



Meaning and design of nature for the urban built environment

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Cultural literacy in the built environment

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In the western context, indigenusness or being indigenous is often associated with the natural, the wild, and in some cases the primitive. In other words the dominant stereotype/illusion for being indigenous generally associates indigenous people with rural living, being close to nature, living with nature and being close to the land. The majority of indigenous people however, now live in cities where they are the subject of yet another stereotype of the indigenous as working class or unemployed, state house occupiers, urban slum dwellers, posing another form of danger or `wildness' and `being primitive' ...gangs, crime, bad housing, drugs, unpleasant suburbs, bland graffittied urban landscapes. One of the biggest challenges facing urban planners, urban designers, architects and indeed indigenous peoples today is to find ways to re-establish indigenous relationships with the natural environment and `their' land in an urban context. A new form of cultural literacy in the built environment is now needed.