



Starfish

New Materialism

Wellington fashion label Starfish, founded by Laurie Foon in 1993, has a history of creating socially and ethically conscious fashion that takes a critical position on current issues. Beginning in the 90's with the 'Liberation' collection – a celebration of the local with campaign images taken in front of Wainuiomata state houses – and exemplified by the late 90's 'Activate' and 'Urban Progression' collections which joined the protest against the Wellington Bypass (including t-shirts with the slogan "bypass my ass"), Starfish have used fashion as a vehicle for social activism. While not all collections have had a political message ('Three Days in Golden Valley' was inspired by a late 1970s music festival), the label has always been committed to championing the stories and values of real New Zealanders, working subversively from within a global fashion culture characterised by elitism, consumption and materialistic excess to voice a uniquely Aotearoan (or even more specifically Wellingtonian) point of view.

As the world grows increasingly smaller and more connected, it is harder, and perhaps less desirable, than ever to remain an isolated nation. As the title of Laurie Foon's AW03 range 'Global Citizens' suggests, we are inextricably a part of global culture. The choice we can make is whether to exist in that global community as passive consumers, or as active citizens. But even as socially/ethically/morally/environmentally conscious citizens, we still act from within a larger (capitalist) context, and are thus continually faced with paradoxical challenges, the prevalent one in this instance being to balance the aspirations of sustainability with the reality of economic survival and the desire for beautiful things that make you feel good.

"The hip and trendy urbanite associates with the Starfish vision of both action and liberation."

– Yan, J. (2007). 10 years of liberating fashion: The party. *Lucire*. Retrieved from <http://lucire.com/>

The Starfish audience is both ethically aware and fashionable – sustainability is now 'cool'. In this lies the danger of the fashion paradox – once marginal fashion becomes accepted and fashionable it is no longer marginal and is thus susceptible to becoming yet another disposable trend. 'Sustainable', 'organic', 'eco-friendly' have become marketing hooks, ones that have also become linked with aesthetic trends – raw / natural / upcycled / distressed. The concept of sustainability has become mediated by layers of socially constructed associations, but at its core it is still of vital importance.

In attempting to address the inherent tensions between sustainability and fashion, Starfish have adopted a concept that works with, or from within, the paradox, rather than pitting the one against the other. On a surface level, it might be assumed that the antidote to consumer materialism would be anti-materialism, or doing-without. But, like anyone who has ever gone on a diet will know, denial is unsustainable. Perhaps the answer to the problem of excess, of more and more 'things', is not less things, but better things; things that make us look better, feel better, act better; things that fulfill multiple needs and thus negate the need to fulfill those needs with more (empty) things.

"Trapped by the madness of growth-demanding money, we compulsively produce more and more cheap, ugly things we don't need while suffering a poverty of things that are beautiful, unique, personal, and alive. That poverty, in turn, drives continued consumption, a desperate quest to fill the void left by a material environment bereft of relatedness."

"...by fostering within ourselves a realization of the sacredness inherent in materiality, and by aligning our work with that sacredness, we lay the social and psychic foundation of an economy in which more and more of the things we make and do for each other are beautiful, personal, alive, and ensouled."

– Eisenstein, C. (2011). Chapter 23: A New Materialism. In *Sacred Economics: Money, Gift & Society in the Age of Transition*. Berkeley, CA: Evolver Editions.

'New Materialism' is not about going without material things, but about refocusing our attention on the qualities of things that make them beautiful, sacred, enduring. It is about acknowledging and celebrating the interconnectedness of things with people, the community, and the environment; being aware of the impact that things can have, both positive and negative, with the ultimate aim of adding positive and lasting value through the creative act of producing something beautiful.

Y2 Spatial Design_224.251, 261, 271_2013

Lecturer/tutor: Stu Foster, Oliver Blair
Co-ordinator: Antony Pelosi

CHANGING ROOMS:

Personal ritual & the (re)active self

act

v.intr.

1. To behave or comport oneself: *She acts like a born leader.*
2. To perform in a dramatic role or roles.
3. To be suitable for theatrical performance: *This scene acts well.*
4. To behave affectedly or unnaturally; pretend.
5. To appear or seem to be: *The dog acted ferocious.*
6. To carry out an action: *We acted immediately.*
7. To operate or function in a specific way: *His mind acts quickly.*
8. To serve or function as a substitute for another: *A coin can act as a screwdriver.*
9. To produce an effect: *waited five minutes for the anesthetic to act.*

re·act

v.intr.

1. To act in response to or under the influence of a stimulus or prompting: *reacted strongly to the sarcastic tone of the memorandum.*
2. To act in opposition to a former condition or act: *composers who reacted against romanticism.*
3. To act reciprocally or in return.
4. *Chemistry* To undergo a reaction: *Methane reacts with hydroxyl to produce formaldehyde.*

en·act

tr.v.

1. To make into law: *Congress enacted a tax reform bill.*
2. To act (something) out, as on a stage: *enacted the part of the parent.*

re·en·act also re·en·act

tr.v.

1. To enact again: *reenact a law.*
2. To perform again: *reenact the first two scenes.*
3. To go through a second time: *reenacted the events leading up to the accident.*

– Houghton Mifflin Co. (2000). *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (4th ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/>

Y3 Spatial Design_224.351, 361, 381_2013

Lecturer/tutor: Jen Archer, Oliver Blair
Co-ordinator: Antony Pelosi

MAKING ROOM(S) FOR CHANGE:

Resonant experience & (re)activation

ac·ti·vate

tr.v.

1. To set in motion; make active or more active.
2. To organize or create (a military unit, for example): *activate the National Guard.*
3. To treat (sewage) with aeration and bacteria to aid decomposition.
4. *Chemistry* To accelerate a reaction in, as by heat.
5. *Physics* To make (a substance) radioactive.
6. *Biology* To convert (certain biological compounds) into biologically active derivatives.

re·ac·ti·vate

tr.v.

1. To make active again.
2. To restore the ability to function or the effectiveness of.

ac·tiv·ism

n.

The use of direct, often confrontational action, such as a demonstration or strike, in opposition to or support of a cause.

res·o·nant

adj.

1. **a.** Strong and deep in tone; resounding: *a resonant voice.*
b. Having a lasting presence or effect; enduring: *"Cranmer compiled the first Book of Common Prayer, writing some of the most resonant phrases in the English tongue" (Allen D. Boyer).*
c. Strongly reminiscent; evocative: *a monument that is resonant of the nation's past glory.*
2. Producing or exhibiting resonance: *resonant frequency excitation.*
3. Resulting from or as if from resonance: *resonant amplification.*

– Houghton Mifflin Co. (2000). *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (4th ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/>

Brief (overview):

- > **[STUDIO]:** Design a spatial intervention that radicalises a personal ritual in order to engender/facilitate a transformation (physical/mental/emotional/spiritual)
- > **[VISUAL REPRESENTATION]:** Produce a visual representation of the narrative of that transformation
- > **[MATERIALS&MAKING]:** Create a tangible representation of a material encounter (material moment) of that spatial intervention

Aim:

To gather, explore, manipulate and represent narratives of personal re(en)action and ritual in order to uncover and critique the ways in which real people interact with their environments. This intuitive and experimental work will feed into the larger project, providing cues as to the ways in which an abstract concept might be activated through the manipulation of objects, space and atmosphere.

Outline Schedule:

wk 2	M 04.03.13 Project intro	<i>Client briefing</i>
wk 3	-	
wk 4	M 18.03.13 Interim presentation (to Y3)	
wk 5	-	
-break-	-	
wk 6	W 17.04.13 Final pres. F 19.04 Exhibition	<i>Submit/present to clients</i>

Brief (overview):

- > **[STUDIO]:** Design a temporary yet replicable spatial installation/intervention that activates the concept of New Materialism with the aim of engendering/facilitating a transformative or resonant experience (personal and collective)
- > **[MULTIMEDIA]:** Explore and (re)present that narrative/transformation through time-based (digital video) media
- > **[THEORY]:** Undertake design research through making/drawing/writing and critical reading of texts (written or material) with the aim of formulating a critical position on the concept of New Materialism; produce a piece of critical writing that establishes your position in relation to existing texts and analyses your design/research process and outcome

Aim:

To use the vehicle of a 'pop-up store' or transportable/temporary retail environment in order to make tangible the abstract concept of 'New Materialism' and thus to activate and generate momentum around the associated Starfish products and brand. Design outcomes should show a thorough and multifaceted research process, consideration and resolution of functional and programmatic requirements, and well crafted (re)presentations of the proposed design solution.

Outline Schedule:

wk 2	M 04.03.13 Project intro	<i>Client briefing</i>
wk 3	M 11.03.13 Round table discussion	
wk 4	W 20.03.13 Interim presentation	<i>Client feedback</i>
wk 5	-	
-break-	-	
wk 6	W 17.04.13 Final pres. F 19.04 Exhibition [Theory hand in wk 8 Friday 5pm]	<i>Submit/present to clients</i>

Project Requirements:

251_Studio	261_Vis Representation	271_Materials & Making
Worth 50% of your course mark.		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visual presentation of research into personal space and ritual explorations 2. Developmental work [models, drawings] and blog in order to understand and assess the depth and breadth of your engagement, research, concept and design development and its iterative and reflective processes. 3. Text, incorporated into visual narrative or model 4. Blog archive submission (as below) 	Final visual narrative [See 224.261 brief]	Material moment [See 224.271 brief]
<p>BLOG ARCHIVE SUBMISSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • title • one sentence summary • paragraph description • 3-4 hero images <p>This project is run conjointly with 224.261 and 224.271</p>		

Note: File naming standards

<paper number>_<lastname-firstname>_<project number>_<year>
e.g. 251_Foster-Stuart_p1_2013

References:

Refer to blog

Project Requirements:

351_Studio	361_Multimedia	381_Theory
Worth 50% of your course mark.	Worth 50% of your course mark	Worth 100% of your course mark
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generative and experimental work [diagrams, parti models, material and digital experiments], 1:1s, details and material information 2. Models, sectional perspective(s) showing detail, material, inhabitation experience 3. Printed and digital scale plans and sections 4. Digital record of project (blog) regularly updated with process work and development, well organised 5. Involvement in class discussions and critiques 6. Blog archive submission (as below) 	<p>This assignment is assessed in two parts:</p> <p>Part 1 is aimed at supporting research and idea generation for the concept and design of your studio project.</p> <p>Part 2 aims to support the (re)presentation of your design through the medium of digital video.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A series of short (30 second max) video pieces responding to in class tutorials and exploring concepts for your studio project. 2. A short video piece (2 minutes max) that explores aspects of your studio project, invoking/expressing conditions or qualities of space and interior relating to the concept of your studio project. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Part 1: 1 x A4 essay on design research [500-700 words]. 2. Part 2: 1 x A4 draft essay on your own studio practice [500-1000 words] 3. Part 3: Final essay and abstract [2000-2500 words] <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts 1 & 2 to be submitted as google doc • Part 3 to be submitted as a PDF via Stream and the dropbox (less than 20mb) <p>Refer to blog for notes on theory, writing essays, referencing styles etc.</p>
<p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:10 or 1:20 plans & sections required • 1:1 finely resolved detail required <p>BLOG ARCHIVE SUBMISSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • title • one sentence summary • paragraph description • 3-4 hero images 		

Note: File naming standards

<paper number>_<lastname-firstname>_<project number>_<item number>_<year>
e.g. 361_Archer-Jen_p1_part1_2013

References:

Refer to blog

Assessment Criteria:

The project will be assessed to the extent that it:

251_Studio	261_Vis Representation	271_Materials & Making
Worth 50% of your course mark.		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Displays a thorough and creative working process, including the analysis and translation of spatial qualities into 2D and 3D media. 2. Demonstrates an ability to creatively develop a concept as a response to a spatial brief. 3. Demonstrates appropriate levels of technical competency in writing, drawing and making, related to spatial design practice. 4. Exhibits a good level of design resolution by translating a concept into a final design proposal. 	[See 224.261 brief]	[See 224.271 brief]

Feedback will be given during and after completion of each project.

Learning Outcomes:

251_Studio	261_Vis Representation	271_Materials & Making
The student should be able to:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply basic research and documentation methods for the investigation of existing spaces and activities. 2. Be familiar with basic spatial design processes for the development of a concept and design. 3. Develop creative responses to communicate spatial ideas. 4. Present a spatial investigation and design proposal in a variety of media, and to a well resolved and considered degree. 	[See 224.261 brief]	[See 224.271 brief]

Assessment Criteria:

The project will be assessed to the extent that it:

351_Studio	361_Multimedia	381_Theory
Worth 50% of your course mark.		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporates social and embodied practices into spatial design. 2. Demonstrates conceptual and lateral thinking in the initiation and development of the design project. 3. Perceives and manipulates space on a range of scales. 4. Exhibits the ability to design and present work to a high level of detail and resolution. 	<p>Worth 50% of your course mark</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigates the relationship of your 'pop-up store' project in video. 2. Creatively explores digital media as a tool for idea generation and communication. 3. Effectively and coherently communicates explorations made and final design elements with digital media. 	<p>Worth 100% of your course mark</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse, critique and interpret theoretical texts and creative works related to spatial designs. 2. Integrate theories and criticisms of spatial design in relation to history, philosophy, culture and gender. 3. Develop a written argument. 4. Demonstrate research-through-design skills and their application to spatial design.

Feedback will be given during and after completion of each project.

Learning Outcomes:

351_Studio	361_Multimedia	381_Theory
The student should be able to:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an understanding of the impact of the body and culture on space. 2. Explore the dynamics and complexities of a single volume of an interior space and an awareness of its relationship to the exterior. 3. Interpret and formulate a design brief. 4. Utilise a broad range of investigative methods to develop a design concept. 5. Explore and manipulate materiality and atmosphere as part of the design process. 6. Communicate clearly and evocatively. 	<p>The student should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidently use computer applications introduced in this project. 2. Apply computer application skills gained to inform design process and design presentation. 	<p>The student should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse, critique and interpret theoretical texts and creative works related to spatial designs. 2. Integrate theories and criticisms of spatial design in relation to history, philosophy, culture and gender. 3. Develop a written argument. 4. Demonstrate research-through-design skills and their application to spatial design.

Procedure and Timetable:

Mon 4 March

Introduction Assignment 1

Select ritual and begin explorations through mapping body space. Begin research into personal ritual..

Wed 6 March

Modeling exercise; bring materials and tools. Session on site measurements and documentation.

Mon 11 March

Group discussions: present research from blog, could include series of photographs, drawings, video, audio, text

Wed 13 March

Table talk and 1-on-1 tutorials with Stu and Oliver. Concept development in preparation for interim on Monday.

Mon 18 March

9.30 Interim: visual presentation of personal ritual research

[Models, drawings, material studies, precedent examples]

Wed 20 March

Attend third year studio presentations.

Mon 25 March

Table talk and 1-on-1 tutorials with Stu and Oliver.

Wed 27 March

Small group discussions: present developed design in preparation for final presentation after the break.
INDEPENDENT: Finalise design, visual narrative and material moment model

STUDY BREAK

Mon 15 April

Small group tutorials, finalise presentation, final feedback before presentations.

Wed 17 April

9.30 10B05 Final Presentations Assignment 1 with 261, 271

Fri 19 April

3pm Exhibition with 261, 271 (with third years)

Procedure and Timetable:

Refer to separate document on blog

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