

Title: Can we change the colour education to an attractive and inspiring choice of subject in design and architecture?

Speaker: Berit Bergström

Abstract:

What can we do to inspire, engage, and increase interest in colour knowledge and education? Colour education must be more than just learning the colour theories. We need more practical training and assignments where colour theory is put into practice to understand the importance of colour knowledge. We must deepen the knowledge of colour to become more practical and hands on. The



colour of an object is not constant. It changes depending on among other things, the observation situation, viewing distance, surrounding colours and lighting conditions. We should highlight colour as an important design factor for creating good environments and products for people. Colour is a crucial design factor that affects spatiality, function, and aesthetics.

Colour is one of the strongest factors in the experience of a building, a room, or a product. Colour and light are so obvious, they are just there, and we take them for granted. We trust that the architect, designer and colourist have a genuine knowledge of the impact of colour on us humans and how colour affects the perception of the building and the room. This applies to both the aesthetic experience and the function of the colour. We need beautifully coloured environments to feel good and we also need the colour's ability to distinguish and clarify our surroundings, for example to facilitate orientation in a building.

The background of my lecture is the importance to spread the knowledge and experience that exists in the science of colour. It can provide both support and inspiration for colour choices and selection in colour schemes and design, of both products and the colouring of our surroundings and finally colour education. Colour education can develop creative environments where creativity, communication, and exchange of experiences between different disciplines are the central point. In this respect, colour science is unique in the field of education. There is no other branch of science which concerns so many different disciplines and can involve students in working together with colour in the same creative project but from different starting points.

The lack of colour education: How can you use colour to create the feeling that you strive for in different environments? Unfortunately, at many of our design and architecture schools around the world, colour has taken on a secondary importance. You like to think that colour doesn't need to be learned anything about "because it's so easy to choose a colour on a product or a house; it is just to pick a colour". Colouring is much more complicated than that. Spatial design is a complex task with many different factors that have to be considered and work together to get the desired effects in a room. The old knowledge of colour is disappearing because the teaching of colour and colour and lighting is no longer compulsory in architectural and design programs. Colour teaching is also an important factor in creating interest in further colour research!

In nature's there is a natural and appreciated flora of colour and light contrasts. Colours and contrasts that touch our senses. Can we find this variation in our built environments? Very often we find office rooms with grey floors, beige walls, white ceilings, dreary furnishings, and lack of accents that catch your eyes; this creates a lack of engagement. We need more knowledge and inspiration to create a consistent and harmonious colour scheme which will be used for clarifying functions and underscoring different types of information.

Biography:

Berit Bergström is a Colour Specialist & Educator in colour theory and colour scheme working in her own business, Berit ColourTalks, since 2016. She was employed by NCS Colour AB from 1990 to 2016. She was the Managing Director for NCS Colour Academy between 1991 and 2012. She has long experience of giving international colour design courses and presentations and has conducted colour studies at university level worldwide for more than 30 years. This has newly resulted her new book “Colour Choices. A practitioner’s guide to designing colour schemes” in both English and Swedish. She was the secretary of the Colour Science Foundation (1991-1997) and was responsible for granting funding for different colour research projects within the field of colour. She is the secretary of the Swedish Colour Centre Foundation since 1991. She has been a member of the AIC Executive Committee between 2006 – 2021. She was the President of AIC 2010 to 2013 and the chairperson of the AIC Study Group on Colour Education between 1998 and 2009.