

# "Colorful World: Overview of Natural Dyes"

The First Biennale of Natural Dyes

## Announcement



Host: Zhejiang Provincial Department of Culture  
Bureau of Cultural Relics of Zhejiang Province  
Organizer: China National Silk Museum  
Co-organizer: China Academy of Art

China National Silk Museum: 73-1 Yuhuangshan Road, Hangzhou, 310002, PR China

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The advent of synthetic dyes in the 19th century has brought a steep decline in the centuries-old productions of natural dyes around the world. The beginning of the 21st century, however, saw a revival of interest in natural dyes as more people turn to nature for solace and harmonious living. Now, many international communities are advocating the use of natural dyes in modern practices and promoting researches on ancient dyeing techniques. In recognition for these artistic and scientific endeavors, the China National Silk Museum (CNSM) organizes the first biennale of natural dyes, with an aim to embrace the beauty of nature, as well as to explore the ancient wisdom and knowledge embodied in the traditional craft of dyeing.

## **EXHIBITION**

### **300-Year History of Dyes on Textiles in Europe and Asia**

In recent years, CNSM has acquired a large collection of textiles worldwide from the 17th to the 19th centuries. CNSM researchers have conducted analyses to identify the dye components on the textiles and comparative studies with dyes used in Asian and European countries of the same period. The results suggest that natural dyes are very diverse and have regional characteristics in terms of science, technology, art and culture.

### **Contemporary Art and Design Works on Natural Dyeing**

Synthetic dyes have been around several centuries. They became very popular because of their ease of use and transport. But today, people began to return using natural dyes. A concept "natural dyeing" has brought new life; these natural dyes are often viewed as gifts of heaven. CNSM is inviting craftsmen and artisans worldwide to showcase their contemporary natural-dyed works on the theme of "natural dyestuffs" around the world. This part of the exhibition is aimed to highlight artistic creations and expressions using natural dyes, with emphasis of cross - border cultural design ideas.

## **COLORFUL WORLD: NATURAL DYES SYMPOSIUM**

Dye masters and scholars from different parts of the world will share their knowledge on modern and ancient dyeing practices in different cultures and decorative techniques employing natural colorants. During the symposium, the audience will gain insight and higher appreciation of the rich diversity of natural dyes and the complex issues surrounding their study.

## **DYE WORKSHOPS**

CNSM will organize workshops on traditional dyeing technology and different decorative techniques from various world regions. The workshops will include reconstitution of *Qianlong* palette, traditional Japanese dyeing, murex purple dyeing,

woodblock printing of India, clamp-resist dyeing and ash-resist dyeing, traditional African dyeing, etc.

### **NATURAL DYE AND TEXTILE MARKET**

There will be an international craft market of up to 20 stalls/ vendors. To participate as vendor, please submit an application. All proposals will be selected by a committee. Please contact LIU Jian ([liujian@cnsilkmuseum.org](mailto:liujian@cnsilkmuseum.org)) for more information.