Material Acts: Experimentation in Architecture and Design, Animating, Disassembling, Feeding, Re- fusing, Stitching installation view, 2024. Photo courtesy of Craft Contemporary, Los Angeles. Exhibition Installation Images: Marc Walker.

Craft Contemporary | Material Acts: Experimentation in Architecture and Design

09/29/2024 – 01/05/2025 (15 weeks)
11-25 artists
26-75 artworks
2,500 sq ft

Craft Contemporary continues its commitment to environmental accountability by preparing its second Climate Impact Report, now for Material Acts: Experimentation in Architecture and Design, as part of the Getty PST ART: Art & Science Collide initiative. Our institutional approach incorporates sustainable sourcing, waste reduction, renewable resources, and biodegradable materials. These actions align with the exhibition's focus on fostering the global and local communities working through new material practices and alternative design principles, while experimenting with new work structures and methodologies.

As part of our ongoing dedication to sustainability, Craft Contemporary will continue to: save and reuse all incoming artworks packaging for their return; save and reuse all hardware; purchase biodegradable materials where available; minimize construction or use of new materials; plan for the afterlife of leftover exhibition materials, prioritizing offering them to artists and educational staff for future art projects and/or workshops; reduce our energy consumption by using low-energy LED lighting; and prioritize working with local vendors for our installation purchase, printing, and material sources, actively reducing our reliance on larger corporations.

For this specific exhibit we will for the first time: exclusively work with artists, architects, and designers who have a dedicated history of environmental consciousness; invite a cyclical symbiosis of teaching and learning where all collaborators share knowledge and resources with each other; track carbon emission from travel of all artists, artworks, employees, and collaborators; restructure our installation work schedule in such a way that preparators work fewer days to reduce their commuting and carbon emissions, whilst still earning the same gross pay; experiment in new painting and packing techniques to minimize tape waste; and finally explore switching from single-use vinyl to alternative signage, such as printed cloth, in alignment with our theme of craft, or incorporating printed QR codes for lengthier didactics.

Our goal over the next five years is to become entirely zero-waste.

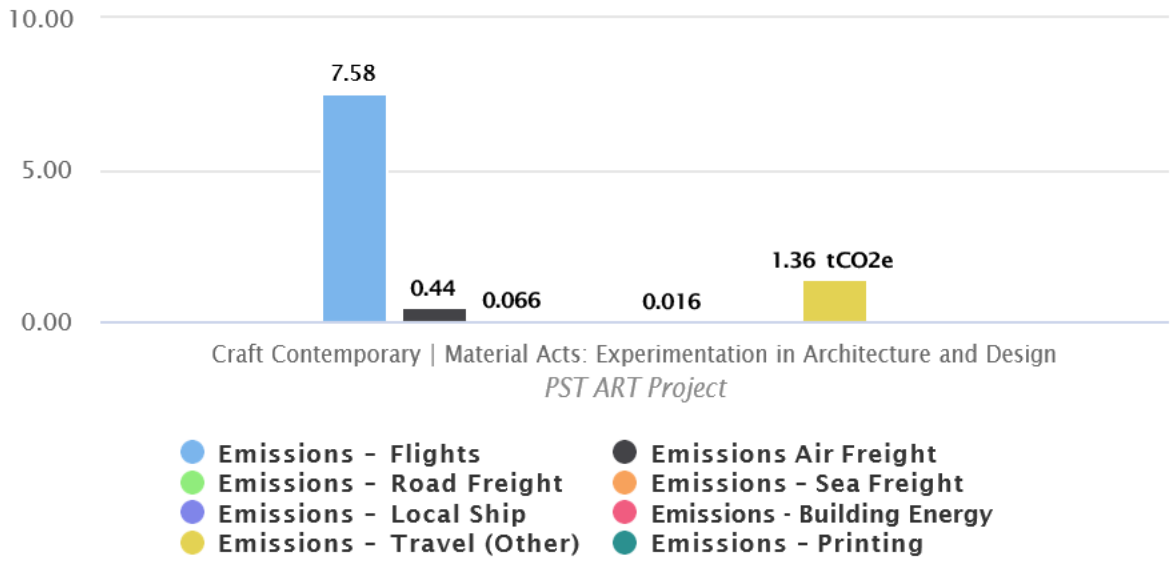
Emissions

Most of our emissions came from travel (7.61 tCO2e), which was a surprise to me. At least looking at the difference between that and shipping (0.08 tCO2e). I think we were extremely mindful of shipping and those costs, but did not give that same care and attention to the flights especially. Although the carbon cost seems high for a show promoting a more sustainable future, I'd argue it was worth bringing all these great minds together. especially since we also made sure their trips were double-worth the effort by having them bring their exhibiting materials with them as carry-ons or having them lead the completion of their section of the exhibit

- Assia Crawford traveled with her ceramic sculptures
- After Architecture assembled their dome on their own
- Sutherlin Santo completed their display and programmed the loaned robot
- Maru Garcia and her assistant Graham cared for the kombucha tank
- Doris Sung brought her own team and materials and assembled the model on site
- After Auto also assembled their display on their own
- A trusted colleague brought Joar Nango's material (halibut stomach skin) with them on their return trip from Europe

Besides artist travel, we also calculated emissions from staff and employee commutes (1.36 tCO2e). Still not much compared to the flights, but also about ~25% of our prep team commutes via public transportation or walking, which was a happy statistic to learn!

We did not calculate the exact waste we produced, but most was or will be reused or repurposed. More on that in the next section.



Emissions

8.94 tCO2e

Flight (domestic), Car, Public transit, Bike/ walking/ other zero emission travel

Shipping

0.52 tCO2e

Road Freight - Dedicated Truck (long haul), Road Freight - Local, No dedicated shipment (i.e. hand carried, produced on site)

We do not have access to energy data

Total Emissions 9.43 tCO2e

Materials & Waste

Pedestal/Plinth, Single Use Packing, Reusable Packing, Artwork/Fabrication, Walls, Wall Paint, Other

Material Sources

New, Reused (Internal Source)

Material Destinations

Reused, Repurposed, Storage, Landfill

Waste reduction strategies implemented, Designed for disassembly, Bio-based materials

1. Materials used: aluminum, plywood, plastic, biodegradable peanuts, tape, paper, earth/gravel, yarn
    - The magic of the aluminum beams is that we can use them for years to come to create faux walls, or a new permanent wall as we recently did in our 3rd floor gallery
    - All plywood panels were optimized for lowest waste use by either using an entire sheet (4'x8') as is, or cutting them in half, or quarters, or eighths, etc. ensuring that no cuts were awkward or difficult-to-use sizes
    - If any plastic or tape was used, we attempted to reuse any until it was truly no longer useful. We even saved a couple tape rolls of "used blue tape"
    - Any peanuts used in the making of this exhibition were biodegradable
    - Any lightbulbs were energy-efficient LEDs
    - Instead of shipping all projects, there were three that were either created on-site or will easily live on in the ground once again
        - Anupama Kundoo's Voluntariat Home model – created on-site with mini adobe bricks
        - Gramazio Kholer's gravel columns - created on-site and the gravel will live on in an employee's landscaping project
        - Rael San Fratello's adobe chunk was made of mud in his backyard – the chunk was broken down and returned to the earth in the park across the street
2. We scrapped use of all vinyl materials and switched to paper didactics
    - During our previous exhibition, $16,000 was spent on vinyl. Then it was all trashed. That includes the labor it took to install it, but does not include the labor and time it took to deinstall it (probably another $2000)
    - This time with paper didactics we saved over $10,000. Although, experimenting with mounting methods was a new time-consuming challenge, it will be worth it in the long run
    - We attempted to use eco-friendly paste material but was unsuccessful. The paper either got too stuck to the wall, or too wrinkly

    - Ultimately we used a border of double-sided tape. After the show, the double-sided tape areas were discarded and the remaining images and didactics were rolled up and saved for our school visits to use as collage material
3. Our lobby and first floor was a commentary on the unsustainable practices of exhibition building, the waste that accumulates as we construct each new exhibit, the materials we use
    - One prep did end up using some of our leftover boxes in the lobby to help with her move into a new apartment, which we were happy to gift her
    - Our education team also reused cardboard for craft projects with our school visits

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Catalog

There is a hard-cover print publication connected to this project.

Engagement

Stakeholders engaged in the Climate Impact Report

Director/Leadership, Curatorial, Exhibitions / Install, Development, Communications / Marketing, Artists, Audiences

Climate related event or public program, Climate related educational program, Climate related wall text, Climate incorporated into exhibition thematic content, Climate incorporated into messaging/communications, Other ways of engaging audiences around climate impact

Our Team

As we made our plans and executed them, we always kept in mind leading with more sustainable practices between all departments (events, education, marketing, etc.).

Our Community

1. Materials Library
    - Was a crowdsourced project with contributors from all over the country
    - Visitors were allowed to interact with these eco-friendly materials and learn about the possibilities of future material something
    - Will continue to live on in existence at Materials & Applications, a few materials returned to their owners, but everything else including the display carts will continue be on display / in use
    - When the library officially closes the carts will be used by our education and shop departments
2. Symposium
    - Several artists/architects/designers gathered for one weekend to share their thoughts on sustainability and their practices and research

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Reflections & Takeaways

1. Tracking everything is impossible, but doing what you can makes a difference. And when we all do a little bit, it adds up to a lot.
2. Bigger budgets naturally mean bigger carbon footprints. Or does that have to be true?
3. The exhibit was a huge hit for our school visits
    - They especially enjoyed being able to touch and interact with materials in the library (“Now this is a museum I would come back to!” – 5th grader)
    - Some of our younger students interrogated the way our world operates today (“Why aren’t people already building homes and clothes out of all this stuff?”)

- Some left inspired seeing that what paths and impacts they could make in the future (“How do I make this be my job when I’m older?”)

Credits

Joseph Baca, Exhibitions Manager

I really enjoy numbers and data so that part was definitely fun. There were definitely moments that were more hectic and busy during installation where I didn't have the capacity to track everything, but I wish I did because having to find data later was a different kind of time-consuming. It did make me want to do a CIR for all of our exhibitions though. Feels like a good habit to get into and it would be interesting to see the changes and evolution from exhibit to exhibit.

Material Acts: Experimentation in Architecture and Design, exhibition introduction installation view, 2024. Photo courtesy of Craft Contemporary, Los Angeles. Exhibition Installation Images: Marc Walker.

Material Acts: Experimentation in Architecture and Design, Materials Library installation view, 2024. Photo courtesy of Craft Contemporary, Los Angeles. Exhibition Installation Images: Marc Walker

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This Climate Impact Report was completed as a part of the PST ART Climate Impact Program, a groundbreaking initiative integrating climate action, community building, and reporting into Getty’s landmark arts event, led by LHL Consulting. More information can be found at pst.art/climate.