

## Obituary

### Silvia Rizzo, dies July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012

It is with deep regret that I inform you of the passing of one of our members. SILVIA RIZZO was a teacher of sculpture at the Klee-Barabino School of Arts (Liceo Artistico) in Genoa, Italy. She was a member of the Study Group on Environmental Colour Design of the International Colour Association (AIC).

A major focus of her research was arts education practices and educational methodology. The various AIC papers published in the conference proceedings sum up some of her professional concerns very concisely. She shared information with us in the many AIC conferences and congresses she attended: Kyoto, 1997; Warsaw, 1999; Seoul, 2000; Rochester, 2001; Maribor, 2002; Granada, 2005; etc., and also last year's AIC Midterm Meeting in Zurich, 2011. <http://www.aic-color.org/histo.htm>

Just a few weeks ago at the International Interdisciplinary Conference on Colour and Pattern Harmony in Budapest, Hungary, held on June 11-13, 2012, she presented *The Color Maze*, considered as an artwork by the UNICEF, which is a colour design project applied to an urban space in Genoa that stimulates children's reflections on the knowledge and harmony of colours.

As well, she attended numerous international workshops. She conducted a seminar on colour held at the School of Architecture, Genoa University. She was a Visiting Professor at New York University (with offices in New York and Venice). She organized several international conferences in Genoa on colour design and also on the relationship between colour and culture. Some of titles include: *Colour and Urban Space between History and Contemporary Times*; *Colour and Design between Communication and Production*; and *Colour and Didactics*. The Berlin-based architectural journal *Bauwelt* dedicated a cover article to her work.

She collaborated in exhibitions and events organized by the University of Genoa, School of Architecture. She was also a member of Hands-On International, the International Children Museums Association. In 1987 she was awarded First Prize for Colour Education of the FarbDesignPreis, an international competition whose awards ceremony is celebrated at the Design Centre in Stuttgart.

We will miss her precious contributions and presence and would like to extend our deepest sympathy to her family and friends.

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Silvia Rizzo at AIC 2011 Midterm Meeting in Zurich. In the background is her poster on “Teaching ideas and aspects for a new spatial research on the interaction between light, space, and color”.

## Teaching ideas and aspects for a new spatial research on the interaction between light, space, and color

Silvia RIZZO - Art High School Klee-Barabino, Genoa

### 1. Introduction

As part of my teaching experimental research, I continued to analyze in ever greater depth the possibilities that this topic can open up, topic which is clearly connected with my paper “Development of Intuition Skills about Light/Color”, presented at the IIAV Conference on “Color and Light in Architecture”, held in Venice last November.

These exercises, using essential structures, refer to the variability of color, light, and space, enhanced through different points of view. In these structures, the color component defines constantly changing space placements, while providing unexpected color matches with “surprise effects” as far as color perception is concerned. Color, in turn, integrates with either natural or artificial light and with space, which becomes a three-dimensional support.

The various constructions for teaching referred to here have been designed and produced with the collaboration of students, aged 15, 1<sup>st</sup> class of the Art High School Klee-Barabino, in Genoa, Italy.

The works by Verner Panton will also be mentioned as the author who has based the expression of his environments on the interaction between color and light.

### 2. Method

Method: design, intuition, creativity between color, space, and light.

The method describes all the approach steps to the work with students in all its main design phases: namely, design, intuition, and creativity.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Phase

Initial construction of simple volumes followed by their composition along lines of different colors, depending on their position in space (Figure 1). Color selection is obviously intuitive, while creative discovery linked to space plays a major role in a still unexplored design experience.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase

Color: changes of color depending on the point of view suggesting different depths or prospectives.

Color – light.

Through different points of view, different collocations in space can be suggested also with unexpected effects (Figure 2). The tone or timbre effect can be highlighted depending on the quality of light: natural or artificial light in different composition dynamics that makes color perception more complex (Figure 3).

In the context of designed plastic compositions, color itself becomes a value of harmonicity: an extension of the concept of perception disconnected from preset rules.

### 3. Educational Objectives and Conclusions

Main static, undefined contents aimed at developing customized creativity and expert perceptions of the light-space-color complex (Figure 4).

For younger generations, this also means to investigate and communicate new avenues of research, which, if properly developed from an educational point of view, are likely to improve knowledge and enhance sensitivities, as well as help them better understand the environment and the motivations underlying contemporary research, also with a specific reference to future projects and a new design.

This method, when widely applied, extends from the object we have designed to our human landscape, our experience of shapes and the environment, by creating spaces for a new creativity, towards an aesthetic approach in which perception interferences offer a more complex and conscious vision.

Just like in a paper “Color and Design: between Communication and Production”, I recently published, I would like to mention the works by Verner Panton as the author who has based the expression of his environments on the interaction between color and light.

### 4. Discussion

Facts on Verner Panton

Once again, when I speak about my experimental teaching work, I have the opportunity to refer to the work of Verner Panton for two reasons:

- 1) The work and research modernity of this great designer are not yet fully recognized, therefore my intention is to bring him to the attention of the large audience of scholars attending this conference;
- 2) Verner Panton’s work and its wide and rich research have been an important reference point for my work presented here, in particular on the importance of rhythm, namely the modular relation of color in designed shapes. Observing the walls of his rooms that change from orange to black, and to red also by means of light sources.

It is thus possible to match different units that can also become large-sized luminous sculptures. The module keeps its serial arrangement especially through the mutation of color and light.

A message against white and gray – the cold anonymity, which is the main feature of the majority of our environments.

#### The point of view of young students

Last February we created a composition of colors, shapes, and volumes.

We began by designing 3D cubes with each face having a different color chosen among our favorite ones. In this way, we were able to expand and freely choose the colors as well as to increase the range of colors.

We then joined the cubes with colored bands. By looking at the compositions from different angles, different chromatic effects were obtained, with different three-dimensional and chromatic perspectives.

In this exercise, it was then important to change the point of view.

As if conducting an actual potential research, we reproduced colors on chromatic tables, as resulting from our chromatic research: a complementary work that helped us better perceive color nuances and choices.

We then exposed our compositions to natural light, obtaining a “soft” contrast, as well as to artificial light which creates a clearer distinction between colors and volumes, with clear-out shadows.

In addition to this, we also considered that each color has its own light as well as special effect. For example, yellow is a color with a lot of light but at the same time it creates a sort of “approach” effect.

Finally, using some transparent sheets as basis, we layered several cubes on top of each other to make one single work. The outcome was amazing, the cubes seemed to float in mid air, hence, a new effect of light and space! In other words, we sort of transgressed all rules of the color cycle.

Professor Rizzo also showed us the works by Verner Panton, which helped us further enhance our knowledge of light, space, shapes, and colors. The works by the great designer Panton have helped us better appreciate his daring in proposing color for the environment and space. We found all this highly fascinating. Through these works, we have also found the courage to fully express our creativity in linking light, space, and colors and to project ourselves into our contemporary times. This activity will undoubtedly become an important part of our learning experience as well as in experimenting with creativity.

The Students of Class 1-H, Experimental Course, Art High School Klee-Barabino.