One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

an exploration in craftmanship.

Master degree project Johan Skoog, 2019

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Degree Project for Master of Fine Arts in Design,
Main Field of Study Industrial Design, from Lund
University, School of Industrial Design
Department of Design Sciences

Johan Skoog
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Supervisor: Senior lecturer Olof Kolte
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Content.

Crafts-manship.

Summary

The purpose of this project is to explore craftsmanship, trying to find out how the use of it can become an integrated part of my design process. The initial part of the project is dedicated to research on the topic of what craftsmanship is. The research is conducted through literature review, study visits and market research.

The project has an exploratory phase whereby I make experiments that attempts to make sense of the findings from the research. The exploratory part uses a hand on iterative approach. The insights gained in the two first parts are then used in the design part of the project. I decide to focus on the craftsmanship related to the material wood and apply it to one of the oldest artefacts that humans have created, and still do new versions of, the Stool. In the process I built 13 stools before deciding on the final designs. Each stool is an exploration and refinement of how to integrate the knowledge about the craftsmanship into the design process. The main insight I gained by working on this project was that the subjective nature of craftmanship implies that the integration of it, into the design process, will be personal, and something that needs to be explored by each individual.
The final result is a collection of one, two, three and four legged stools all made of solid Oregon Pine

Back-ground.

In the very first week of the master's education, our class went on a study trip in the south of Sweden. The trip was a part of the course "cyclic food project" lead by Olof Kolte. The purpose of our travels where to meet people devoted to making and producing things with great passion, people I would like to call Craftsmen. The purpose of our travels was to meet people devoted to making and producing things with great passion, people I would like to refer to as Craftsmen.

Nearing the end of the four-day trip we stop by some small red buildings and a gravel yard with piles of logs, some old wooden boats and an old sawmill. The people operating the sawmill were later presented as the Ravanis brothers. The two brothers, Martin and Matias were like characters out of a book, living in the countryside far away from the stress of the city, completely dedicated to the craft that they love, boat building. This visit was an inspiring insight into the passion and knowledge that these two brothers share. I was amazed at the passion these brothers displayed for the craft of cutting wood.
This visit was truly inspiring, the passion and knowedge that the brothers demonstrated in the craft of cutting wood amazed me. The more questions I asked, the more eager they became to show me their work and explain their process. At the end of the visit the brothers were cross navigating the yard of old boats, planks and logs as they pointed and spoke enthusiastically about differences in wood and ways to cut them. This visit was a key moment in this project. I discovered a passion and knowledge that I had not experienced before, something I think there is great potential to explore.

In this project I want to discover more about the passion and knowledge that goes in to craftsmanship and how it can be utilized in design.

Craftsmen (Photo:Tim Krahmer)

Curating Crafts-manship.

During my previous experience as both a student and designer in the professional field
In previous experience in school as well as a designer in the professional field I have struggled to combine the knowledge of craftsmanship with the design process.
In my experience I have observed that design is usually driven from an aesthetics or function starting point. The knowledge of craftsmanship is typically added in a later stage towards the end of the design process. In my opinion I believe that craftsmanship can create a product that is far superior than one without it and I feel that it could be used in a much earlier stage in the design process. In this project I want to explore how we can think about craftsmanship within design, as integral in the design process, in order to do this, I want to explore the following idea:
craftsmanship as inherent in the design process.

In cooking it is often said that a good ingredient speaks for itself, meaning if you have a good raw ingredient not much is needed in order to create a good dish. When meeting the brothers at the sawmill I realized that this saying is perhaps something that could be adopted within design. Can we as designers be like chefs and treat craftsmanship as our raw ingredient? What if we as designers saw ourselves as curators, telling the story of passion and knowledge that craftsmanship possesses.

Craftsman (Photo:Tim Krahmer)

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Demarcations.

Craftsmanship exists in many forms and fields. In the time frame of this project I do not have the time to explore all of them, therefore I will make some demarcations in order to narrow my scope and create attainable goals. When choosing which demarcations to make, I have reflected upon which elements will be most beneficial to my future career. Practicalities such as time frame, scope of work, resource availability and size of the task were also taken into consideration.

The main demarcation is the choice of material. As the main focus of this project I have chosen wood and woodworking.

Woodworking and the knowledge of wood has a very strong link to craftsmanship. I believe this demarcation will not limit my exploration but rather be fruitful for the project.

On a practical level, wood has been chosen because of the availability. I have the resources to work with wood as well as the access to knowledge in close proximity from both the brothers at the saw mill and the staff in the workshops at the university.

In order to explore my idea in this project I have chosen furniture as the medium. This choice is made so that I can focus my attention on the process and ideas rather than the medium of the idea. The decision fell on furniture, I believe this field can offer large room for exploration since the function is often basic (to sit, to store, to provide a place to rest etc.).

Goal.

One defining goal of this project is to explore the concept craftsmanship. Initially I found the concept of craftsmanship to be highly interesting and continued research has revealed craftsmanship as multifaceted and complex to define. In my opinion craftsmanship can appear in countless number of variety of forms. One stereotypical view of craftsmanship, from my observations and research is, that it is often regarded as synonymous with the handmade. While this is true in many cases, I have also seen many examples of craftsmanship that is very much machine made. I have in a previous research project ('Research methods for Industrial design, IDEN35 at Lund university) looked in to the perception of the handmade vs the machine-made dovetail, I concluded that we consider the machine made as well as the handmade dovetail as a sign of craftsmanship. This conclusion shows the abstract nature of craftsmanship, making it a difficult concept to explicitly identify.

The view of craftsmanship might also be linked to culture. Various views of craftsmanship and the shifting perceptions across cultures, generations and contexts further complicates the identification of a definition. Showing again the multifaceted nature of the concept of craftsmanship.

By exploring the concept, I want to familiarize myself and Explore the possibilities of seeking to define and better understand craftsmanship
In this explorative process I am not seeking to constrict the possible definitions of 'craftsmanship' but rather to open up discussion in an attempt to better understand its complexity.

The main driving force behind this project is a personal Fascination over what could be defined as craftsmanship and what could not. During the initial visit with the sawmill brothers I could clearly see that they were craftsmen, although explaining the reasoning behind this was hard to put in words. Since my starting point is a personal fascination, I believe it is important to acknowledge the inherent subjectivity associated with the concept of craftsmanship. The goal can also be perceived as an opportunity to improve as a designer and to broaden my personal knowledge of the greater perceptions of craftsmanship

Apart from the knowledge and experience, the outcome of this project will be physical objects. My goal is that the making of objects will serve as a methodology for exploring the concept of craftsmanship. The findings of the exploratory process will be inherent and evident in the final outcome. My goal is that these final objects will serve as a materialized summary of the explorative process.

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Learn.

Working with craftsmanship demands a thorough understanding of what craftsmanship means. The research in this project is focused on this. Through multiple methods and approaches I have tried to answer this very question.

What is craftsmanship?

Literature.

The nature and art of Workmanship by David Pye

The main source of theory of the research is gathered from two books written on the topic of craftsmanship.

In the book The nature and art of Workmanship by David Pye, the author dissects the word workmanship from a designers and manufactures perspective. The book looks at workmanship instead of craftsmanship. The reason according to the author is that there is a lot of prejudice against craftsmanship and that it is hard to define (Pye, 1968). The concept of workmanship is closely linked to craftsmanship but includes a larger variety of work.

In the beginning of the book he defines workmanship in relation to design as the flowing:

"Design is what, for practical purpose, can be conveyed in word and by drawing: workmanship is what, for practical purpose, cannot".

In this book he proposes a theory that divides workmanship in to two categories, the workmanship of risk and the workmanship of certainty. The workmanship of risk is work that does not rely on helping aids such as guides and jigs and more on the dexterity and skill of the worker. The workmanship of certainty is the workmanship that goes in to making something where the result is predetermined. Workmanship of certainty is work of that kind that once set up will produce many objects that are identical, the outcome is certain and there is less risk of diversion from the "original".

The book also addresses quality within workmanship. Pye states that quality of workmanship is judged on two criteria: sturdiness and comeliness, Sturdiness being the way something withstands and transmits forces in the way that the designer intended. Comeliness is how well the workmanship communicates or adds to the aesthetic expression of the design or adds to it. He also states that quality of workmanship is more about fit for purpose than always being of highest precision.

This book has played a large role in understanding workmanship. My idea of craftsmanship differs from the author. Craftsmanship for me is both the workmanship of certainty and the workmanship of risk I find the prejudice of the word craftmanship interesting since it is so hard to define, for David Pye it is a problem, I see it as a resource.

I have experienced that while we often have a romanticized view of the handmade, Pye does not seem to have this same view. Pye does not make it explicit whether he believes that making things by hand is better or worse but rather identifies that machine-made things also have workmanship in them, but at a different stage (workmanship of certainty). David Phys theory of what workmanship is has helped me to understand and identify where different types of craftsmanship appears, and by doing so understand what it might be.

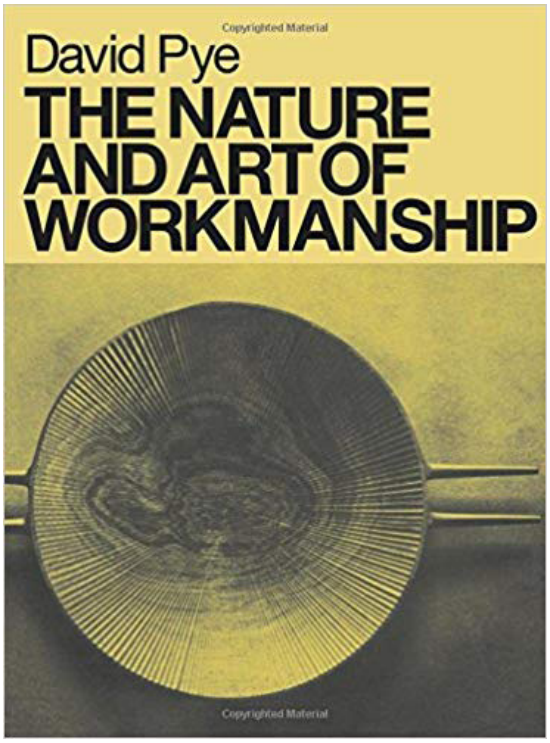
Literature.

The craftsman by Richard Sennet.

This book takes a more philosophical point of view and goes in to the mind and the mentality of the craftsman.
Richard Sennet writes about craftsmanship as perfecting a skill, and this is what drives the craftsman. He identifies this craftsman in many different fields, not only the traditional such as woodworking and pottery but also in cooking, music and programming among others.

Sennet writes about the tacit, non-verbal knowledge that craftsmanship is. Tacit knowledge cannot be passed on with words but rather needs to be practiced in order to be learnt. In this book Sennet explores how this knowledge is passed on trough medieval guilds and apprenticeship models.

This book has been a important part of understanding the drive of the craftsman. I believe this book explains where the passion of the craftsman comes from and that It is an essential part of perfecting a skill.



The nature and art of Workmanship by David Pye

The craftsman by Richard Sennet.

Visit.

Nymans såg

In the nature and art of Workmanship by David Pye, the author writes about how we sometimes refer to a material itself as being a 'good material' (Pye, 1968). Pye reflects that a tree growing in the ground is not good as a material until it is cut down and refined. The process of doing so requires craftsmanship, and the quality and usability of the material is determined by the craftsmanship involved. This is often forgotten and taken for granted.

I had identified a deviation in what the consumers would describe as high quality and what the Ravini brothers has describes as high quality. Further exploring my analogy of craftsmanship from the lens of a chef and letting high-quality ingredients speak for themselves, requires me to understand what a good ingredient is in the world of wood from a craftsman perspective. To find this definition I turned to the craftsmen that inspired the project, the sawmill brothers.

I visited one of the brothers on a grey February morning in order to see if I could better understand what their definition of quality was.

The visit did not yield many concrete answers of what wood quality was, but it gave insights into their knowledge and how hard the process of transferring such knowledge can be. During the visit I asked what good quality was for them, the answer was quite simple, strait grained and knot free. Although while walking around the yard talking about different types of wood, other knowledge appears. The brothers could look at a piece of wood and determine flaws like fungi or rot and immediately determine what the wood could be utilized for. They also appeared to know every individual plank in the yard, telling me how and for what each one could be used for.

During the visit I also met a carpenter by the name of Joar Nilsson. He was buying lumber from the brothers and started talking to him. He was a carpenter that specialized in traditional house building. I asked him about his view of choosing wood, and he emphasized on the value of choosing not the best wood, but the correct wood. His approach was that even wood that was not considered of best quality could be used in places where it is not visual or part of the construction. This approach would be utilizing the tree as a resource in a better way. The respect for nature is a great insight, not all trees produces the highest quality wood, although good craftsmanship can make the most out of the resource.

During the original visit I could not pinpoint why I experienced the brothers as craftsmen. During the second visit I came to the conclusion that it is about the knowledge and experience and how they utilize this in order to make the most out of the resource. Their approach is respectful and humble towards nature, which could be one way of defining craftsmanship.

During this visit I also experienced the problem of knowledge transfer. In order to get access to their knowledge and experience I felt like I had to talk in tangible terms. This insight tells me that the key to using craftsmanship in design might be how it is integrated in the design process. Perhaps prototypes can be used as mediation objects in order to open up a dialog?

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Visit.

ATA timber Widtsköfle

Craftsmanship is often connected with the small scale but could the knowledge of the craftsman be present at a larger scale production to? To find out I visited a large-scale sawmill, producing construction timber. I wanted to see the different in their perception off quality and how it compares to the small-scale sawmill.

I visited ATA timber in Wittskövle and was guided around the operation by the site manager Greger Janson. The operation differs a lot in comparison to the small-scale. The hands on production of the brothers sawmill is replaced computer controlled production lines.

The sawmill produces timber from Swedish forests to become building material that many is exported outside of Sweden sometimes as far as china and the USA. The mill focuses on pine and fir trees and control the entire sawmill process from the debarking of the logs, to the cutting and drying of the finished product.

The insight for me during this visit was how the tacit knowledge of wood still plead a major role in the large scale sawmill. When the logs arrive to the sawmill a person individually inspects the log and clarifies it in quality. This is all made manually and the person doing the classification does it by looking at the log. In a later stage each and every plank is inspected and classified again also by looking at each plank. I later learn that there is an electronic classification machine but the person doing the manual classification has override over the electronic testing machine.

The core of craftsmanship is tacit knowledge, making of things requires this knowledge, but it does not need to be limited to the making it can exist in many forms.

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The Market.

The furniture industry

Market research

Craftsmanship plays a big role in the marketing of companies and products. We often see craftsmanship as a buzz word in marketing and it is used heavily in the communicating of company values. To get a better picture of how the term is used, I collected data with my demarcations in mind, looking mostly at the furniture industry. To get a somewhat broader perspective I looked at other markets where craftsmanship in marketing is common, like the luxury car or watch market.

The data for this research was collected by going to the furniture fair in IMM (Internationale möbelmesse) in Cologne as well as the Stockholm furniture and light fair. Data was also collected through various company's webpages.
One notable insight from this research is that craftsmanship is used in marketing to paint a picture that shows that care is taken in producing the products. The craftsman is often portrayed as a person doing manual labor on products. Having visited some company factories I have witnessed that in many cases the imagine are not made up but don't tell the entire picture of how something is made. Also the word craft and hand crafted appear as payoffs to multiple companies logos (Gemlaab.se, 2019) (Ton.eu, 2019). To these words in the logos of companies shows the value of craftsmanship in marketing terms, it stands for something that is attractive.

During the research I found some companies that talk about genuine craftsmanship (Kvänum, 2019). This is something I find interesting sine it might show that craftsmanship as a concept is over used in marketing. From my observation the genuine is added in order to achieve two different things. Firstly, genuine might be added in order to distinguish a company from another. Craftsmanship is (in the "western" markets that I looked in to) often considered a luxury (Nieto, 2019) and the companies want to take advantage of this. In a market where craftsmanship is widely used as a selling point the exclusivity of the word gets lost. For companies to distinguish them self from others genuine is added. The definition of genuine craftsmanship is hard to pinpoint due to the complexity of defining craftsmanship.

The second reason I believe companies use genuine in front of craftsmanship is to emphasize that it is hand made. Early on in the research process I have identified the preconception that handmade and craftsmanship are seen as the same. Looking at the brand imagine of some of the brands it seems like genuine is there to emphasize that it is truly made by hand and not assisted with a machine. If this is true it also implies that machine made is not genuine craftmanship, and therefore fake.

The conclusion is that craftsmanship is widely used in the world of marketing, which gives hints that it is a strategy that the consumer finds attractive. The image of craftsmanship that is depicted and communicated is that it stands for exclusivity. The companies paint the picture that their products are crafted with care and humans involved. I believe that this pictures automatically makes us draw the conclusion that the production is small since a human center production that involves a lot of care for a product is rarely seen in large scale.

When collecting the data, I identified that many companies have a disclaimer text that describes that a natural material may vary in appearance (Carlhansen.com, 2019). I have insights to companies that uses similar text and they are a result of too many complaints from customers, not being satisfied that the material differs from images of which they were marketed with. This text is a hint that the craftsmanship of choosing wood and other material might be lacking. The disclaimer text might also be evidence of a consumer's lack of knowledge of wood thinking it is always consistent in appearance.

Screenshot, Ballingslöv catalog (Ballingslov.se)

Screenshot, Montana website (montanafurniture.com)

Screenshot, Brdr. Krüger website (brdr-kruger.com)

Screenshot, Kvänum website (kvanum.se)

Passionate craftsmanship

Through the years, Carl Hansen & Søn has maintained a strong focus on preserving Danish design classics while continuing to expand our collection to represent influential new designers. Our goal: to gather the best, most iconic modern furniture designs under one roof.

Find out more

Screenshot, Carl Hansen & Sön website (carlhansen.com)

Conclusion.

Research

What is craftsmanship for me?

In my opinion, objects made with craftsmanship are well made objects. It could be that they are made with high precision, exceptional function or it could be that the attention to detail is high. Making something well is highly subjective and what I think is well might differ from other people. This might be the reason why the definition of craftsmanship is so subjective, where to draw the line of what is craftsmanship and what is not is up to the each and every one.

Craftsmanship is umami

Umami is a complex flavor that can be described as satisfying, I see craftsmanship in the same way. An object that is made with craftsmanship gives a very satisfying feeling. Nowadays we know what chemical substances contribute to the flavor of umami but the outcome is still best described as satisfying, deliciousness. The same goes for craftsmanship, we can see the contributing factors (skill, attention to detail, tradition and so on) of craftsmanship but the outcome is in my opinion most accurately described as satisfying. When I see an object that I identify as made with craftsmanship I cannot always specifically tell why. I know it simply as a feeling.

Craftsmanship is marketing

Although hard to define we seem to love craftsmanship. The finest of objects are all created with some degree of craftsmanship. When looking through the catalogs of the most luxurious brands that produce what are considered as objects of the finest quality, a black and white picture of someone making things by hand is not a rare sight (Rolls-roycemotorcars.com,
2018) . The pictures communicate that craftsmanship was involved in the making of the object and tells a story about quality, tradition and attention to detail.

Today craftsmanship might have it's highest value in the world of marketing. The story of the passionate craftsman crafting an object is a valuable one, a story that seems attractive for costumers. Many of the pictures that are meant to tell the story are staged pictures. We use the picture of craftsmanship as an enhancer to make the product better. Many times, there are craftsmanship involved in the production of objects but the pictures over exaggerate this in order to create the satisfying feeling that is connected to craftsmanship.

Craftsmanship is fake

The competitive nature of a market has made its way in to the world of craftsmanship, we can observe this in the phenomena of genuine craftsmanship. Company's need to make sure that they are using genuine craftsmanship to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Defining genuine craftsmanship is for me difficult and is simply evidence that the craftsman concept has become a marketing practice as much as a practice of making things well.

Evidence of craftsmanship

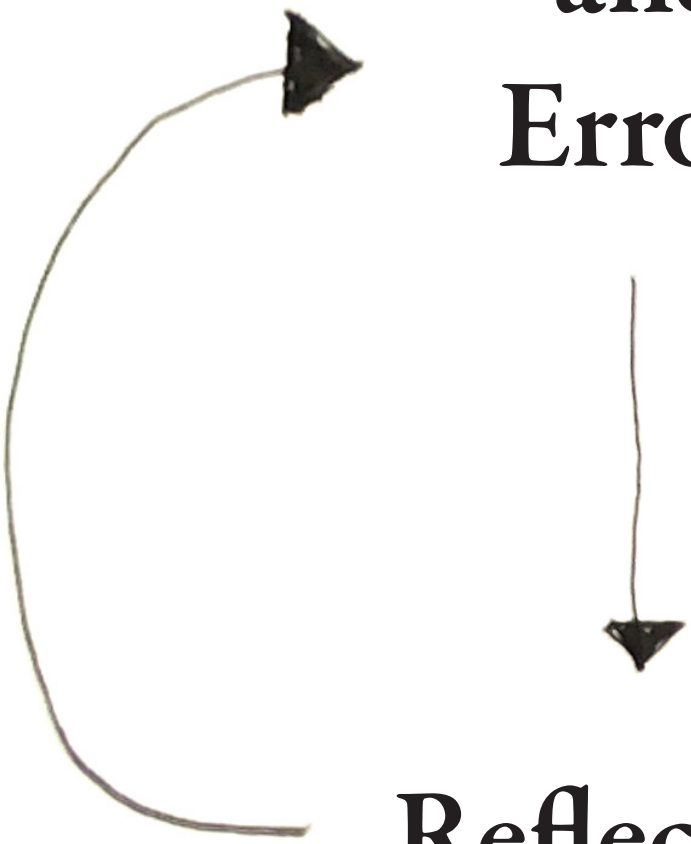
The phenomena of what is real craftsmanship compared to what is "fake" craftsmanship highlights the fact that the object itself does not communicate if it has been crafted with craftsmanship or not.

The physical evidence that the craftsmanship leaves behind is something I find interesting. One might look for imperfections as a sign of craftsmanship, a logical reasoning since craftsmanship is often depicted as handmade. The romantic view of craftsmanship was referred to earlier as a man in a black and white picture crafting something by hand. The idea of craftsmanship as something exclusively handmade is in my opinion inaccurate. Although craftsmanship can be executed by hand it can just as well be executed by machine, it is just another type of craftsmanship. Well executed work is one way I would summarize craftsmanship, the work that goes in to operating a machine is also craftsmanship not only if it is made by hand or by using hand tools.

Explore.

This chapter is dedicated to the physical exploratory part of the project. The purpose of this part is to convert the findings in the research part into something tangible. In this project I have chosen an iterative approach where trial and error in combination with reflection are employed in order to attain a result. This approach gives me the possibility to find new insights and learn more about craftsmanship during the process. The exploratory process also implies that the outcome of the project can constantly change with new insight and knowledge, I have used this by constantly reflecting and re-evaluating my brief.

Trial and Error.



Reflection.

Directions.

To start the exploratory process, I needed directions to explore. By synthesizing the insights of from the research I made 5 concrete directions. The research part of the project was intentionally very broad scoped, and I have found insights and interest in many areas.

It's easy to think more is more however by adding many of the interesting points in to one project the final outcome can become a mess since it lacks in clarity. This is something that could happen in this project since I find this topic so interesting.

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Direction #1.

Craftsmanship was involved

Background:

It is easy to claim craftsmanship of a product, but there are signs to look for in order to see if something was made with craftsmanship or not. The consumer potentially does not have the knowledge that is needed to accurately identify theses signs.

Message:

This direction is about educating the consumer in "signs to look for" to identify craftsmanship. It will show details that inform us whether craftsmanship was involved in the making of such goods.

Physical object:

This project will result in one or multiple furniture pieces (depending on what communicates the message clearest) that highlight the evidence of craftsmanship. They can do so in multiple ways, whereby scale and context might be methods used.

Direction #2.

The hidden craftsmanship of woodselection

Background:

The knowledge of wood is closely linked with craftsmanship. The craftsmanship that goes into cutting, sawing and choosing wood is one that is often overseen (Pye, 1968).Today's consumer seems to have little knowledge of different types of wood and different techniques of cutting wood.

Message:

This direction is about educating the consumer in the craftsmanship of timber production. I want the consumer to be aware and demand higher level of transparency in modern furniture.

Physical object:

This project will result in one or multiple furniture pieces (depending on what communicates the message clearest) that highlight the different ways of cutting timber. It will also showcase the finest quality of timer according to classical definition.

Direction #3.

Reference of quality

Background:

Today's craftsmanship is seen as something expensive and excessive, not only as a sign of quality. This perception is due to the fact that craftsmanship can be labour intensive and in Sweden labour is very expensive. This fact has made craftsmanship rare and replaced with cheap flat pack furniture, that is assembled by the consumer itself. However flat-pack and self-assembly furniture isn't often associated with craftsmanship. There are a lot of consumers that are not a craftsman, but is there a way for more of them to become a craftsman? Could he or she be a part of the making of high-quality furniture in solid material in order to get more accessible furniture (price wise)?

Message:

This direction tackles the fact that craftsmanship is expensive. In this direction, I want to make consumers think about craftsmanship as quality rather than only high price and exclusivity.

Physical object:

The outcome for this direction would be a piece of furniture that can be assembled by the consumer. The goal is for it to be of high quality and made with traditional methods found in things that bare the evidence of craftsmanship. The outcome would be of high-quality self-assembly furniture.

Direction #4.

The hidden craftsmanship of woodselection

Background:

In the furniture market in Sweden, the demand for cheap furniture is high. Furniture made with cheap material and with simple joinery (insufficient in my opinion) is very common in various price points in the market. I have identified that solid material is substituted by laminates and veneers that are applied in an way that I would consider being poor. I have experienced that people do not have the ability to tell the difference between solid wood, veneer or laminate. I have heard comments that it does not matter what it is as long as it looks good. Are we judging a type of wood entirely on aesthetics instead of its physical properties? Is this something new or is it something that has always been going on, this direction explores this.

Message:

This direction is to educate the consumer on what quality is and what to look for. The main message is that material matters and there is a large deferens between solid wood vaneer and laminates, and this directions goal is to communicate this. Like previously noted there are signs of a trend that we are judging a material based on aesthetics. This changes the demand on the market in regards of material. If only aesthetics values are requested, companies will not put effort in to doing high quality solid wood furniture. Solid wood is far superior in durability in many cases, resulting in furniture with a longer lifespan. From a sustainability standpoint this is very important, therefore it is important that the demand for high quality solid wood furniture increases on the market.

Physical object:

The outcome would be a library of references of quality. The library will act as a showcase for things to looks for more durable furniture, material and construction could be the main focus of this library. The outcome could be a library of physical objects., that could be documented in multiple ways.

Direction #5.

Craftsmanship in foreign objects

Background:

Craftsmanship is closely linked with certain industries and markets. Craftsmanship has historically been of importance in for example the furniture and watch industry. It is so common that we might take it for granted. To highlight craftsmanship, I would like to put it in a setting where it sticks out and creates a contrast in comparison to what the norm is on the market regarding how things are made.

Message:

This direction will show the effect of craftsmanship when applied. It attempts to show what craftsmanship can be by putting it in contrast to things I would not consider made with craftsmanship. This direction is highly subjective and will show my view on what craftsmanship could look like when materialized.

Physical obejct:

This direction will result in physical objects that have evidence of craftsmanship. The objects will be chosen from markets and categories where craftsmanship is not common in the way we are used to seeing it.

Craftsmanship in foreign objects Pixelvision, Love hulten (Photo:Lovehulten.com)

Selection.

After evaluating the concept, I took the decision of going with the direction the hidden craftsmanship of wood selection. The main reason for this is rooted in the background for the project. The Brothers at the saw mill opened up a new world for me, I only had limited knowledge of how wood was cut and after seeing the sawmill I understood that there is a lot to explore and discover. I identified that the common consumer was potentially disconnected from this world and had little knowledge of wood in general. This lack of knowledge is problematic since it could also have correlations to a lack of knowledge regarding quality of wood. This direction could perhaps bridge the knowledge gap between the sawmill craftsman and the consumer. This direction is also the one that I felt could bring the highest level of clarity, but also something that would fit the furniture market.

The Direction 1 is interesting but the broad scope is unachievable given the scope of work. It builds upon assumptions that it is possible to say what is good and what is not in the world of craftsmanship, and this becomes highly subjective and hard to define. The outcome of this directions is also less defined.

This direction is something that needs a stage such as an exhibition. The project will be displaced in the degree show; however this exhibition is small, and more channels are needed in order to reach a larger crowd. This also goes for direction 5 where the outcome might become more of an exhibition piece and the message and standpoint of this piece needs to be of extreme clarity. The direction 3 is addressing the economics of craftsmanship, which is a topic that is heavily discussed on the consumer level. In this direction the outcome might become to unrealistic, and problematic since it is shifting the craftsmanship from the craftsman to the consumer, going against a lot of what I have read and discovered in the research part. This direction is plausible to execute although it will be a fight to make it realistic. The last direction addresses quality in a broad sense. Quality depend upon many factors in order for this direction to have clarity it needs to be very explicitly defined which might be problematic since it will limit the project.

Metho-dology.

I have chosen a hands-on approach to explore my direction of choice. Wood is a central part of the project and therefore believe that working with the material is crucial to fully understand it. There are many methods of form giving that I believe does not focus on the material in the initial stages of a design. I have experienced that form giving through sketching, Cad and even quick prototypes in other materials than the final can leads to a disconnect between form and material. This is problematic in this project since I believe a lot of the knowledge of the craftsman is tacit knowledge. To not make something out of the final material (wood) would then mean that the tacit knowledge of that material will be lost in the early stages of the form giving process. I therefore believe that the material and the form giving should be continuously considered together. Making physical objects takes more time than for example sketching on paper, modelling, or making prototypes in a different material and scale. This slower proses can however creates space for reflection and adjustment that yields higher quality detail work.

In order to succeed with this method, a certain level of knowledge in building physical objects is needed in order to be sufficient and effective. As a side project to this I have been building a wrist watch in the workshop. This project was not initially part of this project however it has assisted in laying the foundations to be able to work with this method. The watch project was a way of getting comfortable with the workshop facilities of the school. By building a watch with the hands-on approach as this project I could probe the methodology. In my opinion the most crucial part of this method is knowing how the workshop works and how to make it work in a sufficient way, the workshop is key. The dialog that I had with the workshop instructors during the watch project was very fruitful. Discussing solutions to solve problems is a way of learning and deeper understand the knowledge of the craftsmen. While discussing solutions and solving problems in the workshop I have been able to deepen my understanding of craftsmanship knowledge.

Approach.

The main goal of making craftsmanship an inherent part of the design process can in my opinion be dealt with in two different ways. You can either work with a person who possesses craftsmanship, or you can take on the role of the craftsman. In this project I chose the later of the two.

In the book The craftsman by Richard Sennet the author defines craftsmanship as ""Desire to do a job well for its own sake." (Sennett, 2009). When building the watch that I mention in the methodology chapter I was very much driven by this idea. I had no practical or logical reasoning to build a watch I made it for the sake of making. This experience was the reason why I choose to take on the role of the craftsman's, or perhaps more precisely the motivation and philosophy of the craftsman. By adopting the philosophy of the craftsman, I could make it part of my process. This approach has been a driving factor in this project and became a theory of with the project was conducted, it can be summarized as: design though making.

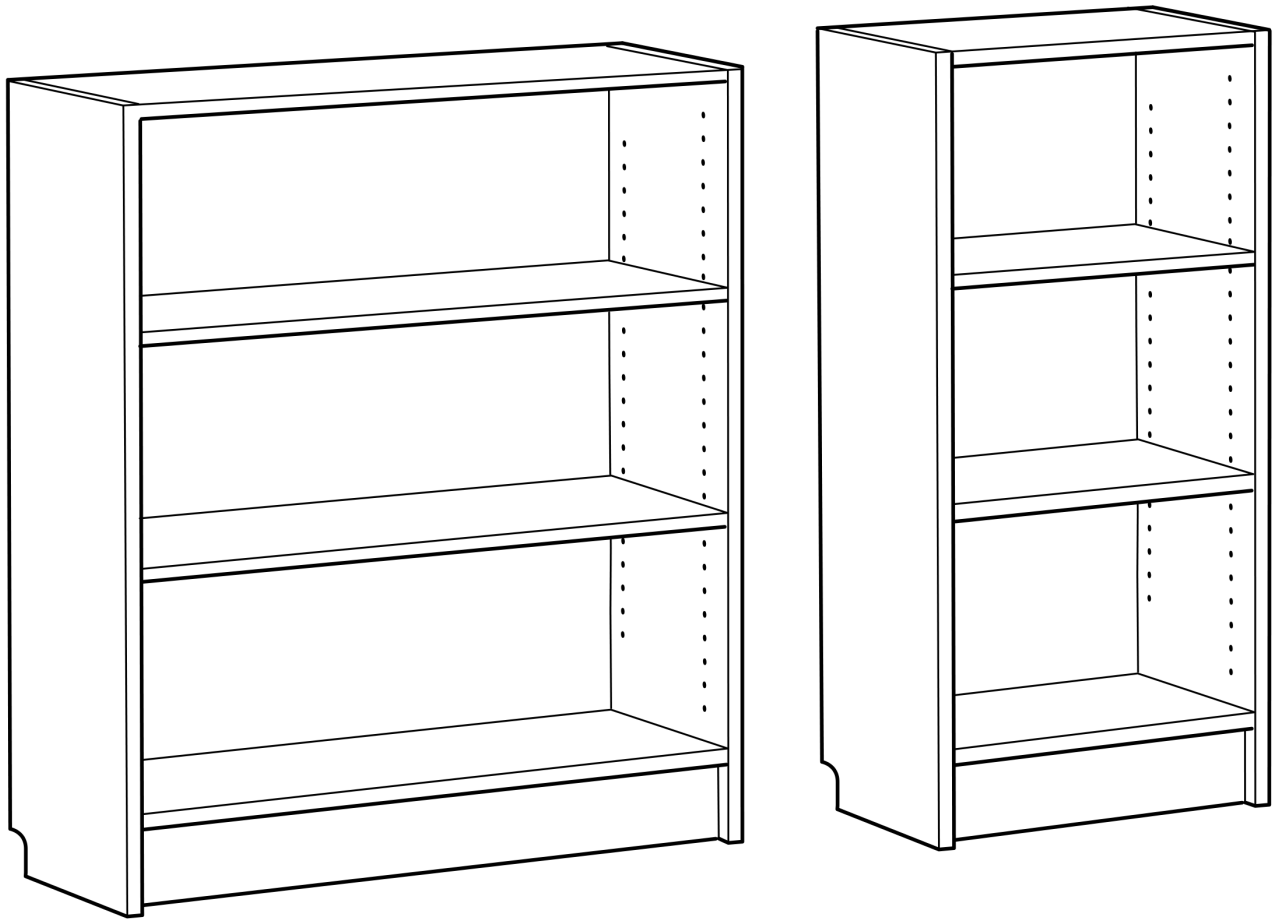
“Desire to do a job well for its own sake.”

The Craftsman - Richard Sennet

Experi-ment.

This experiment was thought out in conjunction with my supervisor, Olof Kolte. The idea is to disconnect the creative part of the form or design of an object and only focus on the craftsmanship and wood selection. I will start from a pre-existing design and duplicate it with craftsmanship in mind and see what the outcome is. I started with one of the most iconic pieces of furniture in the Swedish home, the Billy bookshelf. The bookshelf was chosen since I wanted the contrast between something that has a high level of craftsmanship and something with very little craftsmanship. The Billy is in my opinion very low in craftsmanship in both construction and material. The experiment goal is was to see what happens when the exact same proportions and dimensions are duplicated with fine wood and craftsmanship techniques.

BILLY



Design and Quality
IKEA of Sweden

Johan Skoog

The Bob.

In the experiment I started out with acquiring the cheapest Billy models from Ikea. My goal was to duplicate the design of the Ikea shelf using air-dried quarter sawn fir from northern Swedish forests. In order to pick the highest quality lumper out of the plank I consulted the instructor of the wood workshop, an experienced craftsman.

In the experiment I also added techniques that lefts signs of craftsmanship in the finished piece. The joinery and assembly of the components were made without metal fasteners and only with traditional techniques, some made by hand. The intention of adding the traditional techniques was to see its effect on the furniture in comparison to the selection of wood. My hypothesis here was that the joinery would enhance the craftsmanship of wood selection.

The new Billy bookshelf has named Bob and is made from Quatre sawn fir laid in book match. The joinery is manly dovetail joinery cut by hand, and sliding dovetails made with machine. The cabinet is finished with a white soaped finish.

The main lesson-learnt when making the bookshelf was how important the interaction with the craftsman is in order to learn how to make things that express craftsmanship. During the project I was in constant dialog with the instructors in the wood workshop. The bookshelf itself worked as a mediator in the dialog between the craftsman and me. Additionally it worked as a mediator for tacit knowledge transfer.

The bookshelf also worked as a mediator with people in my soundings. People interacting and commenting on the bookshelf opened up for discussion and an insight in to their thoughts and ideas. A lot of the initial comments about the new bookshelf were positive, commenting on enhanced aesthetics. These comments were made with both the original Billy beside it and without. The comments of the design were for me evidence that there is great power of craftsmanship in order to enhance the perception of beauty. After the initial comment the second comments were often regarding pricing. It is interesting that economics is so distinctly associated with craftmanship. The intention of this experiment was to discuss craftsmanship outside a commercial setting, but the economics comes to play even though the experiment did not have any intention to discuss this.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

The Bobby.

This experiment was to try to see the power of the wood selection. In relation to the design and the joinery techniques, what different does the selection of wood have?
In order to test this, I constructed the same bookshelf as in experiment 1 with the same type of wood and joinery techniques although the wood will come pre glued from Biltema.

The new bookshelf was made from wood that is cut and glued together (at a factory) to form boards and its main purpose is to be used as shelfs together with modular storage systems. The bookshelf design originates form the Billy bookshelf. The back piece is made from plywood which differs from experiment 1 where it is made from solid wood. The cabinet is finished with a white soap finish (same as experiment 1). The outcome of experiment number 2 will be referred to as Bobby.

The expression of experiment 2 differs quite a bit due to the knots and the fact that the wood is less uniform than that of experiment 1. However, the reactions of surrounding people were quite different. Most people saw a clear difference when comparing experiment 1 and 2 although they did not necessary prefer experiment number 1. What is considered high quality in lumber was not always important, some people were surprised with the difference in expression, while others preferred the lower quality wood due to the imperfections in it. Although preferring the lower quality wood it seemed like experiment 2 was generally more preferred over the original Billy bookshelf. The conclusion that could be drawn is that the joinery is a stronger sing of craftmanship than the craftsmanship that goes in to selecting the wood . My opinion is that the wood that is selected for its strait grain and uniformity enhances the overall craftsmanship and provides a level of tranquility that is unmatched by the lower quality wood.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

The Bill.

The third experiment investigates how big an impact the craftsmanship techniques has on the outcome of perception of the bookshelf. In this experiment I would take out the type of material from the equation and make a bookshelf from the same material as the original Billy.

The bookshelf in experiment 3 uses the same craftsmanship joinery techniques as in experiment 1 and 2 but is made from a melamine clad particle board with no further surface finish. The outcome of experiment number 3 I will refer to as Bill.

The building of the bookshelf was a bigger challenge than in the other experiment. The material is not suited to use with traditional joinery techniques. The solid wood affords craftsmanship, an important insight. The material of this experiment also does not allow for any imperfections. Due to this the overall quality is in my opinion lower than that of the original, and in this case the material does not afford craftsmanship.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Reflection.

Upon completion of the experiments I felt the need to alter the direction of where the project was heading, my idea of working with the hidden craftsmanship that is present in the lumberyard has turned out to be less fruitful than first expected. In the experiment, the various types of wood had large effects but was not the main contributing factor of what was craftsmanship or not. Reflecting upon the idea of the designer as a chef, where little is needed if the raw ingredient is of high quality, might need to be reimagined. Up until now I have thought about the raw ingredient as the wood. If the wood is of high quality little is needed in order to produce something of high quality. The experiment shows that this is not true, the wood in experiment 1 and 2 was of different quality but the opinion of surrounding people did not favor the one that in general would be considered higher in quality. Although it seemed like craftsmanship did have the effect of a good ingredient, if the craftsmanship was good the outcome would follow. Instead of highlighting the craftsmanship of selecting wood, a better approach would be to see craftsmanship as the main ingredient and as a designer my job is to facilitate that craftsmanship. The idea of educating the consumer that was present in the initial direction also needs to be tackled in a different way. What is good and bad is up to the consumer and not my project to decide for them what is good or not. Good lumber affords good craftsmanship, the two are hard to separate therefore lumber selection is important although not the main focus.

The new focus main goal is to create a product perceived as good with the help of craftsmanship, and how to work with this. In order to do this, I need an object to work with that can carry my ideas. For this I have chosen the stool.

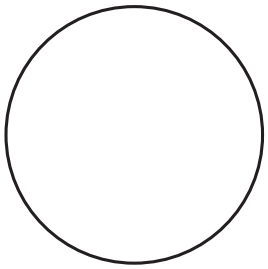
The decision of making stools comes from a trial and error method. Initially I was interested in making a chair. This interest came from personal reasons, design a chair is a challenge I very much enjoy. From a historical perspective the chair has acted as a communicator in the furniture industry (Nast, 2019). This idea of the chair being a canvas intrigued me. I probed the idea with people in my surroundings: my examiner, supervisor and also furniture designer Jonas Lindvall. The complexity of a chair was problematic, and all steered me a way of doing a chair in this project. The stool however offers much lower complexity and therefore easier to work within the scope of work in this project .

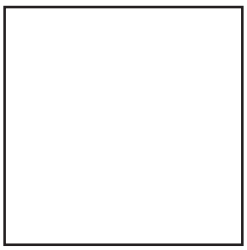
Brief.

Curate craftsmanship
Create one or multiple stools that facilitates craftsmanship

Design.

In order to understand how to design with craftsmanship I used the same hands-on approach as in the experiments. When doing the experiment, the object that I built became a mediating object. This is something I felt was key in order to draw sufficient conclusions when working with the initial experiments. My strategy was to spend little time sketching on paper and more time building in the workshop.





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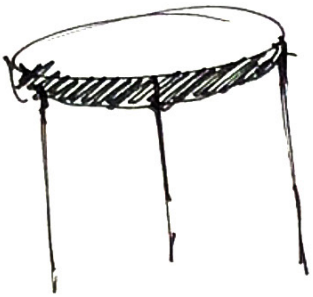
3.		
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Stool 1.

The material plays a hand in the dimensions of this stool. In order to get a good yield with a good match in grain and structure of the wood the stool needed to have certain dimensions. The construction is defined by functional limitations. In order to have enough stability, the construction in my sketch would not be sufficient. Therefore, I made a structure that supports all sides of the top and bottom platform, rather than the original one that would only support 2 sides.

The power of craftsmanship lies in details, but in my opinion the amounts of details needs to be balanced. When building this stool, I wanted to do dovetails that connected the top and bottom of the stool. When altering the construction of the stool more dovetails where needed. This result of this was that the dovetail disappeared in the overall complexity of the stool. The dovetail became in my opinion close to an ornament. This feeling of craftsmanship as ornamentation is an important reflection. Detail that show evidence of craftsmanship must be balanced and integrated in the design and not added as an afterthought.

An interesting outcome of is the physical nature of the stool. The physical object invites for discussion with people in my surroundings. People from different faculties comment on the design without me asking for comments. I believe this is a very good way of including others in to the design process, making it less subjective and also diversifying my thoughts.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Stool 2.

This stool was tuned on a wooden lathe. This process requires the shape to be made by freehand, resulting in a very intuitive form giving process. In this case the method determines certain dimensions, which became the limiting factor. This made me search for a plank that would fit, matching the wood to the method of producing.

The intuitive process of turning the seats on the lathe gave me the insight that there is craftsmanship in the subtle detail shapes of the seat. The top of the stool is convex (bottom) and concave (top) but only in a subtle way. This gives a hint of thought to the person who interacts with the objects without creating noise and interference with the general gestalt. The subtle shape changes in the seat adds complexity, however does not make the general design more complex.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Stool 3.

This stool was quite close to an architype of a stool in my opinion. The sketch had three legs equally spaced and connected to a round top. My starting point for building this stool was the top seat. In experiment 2 I made a concave top on the lathe. In this stool I wanted to experiment with the opposite shape and make the seat for the stool convex. The connections between the legs and the top was an important part of highlighting craftsmanship and therefore I wanted to play with the size of the dovetail connecting the legs to the top.

The dovetails seem to be a detail that people appreciate together with the angled legs, proportions and the convex shape of the seat. I find the dovetail interesting since it has caused similar reactions in previous experiments namely, the bookshelves (Bob, Bobby). The dovetails feel integrated into the design rather than an added afterthought.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Stool 4.

The sketch for this stool was also close to an architype of a four-legged stool. In this experiment I set out to integrate the legs in to the top so that it becomes the main feature of the stool. This was something that was successful in experiment 3 and something I wanted to explore. I therefore wanted the round legs to form the radius of the seat edge, making it perceived as a fully integrated part of the design.

The joinery used on this stool adds a lot of complexity in the already complex form. This is a good way of verifying the level of integration of craftsmanship. If the detail feels like it adds something to the overall shape its good, if it does not it should be eliminated.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Reflection.

VOL. 2

The first round of stools has rendered some good and some less successful attempts in the quest to make stools that facilitate craftsmanship. The most successful in my opinion are the ones that integrate craftsmanship to a state whereby the entire design depends on it. The stool 1 and 3 are examples of stools where the integration of the craftmanship was successful. When I evaluate those designs, I imagined them without the signs of craftsmanship (in this case the joinery) and drew the conclusion that they did not add very much to the design. In the case of the stools 2 and 4 the signs of craftmanship (concave and convex surfaces and joinery) felt more integrated and crucial for the design. Moving forwards the goal is to end up in a place where the design and craftsmanship exist in symbiosis.

Brief.

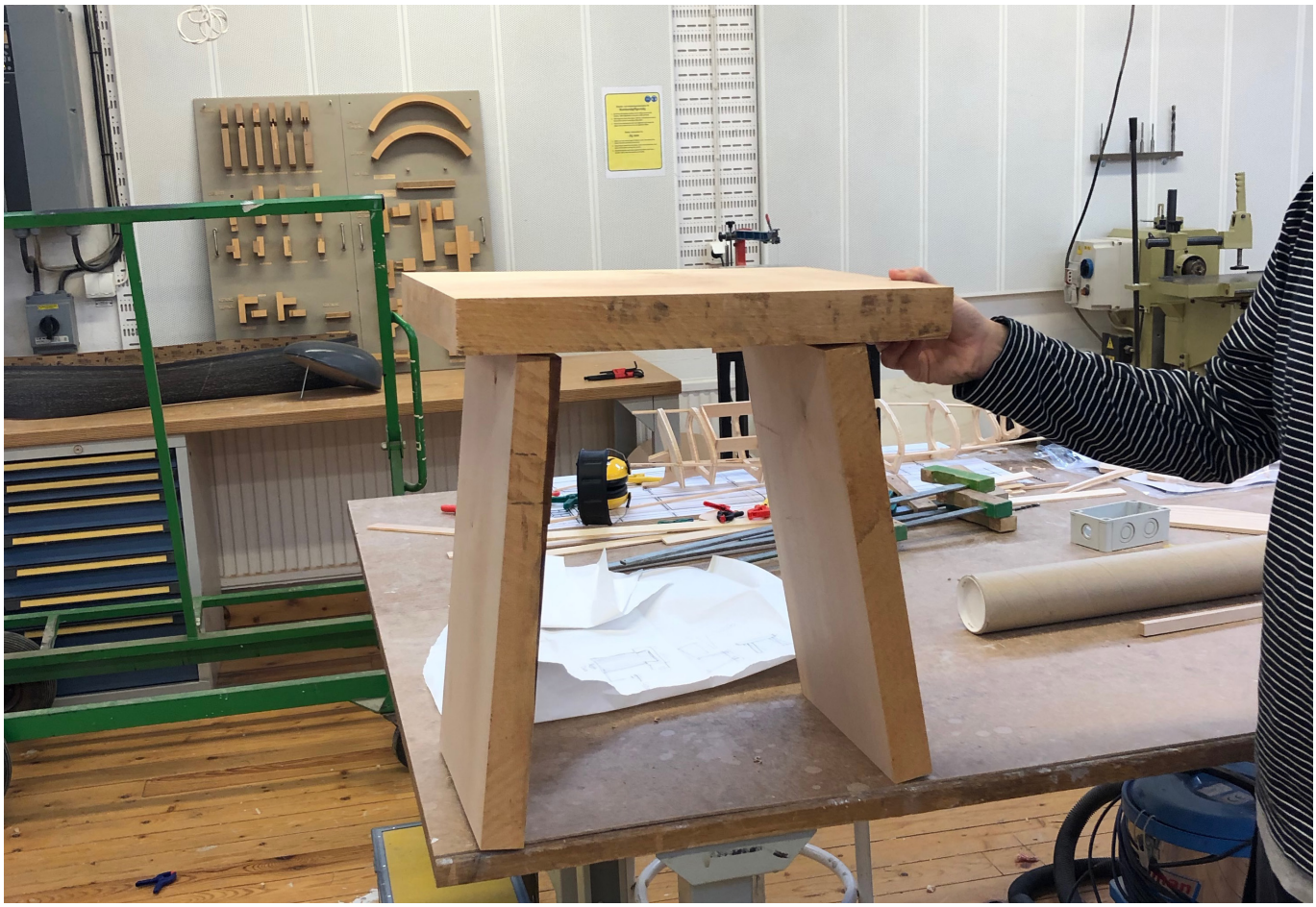
VOL. 2

Curate craftsmanship
Create multiple stools with different leg configurations, that facilitates craftsmanship. The sings of craftmanship should be integrated in a way that they exist in symbiosis with each other.

Two legs.

The two-legged chair took its form from the idea of using the same plank for the legs as the seat. The dimensions and angles of the legs were decided in situ when making the stool. The angled legs generated the angle for the convex bottom of the seat, by doing so the seat and leg meet in a 90-degree angle. The convexity then motivated the top concave seating since it gave the seat a uniform thickness, and also integrated the sign of craftsmanship of the slight concave seating surface found in stool 2. The joinery of the legs were made with a classical sliding dovetail. The Dovetail was chosen since it provides a strong joint that is durable and does not require any glue.

Once assembled the stool lacked detailing. Before assembling I added a bevel on the legs something that made the transition between legs and seat, complex and messy. In order to resolve these problems, I decided that a tapered silhouette of the entire stool was worth experimenting with. I therefore mounted the stool in the bandsaw and cut parts of it off. This method of changing as the stool developed was very effective way of developing details, a trial and error approach.



One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Three legs.

VOL. 2

This stool builds upon a combination of the design and construction of stool 2 and 4. During the initial stool building experiment, the 3-legged stool seemed to be the most popular When reflecting upon comments provided by those around me at the time. And through my own research into the perception on what craftsmanship is. The concave surface of stool 2 was also something I thought was a successful way of showing craftsmanship and therefore a detail to further explore. In this stool I let the angle of the legs determine the angle of the convex surface of the bottom of the stool. Just as in the two-legged stool the angle of the concave top surface was motivated by the convex bottom. The angled edge is a result of making the side perpendicular to the top surface. In this tool I used a mortis and tenon joint, same type of joint used in stool 2.

The tenon and mortise joint used needs to be surrounded by a certain amount of material in order to be stable and not crack. This made me not place the joint in the center of the leg but offset when viewed from above. When assembled I realized that this was a mistake. The offset detail made the joinery look fake, since the connection between the legs and seat was not fully understandable. To try to resolve this problem I planned down the legs with a router on the assembled legs. This improved the understanding although of how the legs where connected, but had great impact of the proportions of the stool.


Luna
SV 750

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Reflection.

VOL. 3

The dovetail has been a reoccurring elements in this project and in this part of stool making it has proven to be both practical and appreciated. In the case of the three legged stool the tenon and mortis did not prove as strong as the dovetail as a sign of craftsmanship, also did the dovetail prove itself over the tenon and mortise in functionality. The collection of stools that I see as the end product of this project should all be different although have something in common in order to tie the collection together. The dovetail is one of the things that could be a defining feature for the collection.

These experiments have showed the importance of detailing. The trial and error method has proven to be effective and important in order to work to a satisfying result. If the stool is built with the idea of it not being the final model it becomes less precious and leaves room for experimentation.

Brief.

VOL. 3

Curate craftsmanship
Create a collection of stools that has one, - two,- three and four-legs. The design should afford craftsmanship. The dovetail should be used as a joinery method. The signs of craftmanship should be integrated in a way that they exist in symbiosis with the design.

Three legs.

VOL. 3

This stool derived from the previous three-legged stool. The curvature of the seat and overall dimension stayed the same although the joinery evolved to integrate the use of dovetails. The legs themselves were reworked with tapering angles when viewed from the side. Seen from above the legs also taper towards the center of the seat. These changes were made in order to get a more refined expression.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

One leg.

VOL. 3

The one-legged chair has had multiple iterations, none of them successful in my opinion. This was an attempt to go back to the beginning and start over. The principal for the stool is a top and bottom plate connected with sliding dovetails. The top and bottom plates are shaped so that they taper towards the dovetail, making them more delicate in comparison to being flat. This design is similar to the one drawn in the initial stool experiment, which informed that the design was altered since I was limited to a material thickness. In this stage that limitation was gone. In order to get a less pragmatic expression I worked with the top of the seat, making it concave.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

One leg.

VOL. 4

The previous one-legged stools structure resembled an I-beam, drawing associations to steel and industrial settings, not craftsmanship. The one-legged stool is the one that has the most monumental opportunities of all the stools. The stool demands a large base to be stable and my idea was to combine the base and leg in one, then connect a top with a dovetail. During the process I was afraid that the result would be to monumental and not delicate enough, therefore I rounded the underneath of the seat and made the top surface concave. This approach to make things more delicate through subtle detailing had worked in the other stools, but it did not work in this case. The stool became too complex, and the monumental base did not work together with the complex top, the contrast was too large. In the end I opted for a flat seat connected with a large dovetail. The shorter sides of the seat follow the angle of the base and the longer side where cut in the inverted angle of the base.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Four legs.

VOL. 2

The four-legged stool was to this point not very developed. The first four-legged prototype was too complex, and the details were not well integrated. My idea was to make the simplest silhouette of a four-legged stool which in my opinion is a square seat with one leg in every corner. This idea proved to be a challenge since this design did not comply easily with the dovetail criteria of the brief. In order to find a solution to this I did not go with the trial and error method but opted for sketching on paper. After this iteration I did test on the isolated corner before starting to build the four-legged stool. The detail was in this case important especially the radiuses on the legs. The diagonal settings of the legs made the corner of the seat complex. To simplify it I sanded the corners of the seat and the legs round. This created a contrast between the front and back of the leg, and initially I shaped the back of the leg in with the same radius as on the front of the legs. Looking at the chair from the side the shape of the legs was hard to read, crating confusion of what the shape looked like. To resolve this the backs of the legs where reshaped with a larger radius.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Four legs.

VOL. 3

The first prototype of the four-legged stool lacked direction in the overall shape, the only indication of what direction to sit on was the slight curvature of the seat. To further enhance this, I built one more prototype to with a rectangular seat. In the previous stool I had also shaped the legs as I went, resulting in a unique shape of every leg. This was not so desirable since the shape did not seem to be defined and uniform across the four legs. This prototype purpose was to define that shape in order to then produce the final stool.

In this stool I also altered the dimensions as I went. The result of this is a seat that has more of a direction (defines what is sides and what is front and back), but it also resulted in legs that where smaller than before, and on the borderline of too small. Technical difficulty also arose in this prototype, offsets of the dovetail occurred with me understanding why, and also angular problems with how the legs align. This can be fixed in the final model however it shows that this design is sensitive to the details and the diagonal settings of the legs are challenging.

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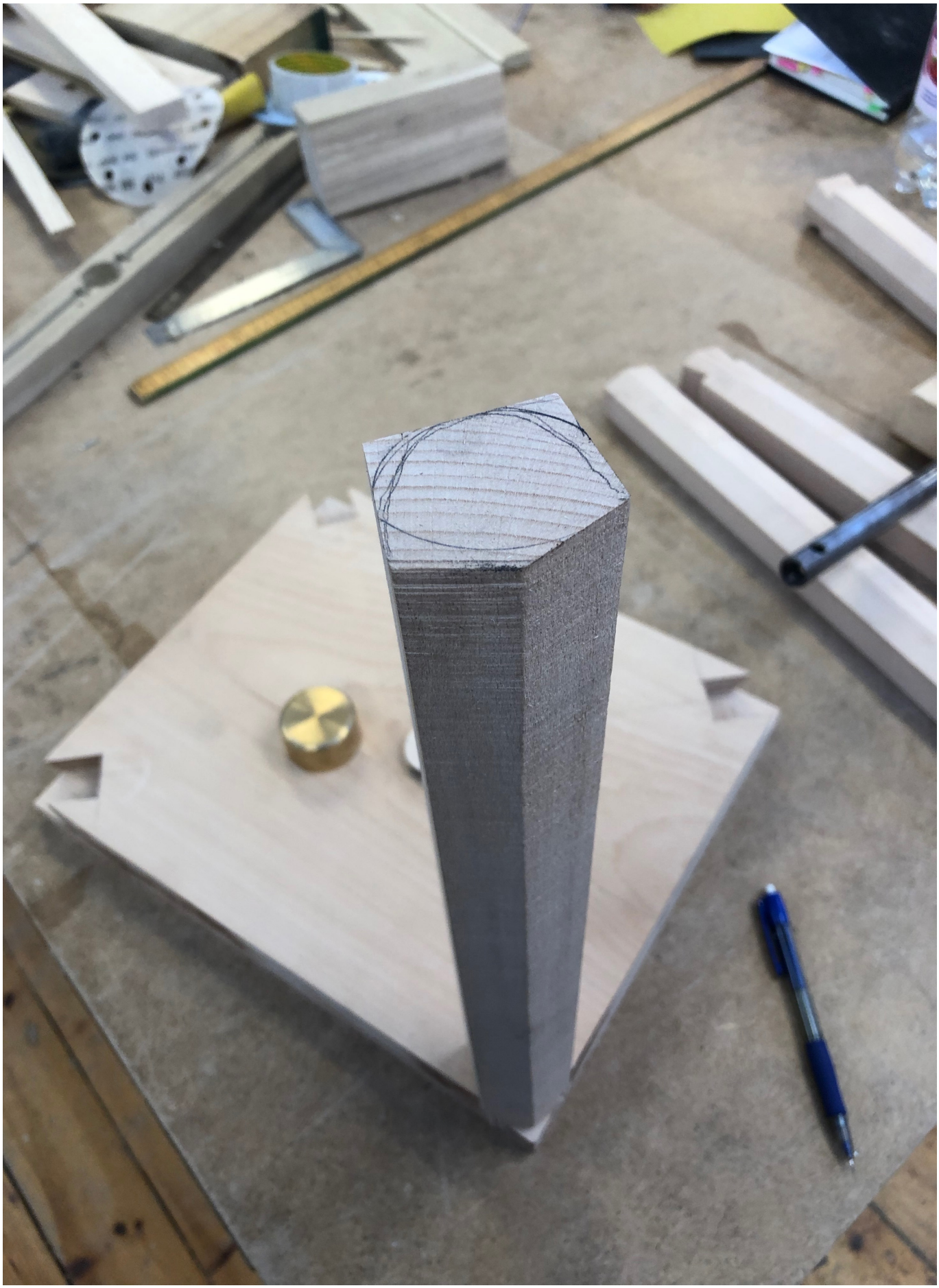
One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog



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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Four legs.

VOL. 4

In this model I took the middle path regarding the dimensions of the legs for the stools. And also tried to get the legs to align correctly in relation to each other. The goal was that the dovetail shall be equally long on the sides of the stool and the legs shall line up on (diagonal). This model was built out of Oregon pine.

Proportionally this model was the best one so far of the four-legged version, although the wood has created a new problem. The side grain of this plank is very "busy" in texture in comparison to the beech used in previous models. This results in the shape of the legs being very hard to read, creating a gestalt that can be experienced ass messy.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Four legs.

VOL. 5

In order to resolve the problem with the messy gestalt I wanted to try a simpler approach. My idea was to try to take away the complicity and seek a more archetypal form. I wanted the stool to have four rectangular legs that had a slight taper and no rounded corners. My conclusion from the previous test was that the round corners where creating a lot of the aesthetic problems I was having.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Wood selection.

At this point I felt like I had honed in on the four final designs. My goal was to produce four final models that were built with higher quality than the previous stools. My intention was to spend more time and to be more thorough with the woodworking and the wood selection for the final models. Since wood selection has been a large part of the project the selection of what to build the final models out of was very important. The main take-away form the initial experiments were that fine wood itself does not make a product necessarily better, but it affords for better craftsmanship making the overall result better. My goal for selecting the wood was a wood that maximized the affordance of craftsmanship. This has two aspects to it, one being functionality and the other, aesthetics. From a functional standpoint the wood needs to be strait and knot free, and also without imperfections such as rot or fungi.

If I choose with these criteria's I will also be able to have higher predictability in how much each plank will yield in usable wood. If I know there are not any cracks or fungi I can use the entire plank meaning I can better plan the outcome.

During the visit to the sawmill brothers I discussed whether they had any available wood that I could best use for stools. The story of this project would benefit if I used wood that they have selected and cut. They had many options of wood that would suite me, their suggestion was quarter sawn beech, Swedish Douglas fir (not quarter sawn), Swedish fir, or Swedish ash. The brother I talked most to suggest the beech, since it had such nice properties and in quarter sawn form makes the medullary rays particularly interesting. This option sounded good from a functional view since beach is both good to work

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Oregon Pine.

with and is hard and therefore durable (Tracentrum.se, 2019). It also has historical ties to the furniture industry, many of the most classical designs have all been made in beech. Beech is a outstanding material to build furniture from however it aesthetic is problematic. The reddish hue and the lack of structure together with the small medullary rays has made this wood very undesirable on the market. In Sweden this could be linked to its heavy use in furniture in the past where it might have been applied in a poor way. Many times, beech has been treated with a lacquer that prevents it from aging in an aesthetically pleasing way.

In this project I could fight this aesthetic preconception. Beech in furniture has been seen in new furniture (Fritzhansen.com, 2019) the last couple of years, . Many of the new products seem to be presented in beech but then sold in other woods as an alternative to the beach. To me this is a sign that the beech version might be hard to sell i.e not so popular. How much I try to convince people that beech is outstanding it is hard to change people's mind and this project will not benefit in doing so, therefore I opted for a different type of wood.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Realisation.

The final models were made from four different planks of Oregon pine. The planks differed in density of the growth rings, from very dense to quite sparse. All the wood was very straight grained and of high quality, which informed my decision to make each stool out of one plank. This will result in a gradient from the four-legged stool in very dense growth ring pattern to the one legged with larger spaced growth rings. This approach would highlight that there is a difference in wood even though it is the same species of wood.

The designs of the stools have minor changes in comparison of the final ones (one, two ,three and for legged stools) made up until now . In the three-legged stool the thickness of the seat is 4mm higher than previous version, also the legs are tilted 5 degrees instead of the previous 6. The one-legged chair is changed in the construction of the box, and a basic rabbet joint is used instead of the but joint used before. This change is so that the contrast of the wood pattern of the sides is kept as low as possible. The two-legged chair has an increased depth, both for stability and aesthetic reasons.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog


BOOKS

Marking.

Marking is an important part of craftsmanship, for countless centuries the signature or mark of a craftsman has been important. It tells the story of that there is a person involved in the process of making, and also that a person has taken pride in the making of an object. The signature is a message from the maker. Under the final iteration of the stools I made a burning iron in order to burn my name in the bottom of the stools. It is common that marking resembles hand written signatures as a way of messaging that this object was made by hand. I opted for the opposite. I chose a relatively simple and non-ornamented font to reflect that this stool was made with workmanship of certainty not risk.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

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Sustainability .

Craftsmanship can play a large role in how the design practice can create more sustainable products. A craftmanship approach also has a possibility to preserve knowledge and promote small-scale businesses. By utilizing small-scale businesses when producing, we can source and produce on a more local scale. This can lead to less environmental impact, in comparison to producing and sourcing materials on a global scale.

Future.

The stools are made with the intention in mind of being displayed at the degree exhibition at IKDC. Therefore the height is kept at the same 450mm high as it is a common hight (due to ergonomics) of a stool. The stools are also made in a way that they work together as a collection. In order to expand on the designs of the stools I have chosen to take some of them and continue working without the idea that they will be presented in the exhibition. The first goal was to create something more commercially viable. In today's settings stools are often used together with a high counter or bar, so I took one of the stools and expanded the design to a family of stools with varying heights. To further show that this design is expandable and has a place on the market I made a family of furniture. The second expansion of a design is a study of proportions. When I started the one-legged chair, the idea was to try to make the dovetail as large as possible, and this grew in to the design of the one-legged chair. When meeting with my examiner, the one-legged chair caught his attention and he thought it would be an interesting stool to design further. I chose to take the initial idea of scaling up the dovetail to explore further. This idea could be explored in a more interesting way if I do not need to conform to the height restriction, or to the ideas that they should fit together with the other stools.

Method of exploration

since the limitation of time in this project I will explore the ideas mentioned above with a different method than the trial and error approach. I opted to utilize 3D cad and renderings in order to explore the ideas.

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One, Two, Three, Four legged Stools.

Johan Skoog

Reflection.

Final

The goal for this project was to explore what craftsmanship is and what it is not. The project should also explore the idea of using craftsmanship as an inherent part of the design process. The exploratory part has not yielded a good definition nor a line that shows what craftsmanship is or not (not the goal), although the exploratory process has reviled the multifaceted nature of the concept of craftsmanship. To understand what craftsmanship is , we must accept that it is subjective and ambivalent. What craftmanship is depends on the people and the situation.
The subjective nature of craftsmanship has had a large impact on the project. During the project I have developed my own process to make craftsmanship inherent in the design process. Since this is based upon my subjective view on craftsmanship it cannot exactly be duplicated by someone else. Instead of dictating a method to use for other people, I would rather suggest different approaches that I feel have been successful in finding how to integrate craftsmanship in to my design method.

Getting lost

I set out with an idea to explore. The idea was taken from the world of cooking, and I saw similarities between the world that they work in, and the world of the designers. This could be seen as zooming out from the view of a designer and seeing things from a different perspective. Starting from such an abstract perspective can be disorientating and sometimes lead to dead ends. Although this approach might not be as effective as one starting with a very tangible goal, I believe that it generates large amounts of qualitative insights. In a streamlined process there is, in my opinion, a risk that one will lose the ability to take a step back and observe. These observations are moments that in this project have been the ones where I have learned the most. In order to develop a process that has craftsmanship as an inherent part the start should be abstract.

Listen to your surroundings

The people that I have had in my surroundings have been crucial for me to understand myself. Not everyone is comfortable to talk about loose and open-ended ideas, so it is important to find the people who do. During this project I have utilized my network of people who are comfortable to talk in abstract terms, this network consists of people that I have met through other educations, current classmates, teachers and staff of the school. It is through discussing with them about my project, I gained insight that made me understand what I am doing. When talking to people, suggestions of what to do usually comes up. In this process I have sometimes followed those advices without fully understanding why, and this has in many cases been a success in my opinion. It has been common that the understating to why I did something was not fully clear until I had completed and fulfilled that advice. I did however not follow all advice blindly it was chosen by intuition. If there was a feeling that a piece of advice could render something interesting, I would follow, if this feeling did not appear, I ignored it and moved on. Find people that understand your project better than yourself by looking at it from a different angle. Follow also your intuition, it will guide you to interesting places.

The workshop is the key

The main insights of how I can use craftsmanship as an inherent part of my design process comes from the building of objects. In this project making has been thinking, and thinking has been making. Every iteration of a stool gave me the insight of what I thought worked with my view of what craftsmanship is. The building of the physical object gave an understanding of details and how important they are for the general gestalt. I feel that building the stools in the final material and in the final scale gave an understanding of details that is far superior to other methods that I have tried in the past.

The physical space of the workshop is also key to working with craftsmanship. During this project the people in the workshops (teachers, student and staff) have been an invaluable resource of ideas and insights. The mediation nature of a physical object opened up for comments and discussions that were very fruitful. Even though this is a highly personal project it is important to take in the opinions and ideas of others. The workshop at the university is a neutral ground where interaction with people from different faculties and with different background can interact.
However, using the workshops as a major part of the process can be difficult. Access to a workshop is not something everyone has. In a school situation there could be physical opening hours restricting the work. The culture of a workshop could also be problematic since it requires a certain level of knowledge to be accepted to work freely. To feel like the workshop is a place where you can relax and explore is important, if you feel like you are unsure if you are doing something correct or not you will limit yourself in your exploration.

In a working environment access to a workshop might not be obvious. In my experience the designer's job is often seen as office work. Making things is not always understood as a part of the creative process and is often outsourced for another person to do. In my opinion many companies see the designer's ideas as more valuable than the making of these ideas, and the designers time is best spent to generate ideas. What I feel is not understood, is that making is an important part of generating these ideas and will in many cases generate very high-quality ideas. This preconceived idea leads to the company not understanding why they need to spend money on a workshop.
My insight of the importance of the workshop is very much in line with what the school of Bauhaus is founded on (Bauhaus100.com, 2019). Even though the ideas of the Bauhaus school are now 100 years old, this project shows that the founding ideas are as relevant today as when the school was founded. In an age where the design relies on digital tools the workshop has never been as relevant as now; it is the bridge between the digital and the physical.

Conclusion.

This project began with a visit to two passionate craftsmen, and my fasciation over what makes them craftsmen. In the end of this project the fascination still stands true, I am still amazed by the knowledge and passion that they have. After this project I do not only find it amazing, I also find it inspiring and something that I admire. During this project I have understood that I am not alone with this opinion and that many people look up to craftsmanship. By looking into the world of marketing, we can see how highly valued the craftman's work is. Although appreciated, the true meaning of word craftsmanship is hard to grasp. What is included and what is not is not a clear cut. The literature used in the research show the large spectrum of what craftsmanship could be. The final decision of what craftsmanship could be is up to each and every person. Every person has a specific background, and this is something that plays a large role in defining what craftsmanship is.

I realize after working with this project that my own perception of craftsmanship might be something that is linked to my childhood. Growing up I had a grandfather who was a good wood worker. He usually worked with traditional joinery techniques and with special wood. This is something I always admired growing up. I can still to this day remember the fascination over the detailing and the work that went into things he made. Some people have similar stories or other reasons why they like craftsmanship. It also important to acknowledge that some people do not have any story or connection to craftsmanship. For them craftsmanship might not enhance a product. Making craftsmanship an inherent part of the design process is not a universal solution to enhance a product. However,

this project shows that it is possible to use it as a personal inspiration to create something.

In the beginning of the project I wanted to work with fascination of the craftsmanship, although not being the goal it is interesting to see if the final outcome embodies some of this fascination. My personal opinion is too bias to have value. However, an interesting observation is the reactions of the people surrounding me. I have never worked on a project where people have showed so much interest in the objects I am making. In numerus occasions I have had people I do not know ask me about the stools, and also how they can acquire them. The stools create a "want" within people. This to me is a sort of fascination. This reaction could also be due to the nature of the object; a stool is an accessible product that fits in many spaces. No one will know for sure, but I find this observation interesting.

As a designer I believe that we can act as chefs and rely on the raw ingredient to bring quality to a design.

My opinion is that if you have good craftsmanship, not much is needed in order to create a good design.

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