

BFA Furniture Design 2024
Senior Degree Project Report

Monolith Program

Yining Ge

Instructors:

Amy Devers
Emily Cornell Du Houx
Sara Ossana
Pete Oyler
Christopher Specce

Monolith Program

We give lateral surfaces meanings.

A roof, we live under.

A platform, we stand upon.

A seat, for resting.

A surface, we touch.

A shelter, for longing.

A shelf, to cherish.

A plain.

The project initiates a deciphering of
dolmen's visual performance.



Dolmens are ancient stone monuments consist of two uprights supporting a large flat horizontal slab, known for their simple yet powerful structural systems.

Monolith Program discovers dolmen forms in design language. The collection discovers the robust simplicity and graphic silhouette and incorporate the identified contracting elements into a statement of furniture making.

Ground

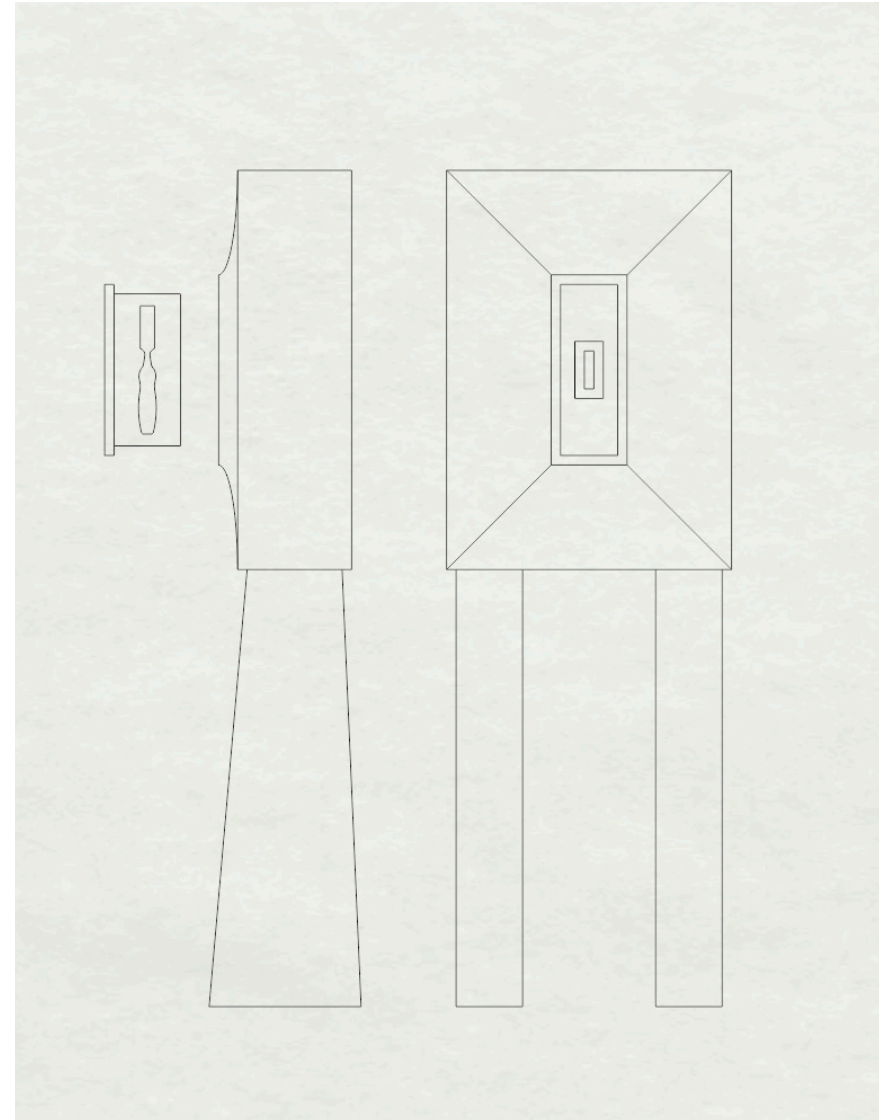
Void

Lapse

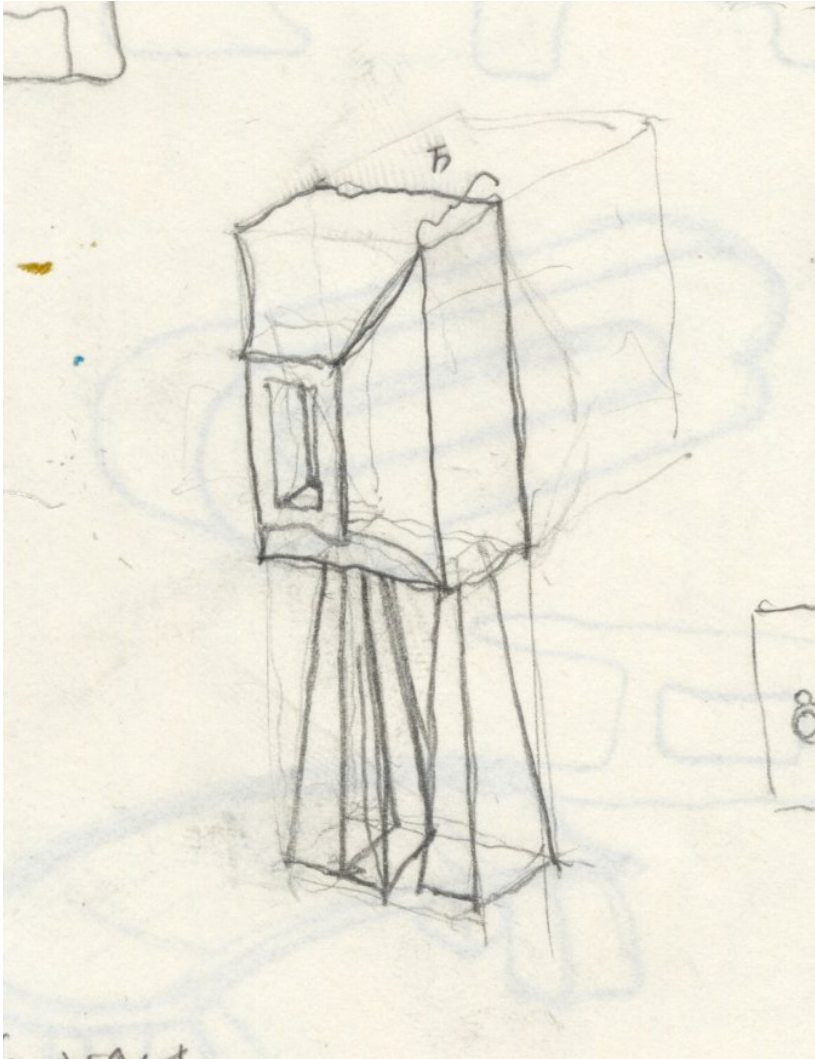
Rhythm

Ground

Reimagination of craft.



Poplar
15"x8"x46"



Cabinet making is a cornerstone of traditional handcraft woodworking, demanding the craftsmans' utmost attention to achieve flawless joineries. Ground is a cabinet that mirrors dolmens' robust simplicity and moves away from the conventional emphasis on perfect joinery.



Rather than using joineries to piece the cabinet together, working subtractively is crucial to Ground. The making process relies on intuitive shaping and mark-making on a laminated body. The surface texture, created by using an angle grinder, adds a tactile dimension, synthesizing the raw essence from my inspiration. Ground is nothing like a ordinary cabinet.

At the center of the cabinet is a drawer with a chisel silhouette on the right. The negative chisel silhouette symbolizes the lost celebration of craft through the tool rather than the craftsmanship.





The cabinet is finished with a charred surface both as a protective layer and to emphasize the timelessness of the dolmens.



Through these methods, the cabinet transforms into a tactile exploration to the enduring legacy of traditional craftsmanship



Untitled, Philip Guston, 1973

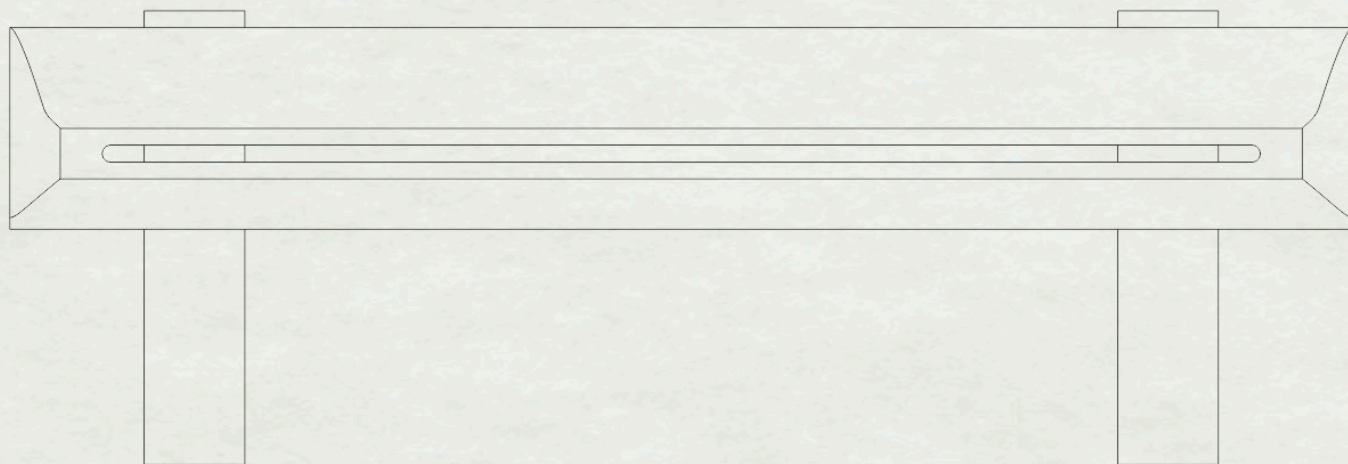
Why is the silhouette of your object an important part of your design practice?

A silhouette is a two dimensional shadow, an echo of the object. Silhouette speaks about my design journey.

One of the guiding principles I embrace for myself is to work around the universal graphic silhouette of the dolmens: two vertical and one horizontal solid. Silhouette blurs the scale. Its graphic essence further contributes to the universality of my designs. Working subtractively, I employ grinding, burning, and sandblasting as my techniques.

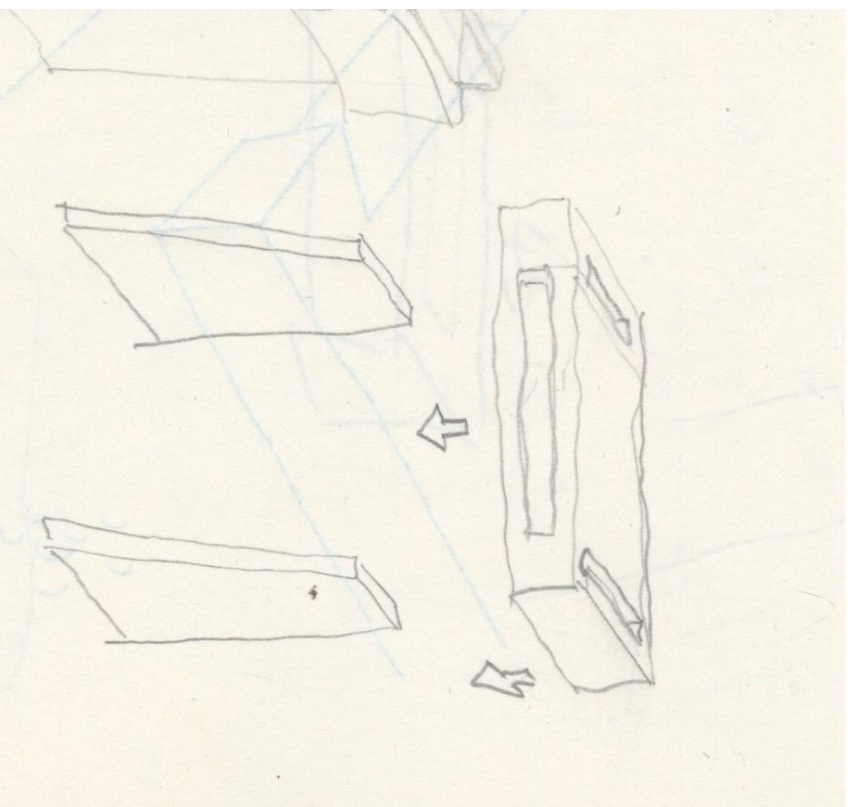
My material removal is meditative and carried out with intuition. I gently unveil the silhouette of my objects. Planer texturing adds a delicate variation to the universal silhouette, expressing my appreciation for the natural weathering those rock structures experience.

Void



Poplar
13"x40"x14"

Rock forms over time. The layers on top of layers shape its materiality. Rock formation is inseparable from gravity.



Void is



a balance between delicacy and substantiality.

an interplay of gravity to dolmen forms.

Delicacy in the bench dances on the edge of fragility and resilience, embodying an appreciation for subtlety. On the other hand, the material choice is robust, reflecting the found enduring strength.



Early human collected large rock slabs and created monolithic structures. To me, the structures show gravity in their essence.

In a bench form,
Void's structural
strength comes
from interaction.



Void disassembles into three parts; the seating platform, having two slanted notches, drops down into their corresponding trapezoidal legs functioning as tenons. The angled joinery is a fiction-fit structure representing gravity.

In-use, the introduction of mass through seating strengthens the stability and further emphasizes gravity's influence.

I delve into gravitational force, seeking to capture gravity as the key structural element for Void.

When you see a fish you don't think of its scales, do you? You think of its speed, its floating, flashing body seen through the water...

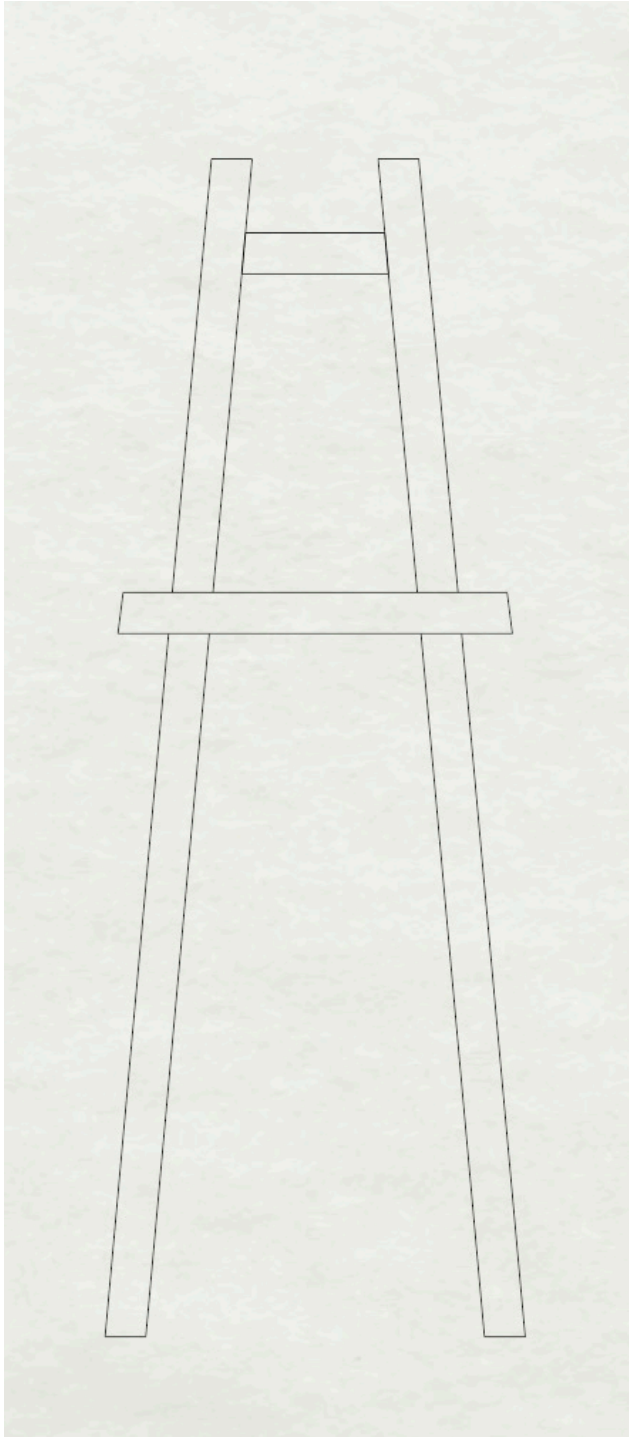
If I made fins and eyes and scales, I would arrest its movement, give a pattern or shape of reality. I want just the flash of its spirit.

- Constantin Brancusi

Thoughts are descriptive and intangible. Words and sketches contextualize the vaguely imagined images.

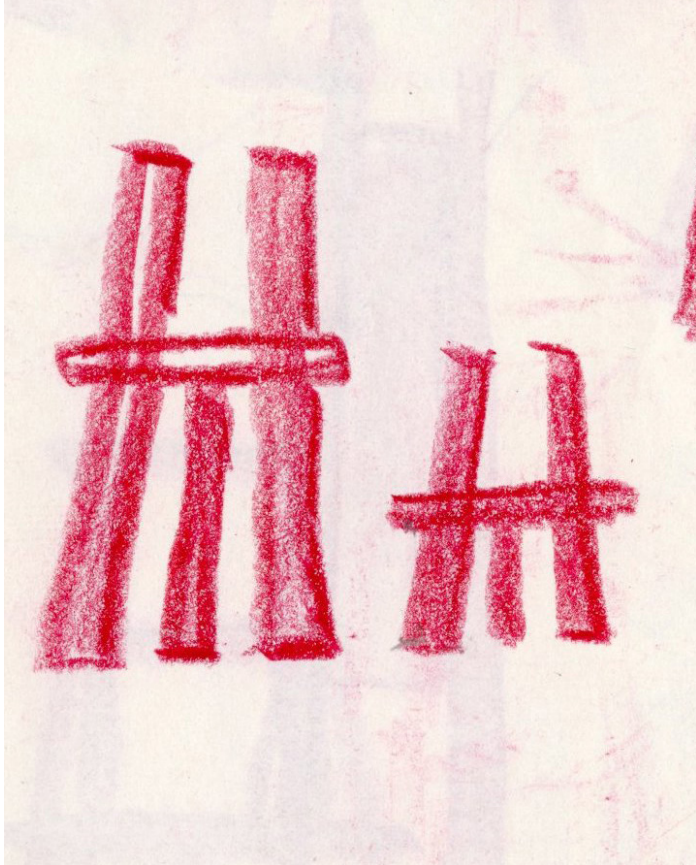
The craft, the hand, and the tools are correspondents of the internal feeling connecting to the world beyond the internal self.

Lapse



Radial approaching in distance.

Poplar
25"x7"x70"



Our ability to define foreign barricades sensibility and approachability.

In the mosaic world, scale loses its grip. Sky's the limit.

The vast difference in scale between human beings and the monolithic structures is profound. Whether it evokes fear or awe, a river of unfamiliarity flows. Physical distancing distorts our sense of scale, casting ambiguity over our perception of surroundings.

However, when we shift our gaze away from the scale onto the form, we find the geometry is simple and universal.



Lapse's form derives from an orchard ladder, a relic fading from memory. Traditional wooden orchard ladders are vanishing, replaced by industrial manufactured metal ladders that have advantage in safety and convenience. Lapse emerges to bridge modernity and tradition, revealing an approachability honoring both.



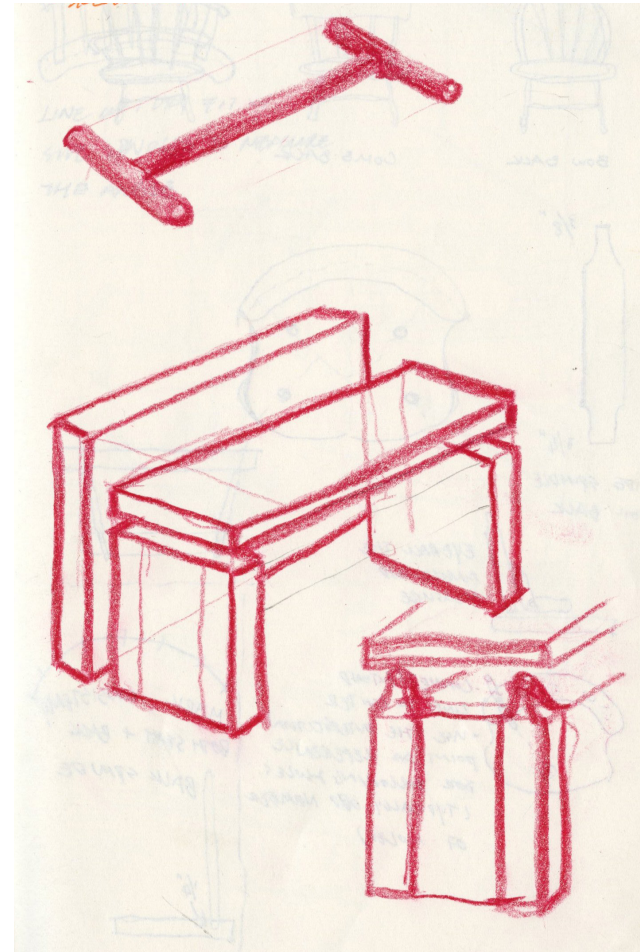
In the form of a ladder, Lapse is a wall-mounted sculptural shelf. The design aims to capture the disappearing orchard ladder, evoking a sense of reminiscence. Lapse is a vessel of memory, a bridge between eras, blending the rustic charm of the past with the sleek efficiency of the present.



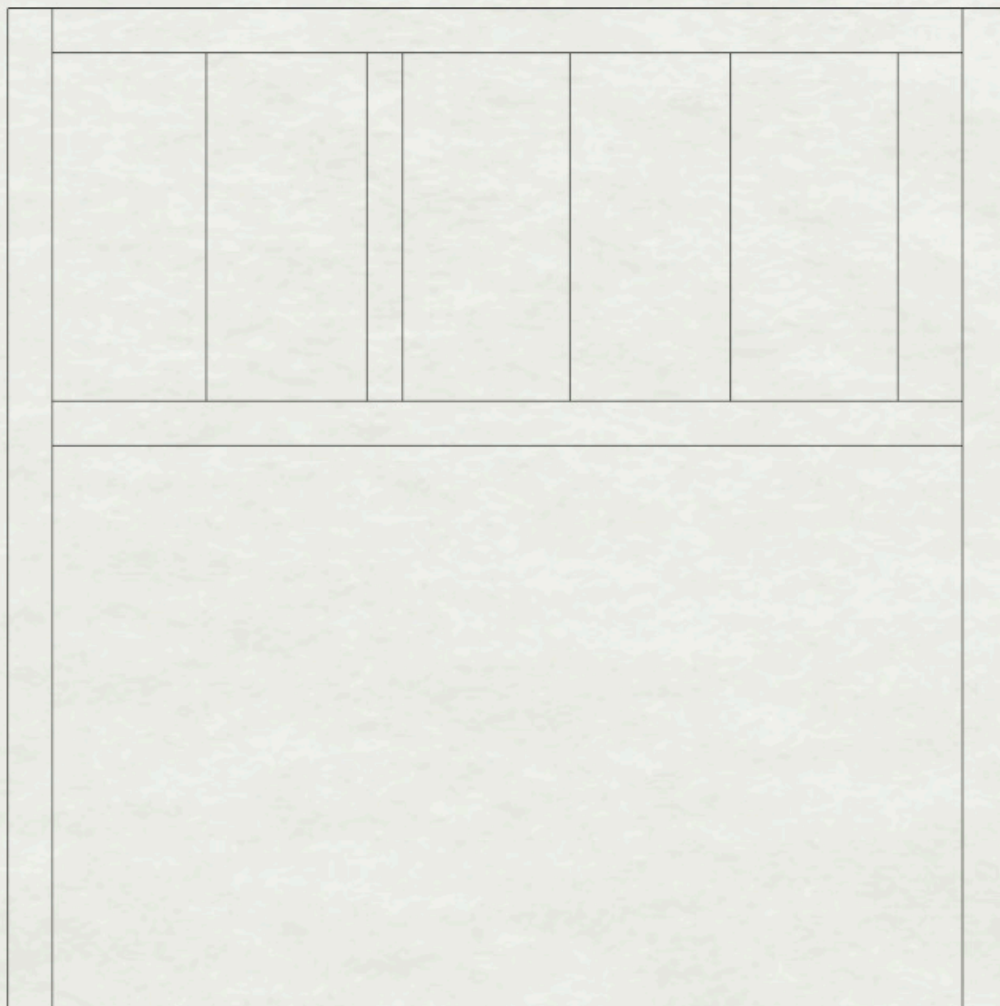
In the spring of 2024, I embraced the art of drawing with a red China marker.

Though a 0.5 mechanical pencil serves its purpose, the red Chinese marker whispers a deeper connection.

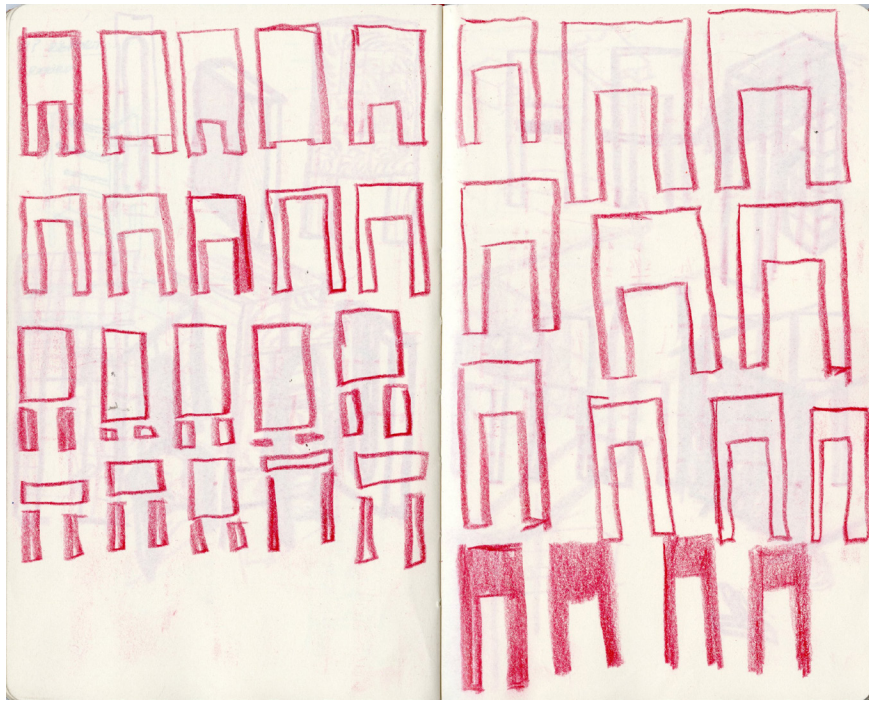
Its line weight dances with the contours of my creations, making it a more fitting and inspiring instrument for my artistic journey.



Rhythm



Poplar
27"x13"x28"





Rhythm emerges as a segway from my exploration of sugi ban.

Functioning as a vanity cabinet, Rhythm embodies my affection for end grain, a beauty obscured in my previous objects.





Instead of using burning as a technique once highlighted the visual climax of the soft and hard wooden fiber, I experimented sandblasting.



Due to the varied density of the wooden fiber, sandblasting removes more soft fiber than higher density wooden fiber, revealing a higher contrast of the wood grain pattern.

The making process was accompanied with serendipitous discoveries.

Cabinet is a most cherished and admired type of furniture.

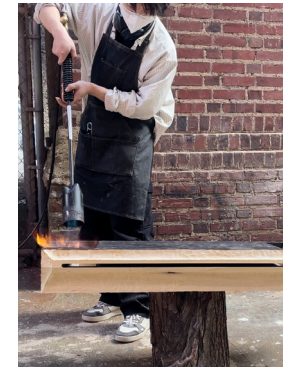
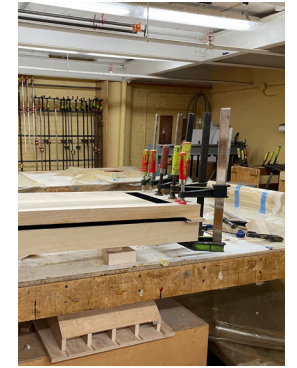
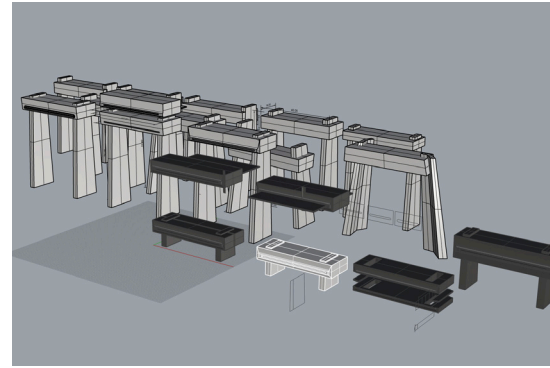
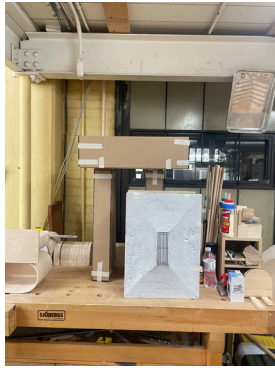
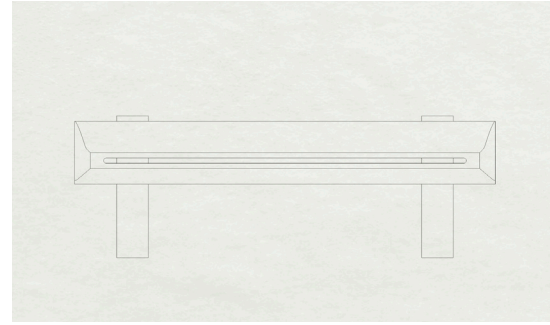
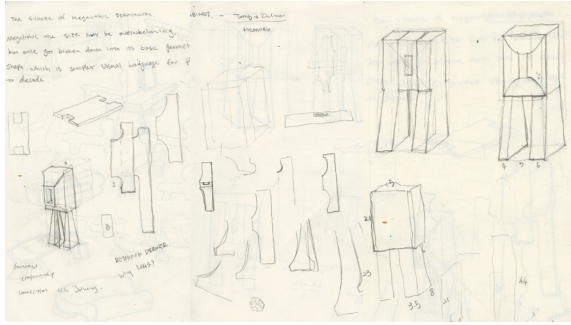
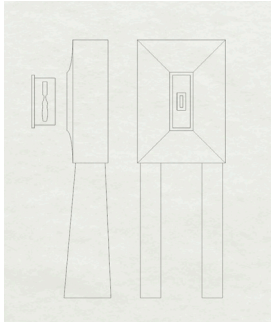


Poplar is universally considered a cheaper, less finished, and model making species.

This poplar vanity cabinet is glorifying the material that is otherwise less valued. The contrasting colors of the fibers creates an attractive tapestry compelling me to forsake the familiar methods of burning and inking. This revelation is a gift that only poplar can give.

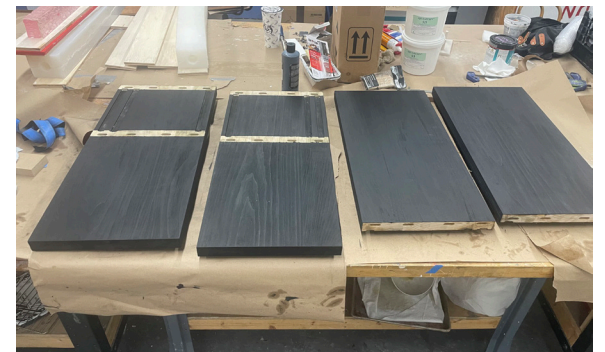
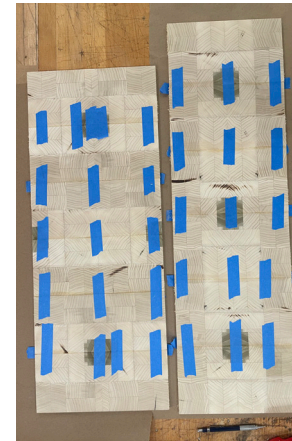
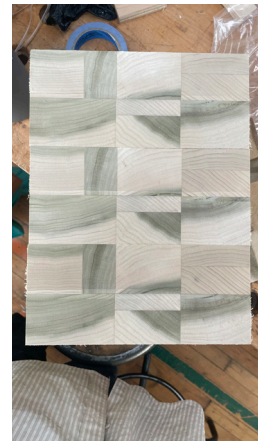
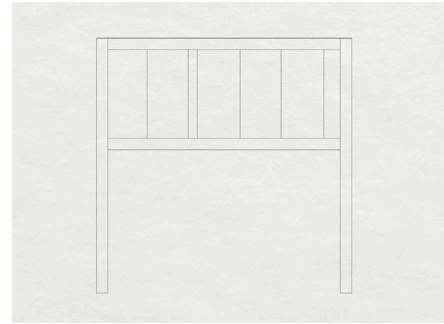
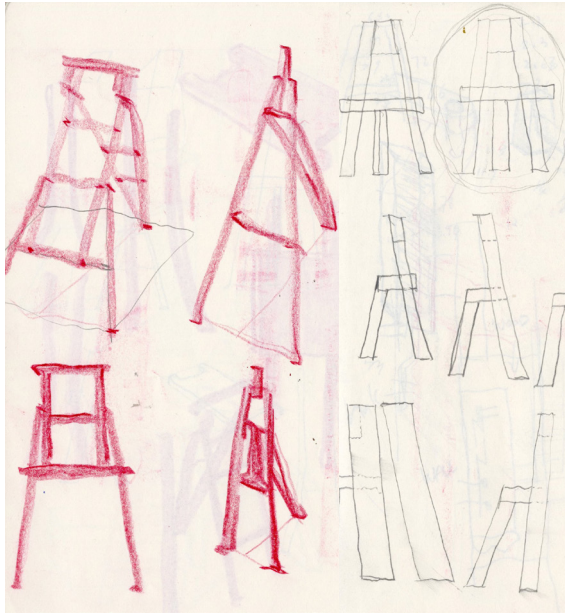
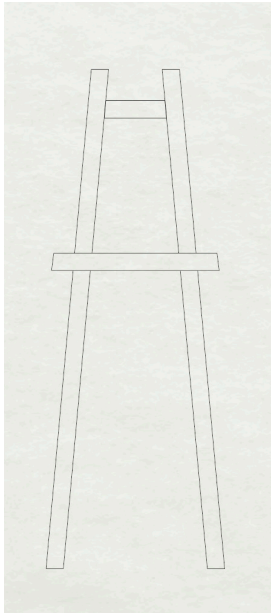






Ground - Process

Void - Process



Lapse - Process

Rhythm - Process



May 25th, 2024

RISD Farm

Furniture Department Bonfire

Cabinet

Shelf

Bench

Vanity Cabinet