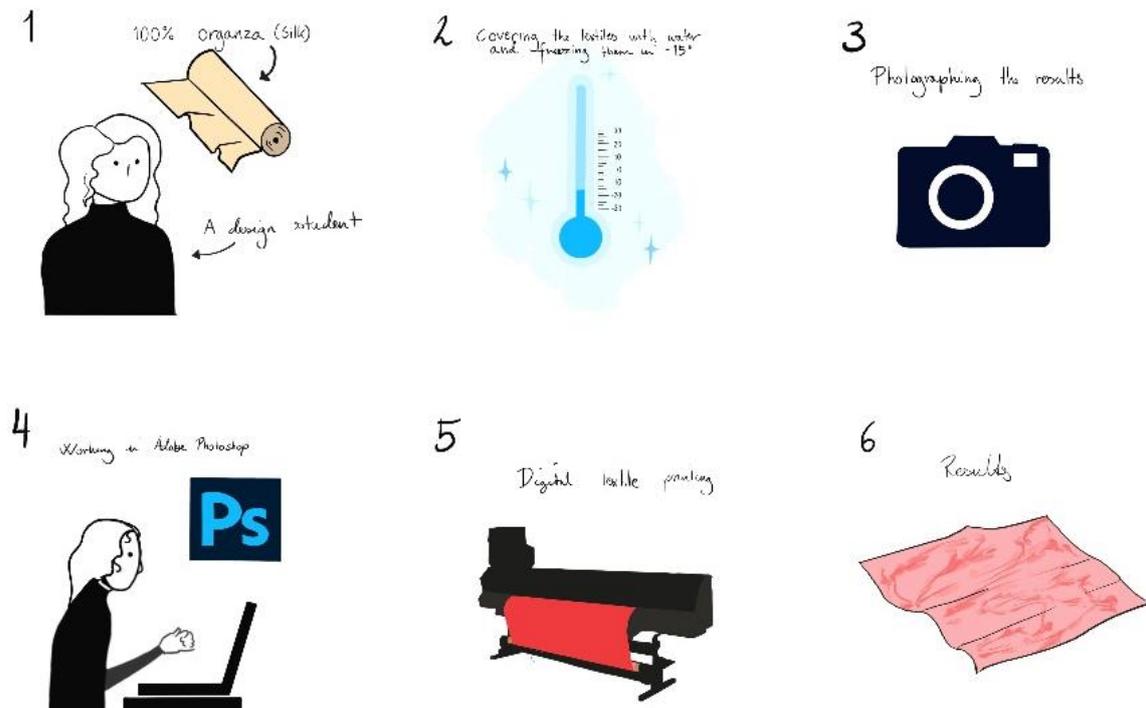


EXPLORING DIGITAL DESIGN: ASSOCIATIONS AND EMOTIONS FROM NATURE

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ABSTRACT

Through the ages, humans have drawn inspiration from nature. It is seen in art, design, and architecture. Nature is inexhaustible for inspiration, and different individuals find new things that inspire them. This visual study explores and experiments with nature, temperature and digital design. This is done to examine a proposition that an individual can be more attached to natural materials even in a digital production context, and where the inspiration from the print comes from nature itself. By signing up for a class within digital textile printing the study was fulfilled with empirical data. In cooperation with a supervisor I began exploring digital textile print on a Mimaki Tx300P-1800 printer. The fascination grew and I want to learn and explore this field in my design education. Fast fashion has a big impact in the society we live in. The consumer is used to constantly buy new clothes, and quantity over quality is the reality. Social sustainability and ethical trade are important to make the world more sustainable. The exploration in this paper will be based on printing on natural 100 % natural fabrics like wool and silk, where the material can be tracked from fibre to production. These materials are robust and known for the good quality. This study explores different approaches to give the user of the textile associations to nature. The aim is also to bring in emotion and atmosphere, and combine photography, text, experiments, and digital tools to explore the expression nature can give.

Keywords: Digital textile printing, digital manipulation, digital textile print, elements of nature, craft commercialising

1 INTRODUCTION

The design process in this study was affected by the Covid-19 situation with constant closing and reopening workshops, and a larger home presence where I had the abilities to use nature more in my project.

By including wabi-sabi into the process, I went into experimenting with a playful mindset [1]. It is about getting out of your comfort zone to create things you hadn't planned. Beautiful things often come when you least expect it [1]. I let the nature and materials guide me

The research process aimed to explore how to create textile associations to nature with the use of ice and textile printing.

2 METHODS USED

The study approach was with a free process. In my design education programme, as a bachelor student I often experience that there's strict rules and you always need to be on schedule in the design process. In this design process, rather than following a design schedule, I got carried away, using the tactile senses and emotions the material gave away. The visual method and documentation were essential.



Figure 1: Silk tulle and golden threads

2.1 Freezing

Through January and February, it was -17 degrees outside. Using the Norwegian winter to my advantage, I froze large baking trays with water and textile outside overnight. After frozen they turned out as large blocks of ice. After taking them out of the tray, I placed them against a natural lightning source. This to capture every detail when photographing.



Figure 2: Details of frozen tulle



Figure 3: Picture of frozen tulle

The aim was to create new tactile surfaces and the abstract patterns only nature can create. The intended focus was to see nature's own aesthetic and expression.

The silk floated in the water, dancing calmly, before it's trapped within its motion. The cold controlled ice is an interesting contrast to the light silk. When you break it, it changes to a beautiful uncontrolled pattern of geometrical shapes. The motifs and patterns bring an interesting life to the ice and textile.

2.2 Digital Exploration

Nature has its own way of creating things and it is difficult to create expressions like this by hand. I manipulated the colours in Photoshop, exploring what moods I could create by changing the colours. Through history different colours has triggered different moods in us humans [3]. This process may take up to 1-hour pr motif. I created 5 different motifs before landing on Figure 4 and 5. They capture the aesthetic and mood well. The reason I decided to not print all 5 was because of waste.



Figure 4: Picture from figure 2



Figure 5: Picture from figure 3

2.3 Digital Design Printing

I printed the designs I created in Adobe Photoshop by using the MIMAKI Textile printer we have in our workshop. The material I used was 100% silk. They are durable and more sustainable [6].



Figure 6: Mimaki in action

3 RESULTS

The finished textiles woke an interest in me as a designer. New ideas came while observing the patterns.



Figure 7: Motif (figure 4) printed on silk



Figure 8: Motif (figure 5) printed on silk

3.1 Repeating the process

After doing this process, the school closed again, and I decided to explore more outside, when I could not use the workshops inside.

I went outside again but froze the printed textile (Figure 5) letting the process guide me. This created a new tactility and interesting refractions.



Figure 9. Creating interesting aesthetics by freezing the textile from figure 7



Figure 10: Close up



Figure 11: Patten created in PS by repeating figure 10



Figure 12: Patten created in PS by repeating figure 10



Figure 13: Mimaki Tx300P-1800 printer in action



Figure 14: Finished textile print from figure 10)

4 CONCLUSION

Through this process it has been explored different approaches to give the user of the textile associations to nature. Through these months I have learned about materials and created beautiful textiles with the use of a single seam and colours, from 1D to 3D. As a bachelor student I think this approach has strengthened me as a designer. It created another type of reflection about the design process that is about to get to know oneself in a new way; to let the process guide you without thinking about the schedule all the time. It was a joy to create. Despite the frustration when school closed due to Covid 19 it was possible to make the best of the things you have. A follow up study to this project can be done by developing research questions about how to explore different approaches to give the user of the textile associations to nature. If the objects wake feelings in me and others, maybe it can be easier to keep the object for longer [5]. The object that has all the memories and associations to it. By wearing these textiles, the user is dressed in nature.

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