Natural Dyeing: A Heritage of Colour

Details

July 22nd - July 26th, V&A South Kensington – Art Studio

Overview

Discover the beauty of nature’s palette in this five-day natural dyeing experience. This course uncovers the history of natural dyeing in the V&A’s collections, giving you private gallery tours with V&A textile curators and exclusive object handling sessions – bringing the history of natural dyeing to life through hands-on learning experiences.

Each day you’ll be guided through a practical workshop led by natural dye experts Moderneccentrics. The course will cover all the classical traditional dyes; Madder, Weld, Cochineal and Indigo as well as the use of modifiers to extend your palette and shift tone. You will learn how to prepare fibres for dyeing and develop your own sample book of fabrics and threads.

Your course leader

Moderneccentrics are a creative collaboration between artists Jonathan Dredge and Ross Belton. Their practice is based around nature in an urban environment, utilising and repurposing found, recycled and redundant materials. Local and seasonal resources inform Ross’ work in particular, part of his attempt to keep their carbon footprint as small as possible. Looking at the urban environment they examine our relationship with the nature that surrounds us. Identity, personal history and experience informs their concerns, as does a desire to reuse, recycle and repurpose.

Ross has worked directly with Jenny Dean, author and renowned natural dyeing expert, for several years, initially as a student in 2018 on the first year long Natural Dyeing Course held at Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft, and subsequently as her assistant and co-tutor. Ross applied his newly acquired skills to his own work and into developing further techniques for his own practice, building his reputation as a generous and effective tutor. As moderneccentrics, Ross has led several extremely successful natural dyeing courses, including a residency at Stepney City Farm, the Contemporary Textiles Fair and the Florence Trust. Jonny also has a background in training, having honed his skills as a ‘Creative’ tutor for Apple and delivered bespoke workshops for a variety of creative groups. In a longstanding residency with CassArt Islington, they delivered weekly Mark Making workshops using handmade brushes and natural inks.
Programme

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22nd July 2024

Introduction and Preparation

   Resource preparation and extracting colour.

12.00 Prepare three dye baths and extract colour ready for dyeing

13.00 Lunch break

14.00 Dye and modify three un-mordanted sets (Buckthorn bark, Pomegranate rind and
       oak galls). Exhaust for tannin mordant & tannin/iron complex for greys and black.

16.00 Set up Solar Jars (cold water dyeing)

17.00 End

23rd July 2024

Substantive Dyes:

10.30 Mordanting Fibres; Alum Sulphate, Alum Acetate, Tannin & Iron. Dye and modify two
       un-mordanted sample set (Rhubarb root, Ivy).

13.00 Lunch break

14:00 Gallery tour with Fashion and Textiles curator Susan North looking at pre-1800
       Fashion / Textiles in the collection. Comparison of fashionable shades in the Baroque,
       Rococo and Neo-Classical periods.

16.00 Set up pomegranate rind and oak galls exhaust tannin and iron complex experiment.
       Record natural dye samples.

17.00 End
24th July 2024

*Adjective Dyes:*

10.30 Natural dye sampling. Dye and modify three mordanted sample sets (Sappanwood, Madder, Cochineal).

13.00 Lunch break

14.00 Dye and modify two mordanted sets (Weld, Logwood).

17.00 End

25th July 2024

*Vat Dyes: Blue*

10.30 Introduction to indigo dyeing including the 1,2,3 vat. Indigo / Woad / fresh Japanese Indigo

12.30 Lunch break

13.30 Curator talk with curator Avalon Fotheringham - Wealth of Colour - India’s natural dyes and their impact on global fashion, Object study in the India study room.

15.30 Indigo over-dyeing for greens & participants own samples. Record natural dye samples.

17.00 End

26th July 2024

*Print, pigments and samples*

10.30 Contact printing, the Art of the bundle
Create contact bundles for steaming

13.30 Lunch break

14.30 Sample collation and recap Q&A

17.00 End

*Note: V&A Academy programmes are subject to change without notice.*