

# Words and Uses of Colour in Trecento Florentine Painting

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Additional information

Year thesis started

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Status of thesis

Defended

Defense date

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Research theme

[4. Actors, institutions, networks: socio-cultural conditions of artistic activity](#)

[5. Materials, techniques, crafts: theoretical and practical approaches to artistic making](#)

Thesis

## **Summary**

This thesis investigates the uses and functions of colour in Florentine panel painting of the Trecento. As the first study on this topic, it moves beyond a mere analysis of hues, using a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates lexicography, material studies, and visual analysis. To determine the role of colour within Florentine society, the first section undertakes a comprehensive examination of colour vocabulary in 14th-century Italian languages, revealing both the significance of red within Florentine culture and the neutrality of colour terms regardless of context. The second section provides a synthesis of previous studies on the material history of colour and an overview of the materials and their application techniques. It highlights the inherent complexity of tempera techniques and the systematic use of pigments, while also allowing for some adaptability to artists' preferences. Finally, the third section examines the functions of colour within images, from both iconographic and pictorial perspectives. This study brings to light the systems underpinning painter colour choices, showing that, while certain individual preferences may be identified, the use of colour in panel paintings follows iconographic, rhetorical,

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