanted to see if I could free my creativity by playing with colour in an irresponsible way. All the exercises were performed with the intention of putting me in a challenging position giving me unexpected colour choices for me to refine.

I set up questions for making an evaluation of the different tasks that I was going to do. The questions demanded simple answers to facilitate the comparison between the tasks and evaluate how comprehensible they were. Every assignment was evaluated by six questions.

**What was the value of the exercise:**
- Is it efficient?
- Has it any professional value?
- Is it easy to teach and learn?
- Is the outcome valuable?
- Is the result easy to communicate?
- Was the outcome unexpected?

Chance and control

If there is no user demands or economical aspect in the choice of colour why not let chance become an important part of the process. I wanted to explore if letting yourself in the hands of chance would give any interesting results. Also the combination of the expression in the form ghost would boost an interesting play with colour, expression and form.

Colour by numbers

The first thing I could come up with regarding the role of chance was to test to simply play with colouring by numbers. I found a readymade picture with framed areas connected to a colour with a number. What would the effect be if I swap the numbers and rearrange the colours? I flipped a dice to change the colours and looked at the result.

Conclusion:
This exercise was easy to perform but too simple to give an interesting result. It’s not useful in a professional sense since it’s too predictable and limited to the number of the dice.
Randomly picked colours
In this experiment I wanted to generate three colours to make a colour suggestion for one of my form ghost. Question was if this could generate a collection of colours. The method was to use bag full of plastic beads in white, black, green, red and blue (equal number). The green, red and blue were in two versions, one cold and one warm. In total I had eight colours to pick from. The beads were picked out of the bag without knowing what was coming up. I did this four times to get a selection to choose from. In this way I could influence the result though I had to stick to the combinations that came up. When transferring them to a graphic sphere I could also tune them in a favourable way though sticking to the hue and temperature of the colour. After I had compared the four different combinations I picked one and transferred it in Photoshop to a form ghost showing it in three different colours.

Conclusion:
The result was easy to perform and gave an unexpected result that could be a useful starting point for the creative work. It can be difficult to restrain yourself from picking too many options that would have an effect on the result. The colour selection is also very limited.
Figure 10
Randomly picked colours - Playing with randomly picked colours to create a combination of three hues.

Figure 11
Randomly picked colours - Processed result of randomly picked three colours: cold red, warm blue and warm red.
Breaking the rules

The different assignments I took on would have to increase in complexity. The outermost idea of testing the borders of colouring was to break the rules. By rules I’m referring to what I’ve found in different colour theories regarding harmony and composition. Ideas from Ittens and Albers have had a great influence on how we’re doing colouring combinations today. My aim was to do the opposite. I looked at the templates for colouring and stated my demands on the result.
Non-primary  
Non-monochromatic  
Non-secondary  
Non-tertiary  
Non-triad  
Non-complimentary  
Non double complimentary  
Non-analogous

I made a graphic sphere were the colours were equally represented. The sphere represent something three-dimensional and it show how the colours work together on one object. I used the three part sphere aiming for combinations breaking all the rules stated for making harmonious and esthetical colour combination. I made one set of spheres with colours wrong in harmony and hue and then developing them in intensity to test different faulty contrasts.

The colour suggestions were transferred to a form ghost and ultimately one was picked in the end. The selected one was then calibrated to a final colour suggestion.

Conclusion:  
This demanded the knowledge of how combining colour usually is performed. The interesting thing was to aim for something without harmony making dissonance. It’s very confusing because it raised the question if dissonance is ugly or not. This was a challenging but far more rewarding and unexpected than the other methods.
Figure 12
Breaking the rules - Development of colours with non-harmonious combinations applied on graphic sphere

Figure 13
Breaking the rules - Development of colours with non-harmonious combinations applied on form ghost.

Figure 14
Breaking the rules - Processed result of non-harmonious colour combination.
**Classic colours**
Ultimately I wanted to let chance play a new role by studying three literature classics, Hemsöborna by August Strindberg, Alice in wonderland by Lewis Carroll and Crime and punishment by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. In these books I counted the number of times the colours were mentioned to see what colours were represented in the text. The primary and secondary colours were counted. Also black and white was counted to represent the brightness. A diagram showing the colour representation guided me to transform it to the form ghost depicting the colour of the book. For example the number of times white was mentioned in Strindbergs book was 47, black 40, blue, 25, green 17, red 15, yellow 8, purple and orange zero times.

Conclusion:
This is not an efficient method because it very time consuming. It’s easy to teach and learn and it’s very communicative. The outcome may be a surprise though the result of the classic books I chose could have been predicted.

![Figure 15](image)

*Figure 15*
Street finding
Finally I chose to look into something that I already had practised without thinking of it. I used a snap shot from a situation when I’ve seen something interesting but in that moment didn’t know how to use. Transferring it to a form ghost

Conclusion:
To get this kind of inspiration you have to expose yourself to environments that can give you input and make you seize the moment. If you just waiting to bump in to something without any effort you’re really in the hands of chance without knowing if it’s going to reward you.

Figure 16
Street finding - Transferred colour on form ghost.
In July 2016 I participated in the international workshop with NCS. The course gave an insight in different ways of using NCS as a tool for communication and definition of colours. What I found useful for my work is that the tools as coloured NCS paper samples are very useful on a basic level to define a colour in a precise way. Also ways of measuring colour could be helpful if you like to mimic or study a colour in different environments. However if you take into account surface and material the system are limited to solid colours as it’s from the beginning developed for painters. But for studying colour on a basic level it’s easy to understand due to it’s logical structure based on how we perceive colour.

My individual work was about making a color choice for products, in this case eyewear. My starting point became the local thrift store where I found a piece of Swedish ceramic from the 50’s. I defined the colours of the product in the NCS system for transforming them to eyewear. As my idea of the importance of the context for colouring products I tried to define the colour of my skin since the face is the context for the glasses. In the business of cosmetics there are several ways of naming skin colour like for example "fair", "medium", "deep", "light", "cool", "neutral" and " warm". Sometimes skin colour also is defined by a number. In my case i used a NCS colour pin to measure the surface of my face. The accuracy can be questioned since the skin have some transparency but with several measurements and comparison with other people. I could approximately define my skin colour. Of course this limited the project only to my self as the context for the colour choice. This colour would however serve as a background for creating a colour selection for eyewear.

I could define eight colours from the ceramic. The glazing is in some parts transparent so for every colour tone I picked two versions. One that I perceived as lighter due to its transparency and a darker version of the more solid parts. This resulted in two versions of pink, purple, green and yellowish green. From this I created mood boards inspired by the time period of the ceramic. Here I found that the pink and purple colours needed to be replenished to broaden the basis for the colour choice. The complementary colours were created from the work on the mood boards. I now had four suggestions in green, violet/pink and blue/red. I transferred the colours on to a template of a frame with my skin tone background. My analysis of the result should end up in a collection of four colours. As I have long experience working with eyewear I know that in a commercial aspect customers prefer some colour hues before others. That may have affected my decision to add blue and red because these are colours consumers in Sweden prefer rather than green and yellowish hues. Purple, violet and pink comes and goes with trends in fashion. The most commercial hues are black and brown. The meaning with my work was to challenge this and find stronger defined hues. The final choice was a collection of four commercial colours inspired by the ceramic bowl. Blue, red, green and pink defined with the NCS colour code. This short assignment of 12 hours gave me an opportunity to explore one way of seeking inspiration. When I reflect on the result I can see that I didn’t really step out of my comfort zone regarding the knowledge I have about the commercial aspect of the colour choice. It would have been interesting to go deeper in the analysis of the impact of colour that’s really "in your face".
Figure 17
NCS international work shop - Measuring skin colour – the context of optical frames.

Figure 18
NCS international workshop - Mood board exploring the red hues from the flower ceramic.
Figure 19
NCS international work shop - Colour selection for optical eyewear inspired by ceramic bowl.
Implementation in education

Student work

One of the goals of my artistic development work was to look for a way to develop the education in applied colour in product design. I’ve been able to test new tasks on two student groups focusing on the product itself regardless of trends or a given context. As I have explored colouring the form ghost I wanted to see if the students could embrace this idea. The assignment would be to look at the object, giving it a colour, with guidance from the three criteria regarding the product characteristic, user demands and context.

BFA1 2015

Spring 2015 was the first lecture with BFA1 in industrial design. This was an opportunity to test the ideas I developed in this artistic development work. As always I share my experience working with colour in industry but also posed the question about how to combine colour with form. The assignments was formulated like this:

Exercise 1
The task is to build a "form ghost" that will represent a function, have an intended recipient and a context that you decide.
Construction can consist of two maximum three form elements + possibly a detail.
Build the shape and paint it with primer.

Colour proposal can be made in the computer and presented with mood board. The proposal will support the three key words you choose for the product related to the following bullet points:
• Product identity. What characteristics do the product express?
• Receiver. What is the recipients expectations?
• Context. How do the context influence?

Paint a colour sample before you paint the "product".

As a whole I think the group understood the challenge well and worked hard with mixing colours getting them right as they intended. They took special care doing mood boards to describe their intentions.

BFA1 2016

I repeated the course the year after. This group warmed up by making a colour circle of real objects. First they studied the NCS colour tone circle to get accustomed to a way of sorting and identify colour hues. They gathered things from around the school forming a 4 x 4 meter circle. The meaning with this was to open their eyes for the three-dimensional colours surrounding them, to take a good look around. It was also a way to get a feeling of how the colour tone circle is composed.

In the same way as the year before the students took on the task of the form ghost. Compared to the year before there were differences regarding the ability to formulate the key word and the choice of colour. Some of the students failed to formulate key words that may suggest that they didn’t fully understand the different aspects of the "product". Others chose more than one colour for a surface thus avoiding making a distinct colour choice.

To sum up the experience from the students work I noted the following:

First of all it comes as a chock to my students when they realize that they have to mess around with real paint. "I haven’t done this since kindergarten!".....
Both years I requested the student to paint the objects with a base coat of white primer. The reason was that the tone of the wood would affect the finishing colour hue. To use white as base is to neutralize the surface with no other hue affecting only giving it a neutral base. My reflection is that the resemblance to a white sheet of paper made the students regard the white base as a colour in the same way as they paint on a canvas. My intention to make them see the white surface as colourless failed resulting that as much as half of the students presented form ghosts with white as the primary colour. I should have noticed it the first year but it was obvious to me the second year.

Another reflection was that a minority of the student presented colour suggestions with surfaces covered by a multitude of colours. In one way it could be inspired by high tech material and advanced coatings. It could also be the result of hesitating to make a distinct choice.

The challenge is to choose one out of a multitude of colours. To argue for the choice and to make a decision.

Figure 20
UID BFA 15 - Colour studies working creating mood boards, colour palette and form ghosts.
Figure 21
UID BFA 15 - Student works, form ghosts.
Figure 22
UID BFA 2016 creating the colour tone circle with objects.
Analysis

Practical

One aim of this work was to develop my skills. In professional life you have to be efficient and therefore using tools that give you result as smooth as possible. I do a lot of my colour presentations with the computer in the digital space but the starting point is always real colour samples from the suppliers. Built on experience my knowledge of making a colour suggestion for eyewear is something that I make with my backbone. I know how to get it right in the commercial aspect but I rarely have time to do experiments out of that comfort zone.

During this work I understood that getting hands-on and mixing colour enhance the quality of the work though it’s more time consuming. To perform tests has been valuable because it’s rarely time for experiments in real projects. In the same way as my student I find that it’s more convenient to stay in the digital space and don’t get my hands dirty. When I overcame the practical difficulties like finding the right material and organize a workspace I found it’s most rewarding. It makes you aware of that design is related to traditional art forms as sculpture and painting. You can be pleased with a surprising result or be provoked by your mistakes but you master the process without the limitations of a computer. Seeing student work hands-on with colouring proves that it’s therapeutic and soothing for your mind. I can see they have fun, easily working with flow.

In the BA students workshop I wanted them to present a final colour suggestion. To be specific were more difficult than expected and resulted in some of them failing to show a final choice. In real production you have to be precise when making the colour presentation. Of course a colour proposal must be discussed and adjusted but your intention as a designer must be clear.

In the future I’ll consider telling the students to use other primer than white paint for the “form ghosts”. White tends to be a chosen proposal but it’s hard to tell if that is a result of a conscious decision or just a given factor that they use. The reason I chose white primer was that it’s the standard for painting wood. My conclusion is that the white surface represent cleanliness and restricts you from painting it over. It’s a surface that you respect too much. It’s also a statement as a colour. A better choice for primer would be putty grey because this colour may be looked up on as dirty and of lesser value than white.

I have chosen to handle colours on a basic level regardless of opacity, gloss and structure since this would have enhanced the complexity of the study. There is a need to look at how different surfaces, both shallow and dramatic, affect the look of the colour. Adding these dimensions was not included in this project but it is a logical step that can take the experiments further.

Theoretical

It was most valuable to look into the theories of colour and how different disciplines speak about it. There are so many aspects affecting they way we perceive it. Physical light conditions have an effect on what we see. Chemistry has given us new pigments to use. People have throughout history formed ways of using, interpreting colour and decided it’s meaning. Colour theorists have striven to cover all fields and explain and guide us on the subject. A deeper knowledge in colour theory has given me the tools for experimentation. My insight is that if you know the rules you can break them.
I miss a deeper discussion on colour in the design process. The choice can be presented without deeper explanation and this reveal that colouring is sometimes a process driven by chance. The colouring process is intuitive and hard to grasp. It’s affected by personal opinions and feelings that are hard to describe and fit in to a framework.

There are two different areas of colour description in design. One is for production and the other is for communication soft values. When you take a colour in to production you usually have a code for it. This code doesn’t necessary describe the colour it’s just for communicating a standard or a formula. The other area is the emotional aspect when you communicate a colour. In this case the common way to explain a colour is to name it. This is the simplest way of story telling and giving meaning to a colour. The most elaborate way is the descriptions given in colour directions from trend forecasters. A hue can be uplifted by a more developed story on the feeling, social context and source of inspiration. The downside is that it can seem a bit “out of the blue” and difficult to link to the different applications of a colour. The names and descriptions are seldom described by it’s practical use and meaning.
Reflection

In the area of product colour the influence of trend forecasts has grown stronger. Manufacturers of colour systems present seasonable colour choices to market their products. Material manufacturers such as suppliers of pigments, varnishes and granules present their products with summarized versions of trends that forecast agencies produce. They offer collections and predictions for colour selection that streamline and facilitate the choice of colours for the industry. Because of their assertiveness these general trends are convincing and the risk is that it puts the choice of colour outside the influence of the designer.

Our perception and ways to interpret colour is influenced by experience, social norms and short-lived trends. One goal was to free myself from conventional thinking and have a norm critical approach in this project. The colouring process is a powerful tool for the industrial designer. My ambition was to find a way to look at colouring in this field since in my research I mainly found strategies regarding architecture, graphic design and fashion.

I took the opportunity to test different methods of working creative with colouring starting from the object regardless of trends and conventional ways of choosing colour. Another goal was to test three dimensional colour samples to see how it works in the design process. The idea of working with chance as a factor for the colour choice wasn’t too distant from reality. When working with a company there are often some given criteria stated by the company like a corporate colour, industry standard or a colour preference stated by former design. In this way you are not free to work with whatever hue you would like from the beginning. The colours stated in the function list are a preference you have to consider and sometimes have to stick to. In that sense it’s not so different from picking a random colour that you have to work with.

Looking back on my ADW I can see that I’ve tried to explore two different areas of colouring. One was to focus on the object, creating colours from functional and communicative values. This I practised with my students. The other part was to find creative ways in the process released from the influence of trends that affect the colour choice to create an unique result. Though I had the ambition I could not make these different tactics of working with colour and design converge.

Colour should be considered as a material and be questioned as any other component of a product both regarding its emotional or economical sustainability. Trend forecasting is used as a marketing tool aiming to sell new product and keeping up the pace of consumption. In the sustainable society we may not need a constant delivery of colour trends. The intuitive process of colouring is a powerful tool for the designer. If we practise and gain more knowledge we can use it more consciously.

This artistic development work was carried out part time during 2014-16, in all 8,5 weeks (340 h) of work. In this time I have had the opportunity to deepen my knowledge doing creative experiments. The aim of this work was never to prove or give scientific results. The purpose of this artistic development work was to boost creative thinking regarding colouring and to find unexpected ways of inspiration with a norm critical approach.
References


