

Personal reflection on my Recent Exhibition

Reflecting on my recent exhibition on the history of Leith, especially my presentation of the Whaling Ship "Faith" model, I realize that I've made a concerted effort to align with sustainable and eco-conscious principles. This effort aligns with concepts from "A New Way to Make Things" and "Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things," and it's something I'm quite proud of.

Use of Recycled Materials:

In my display, I chose to use recycled materials like cardboard and previously used LED lights. This decision was rooted in the cradle-to-cradle concept, reducing waste and extending the lifecycle of these materials. I see this as a practical and responsible approach to resource efficiency in my work.

Creation of a Movable Box:

I designed a movable box for displaying the ship model. This wasn't just for convenience; it was a deliberate choice to ensure ease of transportation and storage, maximizing the potential for reuse in future exhibitions. This aligns perfectly with my goal of sustainable design.

Applying 'Vibrant Matter' Principles:

My use of existing materials was influenced by the ideas in "Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things." I aimed to contribute to a narrative where objects are seen as having ongoing potential and life beyond their initial use. It's important to me that design is not just about creating new things but also about reimagining the use of what already exists.

Sustainability in Temporary Exhibitions:

The challenge with temporary exhibitions is their often short-lived nature. However, in this project, I ensured that the materials I used could be reused or recycled post-exhibition, setting a sustainable model for such events.

Future Projects and Sustainability:

While I'm satisfied with my efforts, I recognize there's always more to learn and improve. In future projects, I'll delve deeper into the complete lifecycle of materials, exploring options that are not only recycled but also recyclable or biodegradable.

I also see value in engaging visitors about my sustainable practices. It's an opportunity to educate and inspire others to consider sustainability in design.

Personal Reflection:

This project has deepened my understanding and commitment to sustainable design. It has challenged me to think about how my work not only tells historical stories but also highlights the narrative of sustainability and responsible design.

Looking forward, I'm excited to explore new sustainable practices and continue incorporating these principles into my work. It's a journey of both innovation and responsibility.

In conclusion, my work in the exhibition not only showcased an important piece of history but also underscored my dedication to sustainability. I believe that my approach serves as a testament to how temporary exhibitions can be both informative and environmentally conscious. As I evolve in my career, maintaining this focus on sustainability will be a key driver for my innovation and inspiration.





Reflective Journey Through the 'Environmental Design' Course

Today's debate crystallized a vital truth for me: achieving sustainability in design is not a static goal but a dynamic journey. It demands collaboration across diverse spheres – designers, businesses, governments, and consumers. The journey starts with educating every stakeholder about design choices' environmental and social impacts. Integrating sustainability into the core of design – from eco-design principles to selecting sustainable materials – is imperative. Moreover, embracing a circular economy, where products are designed for longevity and recyclability, is crucial to minimize waste.

Collaboration stands as the cornerstone of this endeavor, bringing together varied expertise to foster innovation. It's essential for governments and industries to establish standards that promote sustainable practices, incentivizing greener choices. Equally crucial is transparency in supply chains and raising consumer awareness about sustainable options.

Investing in research for new sustainable materials and technologies is paving the way for groundbreaking innovations. In a broader context, sustainable urban planning and infrastructure development play a key role in reducing environmental impacts. (European Environment Agency, 2023)

Global cooperation is indispensable in tackling challenges like climate change. Through advocacy, activism, and continuous improvement in practices and technologies, we can drive a sustainable transformation that is inclusive and ethical. (Klaczynska, 2023)

Reflecting on the past eleven weeks, I realize how profoundly my perspective has shifted. Engaging in a course about environmental understanding – crucial for designer passionate about interior design like me – has been transformative.

Before this journey, names like William McDonough, Jane Bennett, and Jennifer Gabrys were just unfamiliar to me. Their revolutionary ideas on sustainable design and plastic, respectively, have now opened new horizons for me. McDonough's concept of 'Cradle to Cradle' design particularly resonated with me, emphasizing the importance of designing with the end in mind – a perspective I had rarely considered before.

The course's interactive teaching style was what captivated me most. Our lectures and workshops, where we applied theories to real-world scenarios, transformed abstract concepts into tangible experiences. The reading groups, as well as the debate, fostered lively discussions, allowing us to delve into

diverse viewpoints and deepen our understanding. This open forum, valuing everyone's opinions, was like peering through a kaleidoscope; each discussion revealed a new pattern of thinking.

Now, I see interior design through a lens of environmental responsibility. This course didn't just amplify my enthusiasm for sustainable design; it instilled a profound sense of duty towards our planet. As I continue my journey in interior design, I am committed to integrating these principles, ensuring that every space I create or influence not only looks good but also pays homage to the planet that houses us all.

In conclusion, I extend my deepest gratitude to our tutors for their comprehensive and dedicated efforts in imparting this knowledge. Their guidance was instrumental in making this learning journey both profound and enjoyable.

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Plastic Pollution

Reflecting on the issue of plastic pollution in the context of interior design and drawing insights from Jennifer Gabrys' work. Gabrys' exploration of the vast accumulation of plastics in ocean gyres and the transformation of marine environments due to microplastics underscores the need for a paradigm shift in interior design materials. As designers, assessing the environmental impact of plastics and synthetic materials in our projects is crucial. For inspiration, we can look at companies like Kvadrat, leading the way in the textile and design industries by turning to recycled and sustainable materials, including ocean-bound plastic. This not only helps reduce marine pollution but also promotes a circular economy.



Gabrys refers to plastics as “materials in process,” highlighting the importance of understanding the entire lifecycle of our materials. This comprehensive view pushes us to consider the aesthetic and functional attributes and the environmental impact from production to disposal.

The fragmentation of plastics into microplastics that persist in the environment suggests a need for designs that emphasize durability and longevity. Creating timeless spaces with long-lasting materials minimizes waste and frequent renovations.

Drawing from Gabrys' insights, there is a clear call for designers to become environmental advocates. This includes educating clients about the environmental impacts of their choices and steering them towards sustainable practices. A compelling case study is the transformation of a eco-friendly

small retail space by designer K, who exclusively used recycled and biodegradable materials, illustrating how aesthetic and environmental considerations can harmoniously coexist. (Redazione, 2020)

The challenge of plastic pollution also opens doors for creative innovation in interior design. We can explore unique ways to incorporate recycled materials, transforming waste into valuable and aesthetically pleasing design elements. Promoting Biodegradability and Non-Toxicity: As Gabrys notes the emergence of microbial life forms that ingest plastics, it's increasingly important to prioritize non-toxic and biodegradable materials in our designs, ensuring they don't contribute to harmful environmental processes.

Reflecting on the Broader Impact of Design Choices: Gabrys' insights prompt us to consider the broader impact of our design choices on environmental issues like plastic pollution.

In conclusion, Gabrys' insights provide a critical lens for designers to reevaluate and improve their practices. By choosing sustainable materials, educating clients, advocating for environmental responsibility, and innovating in material usage, we can significantly address the challenge of plastic pollution. Let us each take a step towards sustainability in our next project, setting a new interior design standard that values aesthetic and environmental integrity.

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Embracing the Future: Top Emerging Trends in Eco-Friendly Interior Design

As we proceed into the 21st century, the fusion of sustainability and style has become more than just a trend – a movement. Eco-friendly interior design is rapidly evolving, blending innovation with aesthetics to create beautiful and responsible spaces. I have found some of the most exciting emerging trends in this field.

Biophilic Design: Bringing the Outdoors In

One of the hottest trends in eco-friendly interior design is biophilic design. This approach connects our inherent need to affiliate with nature in the modern built environment. It goes beyond just adding plants; it's about integrating natural elements like wood, stone, and water features into interiors. Large windows that let in natural light, living green walls, and nature-inspired textures and patterns are hallmarks of this trend.

Sustainable Materials: A Conscious Choice

The shift towards materials that are kind to the planet is gaining momentum. Bamboo, for instance, is a popular choice due to its rapid regrowth rate. Recycled materials are also in

vogue – think countertops made from recycled glass or reclaimed wood furniture. Designers increasingly seek materials with a lower environmental footprint, be it through upcycled goods or resources harvested in an eco-friendly manner.

Low-VOC and Natural Paints

Indoor air quality is taking center stage, with more homeowners opting for low-VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) and natural paints like Lake Land Paints. Traditional paints release chemicals that can be harmful over time, but low-VOC options provide a healthier and more eco-friendly alternative. These paints are also available in various colors and finishes, making them a practical and stylish choice.

Energy-Efficient Lighting

With the growing awareness around energy consumption, energy-efficient lighting is becoming a staple in eco-friendly interior design. LED lighting, for instance, uses a fraction of the energy of traditional bulbs and lasts much longer. Intelligent lighting systems that allow homeowners to control lights remotely or through motion sensors are also rising, reducing unnecessary energy use. (Department of Energy)

Vintage and Second-Hand Finds

There's a growing appreciation for vintage and second-hand furniture. Not only does this trend help reduce waste, but it also adds character and history to a space. Mixing old and new is a crucial characteristic of contemporary eco-friendly interiors, where, for example, a vintage oak table might be paired with modern bamboo chairs. (Kijowska,2021)

Minimalism: Less is More

The minimalist trend aligns perfectly with sustainable principles – less consumption means less waste. This doesn't

mean spaces are bare; instead, they are thoughtfully curated with items that serve a purpose or bring joy. The focus is on quality over quantity, with a preference for well-made, durable things that won't need to be replaced frequently.

Multifunctional Spaces and Furniture

As urban living spaces get smaller, multifunctional designs become essential. Furniture serving multiple purposes, like sofa beds or extendable tables, are popular. This approach saves space and reduces the need to purchase more items, aligning with a more sustainable lifestyle. (n.d.)

In conclusion, these trends in eco-friendly interior design showcase a growing commitment to sustainability without compromising style and comfort. As we become more conscious of our environmental impact, our living spaces reflect this change, embracing better designs.

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Illuminating the Mundane: The Vibrancy of Repurposed Glass Bottles

In the context of Jane Bennett's 'Vibrant Matter,' I witness a transformative journey of glass bottles, from being mere waste to becoming essential elements of design and utility. This transformation is not just a change in physical form but a radical redefinition of the object's role and significance.

Glass bottles are single-use items destined for disposal after fulfilling their primary containment purpose. However, through the lens of vibrant matter, these bottles possess an inherent potential that transcends their initial utility. Repurposing them into decorative light fixtures is an exploration of this potential. The transformation is a testament to their continued vitality and agency beyond their conventional life cycle.

The glass bottle is no longer a container but a vessel of light. This shift challenges traditional perceptions of material use, opening new possibilities for how objects exist and interact in our environment. I infuse the bottles with new aesthetic and functional value by painting them and incorporating lights. This process is not just about beautification; it's a re-engagement of the material, allowing it to play an essential role in its environment.

The repurposing of glass bottles epitomizes sustainable design. It showcases how we can redirect waste towards functional art, contributing to a circular economy where the end-of-life of one product marks the beginning of another.

This approach mitigates the need for continuous raw material extraction and reduces waste proliferation.

In conclusion, transforming glass bottles into light fixtures is more than a physical alteration; it reimagines the materials' narrative. It aligns with Bennett's view of vibrant matter, highlighting how every object, regardless of its original purpose, is part of a dynamic, interconnected network. This transformation illuminates physical objects and sheds light on the implications of recognizing and utilizing latent potential in everyday things. It underscores the importance of engaging with our material world sustainably, innovatively, and thoughtfully. It celebrates the ongoing vibrancy and agency of matter in our lives.



Materials, Ecologies and Futures

After reviewing the Stories of Stuff in the second lecture on Materials, Ecologies, and Futures, I realized that interior

design should encompass more than aesthetics and functionality. It is also important to note that interior design incorporates the ability to portray a story using objects and spaces. Doing so benefits the planet and enhances the human experience, creating spaces that resonate with depth, history, and a conscientious spirit.

Bringing narrative into interior design begins with a consideration of the human experience. People are more likely to connect emotionally with spaces that tell a story. If the objects in a room, whether furniture, textiles, or decorations, have a history or unique origin story, they engage the occupants intellectually and emotionally. This connection fosters a sense of belonging and appreciation, transforming spaces into experiences rather than mere functional areas(Martinez, n.d.).

A second reason is that storytelling can be an effective tool for promoting sustainability in interior design. By selecting materials and products with eco-friendly narratives, designers educate their clients and users about the importance of environmental stewardship. Recycled materials, sustainably sourced hardwood, and repurposed items can all be eco-friendly. This approach also reduces the ecological footprint of design projects by raising awareness about the effects of our choices on the environment.

In addition, incorporating stories into the design process promotes ethical consumption. By emphasizing the origin and manufacturing process of materials, designers encourage transparency. This transparency will increase the demand for ethically produced goods, support fair labor practices, and reduce exploitative manufacturing practices. A more informed consumer is more likely to make decisions that align with their values as they become more knowledgeable about their purchases(Courtnell, n.d.).

Design storytelling contributes significantly to the

preservation of cultural heritage and the promotion of diversity. Designing spaces that celebrate and preserve cultural histories can be achieved by incorporating artisanal crafts, traditional techniques, and culturally significant patterns into modern designs. This approach adds value to the design and provides a market for local craftspeople and communities (Zort, 2023).

It can overcome this challenge by educating clients about the long-term benefits of sustainable and narrative-rich designs. As well as keeping ethical and sustainable standards, designers can provide budgetary and aesthetic solutions. Moreover, as public awareness grows, the demand for such materials and designs will likely increase, potentially reducing costs and making them more accessible.

In conclusion, incorporating storytelling into interior design is more than a trend; it is a necessary component of a shift toward more ethical and responsible design practices. Designers can develop a deeper human connection to their environments by creating spaces that tell stories. They can advocate for sustainable and ethical practices and celebrate cultural diversity. The greatest goal is to create interiors that are not only visually appealing but also functional. They should also reflect a commitment to the planet's well-being and inhabitants. While presenting specific challenges, this approach is essential for the evolution of interior design as a discipline that values both beauty and responsibility.

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Sustainable Interior Design in the Arvo Pärt Centre

As I research deeper into sustainable examples, the knowledge I as an interior designer gain will become an invaluable asset for shaping a greener future, mirroring the growing trend in interior design to embrace environmentally friendly principles over wasteful practices. There is evidence of this transition in structures such as the Arvo Pärt Centre, which was designed from the beginning to be sustainable.

Sustainability in global interior design aims to achieve two things: (1) a balance between architectural manifestation and the environment; and (2) a design that is long-lasting so that future generations will be able to use it without interruption (Jones, 2008). A design plan that incorporates nature can facilitate coexistence. According to Cheney (2019), the Arvo Pärt Center is situated within the Nordic Forest landscape. By

taking advantage of the floor-to-ceiling glass, the structure co-exists harmoniously with the trees in the background, which would normally be cleared in a standard design configuration. In this way, the interior ambiance is enhanced with an experience of nature. Floor, wall, and ceiling surfaces in the Arvo Part Centre are covered with white oak veneer. Veneer made from white oak is an excellent choice for longevity. It is a rot-resistant driven design (The Wood Database, n.d.).

Green buildings are concerned with energy consumption. By implementing reimbursement programs within the national grid, contemporary infrastructure has encouraged energy production (n.d., 2011). Solar power buildings save power and reduce. Photographic evidence from each facility does not show solar panel implementation. However, interior facilities feature a floor-to-ceiling design of glass exterior to allow sunlight to illuminate the internal sections around the edges of the architecture. In the Arvo Parti design, the floor-to-ceiling design is complemented by a roof overhang that limits excess heat insulation in hot weather (Cheney, 2019). A wooden wall panel serves not only as an aesthetic element for the occupants but also as a natural insulation for the interior. Therefore, there will be no need to consume energy on technologically powered air conditioning efforts. In addition to serving as doors, the glass panels serve as temperature regulators and reduce the need for electrically powered air conditioning. Skylights were also incorporated into the interior design. Skylights have a consistent shape and design. As part of the facility's forest background, the interior architect incorporated the pentagon shape of leaves into the roof.

Green buildings refer to as being eco-friendly from the beginning. Hrivnak (2007) indeed argues that such buildings usually perform better than conventional buildings. He also emphasizes that a truly green building goes beyond simply planting trees – it involves making intelligent decisions that

everyone can agree upon. The Arvo Pärt Center is often cited as an example of this type of smart, environmentally friendly design. Interior design projects struggle to achieve this level when the budget is limited. Despite these concerns, the Arvo Pärt Centre is a testament to sustainable interior design. With its locally sourced materials and utilization of recycled furniture, it showcases how design can be both sustainable and aesthetically pleasing.



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In the Context of sustainability, What role do Designers Play?



As an interior designer, navigating the sustainability debate requires an integrated, multifaceted approach, acknowledging our role as designers within a more extensive system and, at the same time, striving for positive change that can be accomplished. In the face of global environmental concerns, eco-friendly practices are more than just a professional obligation.

It is essential to educate oneself and others to make progress. Staying up-to-date on sustainable technologies and practices can be achieved by participating in workshops, webinars, and conferences. The valuable knowledge that we have can be shared with our colleagues and clients. By continuing to learn, we create a community where sustainable design is not just a preference but a norm. It goes beyond our practices when we advocate for change. Our collective voices can be crucial in promoting and influencing policies that encourage sustainable design on all levels. From local zoning laws to international trade agreements, every policy can shape our built environment's sustainability.

It is possible to develop innovative solutions that balance aesthetic appeal with environmental protection when

collaborating with environmental scientists, engineers, and manufacturers. We can create beautiful and environmentally friendly designs by engaging in cross-disciplinary partnerships. To achieve our sustainability commitment, we select and use materials sustainably. Materials should be researched and utilized to minimize their environmental impact throughout their lifecycle. As a result, we can create spaces that are not only temporary fixtures but also adaptable environments designed to maximize reuse and durability.

As a result of developing assessment methods, we have been able to quantify and improve the sustainability of our projects. It is through this accountability that we inform our practice and demonstrate to our clients and the community at large the tangible benefits of sustainable design.

Furthermore, our most daunting yet vital responsibility is to help consumers shift their mindset from consumption to appreciation to combat consumerism. Spaces designed for longevity must promote evolving areas rather than succumbing to trends. Developing a culture of sustainability and durability over the short-lived and wasteful is integral to cultivating a culture of durability and sustainability.

Finally, interior designers can make a substantial impact on the sustainability of our environment. Sustainable practices, business models, and the collective consciousness of our clients and communities are outlined above as a roadmap for embedding sustainability into our work. By embracing these principles, we contribute to the industry's evolution and take a significant step towards a more sustainable future.

For the image:

The image is an AI image was created by me in Microsoft Bing which is illustrating the role of designers in

sustainability.

Cradle to Cradle

A New Way to Make Things By: William McDonough and Michael Braungart Why Written: The book examines the existing “cradle to grave” design and production methodologies and introduces a new paradigm of “cradle to cradle” where waste is eliminated, and products are designed for continuous reuse or recycling. As a result of the chapter, I read this week by Michael Braungart and William McDonough, I was inspired to consider how I could apply the Cradle to Cradle philosophy in my own design process.

It's for designers, industries, policymakers, and the public concerned with sustainability and the impact of production and consumption on the environment. The authors argue that the current industrial system, based on a cradle-to-grave model, is wasteful, often toxic, and unsustainable. This system depletes resources, generates pollution, and results in products that end up in landfills or incinerators. The status quo often sees waste as an inevitable outcome and environmental damage as an external cost, not borne by producers or consumers. Cradle-to-Grave defines this linear model based on raw materials being extracted, used in production, and finally disposed of after their useful lives, typically in landfills or incinerators. Cradle-to-cradle is a circular manufacturing model in which products are designed to either biodegrade safely or be fully recycled into new products, creating a closed-loop manufacturing process. McDonough and Braungart define “Monstrous Hybrids” as products that cannot be easily separated for recycling due to the combination of materials. A juice box made of layers of

plastic, aluminum, and paper, for example, is a monstrous hybrid that is nearly impossible to recycle.



Photo Address:<https://upcyclea.com/en/cradle-to-cradle/>

Consequently, these hybrids not only pose a challenge in terms of recycling, but they also contribute to the pollution of the environment. To prevent the creation of hybrid products, we should design products using the Cradle-to-Cradle methodology. We would create every component so that it can either be returned to the environment in a safe manner or be recycled into a new product. A quote from chapter 4 speaks volumes about our desire to live in an economically, equitably, environmentally, and elegantly prosperous world. “Waste equals food.” “Being less bad is not being good.” True sustainability requires a transformative approach rather than incremental improvements. These statements are compelling since they invite us to rethink our strategies for design, production, and consumption in more innovative and regenerative ways. (McDonough and Braungart, 2002, p. 92)

The tone and structure of the article are both critical and optimistic about future possibilities. It is educational, persuasive, and forward-thinking. This chapter develops its argument methodically by identifying the current system’s problems. Using examples from the real world, it proposes solutions and illustrates its points. In this book, the authors make a compelling case for rethinking how we design, produce, and consume. Their arguments are well-presented and based on science and design principles. The authors emphasize that it is not only possible but also beneficial to both the economy and the environment as well.

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Changing light, not build, to create more sustainable exhibition spaces: by Pippa Nissen

As an interior designer, I was delighted to find an article that is both valuable and environmentally friendly, thus inspiring my upcoming endeavors. The report provides an overview of how lighting can create more sustainable exhibition spaces. It is written by Pippa Nissen, Director of Nissen Richards Studio. She emphasizes transforming spaces to maximize their impact, particularly in temporary and blockbuster exhibitions. It has been observed that traditional exhibition design has entailed a significant amount of waste, often requiring substantial new construction. As a result, she stresses the importance of developing a sustainable strategy and thinking creatively about how to alter the appearance of a space without extensive physical changes. To require minimal physical construction but with the ability to dynamically change the look and feel of the area, lighting and graphics are identified as critical tools in achieving this goal. According to the author, she has experience working with lighting design that empowers change and mentions working with

theater consultants with expert knowledge of using light to tell stories. An example of the power of lighting is given from a bar project that saw lighting transform the space from a cafe to a nightclub for a few hours, demonstrating how lighting can be used for seamless transitions between areas. Lighting systems plays a curcail role in creating adaptable spaces, and Nissen discusses the use of concealed light sources and fittings. During her presentation, Ms. Haave discusses a recent lighting project that creates a magical and adaptable exhibition space at the National Library of Norway, which can change moods and compellingly highlight exhibits. As a result of the article's statement, I will use these methods in my exhibition project. I will integrate interior design and lighting to create dynamic spaces and provide additional value for clients. Besides enhancing the overall experience, this approach is also sustainable since it reduces the need for extensive physical construction and improves the customer journey in the space. It is also possible to use the same area for a variety of purposes at the same time. Furthermore, it can create a distinct atmosphere that visitors will remember long after their visit. By integrating zero-waste materials and lighting, interior designers can create versatile, sustainable, and enjoyable spaces for their customers.



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