Sourcing Material Transformations:

The traditional Japanese home and garden is composed of an assemblage of worked materials. Woods, fibers, stones, metals, and clays reveal attitudes towards making which blur the distinctions between art, craft, and design. Domestic objects and architectural elements are formed through distinct and precise physical processes specific to Japanese workmanship and life. Embedded in the forms, dimensions, textures, and teiconics of these domestic spaces are layered histories of transformation that cross time and scale.

Sourcing Material Transformations proposes utilizing one single house, Ryōan-ji, located in Kyoto and built in 1450, as a lens for understanding the material productions necessary to restore each part of the building: woodworking, fabric dyeing, weaving, paper making, metalwork, and ceramic production. Throughout the 750 years of the building’s existence each element of Ryōan-ji has been restored or replaced with materials produced by these traditionally trained craftpeople. Working backwards from the buildings architectural and domestic objects, I will visit six sites of production following the path of the material from its extraction from the landscape, refinement in the workshop, tooling by the craftspeople, installation on site, and its role in domestic life. The Japanese islands are very unique in that all of these traditional techniques of workmanship and production are still practiced today. The craftspeople and their workshops have centuries of traditional knowledge that are kept alive through rituals of cyclical making. Through the process of rebuilding this specific home, the processes of making will reveal how these material philosophies are alive in the contemporary Japanese culture and environment.

This travel proposal seeks to create, through photography and architectural drawings of plan, section, and detail, portraits of each of the six sites of production at various scales—house, object, and material. The methods of cultivation, the motions of the human body, the form of the tool, the teiconics of the architectural element, the workshops that facilitate the act of making, the workshops as civic space, the urban figure, and the landscapes of extraction. In response to the experiences and analysis I intend to create new tools of production to generate full scale material and teiconic systems where the rituals of making the home and the rituals of living in the home are in tune with and are extensions of traditional Japanese homes of Kyoto. In the suburbs of Kyoto there are a series of design studios (Suikoushya) that specialize in carpentry and restoring the traditional Japanese homes of Kyoto. In wood joinery such elements are designed in a way that it could be replaced without needing to destroy the parts next to it promoting a philosophy of sustainability and generational craftsmanship.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Ryōan-ji Analysis in Kyoto</th>
<th>Metalwork in Yamagata</th>
<th>Tatami Weaving in Saitama</th>
<th>Papermaking in Echizen</th>
<th>Indigo Dyeing in Aizumi</th>
<th>Ceramics in Arita &amp; Imari</th>
<th>Woodwork in Kyoto Suburbs</th>
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<td>The practice of casting metal was established in Yamagata when it was discovered in the city's river and soil on the shore. The workshops are known for creating extremely thin casts in the town that produce nails, hooks, ornaments, cooking utensils, and tea pots.</td>
<td>Tatami is known for its weaving and workshops that make traditional tatami mats. The mats are made of a local grass woven over a strung base framework. These materials function as natural humidifiers keeping the ground cool during the summer and warm in the winter.</td>
<td>The main industry in the Echizen area is Washi paper made from local plants harvested Kyoto. The bark is harvested from the trees, stripped into strands, soaked, mashed into pulp, and sieved into planes. Washi is water-resistant and used in the production of shoji-screen windows and doors in addition to surfaces for accounting painting, calligraphy, and paper string.</td>
<td>The town of Aizumi has many farmers who grow indigo leaves, known as sukurahiko, harvested for dyeing a unique deep blue color. The leaves are fermented, boiled, mixed into shibori, which take place in specially designed rooms with deep holes in the ground for soaking. The fermenting leaves are turned and aired once a week for over four winter months.</td>
<td>The town produces domestic objects as well as architectural floor, wall, and roof tiles.</td>
<td>These two towns are home to the first Japanese porcelain. The clay is extracted locally and formed in hundreds of workshops. The town is also known for its hatakagi kilns which utilize the slope of the hill to produce economic updrafts. The town produces domestic objects as well as architectural floor, wall, and roof tiles.</td>
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Airfare: $2,000
Accommodation: $3,500
Food: $1,300
Train Fare: $1,400
Admissions: $300
Materials Production: $500
Contingency: $1,000
Total: $10,000
The traditional Moroccan home and garden is composed of an assemblage of worked materials. Woods, fibers, stones, metals, and clays reveal attitudes towards making which blur the distinctions between art, craft, and design. Domestic objects and architectural elements are formed through distinct and precise physical processes specific to Moroccan workmanship and life. Embedded in the forms, dimensions, textures, and tectonics of these domestic spaces are layered histories of transformation that cross time and scale.

*Sourcing Material Transformations* proposes utilizing one housing typology, Riads, as a lens for understanding the material productions necessary to rebuild each part of the building: stucco carving, tadelakt plasterwork, zellij ceramic tile production, wood carving, horticulture and aquatic practices, metal workmanship, and fabric production. Throughout the history of these building's existence each element has been restored or replaced with materials produced by these traditionally trained craft people. Working backwards from the building's architectural and domestic objects, I will visit seven sites of production following the path of the material from its extraction from the landscape, refinement in the workshop, tooling by the craftsperson, installation on site, and its role in domestic life. The craftspeople and their workshops have centuries of traditional knowledge that are kept alive through rituals of cyclical making. Through the process of rebuilding this specific housing type, the processes of making will reveal how these material philosophies are alive in the contemporary Moroccan culture and environment.

The travel proposal seeks to create, through photography and architectural drawings of plan, section, and detail, portraits of each of the six sites of production at various scales: the properties of the material, the methods of cultivation, the motions of the human body, the form of the tool, the tectonics of the architectural element, the workshops that facilitate the act of making, the workshops as civic space, the urban figure, and the landscapes of extraction. In response to the experiences and analysis I intend to create new tools of production to generate full scale material and tectonic systems where the rituals of making the home and the rituals of living in the home are in tune with and are extensions of each other.

Daniel Hall
RAMSA TRAVELING PROPOSAL
06/22/22

Note: Revised proposal due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.