

Transmaterial Aesthetics (Berlin, 1–2 Oct 13)

Aedes Network Campus Berlin, Oct 1–02, 2013

Deadline: Jun 3, 2013

Sandra Karina Loschke

Symposium: Transmaterial Aesthetics - Experiments with Timber in Architecture and Technology

Aedes Network Campus Berlin

In the light of increasing environmental awareness, timber emerged at the forefront of material investigations in architecture over the past decades. Waste material from the end of the manufacturing process, or recycled material is fused with other materials to produce composites with changed structural, performative and aesthetic properties. Pulped, cast, bundled, 3D-printed, and robotically-stacked, new technologies enabled a radical shift away from traditional tectonics and towards articulations previously associated with other materials such as concrete, masonry and plastics. Together, these experiments give rise to a new techno-aesthetic paradigm that could be described as a form of transmateriality.

In nineteenth century architectural theory, Gottfried Semper's Practical Aesthetics already suggested a synthesis between artistic and technological developments brought about by processes of material transfiguration (Stoffwechsel). Today, new visual languages emerge alongside innovative technologies that permit the realistic study of material changes across structures: in folded plates, grid-shells and multi-reciprocal frames, structural integrity is achieved through grading, layering and fusing of surfaces. In practice, developments in timber range from Walter Gropius's and Konrad Wachsmann's Packaged House, which unsuccessfully attempted to sell the modern dream of technologically advanced living to the masses, to Jürgen Mayer H's Metropol Parasol whose captivating elastic forms promise the activation of public space.

In order to explore the interplay between aesthetics and technology in timber architecture, we seek submissions that probe the topic of transmateriality from perspectives that redress imbalances and missing links in the debate. We welcome critical investigations of historic or theoretical content, as well as practice-oriented contributions and case studies exploring the latest technological research in timber. We also invite proposals for workshops.

Submissions:

Please send a 500-word abstract and a short cv to the symposium convenors Sandra Karina Löscke (sandra.loschke@uts.edu.au) and Matthias Ludwig (matthias.ludwig@hs-wismar.de) by 3 June 2013. Abstracts will be double-blind refereed and notifications will be sent out by 17 June, 2013. If accepted, they will be published on the institutional websites.

The symposium is supported by ARUP and the UTS Centre for Contemporary Design Practices.

Reference:

CFP: Transmaterial Aesthetics (Berlin, 1-2 Oct 13). In: ArtHist.net, May 2, 2013 (accessed Jul 16, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/5251>>.