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Osaka University

# Painting and Decoration of Henri Matisse

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This paper discusses Matisse as designer and the three decoration categories found in Matisse's works: 1) Matisse's inclusion of rugs, tapestries and decorative wall motifs in his paintings; 2), the unique visual construct of decorative items, and their response to pictorial composition principles, such as the rhythm and repetition found in the spatial relationship between ground and image; 3), decoration used as environmental construct, creating fictions that envelops other depicted motifs. The decorative paintings for the Chtchoukine home, The Dance in the Barnes Foundation collection, and the Chapelle Rosaire in Vence, in each the painting and decoration can actually physically envelope their viewers. Matisse used unique decorative principles in the context of his paintings. For Matisse, decoration included visual color and motif effects, the sense of multiplication, infinity and freedom created through repetition and fragmentation of motif, and the spatial and compositional principles based on flatness and vacillation between front and back. Finally, his works incorporated the principles of enveloping movement. Why then did Matisse bring decoration into his works as he freely crossed the borders between design and painting? This usage is not simply the "expression" focused on by art historians considering Matisse. Rather it is another artistic standard discussed in his *Notes d'un peintre*. This use of decoration conveys "tranquillity," a "sense of psychological safety," "a chair which feels good, soothing the heart and the tired body."

## The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and Sweden in the Inter-war Period

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The Arts and Crafts movement is said to have withered away in the 1910s. However, its main organization, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society still exists today, and certainly in the forgotten period of inter-war years it was active. Or, it was activated by one Scandinavian country, Sweden.

Sweden was very much influenced by Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement, and as a result, developing an original style featuring the mixture of traditionalism and modernism. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society whose attitude towards other organizations was hostile, realized that Swedish design was the embodiment of the principle, that modernism and traditionalism can coexist in the mechanized civilization.

This realization was brought about by two major Swedish exhibitions, one in 1930 in Stockholm, and the other in 1931 in London. After these occasions, the public statement made by the Society widened and the problems of machinery were "welcomed" as a part of its discussion over craft and craftsmanship.

## Musical Instruments in Crystal Palace

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The Crystal Palace exhibition was widely known as an important event which summed up the whole spirit of the Victorian era. Many things were exhibited that expressed self-praise of the bourgeoisies, and were filled with the spirit of "Laissez-faire".

As a social and economic event, this exhibition was successful and epoch-making, but as to its fundamental purpose, it is quite doubtful that the same could be said. The directors of the exhibition, Prince Albert and Henry Cole, planned it with an enlightened purpose. They intended that by exhibiting good designs from all over the world the exhibition could be a good chance for British people to know what good design was.

In spite of their intention, because of a short preparation period and lack of judgement concerning the works on display, the exhibition was filled with products which showed the shortsightedness and the lack of a sense of beauty by their producers, the bourgeoisies. They loved curiosity and thought curious design was good design.

In this essay I tried to show such a tendency of design seen in the most of the works displayed in this exhibition, by analysing the musical instruments exhibited there. Some appeared as their appropriate design as musical instruments, but others showed their overabundant decoration and ornamentation. They were symbolic examples of the love for decoration and ornament by Victorian people.

## The Use of Photography in Takeuchi Seiho's Landscapes of European Scenery

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The Meiji period Japanese-style painter Takeuchi Seiho went to Paris for the 1900 World Exposition and purchased a great number of picture postcards and photographs. He is thought to have done so in order to be able to continue his study of Western painting even after his short stay in Europe was over.

Numerous postcards originally owned by Seiho are still extant today.

In his "Kikoku Hokoku" (Report upon Returning to Japan), Seiho mentions the influence of the invention of photography on painting. Before the advent of photography, Western painting sought an almost photographic realism. With the lionization of the new photographic technology, Seiho says, the emphasis in painting moved from photographic realism to more personal forms of expression.

Traditional Japanese-style painter Imao Keinen extolled the virtues of traditional painting methods and criticized works executed from photographs.

Seiho was similarly conscious of this essential difference between painting and photography. Nevertheless, he used photographs as the basis of his 1901 painting *Ancient Castle, Rome*, *Autumn Color in the Ancient Capital: Roman Ruins*, and *Venetian Moon*.

Painting European landscapes with Japanese pigments was highly unusual at the time, but Seiho did not simply duplicate this Western scenery. In *Ancient Castle, Rome* and *Autumn Color in the Ancient Capital: Roman Ruins*, he evokes the impermanence of human existence, while in *Moon over Venice* we see his purposeful use of Japanese pigments to express a back lit landscape.

# The Relationship Between Techniques and Designs Produced at Jingdezhen During the Yuan Dynasty

— Survey focusing on red and blue underglaze ceramics —

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A great number of studies have been undertaken to determine how blue underglaze porcelain was created at Jingdezhen in the late Yuan Dynasty, and many different ideas have been presented by these researchers.

It is generally believed that red underglaze was invented in almost the same period as blue underglaze, but their origins have still remained unclear. The theme of this thesis focuses on determining the relationship of blue to red underglaze ceramics produced at Jingdezhen in the late part of the Yuan Dynasty.

As a result of my comparisons of the two, it has become very apparent that very few red underglaze ceramics employ petal-panel patterns. In contrast to this, however, the pattern is used not only on many blue underglaze ceramics, but also on ying-ching or shu-fu porcelains produced at Jingdezhen in former times.

The reason that only the small number of red underglaze ceramics employed the petal-panel pattern may be closely connected to the fact that red ceramics employ no dragon patterns. It is well known that the dragon was the symbol of the emperor of China.

In the very early period when Jingdezhen gave birth to many new ceramic techniques, the petal-panel pattern, as well as the imperial five-claw dragon pattern, was used on shu-fu porcelain produced for the imperial family. This could have been the cause for the restricted use of the petal-panel and dragon patterns on other red underglaze ceramics.

Therefore, I have arrived at the conclusion that the difference in pattern between blue and red underglaze ceramics was intentionally made to distinguish Jingdezhen porcelain in the late Yuan Dynasty.

## Minimal Art and Sites: on Judd and Morris

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Art in the 60s tried to subvert a conventional view of art, making an issue of the connection between art and daily life through the avant-garde activity, specifically the dissolution of the autonomy and categories of art. A series of three tendencies at the time (pop art, minimal art, and postminimalism) was not individually complete, but even a set of movements affected by each other, and resulted in taking art out of the museum and inquiring about the institution of art and what art should be. To reconsider these is not only to explain the relation between art and sites, but also to reflect on the problems of sites concerning public art today. In this essay, I would like to take up “minimal art and sites” among the three movements.

Minimalism with rigorously geometric forms was so ascetic and rejective that it was seen as reductive or ideal and as the culmination of modernism. In the meantime, it brought up the relation between a work and a viewer, or a work and the space where it stood, and therefore it was criticized as *theatrical*. This, however, was subsequently revalued in terms of site specificity, and now is considered as the forerunner of postmodernism.

When we think of minimalism through two artists, Donald Judd and Robert Morris, comparatively, the difference between positions of the two seems to be consequently revealed in the relation between works and sites. To Judd, site specificity means that the artist controls the situation and the site of his work, that is, a work and its site are just as the relationship of master and servant. On the other hand, to Morris, it means to entrust his work to a viewer or a place, that is, a work and its site have the interactive relationship. In other words, the difference is whether an artist allows other elements (viewers, the history and the community of a place, and the institution of art) to intervene between the artist himself and his work.

## The Design Education by Prof. Kanzaburo MUKAI

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Professor Kanzaburo Mukai (1890-1959) taught design at *The Kyoto Koto Kogei Gakko* (The Kyoto Higher School of Design) between 1917 and 1956. He researched the theory of design and published seven books on the theme: *The Basic Knowledge of Drawing* 1925, *An Introduction to Designing* 1930, *The Textbook for Design Theory* 1936, *The Textbook for Graphic Design* 1936, *The Textbook for Crafts Design* 1936, *The Textbook for Commercial Design* 1936 and *The Theory of Design* 1937.

His concern at the School was to give the theory to design processes and design education. He read Ernest A. Batchelder, Richard G. Hatton, Frank G. Jackson and Theo van Doesburg and in Berlin studied design processes at the Reimann School, Technical College and Design Studio of Hans Poelzig in 1931-33. Batchelder, Hatton and Jackson were educators of decorative art and their theories were also limited to the matter. But van Doesburg was the modernist painter, architect and art critic, and Prof. Mukai read only his aesthetic theory of experience as the base of designing. Prof. Mukai was interested not in modernist design, but in design processes in general. At the point Prof. Mukai's interest was characteristic in the period in Japan and a forerunner of theory of design processes in 1960s.



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