

“Dyeing with Ground Coffee”

Yancel Valladares

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In this dyeing research project, I will be learning how to dye shirts using a natural dye. I will be using ground coffee as my dyestuff and two shirts as a my fabric. By watching a tutorial, I will learn the process of how to prepare the dye and how long the process will be in order for the fabric to completely absorb the color of the coffee correctly. I will also learn how to add resist-dyeing techniques on the shirts in order to create unique designs on the shirts. Throughout the paper, I will discuss the history of the dyestuff I chose to use, the affect color has in fashion today, the process I went through while dyeing the shirts, and my observations after the dyeing was finished.

The dyestuff I chose was ground coffee. The specific coffee I used is Arabic and is produced in Honduras. The range of colors that Coffee can produce on a fabric/garment can range from a light beige to a medium brown. This ground coffee would normally sell for 245 lempiras which is \$10. I would depending on how much you use this would determine if it is expensive or inexpensive. If you buy this coffee just to drink and you don't drink coffee that often, it probably would be inexpensive. If you are constantly dyeing clothing with it, you'll find yourself having to buy it more often which can because expensive. If you don't only use coffee to dye naturally or decide to put a lot of fabrics in the same dye bath, it might not be expensive to you since you're saving more of it. I believe that coffee has been subject to sumptuary laws because of how addicting it could be to some who drink it. Coffee was symbolic during the Enlightenment period. People in this period felt a sense of freedom while talking about new ideas while drinking coffee. This has made an impact into our modern day lives. When we feel like conversating in a deep way with our friends, family and even when meeting new people, we usually say "do you want to meet up for coffee?".

Color has the capability to affect your moods throughout your day. For myself, I choose the color I want to wear on my clothing depending on the mood I am feeling that day rather than picking out an outfit a day before and letting the outfit/colors run my emotions. I usually like to wear basic colors like black, white and beige tops so that I'm able to make an outfit with any bottoms that I have. I believe my favorite color to wear is beige because it's neutral. I like to look for garments that are soft and comfortable to wear because it keeps me at ease. Although I like switching textures for fancy events, there are some textures in garments that can cause a irritable reaction to my skin which can become uncomfortable. A celebrity who's style I admire is Selena Gomez and Lily-Rose Depp. They both know how to make simple outfits like their street styles look so beautiful on them. The garments they wear for events are also stunning but simple well which is I adore very much.

The items I am dyeing are both white shirts. One is an old shirt I was noticing that start to look worn out and the other is a V-neck t-shirt I bought at Michael's. I prepped the shirts by placing them in boiling hot water and soap for about 3 hours and then rinsed them out very well. Then I began to make the coffee/dye bath and some vinegar as my mordant. Then I decided what resist-dyeing technique I wanted to put on my garments if any. I decided that I was only going to do some on the V-neck t-shirt since my old shirt already had some type of design in the front resembling as if the shirt had a knot and I didn't want to take away attention from the design. Once I finished making a resist-dyeing technique on the V-neck t-shirt, I placed them into the dyebath of coffee. Both garments immediately started to absorb the coffee well which amazed me. I let the shirts sit in the dyebath for about an hour since I noticed how well they were absorbing the color. After that I placed them to dry for about another hour decided to take off the

rubber bands I placed on the V-neck t-shirt for the resist-dyeing technique. I hung them both on hangers until they were completely dry.



The picture on the left shows the coffee that I choose to use. My mother's cousin gifted it to her while she was vacationing in Honduras. The picture on the right is me adding the coffee to the cloth strainer.



The left picture is me adding hot water into the coffee strainer in order to make the coffee which will then be used as the dyebath. The picture on the right is the vinegar I used as a mordant which I then added into the pot of coffee next to it.



The left picture is me using a fork to twist the V-neck t-shirt in a circle in order to add a design. The middle picture is me adding the rubber bands on top of the rose like circle to create a resist-dyeing technique. The picture on the right is how the V-neck t-shirt looked like when I was finished adding the rubber bands in the places I chose to create the design.



These three pictures are of me adding both the shirts into the dye-bath. The last picture shows how I tried to push the shirts into the pot of coffee well in order for them to be fully covered of dye.



This picture shows how the shirts looked after being hung to dry. The shirt on the left is the V-neck t-shirt I bought at Michael's and the shirt I decided to do a resist-dyeing technique on. You can see that it created a design that almost resembles the way a lime looks when it is cut open. The shirt on the right is an old shirt from my closet that I had decided could be dyed in order to bring it back to life.

I found that the color I expected to see actually showed on the shirts! I didn't want the shirts to be too dark or too light. Although, there was a lot of patches throughout some areas of both shirts which could have been because of the amount of vinegar I put in, when I added it or from scouring. From the YouTube tutorial I saw, there wasn't much of a difference in the process/outcome expect for the amount of time the woman let things sit for hours.

In conclusion, I enjoyed doing the whole dyeing project. It was something new to learn and do rather than buying everything artificially made. It was fun to actually go through the process and waiting for the results. One of the major things I learned from the process is appreciation. I learned how to appreciate the process and not take for granted the things that we have in front of us that we waste all the time. It was exciting to make something in a more natural way.

References

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