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2006

# Awareness of Form

Workshop led by Maria Blaisse with Design Lab

## Context

The workshop took place within the context of Rietveld Design Lab's Wintergarden. The Wintergarden is a study period of two months during which students can take part in a number of workshops, design competitions or exchange projects. The Wintergarden 2006 was set up as a pilot project in order to put discovery and reflection in relation with the design process.

## Format

Twelve students – of which two selected students from the Technical University of Delft – took part in the workshop. Valérie van Leersum assisted Maria Blaisse and two higher year students were asked to help the participants to document their process. The first day was spent looking for work material (in the form of twigs, or leaves but also inspiration) in the Amsterdamse Bos nearby. The next three days were spent working with the material. The last day was dedicated to selecting and naming those images that best represented the process and findings of the week.

## More info

The workshop was documented and edited by Muriel D'Asembourg (Moving Silence Productions). The Dvd is a compilation of 'personal portraits' of the workshop results.

## Challenge

The workshop focusses on more senses than the eyes and gives space to listen, feel and use one's intuition.

- \* To find one's individual understanding of the complexity and simplicity of form
- \* To find the natural behavior of each material and how it provides an insight into specific laws of nature + how to relate to it ,and use it.
- \* To develop a presence and sensitivity which enables one to work and live more connected with one's qualities, authenticity, and each other.
- \* To align with nature

(source: Maria Blaisse, 2006)

## Hindsight

The workshop was felt as an intense (group & craft) experience by most students. Gathering the necessary concentration for a whole week was a big challenge for some. Working without a clearly outlined end goal caused many to initially stagnate in their process. In order to gain personal insight, one must dare to make mistakes but also dare to recognise qualities and to follow a found direction. As a designer you are the material. What is needed is to listen carefully and to act upon what you sense.

## Quotes

“Helping the material” (Jacob Uhlin)  
“Touch but not feel” (Judith Montens)  
“Create space” (Myung-Hyun Bang)

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