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Color, culture and identity: past, present and future Color, cultura e identidad: pasado, presente y futuro

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PROCEEDINGS

Editors

Dra. Georgina Ortiz Lic. Citlali Ortiz Dr. Rodrigo Ramírez

Preferencia De Colores En Electrodomésticos De Lujo En Poblacion Mexicana De La Zona Metropolitana De Guadalajara (ZMG)	643			
Ibarra, G. Laura; Rosales, C. Rosa; Prado, L. Lilia.				
The Human Skin Colorimetric And Evaluation Way Applied Spectral Imaging And Analysis Of Optics Structure				
Masayuki Osumi				
Influence of Colours in the Perception of Emotions	670			
Simone Thereza Alexandrino Maffei, Maria João Durão, Marizilda dos Santos Menezes				
White Colour in Architecture and Built Environment – Facts, Myths and Contemporary Application. <i>Justyna Tarajko-Kowalska</i>	683			
A Study on Color Emotions of Two Color Combinations Using Achromatic Colors as Main Color.	704			
Wen-Yuan Lee, Shi-Min Gong				
Color Naming of Deutranomals Largely Influenced by Luminance and Size of Light	710			
Yoko Mizokami, Saeko Oishi and Hirohisa Yaguchi	/10			
Optical Designof Sunglass Lensesfor Archery Competitions Using CIECAM02	717			
Ichiro Katayama, Kenta Noda, Noboru Kawanishi	/1/			
TOWN PLANNING				
Please, No More White At Workplace Environments				
Cristina Caramelo Gomes and Sandra Preto	723			
The Chromatic Project as a Proposal to Reappraise the Urban Image, Co-management Experience Between the Municipal Government and the University	738			
Adriana Incatasciato, Inés Girelli, Marcelo Balián, María Marta Mariconde, Darío Suárez				
Image Of The City: Colours, Cultures, Architectures Larissa Noury	747			
The Colors of Belém, Pará. A Quest for an Urban Chromatic Identity	756			
João Carlos de Oliveira Cesar	756			
Color and Place: New Ways of Expression in the Contemporary City	766			
Darío Suárez	766			
Traditional Color of Cities in Central-Eastern China	770			
Yi Zhuang, Sari Yamamoto	//0			
Adaptive Urban Chromatic Control Method. Case Study in Bucharest, Romania	791			
Veronica Maria Zybaczynski	191			

The Chromatic Project as a Proposal to Reappraise the Urban Image, Co-management Experience Between the Municipal Government and the University

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary city is expressed in the building of complex scenarios, and thus inhabitants find it more and more difficult to represent, understand or signify it. In this context, color, textures, cesias and other components of urban language become essential in the structuring of the physical environment and in the construction of memorable spaces.

The traditional perception and familiarity with the public space is replaced by new experiences that bring about new ways of communication and experimentation. It is therefore necessary to recover a coherence principle which allows the construction of a contemporary urban reality and its all-embracing image. (Améndola, 2000).

The public management of towns sets as an objective the search for specific urban instruments with the aim of reinforcing local identity.

Within the Institute of Color of the Faculty of Architecture, Town Planning and Design of the National University of Córdoba a proposal is shaped up to reappraise the image of the public space in the micro-area "Center West" in the city of Villa Carlos Paz. The municipal management, with the participation of the university and neighbors, works towards the reappraisal of the image expression of this area, mainly by means of chromatic design of facades and other language components to foster in residents experiences of belonging, remembrances and construction of the sense of urban living.

Concerning this and taking into account the landscape and the architectural, urban, touristic and commercial values that distinguish the hilly village, the chromatic project sets out a palette of colors with a clear aim to contributing to the reinforcement of the area's identity.

In this way, the urban color plays the role of a leading instrument that structures and defines the environment allowing the residents to signify if and in time make it their own.

The color of each city depends, to a large extent, on its natural determinants and its history. The natural determinants are decisive for the choice of materials or the predominance of one material over others; history decides by leaving traces of periods of time with special vitality or peculiar dynamisms: times, therefore, responsible for many of the final aspects that make up the urban physiognomy. (Düttmann 1982:111)

The reappraisal of the "Center-West" area, in a context of a weak urban image, will contribute to a spatial configuration that identifies the place promoting unity and identity and putting emphasis on the commercial-touristic character of the area. Besides, it will stimulate the necessary synergy to reconsider the management and planning of the city.

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