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Indigo: Egyptian Mummies To Blue Jeans



Synopsis

Praise for the U.K. edition: Thoroughly satisfying. -- Crafts All those working with indigo or merely interested in the cultural history of that dye must read this book. -- Textile Forum Indigo: Egyptian Mummies to Blue Jeans tells the compelling story of the world's oldest and best-loved dye, the iconic blue behind one of the world's ubiquitous fabrics: denim. Brilliant photographs and eloquent text describe the process of making indigo dye from plants and how indigo is used. It weaves stories of indigo's producers, its cultural traditions and history, its importance in global trade, and the modern textile artists and fashion designers who are reviving indigo for sustainable development. The book covers: Indigo's history, dating to ancient times The botanical sources of indigo, including woad Uses of indigo in traditional medicine and religious practices The chemistry of indigo and the technology used to extract it Production and dyeing methods The commercial indigo industry, past and present The health consequences of making indigo Modern and future applications of indigo Indigo's continuing appeal and the iconic blue jean Indigo tells fascinating stories from the history of the dye, such as the recent discovery of 17th-century Spanish galleons in the Caribbean carrying hundreds of chests of raw indigo, which the author successfully used to dye 21st-century fabrics.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

[An] extraordinary book. (Sumana Roy Warscapes Magazine 2014-10-06)The essence of indigo as a commodity is captured perfectly by Jenny Balfour-Paul.

<http://chocolatefoodofthegods.weebly.com/indigo-feeling-blue.html> (Skylar Ensburry Chocolate Food

of the Gods Blog 2014-04-13)(review of UK edition) (reviewed with Madder Red) Both books combine practical wisdom with a tireless search for historical evidence in print, documents, textiles and photographs, and both deal with the use of the dyes in textiles, paints, and medicines, though their emphases differ. Both have abundant and varied illustrations, but Chenciner's are in black and white, whereas Balfour-Paul offers a magnificent selection in colour...The ramifications of dye-plants are endless, and these two books open up innumerable alluring pathways, not yet explored to their ends. (Joan Thirsk, emeritus reader in economic history, Times Higher Education

2001-02-01)(review of UK edition) Indigo: Egyptian Mummies to Blue Jeans is the definitive work on the dye, tracing its exotic history from the times of the ancient Pharaohs to the present day. Indigo, first published in 1998 by The British Museum Press, has a recently updated last chapter that focuses on sustainability and the environment in the 21st century, and looks at how the dye is once again growing in popularity thanks to an increased demand for organic clothing made from eco-friendly materials. It is far more relevant today because synthetic dyes made from toxic ingredients and used by the textile and fashion industries are creating a large amount waste that is polluting the planet. Natural indigo is made from plants and is a non-toxic product that enriches the soil. In hotter climates indigo can be farmed in rotation with other crops, or on waste land, and it also provides employment in rural regions. Currently, one of Jenny Balfour-Paul's projects is to encourage worldwide revivals of sustainable natural dyes. The book is beautifully illustrated with over 435 images that show how the dye has featured in different cultures and communities throughout the world. Jenny's experience as a batik artist and teacher is evident in her exploration of how indigo has been portrayed in folklore and through art, exemplified by some stunning photographs of textiles. Indigo has been the symbol for a diverse range of beliefs, highly prized in some cultures, for thousands of years. Strongly associated with wealth, fertility, rites of passage and even in mourning ceremonies, indigo has always been a desirable commodity. Nothing is left out that anyone with an interest in the development of indigo could possibly want to know, from the agricultural and botanical origins to the commerce and economics of the dye. (Jo Wyndham Ward Jo Wyndham Ward Blog 2011-10-25)Capturing a tapestry of cultural importance around the world author Jenny Balfour-Paul has dedicated most of her life to researching the history of the indigo dye, and gives an in depth explanation of why it's so important now. Following the oldest dye in the world really makes you understand how powerful this dye was for royalty and for trading throughout the ages right up to modern day. If you're interested in the production of dyeing or you're in an art program at school this is a book you want to have for your archives. For denim lovers (the denim industry is the largest user of indigo dye) and design enthusiasts, the book will offer new insight into

the process of dyeing denim and fabric. I find myself coming back to this book for inspiration, it has become my definitive guide for textiles, history, and plant based dyes, straight through to synthetic. www.thinkmag.net/review-indigo-egyptian-mummies-to-bluejeans (Think Magazine 2012-08-07) Historical reflections on the cultivation, use, and politics in this world of blues--from India to Palestine to the Solomon Islands to Nigeria.... Stunningly illustrated and richly researched, *Indigo: Egyptian Mummies to Blue Jeans* tells the history of the dye set against the backdrop of an industrial world. (Julie Foreword Reviews 2012-03-06) This beautifully illustrated volume presents many details on the history, creation, use and significance of indigo dye.... Balfour-Paul communicates her fascination with indigo, and the many compelling photographs are a treat. (Kathryn Wekselman Library Journal 2012-08-01)

Jenny Balfour-Paul, an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Exeter and a Fellow of both the Royal Geographical Society and the Explorers Club, is a partner in "Silk Road Connect", an exciting educational initiative of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project. She is also a Councillor and Trustee of the Royal Geographical Society and President of the UK Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers. A renowned authority on indigo, Jenny has been publishing, lecturing, exhibiting and broadcasting on dye and related subjects for well over twenty years.

I bought this for my wife to use as one of her references to use in her work developing indigo dyes. She says its a good reference without being overly scientific.

Excellent book. Anything written by Jenny Balfour-Paul on indigo is worth buying and keeping.

Detailed, meticulously researched information on indigo and its history. Whether you are a textile historian or a fiber artist, the technical information in this book is of great value.

Very good copy and informative book about the process of indigo dying. It is a British Museum publication and very well researched. Not much about the pigment for painting but mostly concentrated on the coloring of cloth world wide.

great present

good book

If you have ever been interested in how our color pallet came about you will treasure this book. it is a must have to any dyers library

If you are really interested in the influence this one dyestuff has had historically and culturally, this book is an excellent source. The photographs and illustrations are great and the layout and quality of the printing is quite good. The writing is academic and a bit ponderous. There are levels of detail that many of us, who just want to become better informed, could do without. There is also very little material on the current state of the art for current indigo usage in industrial production. We are presented a lot of material about native and small lot dyeing that could have been placed into better perspective with at least a photograph and short write-up of a modern continuous denim dye range as a contrast. An informative book, but certainly NOT light reading!

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