



The Spirit of Design: Objects, Environment and Meaning

Stuart Walker

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Imaginative design will be a crucial factor in enacting sustainability in people's daily lives. Yet current design practice is trapped in consumerist cycles of innovation and production, making it difficult to imagine how we might develop a more meaningful and sustainable rendition of material culture.

Through fundamental design research, *The Spirit of Design* challenges a host of common assumptions about sustainability, progress, growth and globalization. Walker's practice-based explorations of localisation, human meaning and functional objects demonstrate the imaginative potential of research-through-design and yield a compelling, constructive and essentially hopeful direction for the future - one that radically re-imagines our material culture by meshing mass-production with individuality, products with place, and utilitarian benefit with environmental responsibility. In so doing, the author explores:

- how understandings of human meaning affect design and how design can better incorporate issues of personal meaning
- how mass production needs to become integrated with localised production and service provision
- how short-lived electronic goods can be brought into a more sustainable design paradigm
- the changing role of the designer in a post-consumerist world taking a design-centred approach
- a combination of creative, propositional design practice, reasoned argument and theoretical discussion
- the book will impel readers to investigate the nature of contemporary material culture and its relationship to both the natural environment and to deeper notions of human meaning.

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