Color in Motion: Transfers, Transformations, Translations (Geneva, 8-10 Dec 25)

Geneva, Switzerland, Dec 8–10, 2025

Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, Université de Genève, CH

Color in Motion: Transfers, Transformations, Translations.
Final Conference of the Visual Contagions Project (SNSF 2021–2025).

December 8–10, 2025
University of Geneva and Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève (MAH)

Keynote Speakers : Monika Wagner (Universität Hamburg), Peter Geimer (Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte, Paris).
Conclusive Roundtable: Frédéric Elsig (Université de Genève).

URL: https://www.unige.ch/visualcontagions/conferences/color-motion

Free Entrance.

Presentation

This conference explores what happens to color when objects, images, and styles circulate across time, space, cultures, and media. While art history has advanced our understanding of color's material and symbolic dimensions, less attention has been given to how circulation and transfer shape coloration, or to the role of reproduction – whether in black and white or in color – in mediating artworks, their reception, and the transmission of practices and styles.

Shaped by time, chemistry, circulation, techniques, transmediality, and cultural diversity, color is far from stable – especially as images travel across geographies and media. More than a property, color acts as an agent of transmission, transformation, and sometimes erasure. To think about color through circulation is to address the epistemology of reproduced images, their technical regimes, and historical effects.

The event concludes the research project Visual Contagions (Swiss National Fund, 2021–2025), conducted at the University of Geneva, in collaboration with the Artl@s project.

Conference Program

December 8 – Day 1
GamMAH, Promenade du Pin 5

09:00 – Welcome Coffee

09:30 – Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel
Introduction

09:45 – Keynote 1 | Monika Wagner, University of Hamburg
Circulation and Reception. Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece in Colour and in Black-and-White Reproductions

10:30 – Coffee Break

Session 1: Cultural and Political Systems
Chair: Frédéric Elsig, University of Geneva

11:00 – Maite Alvarez, J. Paul Getty Museum
Spanish Imperial Chromatic Charts: Watercolor, Weather, and Governance at a Distance 1789–1816

11:30 – Hiromi Matsui, University of Tokyo
Japanese Color Theory at the Age of Modernism: Formation, Transformation, and Cultural Synthesis

12:00 – Stephanie S.E. Lee, Northwestern University & Morgan Library
Making Yellow in the Twentieth Century: Color Charts, Shiseido, and Asiatic Femininity in East Asian Works-on-Paper

12:30 – Witold Kanicki, Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts
Cold War and the Politics of Color Photography

13:00 – Lunch Break (1h30)

Session 2: Color Semantics
Chair: Dominik Remondino, Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève

14:30 – Maryam Akramifard, Université Laval, & Mahsa Akramifard, Tarbiat Modares University
Semiotic Squares of Color: Greimasian Analysis of French Translations of Hafez's Chromatic Imagery

15:00 – Tatiana Smolyarova, University of Geneva
The "Travelling Eye": Osip Mandelstam's Theory of Color and Vision in "Journey to Armenia" (1931) and "Impressionism" (1932)

15:30 – Adriana Zdrzalek, University of Palermo
Color Circulation from Esthetics to Ontology. Or from Decorative Arts to Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks

Session 3: Shifting Perceptions
Chair: Milan Garcin, Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève

16:30 – Carla Mazzarelli, Università della Svizzera Italiana
Which "Authenticity" of Color? Michelangelo Reproduced between Media Transformation and

Migrations of Perception

17:00 – Stefanie De Winter, KU Leuven
Silent Color Transformations: Ageing, Reproduction, and the Epistemic Gap in Color Field Painting

17:30 – Emilia Cottiglioni, Stanford University
Nordic Time: Color, Metamorphosis, and Landscape Imaginaries

18:00 – Marta Spanevello, Università della Svizzera Italiana
Perceiving the Imperceptible Color: American Monochromatic Art, 1980–2000

18:30 – Cocktail for speakers

December 9 – Day 2
Espace Colladon, Rue Jean-Daniel Colladon 2

09:00 – Welcome Coffee

Session 4: Black and White Filters
Chair: Adélaïde Quenson, University of Geneva

09:30 – Léo Bohn, Artist, EESAB (European Academy of Art in Brittany)
Ghost Image

10:00 – Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, University of Geneva
The Colors of Distance: Peripheral Dalinism, Reproduction, and Reinvention in the 1930s

10:30 – Milan Garcin, Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève
Cooking Colour with Black and White: Francis Bacon’s Use of Reproductions of the Amarna Masks from the Antikensammlung Berlin

11:00 – Coffee Break

Session 5: Color Techniques of Reproduction
Chair: Catherine Dossin, Purdue University

11:30 – Maria Dolores Garcia-Aznar, Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève
Color Intaglio Printmaking Techniques in the Eighteenth Century and their Cultural Impact

12:00 – Fedora Parkmann, Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences
Nude Photography in Ink: Cultural Meanings of Color in the Magazine Reproductions of František Drtikol

12:30 – Maaheen Ahmed, Ghent University
The Colors of Crisis: French Children’s Magazines during the Second World War

13:00 – Lunch Break (1h10)

14:15 – Visit of the Conservation-Restoration Studios, Musée d’Art et d’Histoire de Genève (registration required)

December 10 – Day 3
GamMAH, Promenade du Pin 5

09:00 – Visit of the Caran d'Ache Colour Manufacture
(registration required)

12:00 – Lunch and Coffee Break at GamMAH

13:00 – Keynote 2 | Peter Geimer, German Center for Art History, Paris
Recoloring the Past? A Plea for Historical Distance

13:45 – Comfort Break (10 mn)

Session 6: Color and Transmission
Chair: Marie Barras, University of Geneva

13:55 – Teresa Knapowska, Adam Mickiewicz University
Moving Colors, Moving Meanings: How Does Color Circulate Across Copies of the Tournament Book?

14:25 – Luca Piccoli, Università della Svizzera Italiana
The Colors of the Pio-Clementino Museum: Genesis, Transmission and Legacy of a Museographic Model

14:55 – Catherine Dossin, Purdue University
From Monochrome to Multicolor: The Circulation of Color in American Art History Classrooms

15:25 – Frédéric Elsig, University of Geneva
Conclusive Roundtable

15:55 – Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, University of Geneva
Closing Remarks

16:00 – Closing Tea

Link to the Program, with location map : https://www.unige.ch/visualcontagions/conferences/color-motion/color-motion-program

Link to the Book of Abstracts : https://www.unige.ch/visualcontagions/download_file/635/0

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