Negotiation between the Maker and Material: Observations on Material Interactions in Felting Studio

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Abstract

This article examines the interaction between maker and material in craft making in the case of felting. From the perspective of material agency, the article argues that the craft practice is the result of a negotiation between the material and the maker, and the bodily movements of a practice emerge from this dialogical act. The article investigates felting processes and uncovers how they occur through bodily movements and material transformations. This investigation refers to the processes that a novice maker and two expert makers go through a negotiation. The emergence of the artefact is studied with a focus on the relationship between the maker, material, and practice by examining different ways of interacting with the material and its transformations. The research employed a practice-led approach and participant observation as methods to collect various types of data in various studio settings. The data was collected in the form of reflective diaries, field notes, and videos. Through a meticulous analysis, we examined the movements of the body and the material in felting. This examination enabled us to understand what happens in each contact moment between the maker and the material.

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