

Planting Buildings: Housing the Ecoregion

This semester Material Cultures will explore the complex interrelationship of ecosystems, communities and landscapes within ecoregions across Europe. Working through film, drawing and making we will study existing material supply chains, before we question how they could be radically reimagined in a post carbon future. With the plants and minerals of Europe's ecoregions as our starting point we look to regenerative practices, designing radical new housing systems which respect our planetary limits. We will also learn how to build with biobased materials, exploring the implications for labour and the body of a new, decarbonized built environment.

The studio will start by researching the environmental impact of the building industry through the lens of the raw material, with a focus on cultivated plants. We will explore how design can contribute meaningfully to transformative change: how our building designs can relate productively to and work the landscape around them. Our work will tread a fine line between conservation, cultivation and construction.

Our methods are investigative, practical and hands-on. We believe in the importance of learning through making, and working together. Part of the semester will be focused on the construction of 1:1 building prototypes, through which we will learn different building skills, as well as the complexity of coordinating a construction project and incorporating interdisciplinary input into a single output.

Tutorials will be on Tuesdays, with Wednesdays dedicated to theory discussion groups and practical construction detailing workshops. Some shared site visits and reviews will be coordinated with the Chair of Being Alive within the landscape department.



Introduction:
19.09.2023 / 9.00 am

Location:
Lägern Kalksteinbrüche

Anticipated spend per student:
250 CHF

Team:
Paloma Gormley, Summer Islam, George Massoud, Francesca Leibowitz, Sara Sherif.