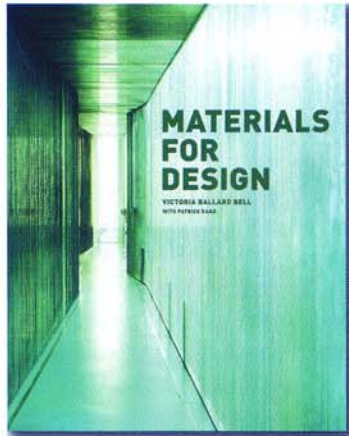


Books

Materials for Design, by Victoria Bell with Patrick Rand. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006, 272 pages, \$50.

Authors Victoria Bell and Patrick Rand, both architects in Raleigh, North Carolina, argue that the "relationship between a project's aesthetics and its materiality" is more important than ever. After the faux veneers and antimateriality of Postmodernism, architecture is returning to its material roots—Mies's steel, Aalto's wood, Perret's concrete, and on to experimental plastic and metal alloys.



In *Materials for Design*, the authors impart a thorough knowledge of glass, wood, concrete, metal, and plastic. A weighty tome, the book is a reference tool, complete with histories, production techniques, and each material's properties, along with case studies of new work. In short, this is the textbook that many of us wish we had in architecture school.

Each chapter begins with a material primer, design considerations, production techniques, and in the case of metal, charts on weathering, corrosion, and galvanization. Sixty case studies—illustrated with good photography, readable plans, and helpful construction details—show how inventive architects have put these materials to imaginative use. The projects range from a Rural Studio chapel made of Chevrolet windshields to Hans Peter Wörndl's plywood-panel house in Austria to Heikkinen and Komonen's Max Planck Institute in Dresden, where thermostatic resins were electrostatically bonded to aluminum cladding.

The book indicates that architectural technology is most advanced in Germany. Of the book's three-score buildings, a quarter are in Germany, with the U.S. and Australia tied for second. Holland, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, and Japan also field exciting examples, with single entries from the Czech Republic, Canada, Ireland, Poland, Chile, and Bolivia.

There is so much information in this book that the publisher had to employ an irritatingly small font. Nevertheless, *Materials for Design* is handsomely produced, and marks an otherwise auspicious start for Princeton Architectural Press's foray into technical titles. *William Morgan*