# DESIGN COMO FORMA DE ARTE: o anti-design no século 21

*DESIGN AS AN ART FORM: 21st century anti-design*

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## Resumo

O artigo discute a interseção entre design e arte, enfatizando o impacto dos movimentos Anti-Design e Pós-modernismo, que questionaram os ideais de funcionalismo modernista, promovendo a liberdade e experimentação criativa. No século XXI, o estudo explora o conceito de Biodesign, que integra design, arte e biologia, enfocando a criação de objetos de design que vão além da mera funcionalidade, servindo também como expressões artísticas. Os autores propõem o desenvolvimento de objetos que refletem essa fusão, destacando o papel do design como uma forma de arte e questionando as normas de funcionalidade dominantes na design contemporâneo.

**Palavras-chave:** biodesign; anti-design; história do design.

## *Abstract*

*The article discusses the intersection between design and art, highlighting the impact of the Anti-Design and Postmodernism movements, which challenged the modernist ideals of functionalism, promoting creative freedom and experimentation. In the 21st century, the study explores Biodesign, which integrates design, art, and biology, focusing on creating design objects that transcend mere functionality, serving as artistic expressions. The authors propose the development of objects that reflect this merger, emphasizing the role of design as a form of art and challenging the prevailing norms of functionality in contemporary design.*

***Keywords:*** *biodesign; anti-design; design history.*

## Introduction

The history of design reveals a long and complex relationship of the area with fine art and its definition and, in studying this trajectory, one can see how the boundaries between art and design have been constantly explored and challenged along the years. Artistic and cultural movements played an important role in the evolution of design as an area, shaping its development and contributing to a vast diversity of creative expression in the field.

The project documented in this article aims to investigate the boundaries between design and fine art by means of applied practice, taking inspiration from the radical design movements that took place in the second half of the 20th century, such as Anti-Design and Postmodernism. These movements challenged the rational and functionalist ideals of modernist design, promoting creative freedom and experimentation. In considering how these influences can be adapted to the present context of design in the 21st century, this article aims to question current paradigms and explore new creative possibilities that embrace their own existence at the intersection between design and fine art.

- **Justification**

This project was motivated by a personal desire of the author to explore the continuous relationship between design and fine art across history, as well as understand and question its current state by means of applied design practice, testing and challenging the boundaries between what can be denominated as design, fine art, or both.

Such desire comes from a perceived return to the rationalism and functionalism of the mid-20th century, starting from the rise of minimalism in the 1990s to the rapid advance of technology and the internet in the 21st century, and the focus brought by these recent changes to user and function-based design. Such a return has, as a consequence, a separation from form in favor of function.

Exploring, through the influence of the Anti-Design movement from the 1960s to the 1980s, as well as that of contemporary authors such as William Myers, author of *Biodesign: Nature, Science, Creativity* (2012, second edition 2018), the relationship between design and fine art, form and function, this project intends to, by creating pieces that exist at the intersection between both areas, question the aforementioned functionalism that is predominant in contemporary design.

- **General Goal**

Develop design objects, considering its perspective as an art form and the designer's autonomy over their own work, challenging the rationalist and functionalist ideals found in 21st century design.

- **Specific Goals**

Study the trajectory of design history from the second half of the 20th century to the current

time in the 21st century, and its relationship with fine art along the years;

Investigate the role of Anti-Design and the Postmodernist movement, including prominent groups such as Studio Alchimia and the Memphis group, in promoting creative freedom and shaping design as an art form, emphasizing the importance of experimentation and individual expression, in contradiction to the rationalism of the Modernist movement;

Investigate the current state of design in the 21st century, the trends originated from 1990s minimalism and UX Design;

Develop design objects that, influenced by Anti-Design and Postmodernism, bring to contemporary design their ideals of creative freedom and a break from rationalism.

## Literature Review

- **Anti-Design and Postmodernism**

20th century Modernism is characterized by its strong rationalist ideals which, in the field of design, with the International Typographic Style, originated multiple norms and rules for what "Good Design" should look like. It is precisely with the intention to question, challenge and even ridicule these principles that, at the end of the 1960s, in Italy, the Anti-Design movement has its origins, with the birth of Radical Design groups such as Archizoom Associati, Superstudio, UFO, 9999 and Gruppo Strum.

Being highly critical of the rapid advancement of technology and consumerism of the time it had its beginnings, Anti-Design rejects the rational principles of Modernism, valuing creative and individual expression in design. It believes that Modernism has been subverted by the interests of the industry, and is now no longer a path of cultural strength. The movement proposed the idea that, if taken too far, rationalism could become absurd, and it was this very thought that originated bold and provocative projects, such as *No-Stop City*, by Archizoom, and Superstudio's super-structures.

Figures 1 and 2 - *No-Stop City*, Archizoom Associati, 1970, and *Pratone*, Gruppo Strum, 1971


Source: FIELL, C; FIELL, P. *Design of the 20th Century* (1999)

Anti-Design sought to promote the designer's individual and personal creativity, and it was with this premise that Global Tools, a school of counter-architecture and design, was founded in 1974, although it operated for only one year. Designers such as Alessandro Mendini and Ugo La Pietra believed, at the time, that this would be the end of Anti-Design, however Studio Alchimia, founded in 1976 by Alessandro Guerriero and his sister Adriana, including other relevant names as Mendini himself, Michele de Lucchi and Ettore Sottsass, brought a new beginning to the movement, reintroducing ideals of spontaneity, creativity and meaning to design, in contrast to the rising conservatism of the 1970s.

At Studio Alchimia, the concern with functionality in design is discarded in favor of critical expression related to the politics of the time period and mass consumerism culture, oftentimes referencing styles of the past in its works. They would say that "there is, today, a need for distance, distant objects situated between men and in the world as signals of our vocation to the magic of thought, as lifebuoys in the tempestuous seas of modernity." And in relation to said magic of thought in italian design, Michele de Lucchi says, in an interview to Folha de São Paulo in 2012, that "Italy is, in fact, a country in which designers and architects work in terms of a thought to be applied to reality, while in general the rest of the world tends to study reality to extract ideas from it."

But it is only in the 1980s that, with the Memphis group being formed in Italy and bringing names from Studio Alchimia and others such as Nathalie du Pasquier and George Sowden, and the rise of criticism against Modernism across the world, that Anti-Design would grow into the movement that would come to be known worldwide as Postmodernism. The Memphis group proposed a liberation from rationalism, and decoration for its own sake, and grew significantly during the 1980s, producing hundreds of bold and colorful pieces and including the work of artists from various parts of the world, bringing Anti-Design closer to an international audience. From 1981 to 1988, the group's art director Barbara Radice organized exhibitions across the globe, in more than a dozen cities including London, New York, Stockholm and Tokyo. It is said in *Design of the 20th*

*Century*, by Charlotte and Peter Fiell, that "The hybrid themes and indirect citations of past styles used by Memphis produced a new vocabulary of postmodern design.", and it is since considered a transition movement to what came to be known as Postmodernism.

Figure 3 - Room fully decorated with Memphis pieces

Source: Wikipedia

**• Bruno Munari, Useless Machines and Unreadable Books**

When it comes to questioning the rationalism and functionalism prevalent in design, it is impossible not to mention the work of influential italian designer Bruno Munari. Having taken part in multiple design and art movements across the 20th century, Munari explores in his work the concepts of functionality and the lack thereof, proposing innovative and experimental ideas of design as a form of expressive and imaginative art.

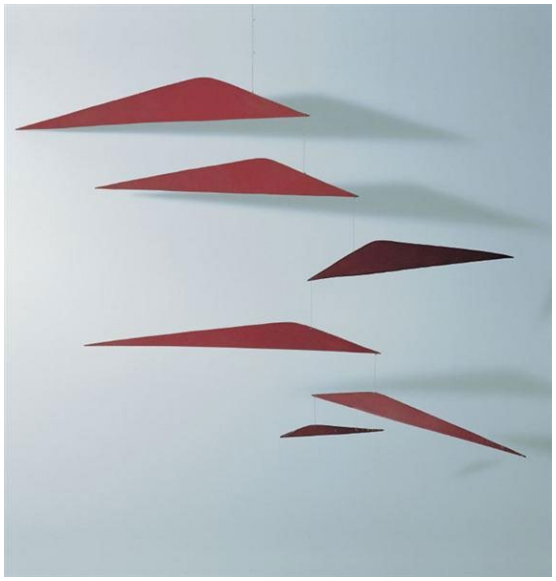
Having his career as a designer begin at the height of Futurism, Munari took an interest in the movement's bold and experimental aesthetic, making his first exhibition alongside the group in 1927. However, due to the movement's association with italian facism, he distanced himself from it, but the aesthetic of his futurist pieces continued to influence his work for many years to come. Surrealism and Dadaism were other great influences in the work of Bruno Munari after his split from Futurism, which led to him exploring various styles and techniques, and breaking in his work the perceived boundaries between design and art.

In 1966, Munari published the book *Design as Art*, a still relevant publication when it comes to the relationship between design and fine art. In it, the artist discusses the relationship between functionality and beauty, defending the democratization of design and art, which should be accessible and comprehensible to all, and the responsibility of the artist-designer to create objects that are as functional as they are beautiful.

But although he created many functional and beautiful objects, Bruno Munari is better known for his 1930s series titled "*Useless Machines*". In it, he created abstract pieces made from paper, cardboard, glass and thread, taking inspiration from the memories of his own childhood of

swings and paper that he used to cut and hang in his bedroom window. These pieces has no utilitarian function but, as Siobhan Keam writes in his 2016 article *Bruno Munari: Futurism, Function & Useless Machines*, "They function to indicate the whimsical exploration of his childhood, encouraging the viewer to contemplate their own relationship with the work."

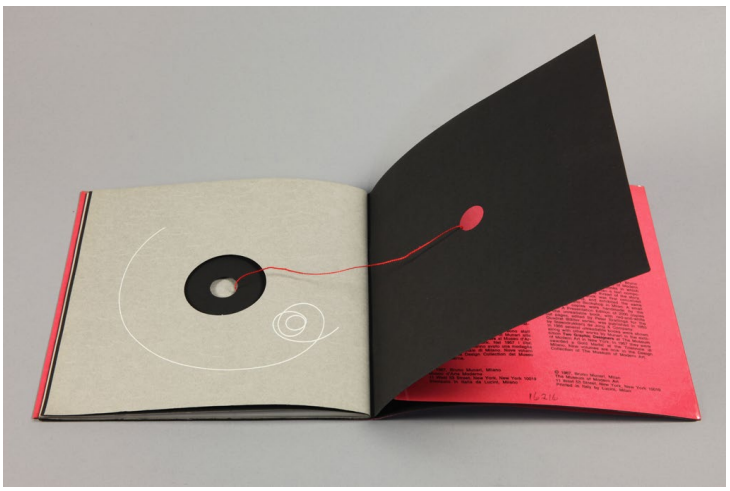
Figure 4 - *Useless Machine*, Bruno Munari, 1947



Source: WikiArt

And in a similar manner to his Useless Machines, Munari follows the same line of thought in creating his "Libri Illeggibili" (Unreadable Books), a series of children's books that challenges the very concept of what a book consists of, in creating books that are not made to simply be read, but to be explored and serve as interactive and fun objects for children, by using different forms, textures and colors instead of concrete text.

Figure 5 - *Libro Illeggibile*, Bruno Munari, 1949



Source: MassArt Blogs

Once again quoting Keam's article, "Bruno Munari was one of a kind. He worked across movements, mediums and disciplines without ascribing to a particular one, always questioning the nature of what he encountered." . His work is essential to the understanding of art, design and the relationship between both, always questioning the concepts of functionality and rationalism and, in doing so, pushing and breaking the boundaries between two fields that are, at times, considered incompatible.

**• 21st Century Design**

Donald Norman, one of the most influential contemporary designers in the present day, often brings in his work as an author the concept of Human Centered Design (HCD), which proposes the use of design to create solutions aimed at tending to the user's necessities, desires and expectations, and highlights the responsibility of the designer to society, as a creator of solutions and products used by people. The designer has the responsibility of finding solutions that benefit the user and society around them, taking into consideration the social and environmental impact of their creations.

In her article *What 21st-Century Design Looks Like*, author Bettina D'ávila explains that 21st century design is "complex for it encompasses other numerous disciplines, as both practice and academic discipline", and this is why authors as Norman himself focus their ideas on designers who aim their work at people and society.

To Don Norman, this advancement of design towards other academic disciplines demands a change in the way the field is taught in universities. To achieve such change, he urges design programs to focus not only in building experience and talent, but in preparing students to deal with the challenges of contemporary design. He defends that a different approach is necessary, where design professionals know how to listen to the community, taking a step back and letting said community take part in the decisions taken during the design process, thus considering that design, in positioning itself as a universal way of solving multidisciplinary and diverse problems, perpetuates colonial structures.

21st century design should, thus, follow the four principles of Human Centered Design: Focus on the people; Solve the real core issue - and not the symptoms; Everything is a system - thus every problem is interconnected; We're dealing with human beings, society, cultures, political issues. We have to find a common ground between different standpoints.

In considering a problem, it is also necessary to consider all its ramifications - its causes and consequences, impact on society and on the environment, and which other problems connect to the one at hand - considering thus the world as a great system of which every problem faced by different areas of society is a part. In the same article, D'ávila affirms that "this is why, as designers, we have to have a system-like thinking — because that's how the world works."

Taking into consideration this point of view, Norman affirms that "A good designer should work for things that go wrong. So when things go wrong, people know what to do. Because "there is no such thing as human error" — just design error."

**• Biodesign**

The book *Biodesign: Nature, Science, Creativity* (2012, second edition 2018), by american author William Myers, is an important piece to understand the alternative and radical design

practices that persist in the contemporary age. In his writing, the author brings a reflection on the relationship between design and nature, the use of living nature as an active part of art and design, and the relationship between nature and the design principles of form and function. The title explores various projects that apply this use of living nature among art, design and architecture, considering the equally hopeful and dangerous possibilities of biotechnology and its use in design and art.

Acknowledging the multidisciplinary nature of 21st century design, which turns its focus to society and the resolution of problems that were previously out of the field's bounds, *Biodesign* highlights the relationship between design, biology and art, encouraging its multidisciplinary practice while aiming not only for the functionality and social impact of the results, but also their beauty and expression. It suggests a "return to the type of consilience that characterized the sciences and applied arts from the Renaissance, when leading artists and architects were also scientists.". Co-author Paola Antonelli points that the documented results of this union between disciplines that were once distant bring together "the lyrical and demonstrative power of art and the realistic possibilities of design.".

Biodesign, as presented in the book, is organic. It involves an observation of life's growth in objects and letting nature, "the best among all engineers and architects", run its course. It considers that "when the materials of design are not plastics, wood, ceramics, or glass, but rather living beings or living tissues, the implications of every project reach far beyond the form/function equation and any idea of comfort, modernity or progress.". In giving the designer the ability to have life itself as a material for their practice, so does it give them an important power, which has in itself a great potential for both creativity and destruction.

William Myers highlights then, throughout four chapters separated by the objects' different categories, a wide diversity of concrete and speculative projects that make use of biodesign principles for architecture, interior and graphic design, and oftentimes intersect with fine art, in creating productions of expressive beauty for only the sake of beauty itself, without preoccupying itself with having an explicit function or serving a predetermined user. Among these many objects, the following have been considered relevant to this research:

• ***Local River***

Figure 6 - *Local River*, Mathieu Lehanneur, 2008

Source: Biodesign: Nature, Science, Creativity

A piece of decorative furniture that serves as an aquarium and fishing farm, in a response to the issue of excessive fishing in natural rivers. Making use of the symbiotic relationship between fish and subaquatic plants, Mathieu creates an ecosystem that simulates that of a river within the dimensions of a piece of furniture, raising within it species that are commonly consumed as food, while simultaneously growing a small vegetable garden on top.

• ***Moss Table***

Figure 7 - *Moss Table*, Carlos Peralta and Alex Driver, 2011

Source: Biodesign: Nature, Science, Creativity

A beautiful table that uses the living moss inside of it as a source of renewable energy, responding, even in a very small scale, to one of the most relevant sustainability issues of the current day, that being the excessive waste of unrenewable energy.

• ***Bacterioptica***

Figure 8 - *Bacterioptica*, Petia Morozov, 2010

Source: Biodesign: Nature, Science, Creativity

A chandelier made of optic fiber and petri dishes, with the intention of being adaptable and mechanical, using more than four kilometers of fiber for its construction. All cables come from a central point, and the individual lamps are sealed petri dishes that filter light from the bacteria growing inside.

• ***Growth Pattern***

Figure 9 - *Growth Pattern*, Allison Kudla, 2010

Source: Biodesign: Nature, Science, Creativity

A traditional ceramic floor with a twist. Being made of living plant matter, the tiles change in unexpected ways as nature takes its course. By giving a living system a manufactured form, the artist

allows it to naturally change its shape as it grows and develops.

• ***Specimens of Natural History***

Figure 10 - *Specimens of Unnatural History*, Liam Young, 2011

I. II. III.

Source: Biodesign: Nature, Science, Creativity

A project that challenges the very definition of nature in, through a combination of taxidermy and robotic pieces, presenting specimens of a world where biotechnology and hybrid forms of life that exist between body and machine are commonplace. The narrative tells that the modified creatures are guards protecting Darwin's Galapagos Islands, an idealized environment, and questions the position of such beings as wild fauna.

## Methods and Process

The research method adopted for the project aims to build a solid theoretical basis, study existing products, propose and develop a product or series of products that reflects the presented questions surrounding the rationalism and functionalism prevalent in contemporary design, considering such as an art form. For such, a five-step method was chosen, as described below.

• **Literature Review**

This first step included a literature review within the relevant themes for the project's theoretical research, aiming to build a strong and relevant basis to support the hypothesis from which the final project would be developed. Research for this step included books, scientific papers, theses and dissertations that touch on the relationship between art and design, functionalism in design, the Anti-Design movement and contemporary approaches that seek to converge form and function in design. The literature review gave way to a deeper understanding of the historical and theoretical context surrounding the main questions touched upon in this research, as well as grounds for the study and discussion of existing design work and the necessary knowledge base to conceptualize multiple proposals for the final piece.

**• Case Studies**

During the second step of the research, multiple studies were made on existing products and works that exemplify the design approach that the project aims to adopt for the conception and development of the final piece. This study helped to identify characteristics and tendencies in terms of form, function and expression, and served as inspiration and a starting point from which multiple alternatives would be proposed (figure 11).

Figure 11 - Moodboard of relevant cases created for the project, Sophia Neves.

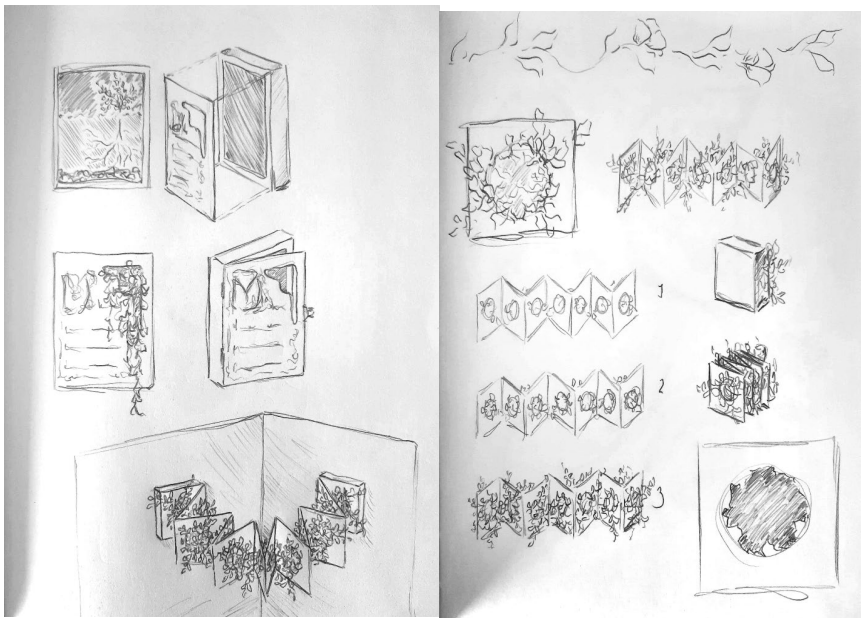
Source: The author

**• Generation of Alternatives**

In the third step, two main ideas were proposed as potential products to be developed as the final piece. Considering the design approach adopted for the research project, which questions functionalism and rationalism in design, emphasizing form over explicit function, and taking inspiration in the existing objects presented in the second step, as well as the ideals of sustainability and collaboration between designer and nature introduced by Biodesign, the idea behind every alternative was to explore the possibilities of such collaboration with nature within graphic design, introducing a harmonious and significative integration of design and fine art, breaking any perceived boundaries between both fields.

The two alternatives that came to be presented came from the same idea of using living plants as a part of graphic compositions, the first coming in poster form, while the second explores the three dimensional nature of an artist's book. In both proposals, the introduction of plants as part of the object came in the form of a small planter made to sit behind the piece, from which the plant would come out through a cut in the paper, taking its place in the composition at first in a planned and intentional manner, but from which it would grow in its own shape, at its own pace, changing the composition over time (figures 12 and 13)

Figures 12 and 13 - Initial sketches of the poster and artist's book, Sophia Neves.



Source: The author

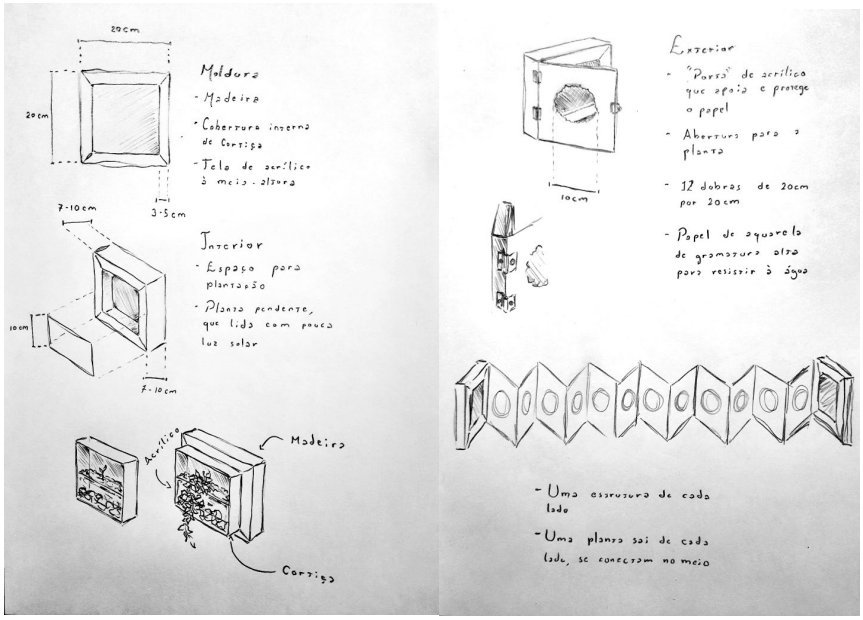
At the end, taking into consideration the complexity and creative potential of the idea, the artist's book was chosen as the piece that would be fully developed for the project. Taking as a primary source of inspiration Bruno Munari's unreadable books, it was thought around the idea that in place of traditional text, the plant itself would be allowed to tell its own story in a collaboration between designer and nature, as it would grow and take different forms and shapes over time. The long, folded format of the book would allow it to be displayed in a variety of ways, giving a certain expressive freedom to the piece's own shape.

**• Development of Selected Object**

Having decided on which of the presented pieces would be developed to conclusion, the fourth step marks the beginning of production. The first step of the process involved a brief return to generating alternatives, although this time in a much more focused manner as there was already a final piece in mind, and all that remained was finding a way to make it concrete. This step involved various alternative sketches and a miniature prototype, exploring what the piece's three dimensional shape would look like.

From the initial sketches presented in the third step, another was made, a more detailed version that explained in detail the planter structure that would support both the plant and book, with dimensions and materials already thought through and annotated, some of which would remain the same in the final piece. The structure would be made of wood, with an acrylic lid and inner layer of cork that would help create the ideal conditions for the plant to thrive and grow. The outer structure would be made of thick watercolor paper, aiming to resist the frequent watering required to maintain the plant (figures 14 and 15)

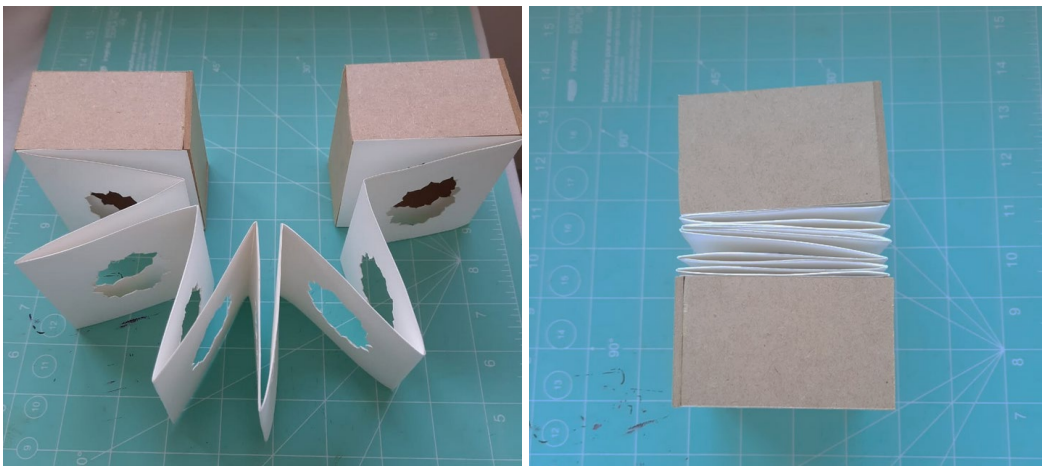
Figures 14 and 15 - Sketches detailing the artist's book structure, Sophia Neves.




Source: The author

From the sketches above, a miniature and simplified prototype of the imagined piece was made, considering the three dimensional nature of the structure and its many possibilities. The prototype, focusing on the external form of the structure and not yet what the inside would consist of, was built out of spare wooden pieces and 200mm watercolor paper, used in the paper parts. Producing the prototype helped to better define the shape with which the project intended to deal - dynamic, and clean enough so that the plant might become the protagonist of form, while the structure would serve as a base to direct its growth.

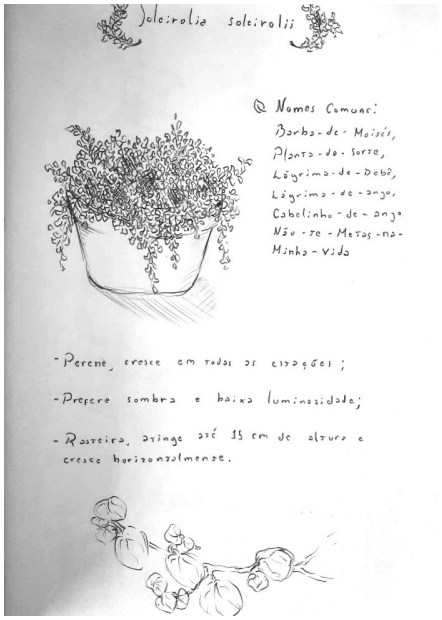
Figures 16 and 17 - Base structure prototype, Sophia Neves.



Source: The author

Following the production of the prototype, it was time to do a deep research into the plant that would become the main collaborator of the piece. With the plant's preservation and adaptability to the structure in mind, certain desired characteristics were previously decided, in order to assure a good result. The chosen species would have to deal well with shade and a lack of direct light, grow horizontally in order to fit the structure's shape and not beyond its dimensions. And after research and consultations with specialists, the plant that was chosen to be introduced in the piece was the *Soleirolia soleirolii*, commonly known as Baby's Tears, Angel's Tears or Peace in the Home. It is a creeping ground plant, only growing up to 15 cm tall, while growing indefinitely in a horizontal direction, and is accustomed to living in the shade, far from direct sunlight. It is also a perennial plant, remaining green and full throughout the entire year, and its leaves are small enough that they would have no problem passing through the holes in the paper structure, as other options considered, such as the Silver Vine, might have had.

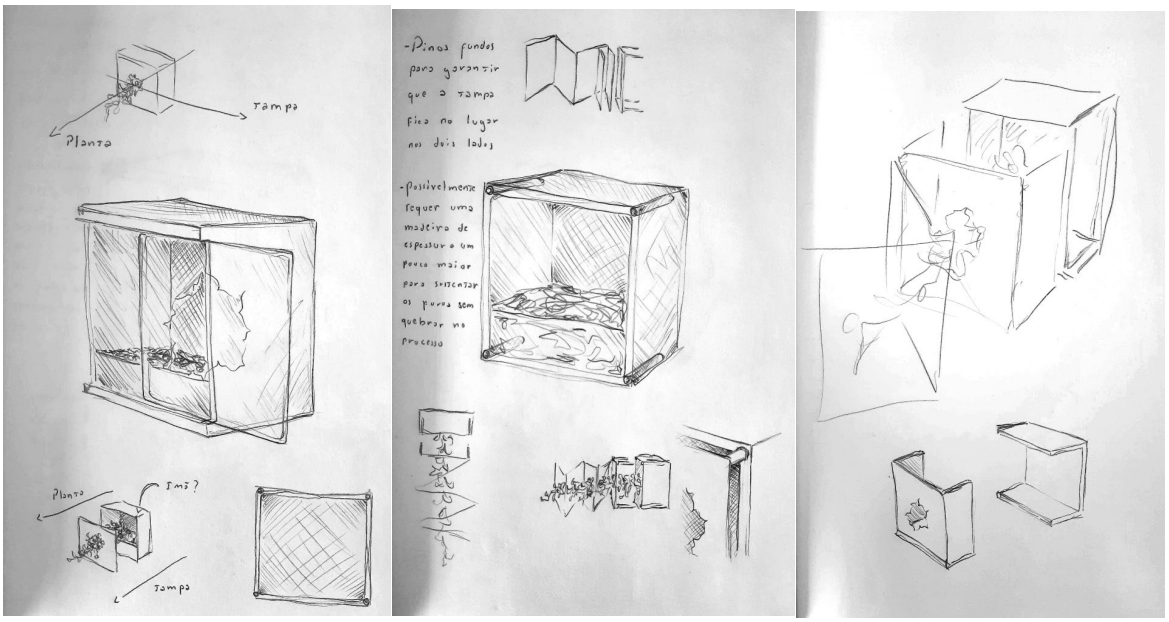
Figure 18 - Sketches and annotations on the *Soleirolia soleirolii* plant species, Sophia Neves.




Source: The author

With all above defined, the next step involved a more thorough review and detailing of the structure, before continuing to a 1:1 scale model of the piece. While the materials and main shapes of the structure remained the same throughout the entire process, the prototype pointed to a potential flaw in the idea of a door-like lid previously presented, seeing as the necessary mechanisms to make it a reality might pollute the minimal form that had become important when observing the prototype. Such questioning raised a need to entirely rethink the lid structure, seeing as it was also noted that the opening movement might negatively impact the plant, and would instead need to be linear and frontal, in order to avoid pulling or cutting the stem when opening the planter for maintenance. It was concluded, after a series of alternatives were thought of and presented, that the lid would be part of a two-piece fitting, as shown in the series of illustrations below.

Figures 19, 20 and 21 - Sketches of lid alternatives, Sophia Neves.




Source: The author

At last, after final adjustments to the planning of the structure, it was possible to begin developing the model. For such, a total of ten pieces of MDF wood, six pieces of acrylic, one sheet of cork and eleven A3 sheets of watercolor paper were used, cut in the precise measures to make each piece fit. With every part in hand, the model was built as planned, with few adjustments made between the final sketches and the production of the three dimensional model.

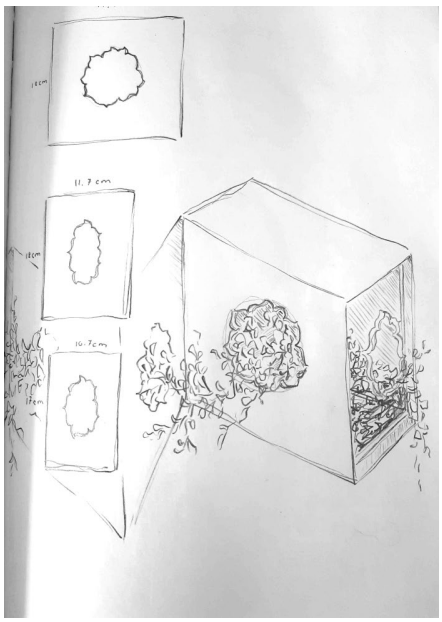
Figures 22, 23 and 24 - Steps of the building process, Sophia Neves.

Source: The author

**• Final Touches and Result**

Having the model shown above as a reference, its flaws and qualities were considered before thinking of what would come to be the final piece. While the external shape and the opening mechanism all worked as planned, the materials used in certain parts of the object had to be reconsidered, in order to improve the quality of life of the plant that would live inside of it. It was first noted that the boxes, in their current state, would not allow for indirect sunlight to reach the plant by any means, nor would it have enough airways for it to thrive and, as a solution to that problem, it was decided that the wood and cork on the sides would be replaced with acrylic, cut in the right places to allow the passage of air through the boxes, which would also facilitate the fitting of both parts and allow a better, more visually pleasant view of the inside.

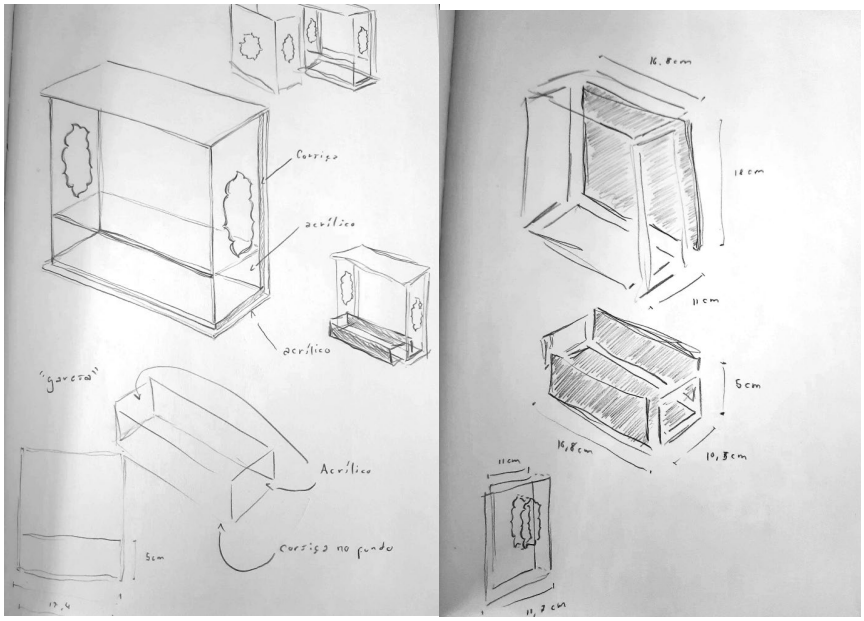
Figure 25 - External illustration of the object with the new acrylic side pieces, as well as their measurements, Sophia Neves.



Source: The author

In defining these alterations to the external form, however, it was necessary to look inside once again, both because it would now be fully exposed to the viewer and due to perceived issues that might cause problems in the future maintenance of the plant that would live inside. The present impossibility to fully remove the plant from the box without potentially damaging it brought a need for change in the way the innermost parts would function. And this issue was solved with the introduction of a drawer-like mechanism, in place of the previously fixed inner structure found in the model. This new piece consists of cork and acrylic, the first which allows better conditions for the plant to thrive in, while the second makes it easier for the piece to slide into the box.

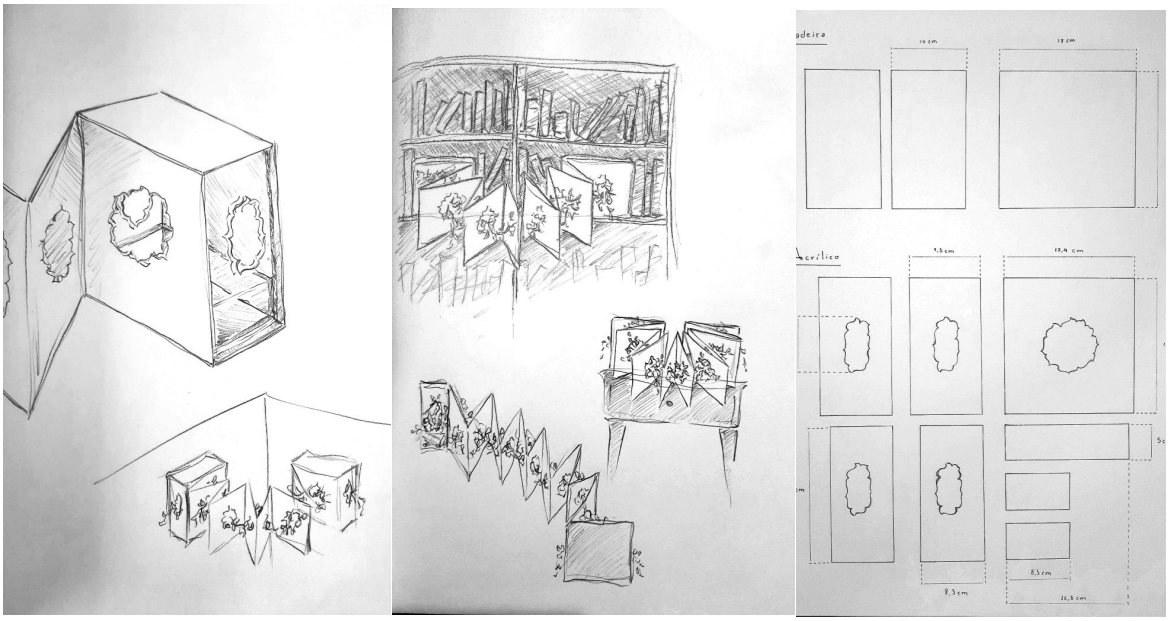
Figures 26 and 27 - Illustrations demonstrating the functioning of the inner drawer piece, with annotations about measurements and materials, Sophia Neves.




Source: The author

Keeping in mind the structure and materials now fully defined, after the series of adjustments made from the previously presented model, the project of the final piece was then concluded with additional illustrations, imagining the piece in different situations it might be displayed in, and a technical drawing of the wood and acrylic pieces with their final measurements, which would be then produced to become part of the final piece.

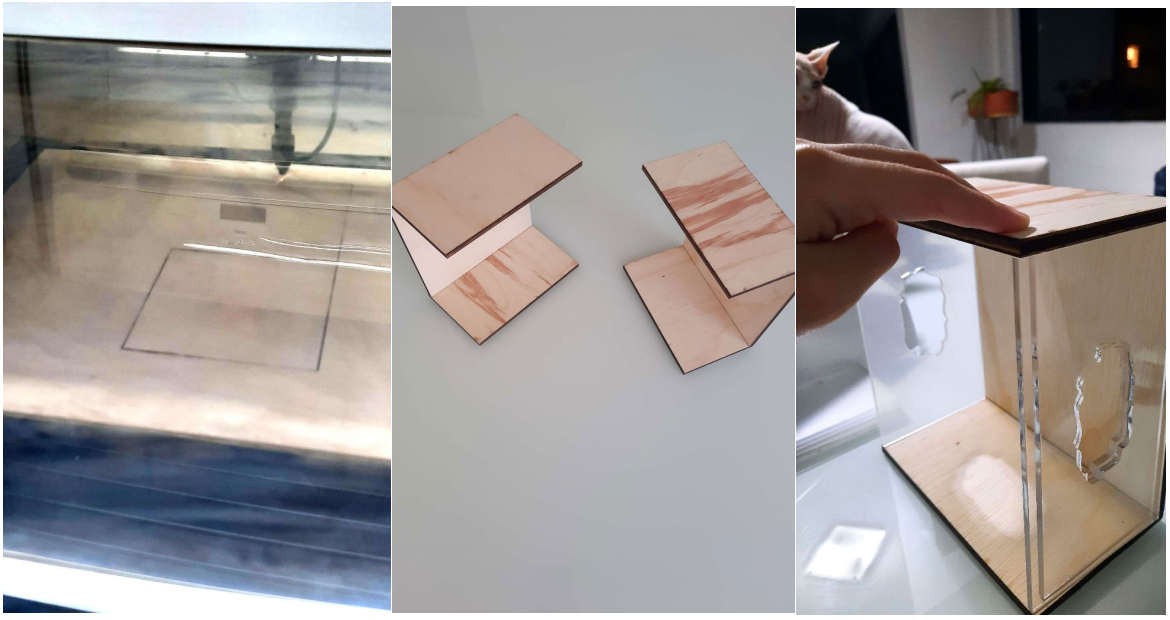
Figures 28, 29 and 30 - Illustrations of the object in varied situations, technical drawing in 1:3 scale, Sophia Neves.



Source: The author

And with all the necessary changes made and a final blueprint to work from, the final piece was produced with minimal adjustments. One such final touch was the change from MDF wood to sustainably acquired leftover wood, which would be both more resistant to potential damage than the much thinner alternative and more in accordance with the principles of sustainable, nature-based design that the project stems from.

Figures 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 and 39 - Pictures taken during production of the final piece.



Source: The author

Once put together, the final piece is exactly what it was intended to be - a book not meant to be read, but to be seen and perhaps understood, thus an object with no explicit function, made in collaboration with the plant growing through its pages. A design object and a piece of art, one thing not remotely excluding the other as it embraces its own existence at the intersection that is most certainly present between the two areas, disregarding any perceived limitations presented by either.

Figure 40 - *A Growing Story*, Sophia Neves, 2023.

Source: The author

## Conclusion

Taking into consideration the initial objectives of the project, it can certainly be said that the way it unfolded and the results provided in the final piece met each and every one of them. With a thorough study of design history and the timeline of its ever-changing relationship with fine art, as well as present day trends in design and the radical movements that seek to challenge them as a strong literary and theoretical basis for the project, the final piece developed was successful in its pursuit. Stemming from the personal desire of the designer behind it to express a point of view, it challenges the rationalist and functionalist ideals of contemporary design that the project sought to question by being a book, and therefore an object of design, that does not serve the explicit function of a book nor is aimed to be used by any predetermined target audience, therefore qualifying as a piece of fine art by existing purely for the sake of expression itself. It does not attempt to question whether or not design qualifies as a form of art, but instead accepts this premise as true from conception and embraces its own existence as both things.

Furthermore, the introduction of biodesign ideals to the initial study adds another, entirely different layer of complexity to the matter as it raises a need to consider not only the relationship between fine art and design, but also that of both areas with nature itself as an artist and designer of its own merit. While the project is not concerned with serving a purpose to any user, it must be concerned with serving as an appropriate home to the plants that take part in it, by using the piece itself as their habitat. This redirected concern with function, in which it must be considered in order to enable the intended form to exist, rather than the other way around, is in itself an important signifier that the project succeeded in its intended direction.

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