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# **Rooted in Place: Crafting Locally Embedded Design Education**

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# Keywords:

- **Sustainable Educational Practices**
- **Place-based Approaches**
- **Regional Craftsmanship**
- **Material-led Pedagogies**
- **Cultural Heritage**

**By integrating Indigenous and Local Ecological Knowledge (ILEK) into the curriculum, educators can create immersive, context-specific learning experiences that not only reduce the environmental impact of long-distance material transport but also foster a deep appreciation for local ecosystems and cultural heritage (Mellegård & Wiebren, 2020).**

# Research Methodology Overview:

- Objective: Capture the complexity and context-specific nature of place-based, material-led design education.
- Methods:
- Case Studies: Explore examples showcasing early implementation or adaptation to locally-embedded design education.
- Literature Review: Analyze existing literature, curricula, project reports, and institutional policies to gain insights.
- Thematic Analysis: Identify key themes and patterns across different case studies.

# Challenges and Limitations

- **Institutional Resistance:** Difficulty in adopting new approaches due to resistance to change.
- **Resource Constraints:** Limited resources for implementing material-led and place-based education.
- **Scalability Issues:** Challenges in applying these methods in larger educational settings.
- **Curriculum Integration:** Requires significant adjustments in teaching practices and resources to incorporate local materials and knowledge.
- **Opportunities:** These challenges can drive innovation and collaboration, especially in low-residency programs that engage students in their local communities.

# Material-Led Pedagogies in Design Education:

- **Shift in Focus:** Material is a co-participant in the creative process, not just a medium.
- **Designer's Role:** Explore, manipulate, and understand the material, allowing it to guide the design from the outset.
- **Mastery of Material:** Designers using the Material Driven Design (MDD) approach must master their material, understanding its behavior under

various conditions and techniques (Karana et al. 2015).

# Material-Led Approach in Design Education:

## ■ **Hands-On Experimentation:**

Designers engage with materials early on, influencing both form and function through an iterative, dynamic process.

## ■ **Practical Application:** The MA

Fashion Artefact course at London College of Fashion embodies this approach, emphasising craft and material-led projects in a shared studio environment.

■ **Learning through Craft:** Students learn through observation, imitation, and practice within a community of skilled artisans.

## ■ **Challenges in Online Programs:**

Transitioning to online low residency programs may limit the shared studio experience, but local communities and expertise can provide alternative learning environments.

Case Studies

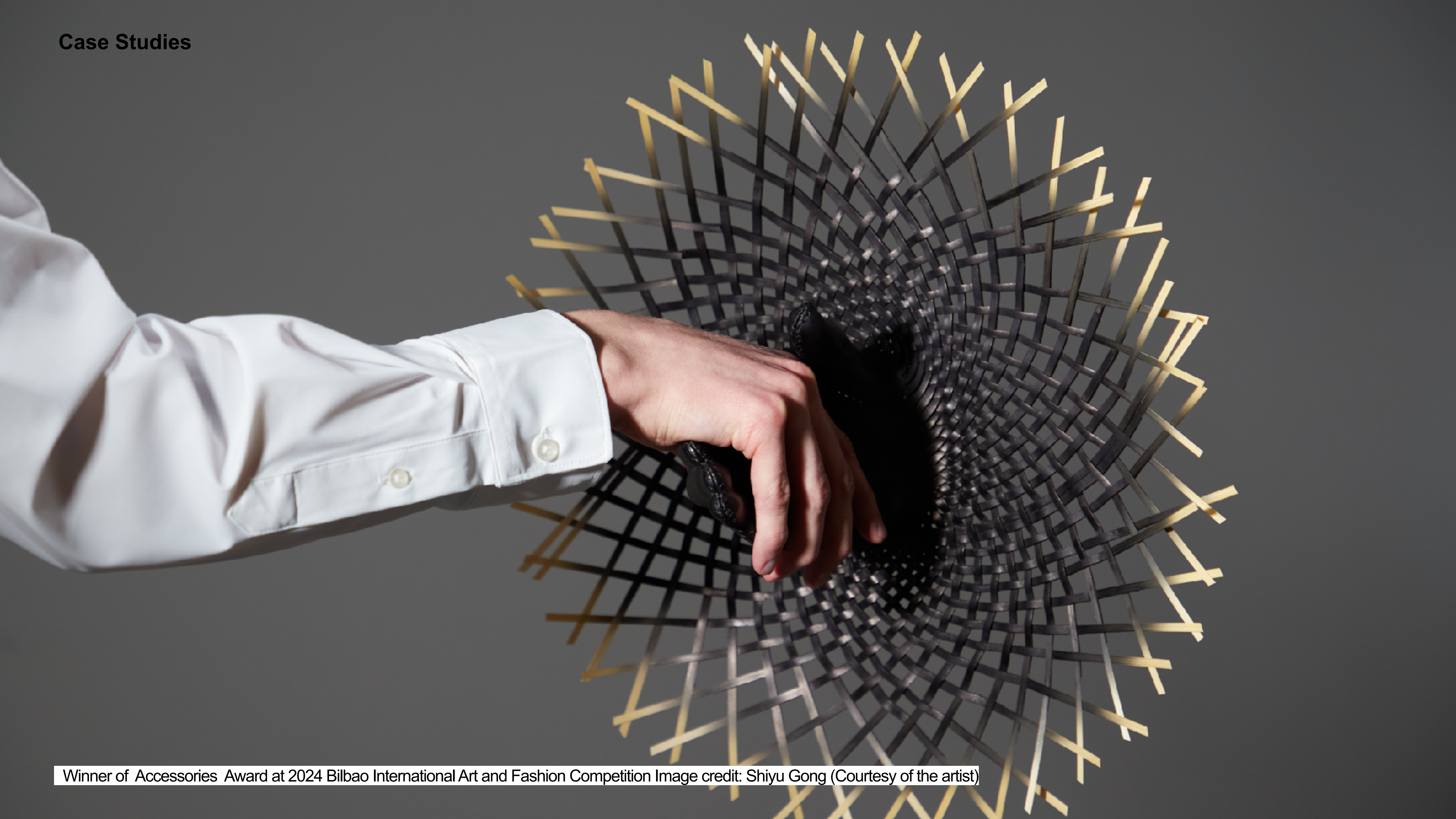
# Locally Embedded Approaches: The Role of Place-Based Practices



Photo by Gonzalo Valenzuela, Speculative objects, Daniel Ramos Óbregon in collaboration with Juliana García Bello for 'Why-What-Who' exhibition at the Museo Decorativo de Buenos Aires, Argentina (2018) Courtesy of the artists



## Case Studies



Winner of Accessories Award at 2024 Bilbao International Art and Fashion Competition Image credit: Shiyu Gong (Courtesy of the artist)

# Cai Hongguang Studio

( Dongyang City, Zhejiang Province, China )



Image credit: Shiyu Gong (Courtesy of the artist)

# Final points

- **Material-Led Low Residency Education:** Offers a robust framework for sustainable educational practices rooted in place-based approaches, regional craftsmanship, and cultural heritage.
- **Transformative Pedagogy:** Combines material literacy with meaningful engagement in local contexts, highlighting the potential for a more sustainable and equitable future in design education.
- **Future Implications:** Embracing this approach equips students with essential skills and instills a sense of responsibility towards their communities and the environment, offering a promising pathway as institutions face the challenges of the Anthropocene.

**Thank you**

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