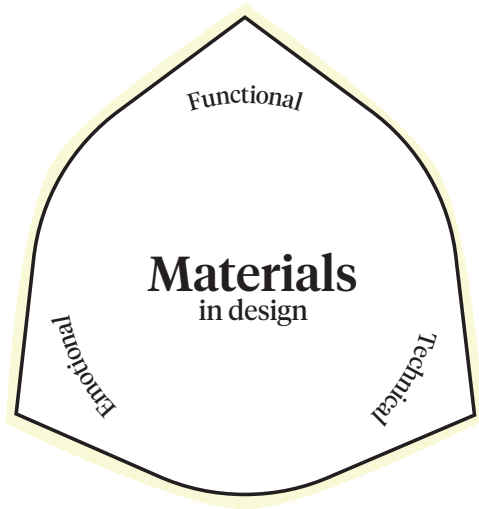


Material Geography



Material Geography

What?

Material geography considers the geographical journeys materials have undertaken through sourcing and production. This covers aspects of local sourcing and production, but also how a globalised production system gives easy access to geographically distant resources.

Why?

Material geography can minimise use of resources i.e. transport cost, CO₂ emission and support user understanding through transparency within the supply chain. Furthermore, it can create awareness on mono-cultural production, loss of biodiversity and building material resilience.

Challenges

- It is not always easy to gain insights on material origin and their production process and thus to influence it when sourcing.
- Minimising material flows may limit material diversity and quantities, and cost of materials could be significantly higher.

Examples

- Atelier NL develops tangible, everyday objects that illustrate the value of local raw materials both in sourcing and production.
- India Flint experiments symbiotically with local plants to discover colours and develop eco-prints to tell narratives of her environment.
- The Bottle-Up initiative in Zanzibar employs local craftsmen to transform the substantial glass waste.

This Card Links To

Material Bio-Ecology / Material Circulation / Material Crafting / Material Origin / Material Plurality / Material Scarcity / Material Transparency

Further Reading

Bridge (2011). Resource geographies 1: Making carbon economies, old and new. *Progress in Human Geography* 35 (6), pp. 820–34 / Cullen, Allwood & Bambach (2012). Mapping the global flow of steel: from steelmaking to end-use goods. *Environmental science & technology* 46 (24), pp. 13048–55 / Manzini (2016). Resilient systems and cosmopolitan localism – The emerging scenario of the small, local, open and connected space.