



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

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BA (Suzhou University, 2014)
MA (University of Victoria, 2016)

**“Aesthetics of Colors in Japanese Traditional Painting
in the Edo Period”**

Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

Tuesday, December 13, 2016
3:00 P.M.
David Turpin Building
Room A136

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. M. Cody Poulton, Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Tsung-Cheng Lin, Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Henry D. Smith II, East Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Brian Wyvill, Department of Computer Science, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

The Aim of this thesis is to examine and study Japanese traditional colours: gold and red for the Kano school, indigo and purple for the *ukiyo-e*, including their symbolic meanings, pigments, how they were applied in art works and how they were related to Japanese aesthetics.

This thesis is contributed by four chapters: the Introduction, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, and Conclusion. The introduction indicates the research purpose, theory, and research method. It also demonstrates the reason why the four colours and the two schools were selected. A combination of western colour theory, represented by Goethe, and Asian colour theory, represented by Five-elements theory and Confucius, is used in the following studies.

In Chapter 2, studies on the colour gold and red for the Kano school are presented. These show that Japanese aesthetics is not a simple concept, but an aggregation of conflicting senses of values. The thesis then examines the colour indigo and purple for the *ukiyo-e* in Chapter 3. The two colours illustrate the concept of Japanese aesthetics, especially “*wabi-sabi*, 侘び寂び”, “*shibui*, 渋い”, and “*iki*, 粹”.

In the two detailed central chapters, the thesis provides readers with resourceful charts and pictures of paintings that are helpful to understand the statement. Finally, the thesis concludes the studies on Japanese traditional colours and their relations to Japanese aesthetics. This thesis hopes to not only help scholars in the field of Japanese traditional art and art history, but also offer some inspiration to readers who are doing research on Japanese contemporary design and modern art.