

A close-up photograph of a person's face, focusing on the eye and forehead. The image is partially obscured by a semi-transparent, light purple overlay on the left side. The word "Aísthima" is written in white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Aísthima

Prelude

I have always felt colour as much as I have seen it.

Before I understood it as pigment, theory, or material, I experienced it as atmosphere — something capable of altering the emotional temperature of a space, shifting perception, awakening memory, or creating silence. Certain colours feel heavy and grounding, others dissolving and expansive. Some carry warmth, grief, distance, or comfort without the need for language. These sensations are deeply personal, yet strangely collective. We recognize ourselves inside colour.

My practice began with a desire to slow down and observe these relationships more carefully.

Working with natural dyes transformed the way I perceive colour entirely. Unlike synthetic pigments, natural colour behaves as a living material. It changes with season, soil, water, fibre, temperature, time, and touch. It resists full control. A single plant can produce countless tonal variations, each carrying traces of its environment and process. Through extraction, dyeing, and repeated experimentation, colour revealed itself not as a fixed visual surface, but as a process of transformation.

This thesis emerged from that ongoing dialogue with material.

Through the study of natural dyes, sensory perception, and emotional response, I began investigating how colour affects the body beyond vision alone. Can colour alter emotional states? Can it shape the way we inhabit space? What happens when colour becomes immersive rather than decorative? What memories, associations, and sensations arise when we are surrounded entirely by a single hue?

These questions led to the development of Aísthima — a spatial and sensory exploration of colour through naturally dyed textiles. Rooted in research across colour theory, psychology, material studies, and embodied experience, the project examines colour as a living encounter between material, environment, and perception.

The title Aísthima derives from the Greek word for sensation, perception, and the capacity to feel through the senses. It speaks to a mode of understanding that exists prior to analysis — a bodily awareness that is immediate, intuitive, and emotional. This notion became central to the project: colour not as information, but as experience.

At a time when contemporary visual culture is increasingly accelerated, artificial, and overstimulating, natural dyeing offers another rhythm. Its processes require patience, attentiveness, and collaboration with natural cycles. To work with plant colour is to work slowly. To observe subtle shifts. To accept unpredictability. This slowness became an essential part of the research itself.

The project does not attempt to define universal meanings for colour, nor to scientifically measure emotional response. Instead, it proposes a space for observation — a space where colour can be encountered as atmosphere, memory, texture, and presence.

What follows is both a material archive and a personal investigation: a study of plants, pigments, textiles, spaces, and human perception, but also an attempt to understand how colour can reconnect us to sensation, to the body, and to the quiet emotional knowledge carried within the natural world.



Colour is never experienced in isolation. It is shaped by memory, culture, environment, and the body itself. Throughout history, artists, philosophers, and scientists have explored the relationship between colour and human perception — not only as an optical phenomenon, but as an emotional and psychological experience.

Thinkers such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wassily Kandinsky, and Josef Albers understood colour as something dynamic and relational, capable of influencing mood, spatial awareness, and sensory response. Their writings suggest that colour is not fixed or universal, but deeply subjective — constantly transformed through context and individual experience.

This project builds upon these ideas through the lens of natural dyeing. Unlike industrial colour systems designed for consistency and control, natural dyes embody variation, unpredictability, and change. Their tones shift depending on season, fibre, mordant, light, and time, carrying traces of both material origin and process.

Through textile experimentation, sensory research, and spatial installation, Aísthima explores colour as a living encounter between material, body, and environment — asking how natural colour can shape emotional perception and create spaces for deeper sensory awareness.

Colour Extraction

The foundation of this project began with plants.

Through the slow process of extracting pigments from roots, bark, leaves, flowers, and food waste, colour became a way of observing relationships between material, time, and transformation. Each dye bath carried its own unpredictability — responding to water, temperature, fibre, mordants, and seasonal change.

Unlike synthetic colour, natural dyes cannot be fully controlled or repeated exactly. Their variations reveal the living nature of the materials themselves. A single plant can produce unexpected tonal shifts, subtle gradients, and layered imperfections that reflect both process and environment.

Working with these materials required patience and attentiveness. The act of dyeing became not only a technical practice, but also a sensory one — grounded in touch, smell, temperature, rhythm, and observation.

This growing archive of naturally dyed textiles formed the emotional and material language of “Aísthima”,





Colour & Perception

As the material research developed, the project began to shift from the study of colour itself toward the **study of perception**. I became interested in how colour is experienced emotionally and physically, and how individual associations shape our responses to it.

Through questionnaires, conversations, and sensory experiments, participants were invited to **reflect on their emotional and bodily reactions to different colours**. The responses revealed that colour is deeply personal and often connected to memory, atmosphere, and lived experience. The same hue could evoke calmness for one person and discomfort or nostalgia for another.

These observations reinforced the idea that **colour is not neutral or universal**. It exists in constant relationship with the body, emotion, and environment. Rather than seeking fixed meanings, the project embraces the subjective and shifting nature of perception.

This exploration became central to Aísthima, informing the development of immersive spaces designed not only to be seen, but to be physically and emotionally felt.





Colour Chamber

The Colour Chamber was developed as an intimate space for **focused sensory observation**. Light, hand-held, and assembled from heavyweight paper, it was designed to isolate colour from its surrounding environment. When looking inside the chamber, external visual distractions disappear, leaving the viewer **immersed** only in the colour of the textile.

This concentrated encounter allowed participants to observe colour more slowly and attentively, focusing on subtle emotional and sensory responses. Used during the research phase of the project, the chamber became a tool for perception — guiding participants through the observation of individual colour swatches before responding to the questionnaire.

By reducing external stimuli, the chamber encouraged **a deeper experience of colour** as atmosphere, presence, and sensation.



The Mood Room

The final outcome of the project is the Mood Room, an immersive installation located in Saghmosavan. Inside the space, three monochromatic silk textiles — all dyed with the same natural colour — surround the viewer. Rather than observing colour as a small sample, visitors encounter it as a **spatial atmosphere**.

In many ways, the Mood Room is the larger spatial version of the Colour Chamber. Both share the same idea of isolating colour and removing external distractions, allowing the observer to focus entirely on the **experience of colour**.





The Architecture

Interviews conducted during the project revealed that responses to colour often reflect a person's internal emotional landscape.

To express this idea spatially, the Mood Room structure is covered with mirror metal sheets on the exterior.

From the outside, the structure blends into its surroundings, reflecting the landscape around it.

But upon entering, the visitor encounters a monochromatic interior.

This contrast turns the room into a kind of **perceptual capsule**, separating the viewer from the outside world and allowing colour to become the primary experience.

The Colour

The colour selected for the Mood Room was not selected for an audience, but for myself.

Colour perception is deeply personal, and the Mood Room reflects my own intuitive relationship with colour.

The choice emerged partly from observing the swatches through the Colour Chamber, but also from an emotional response to the present moment.

In a way, this process resembles how colour trends often emerge — through a mixture of observation, cultural atmosphere, and intuition.

At this particular moment, I felt that this was the colour my mind and body needed.





Beyond Textiles

Instead of discarding the leftover dye baths, I began experimenting with transforming these dye baths into lake pigments.

What initially appeared as waste became a completely new material and opened a new direction within the project.

Converting plant dyes into pigment form allows these colours to continue their journey beyond textiles — moving into watercolours, inks, and other artistic applications.

And so my next project, growing from the branches of Aisthima, is to transform these pigments into all-natural watercolour sets, allowing these colours—born from nature—to continue their life through new forms.



Final Thoughts

Aísthima is not a fixed conclusion, but an ongoing inquiry into how colour is experienced, shaped, and remembered.

Working with natural dyes has revealed colour as something continuously in flux — never fully stable, never fully repeatable. Each experiment carries traces of its material origins, but also of time, environment, and chance. In this way, colour becomes less a controlled outcome and more a record of relationship: between plant and process, body and perception, material and space.

Rather than defining what colour is, *Aísthima* remains open to what colour does — how it affects the body, how it shapes atmosphere, and how it continues to evolve beyond its original form.

The research does not end here. It continues in material exploration, in collaboration, and in the ongoing transformation of natural colour into new mediums and experiences.

