

## Early Modern Colour Practices 1450–1650 (Berlin, 20–21 Sep 13)

Berlin, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Sep 20–21, 2013

Karin Leonhard

Conference: Early Modern Colour Practices, 1450-1650,  
September 20/21 2013

Main Conference Room, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Boltzmannstr. 22, 14195  
Berlin

Organisers: Sven Dupré Max Planck Research Group Director, MPIWG/Freie Universität Berlin  
Karin Leonhard, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science

This workshop takes colour practices, cutting across the categories of art, craft, science and technology, as its central category of analysis. The contributions deal with a diversity of practices, ranging from painting, limning and colour printing to medical diagnosis and optical or meteorological observation as well as botanical and anatomical drawing, in the period between 1450 and 1650. Aiming at opening up the black box of an allegedly monolithic 'Aristotelian colour theory' preceding Newton, the workshop will elucidate how early modern colour practices in dialogue with the reception of Aristotelian theories of vision and colour theory shaped a plurality of colour concepts.

### PROGRAM

Friday, 20. September

09:00 – 09:10

Sven Dupré, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Freie Universität Berlin  
Introduction

09:10 – 10:00

Birgit Borkopp, Universität Bern  
Colour and Dye-Stuffs Used in 16th Century Tapestry Weaving

10:00 – 10:50

Sylvie Neven, Université de Liège  
Illuminating the 'Elusive': Organic Colorants in Northern European Illuminations

10:50 – 11:30

Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:20

Romana Filzmoser, Universität Salzburg

Red, White, and Black. Colour Knowledge in 17th-Century English Cosmetic Writings

12:20 – 13:30

Lunch Break

13:30 – 14:20

Sachiko Kusukawa, Trinity College, Cambridge

Concepts of Colour in University Textbooks in the 16th Century

14:20 – 15:10

Tawrin Baker, Indiana University

Thickening the Celestial Aether vs. Blowing Bubbles and Grinding Glass: The Shift from Aristotelian to Corpuscular Theories of the Origin of Colour

15:10 – 15:50

Coffee Break

15:50 – 16:40

Doris Oltrogge, Fachhochschule Köln

Item Prior Color Est Blaius – Theoretical Concepts of ‘Colour Systems’ in Early Modern Recipe Collections

16:40 – 17:10

Round Table Discussion

Led By Tawrin Baker, Sachiko Kusukawa and Karin Leonhard

Saturday, 21. September

09:30 – 10:20

Valentina Pugliano, Cambridge

Ulisse Aldrovandi’s Colour Sensibility

10:20 – 11:10

Anna Marie Roos, University of Lincoln

Nature’s Art of Painting’: Nehemiah Grew (1641-1712) and the Chymistry of Colour in Plants and Flowers

11:10 – 11:40

Coffee Break

11:40 – 12:30

Simon Turner, Berlin

Opus Typo Chromaticum: The Colour Prints of Johannes Teyler (1648–c. 1709)

12:30 – 13:30

Lunch Break

13:30 – 14:20

Amy Buono, Rio de Janeiro

Tupi Colours

14:20 – 15:10

Simon Werret, University College London

Powders of Diverse Colours: Fireworks and Colour in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

15:10 – 15:30

Coffee Break

15:30 – 16:20

Karin Leonhard, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science

'The Various Natures of Middling Colours we may learne of Painters...' - Sir Kenelm Digby Looks at Rubens and Van Dyck

16:20 – 16:50

Final Discussion

If you would like more information please see the events page of the MPIWG:

<http://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/en/news/index.html>

and the web page of the workshop:

[http://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/workshops/en/Dupre\\_Colour\\_Practices\\_Workshop](http://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/workshops/en/Dupre_Colour_Practices_Workshop)

Observers are welcome but space is limited, to register please email  
officedupre@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de

Reference:

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(accessed May 15, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/5917>>.