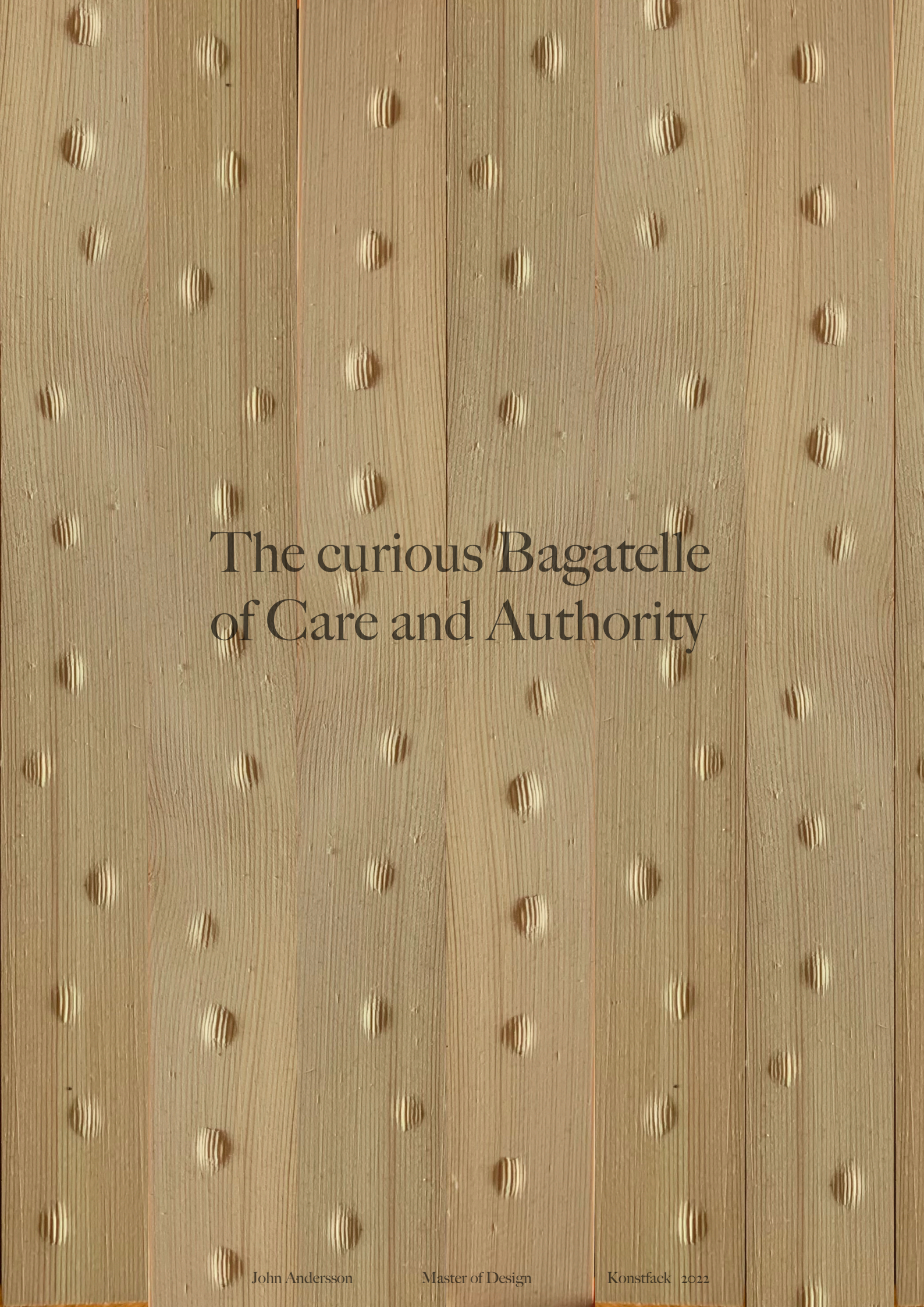

The curious Bagatelle of Care and Authority

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Abstract

How do *care* and *authority* relate to each other, and why is the relation between them important to understand for architects and designers?

By experimental modelling and experimental thinking this project tries to understand how the caring for different matters in the design process affect the results and consequences of care. The text draws parallells to early aviation pioneers and how a shifted focus from sheer power to manoeuvrability served them their success.

Through the development of a curious wood treatment technique, and through it's imagined applications to homes, mainly in large scale housing projects, this project searches eagerly for answers on matters related to care, authority, responsibility, a reasonable degree of rationality, standardisation, the role of the architect and the role of the designer.

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The curious Bagatelle of Care and Authority

Introducing the curious Bagatelle of Care of Authority

My starting point is the sudden love for an object. Seemingly a bagatelle.

I intuitively sensed the quality and the potential of the technique achieved on the piece of wood that my father once showed me. The technique - probably drawn from the Swedish craft tradition - had been used to achieve a protruding pattern on the piece of wood that I held in my hands. I could not understand how the surface had been achieved. When I asked my father, he told me that he knew very little of the technique himself, but had learnt it somewhere, sometime. He didn't remember when or where. The curiosity for the history of the technique and the beautifully simple principals it employed and the qualities it achieved was intriguing. The technique seemed to present to me a passable way forward for many of my ambitions and interests as an architect and designer.

During the planning of the degree project at the master of design, I decided to work with the mentioned technique as my main interest. I decided to have the practical side of the project centred around how an adaptation of this craft technique into a more rational production could be imagined without loosing all it's qualities. Rationality would be used gently to make it more affordable and accessible, but not let to be the guiding factor. Qualities provided by variations in the material, the partly random process of the technique and the possibilities of instant manoeuvrability in the process would be just as prominent. The decision was made with a conscious will to meet an increasing interest of mine of how standardisation, industrialisation and rationalisation affects architect's and designer's practices and how it affects their architecture and design, subjects which I'd worked on in previous courses and projects.

To accompany the practical thinking, which I planned to exercise through experimental models and prototypes, I decided to appoint as the core of my theoretical work and my theoretical thinking, the tension between two terms: *care* and *authority*. I had previously, and especially in the research of my BA[1], found great value in investigating how practising architects and designers view their use of authority and care in their daily work. I started to develop an interest in how they defined the two words a*uthority* and c*are*, and how their understanding of *authority* and *care* were manifested in their practices. For this project I've been elaborating on how to continue forward. How should architects and designers - me included - think about *care* and *authority* when designing?

[1] Van Toorn, Roemer; Shirke, Sangram (ed.) *Radical Swedes* Towards a Cosmo-Political Outlook: Studio: Celebrating Diversity*. UMA School of Architecture. Umeå, Umeå Universitet, 2019.

Hitting wood with a hammer and thinking about aviation pioneers

Background and theoretical perspective

Background

The practical part of this degree project consists of an attempt to imagine and develop a semi-rational ornamental wood processing technique. The inspiration to the technique has been derived from a traditional craft technique which I initially didn't know much about. To learn more about the technique and how it could be achieved, easily produced and applied, I've used a method inspired by the experimental modelling and experimental thinking mentioned in Susan G Sterrett's *Wittgenstein Flies a Kite*.[2]

To uphold the method of experimental modelling, curiosity has proved to be a loyal driving force, both in regard to evoking interest in the materials I've experimented with, but also in regard to the various traditions and techniques I've used. Also - and probably most importantly - curiosity has been valuable when testing different attitudes to what the role of designers and architects are. By engaging in different attitudes I wanted to be able to more truthfully elaborate with the proportions of care and authority. I suspected different proportions would affect both the process and the end result of the mentioned wood treatment technique.

Theoretical perspective

This project shares familiarities with Sterrett's reasoning in her *Wittgenstein Flies a Kite*, where she draws parallells between the eager attempts of achieving heavier-than-air flight (compared to lighter-than-air flight, such as balloons and airships) in the early twentieth century, and the change within logic and language theory occurring at the same time, which at the time often were aimed to understand and perfect a logic system and by extension understand the logical fundament of language.

Sterrett illustrates efficiently how the young Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein - who later would become one of the most prominent philosophers of the twentieth century - found himself ambivalent whether he should engage himself in the study of aviation or in the study of philosophy, and later, if accepting Sterrett's hypothesis, also can be seen as a personification of how these two fields actually overlapped in more significant ways than is generally understood today.

Sterrett describes a crucial situation in the 1910's, where we meet a young Wittgenstein trying to sort his ambivalent mind in an unusual way, potentially bordering naivety[3]. He stubbornly searches and finally manage to get into contact with the famous and influential English philosopher Bertrand Russell, from whom he sharply requests a verdict. He formulates a wish to have Russell decide whether he has any talent for philosophy at all, and thus if he have something to offer to philosophy, or if he rather should continue his current efforts in the fields of mechanics and experimental aviation.

Worth mentioning is a potential alternative interpretation of the same situation. The same situation could also illustrate that the crossroad dividing the road of aviation and the road of philosophy in fact wasn't so much of a crossroad and not as thought-bending as we today might understand it as. It's important to remember that we always have the benefits of retrospect when studying historical records. Heavier-than-air flights was at that time still at the point of being entirely experimental and still questioned if possible at all outside of experiments, not to mentioned the range of positions one could hold whether the venture of flight was morally sound or not, people were simultaneously starving while others vainly attempted to fly, and at the end of the day we are not born with wings. If humans can't fly - should they then try to? In other words, It was a rather theoretical and moral matter, and arguably it landed closer to what we normally imagine philosophy to be. The fields of aviation and philosophy might have been seen as more intertwined than the

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[2] G Sterrett, Susan, *Wittgenstein Flies A Kite*, Penguin Books 2005.

[3] G Sterrett, Susan. *Wittgenstein Flies A Kite*. Penguin Books 2005.

contemporary understanding has it, the two research fields could rather and arguably be seen as being two sides of the same coin.

Fascinatingly, the tenacious attempts of heavier-than-air flight was finally succeeded a few years earlier, when the bicycle mechanic brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright managed to sweep over the grounds of Kitty Hawk in North Carolina in 1903, in what is considered the first controlled heavier-than-air flight. They had realised that control and manoeuvrability were to be prioritised over pure power.

Earlier attempt had focused on the power needed to force the plane up into the air. For the Wright brothers, it was first when they had managed to construct a fully manoeuvrable plane that they considered adding a sufficiently capable engine. A key was their wise departure from the fact that human flight would need to include a human pilot, a pilot which would be able to constantly read the situation and constantly be able to make adjustments accordingly to his or her reading. The *context of the moment* were made key. Their focus on the human ability to constantly adjust and manoeuvre a flexible structure made them less dependent on strength and pure power. Their approach proved successful. The soft, flexible and apparently powerful strength achieved by the amplified plane-pilot relation were to pioneer early aviation. The access to the *context of the moment* let them economise the structure and decrease their need for sheer power in the engine.

In the field of logic, system theory and language theory similar insights were emerging. Strict, fixed and rigid systems of how the world were to be understood and analysed were falling apart. It's interesting that many logicians such as Bertrand Russell, Alfred North Whitehead and Gottlob Frege eagerly attempted to map the logistic fundamental framework of mathematics and language at the same time.[4] The prevailing focus on omnipotent theories - even if there were great differences between their views on how such a logic system were to be formulated - was suddenly dissolved by Kurt Gödel's brilliant incompleteness theorems published in 1931, in which he presents a mathematical proof that proves that no mathematical system - and extrapolated, neither any logically based understanding of language - can be totally complete or true[5]. Any such system always have to include self referential elements, and therefore can not be seen as complete in the way that the strict logicians believed possible. Gödel's theorems opened up what had become a stiffened research field. Creative and elaborative interpretations of how to understand language and logic were suddenly a more auspicious enterprise. The re-evaluation of the fundamental conditions and the limitations of logic were dramatically changed, just as the Wright brothers had revolutionised aviation when they approached aviation by treating manoeuvrability as fundamental, and power as secondary.

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[4] Whitehead, Alfred North; Russell, Bertrand. *Principia Mathematica*, Cambridge University Press 1910-13.

[5] Gödel, Kurt, *Über formal unentscheidbare Sätze der Principia Mathematica und verwandter Systeme I (On formally Undecidable Proportions of Principia Mathematica and Related Systems I*, Monatshefte für Mathematik, 1931.

Ideation and tests

In this section material and descriptions from the ideation and the experimental modelling are presented. These descriptions are representable of the way that I have worked during this degree project.

For long I've been fascinated by how light and shadow affect the appearance of homes, building and objects. I suspected that there were ways to design patterns and surfaces which would pick up and potentially enhance this effect. I sensed an opportunity to address the problem of dull and stiff materials in many large scale housing projects and, if successful, be able to propose a material or a solution which provides a sense of care and which holds a more vidid and changing nature.

I set up small test stations around my personal home. Initially it was necessary to do these tests in my own home because of the pandemic restrictions, but later I realised that it was ideal for this project. I decided early to direct potential applications toward the context of homes.

While reading and forming the theoretical backbone of the project I could observe, document and analyse the results from these small test stations. I soon found a direction I wanted to explore further. It was a small piece of wood that I had got from my father (not the piece in the photograph). The piece was the result of an old technique that he had once presented me with. When this piece was set up in the test station, this specific one was by far the most interesting and vidid piece, but still it was made out of simple wood by a simple technique.

This discovery led me onwards. I had long conversations with my father and I started to learn the basics of this technique which neither of us knew much about initially.

By using softwares and 3D-modelling I made simulations and analysis of how the angle and direction of the sun during a day (and on different times of the year) would affect the appearance of architectural details. This was helpful but I soon realises that I would not be able to source much knowledge from this method besides knowledge about how potential applications would be placed and used once the technique would produce satisfactory surfaces.

This was not what I intended this degree project to be concentrated on, so I gathered the useful information and went back into the workshop to further develop the technique by hand.

A wide range of different patterns have been tested. Many patterns suggests function, such as providing grip, mediating messages written in braille or to fade the sharp contrast between a bright window and the surrounding window frame, (similar to the function of the rich profiles usually found around the glass planes in a window construction). I decided to concentrate on a dot pattern because this pattern could both be ornamental and functional. The dots are simple and versatile and have a neutral quality which I value when it comes to homes. I wanted the technique to fit a range of aesthetic preferences and be understood as flexible, accessible and affordable, rather than fixed, luxurious and exclusive.

Once I had decided to work within the home context and that I would develop a wood treatment technique and that I would make use of the light play, I continued to make more specific tests and documented possible application areas. In this photograph one can see how I've tested how the angling of the sun affects the appearance of the pattern over a 2 hour period. The aim for this test was to find the delicate balance where I as a designer provides brief glimpses of quality meant to show the care that has gone into designing a detail in a home, but little enough to not limit the user's freedom to independently design her or his own home. The occasional ornamentation should not be too obvious and not powerful enough to take over the entire room. I hade find my scope: a specific technique with intentionally unfixed applications. If directed towards designers, architects and interested homeowners this would fit well into my ambition of designing proto-products rather than products meant to be fixed and fully programmed. I return to the concept of proto-products later in the text and explain it further.

Process of final technique

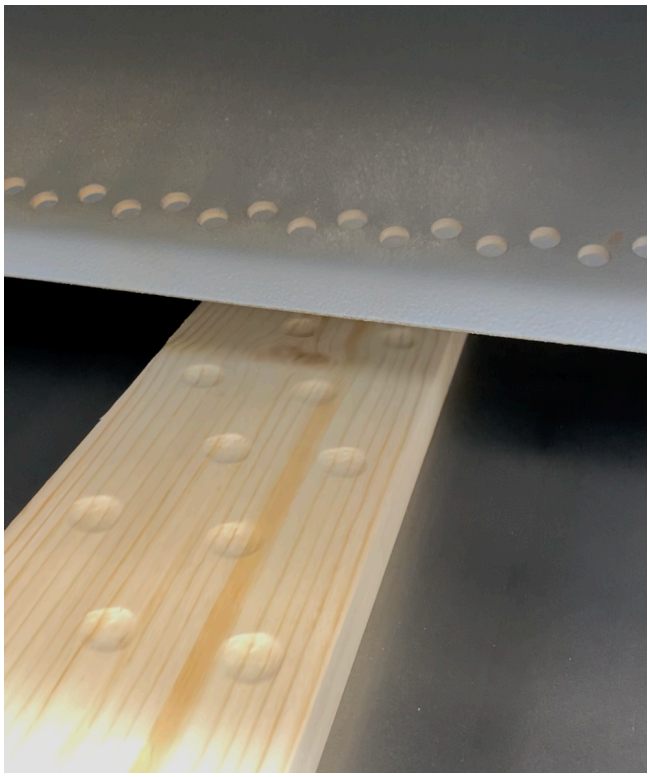
The examples below presents the basic steps of the technique which the later part of this degree project have been centered around. The practical prototyping is described with texts and photographs.

Step one

Many hours of experimenting with various types of wood, various qualities of wood and various compositions of the prepared material have provided me with this set of requirements to be the most efficient for achieving a reasonable production efficiency and yet secure the qualitative aspects of the original craft aesthetics:

- Swedish pine wood of proper quality
- Ideal angle for wood fibres in relation to surface plane: 40-90°
- Ideal depth of dent: 3.0mm

In order to secure a constant contact with the consequences of my authority as a designer I decided to do as much of the prototyping by hand as possible. In this photograph I'm using a ball hammer and a sledge hammer to achieve the dents needed for this technique.



Step two

Next step is to plane the material, to remove material down to the lowest point of the dent. This is the step that I have decided to not experiment with.

Step three

Adding water. For 10-15 minutes the surfaces are brushed with water or the whole piece is soaked in water. Both cold and warm temperatures work, but warmer water seems to speed up the penetration of the water into the wood fibres.

Simple test with water-based paints, oils and pigmented waters have been performed, but it has not been included in the core of this project, instead I wanted to focus on understanding how the surfaces and the patterning best could be achieved.

The step when water is added holds many possibilities that I wish to explore now when the mechanical process of the patterns are satisfactory.

Step four

If the right type of wood is used, the denting is made according to the set of requirements that I've described and the soaking is done as described, the end result doesn't need much after-work. It's the simple beauty that I've strived for. The ample amounts of testing have been rewarding.

For further research and developments (which are planned beyond the degree project course) I have an extensive list of aspect that I want to explore in closer detail but have not had time or resources to carry through within the frame of the degree project course.

Achieved in the end is what I call a proto-product, which according to my definition is a material, a source of inspiration or a potential component for a product. My ambition have been to design something that would trigger inspiration and later be picked up and integrated into fellow designers's, architects's or home owners's projects. I aimed to let the application of these proto-products reach beyond my imagined applications.

Where to land?

Discussing the method, the results and what to bring from this

In line with a similar development of ideas - illustrated both in the case of the Wright brothers, who premiered manoeuvrability over sheer power, and the sudden dissolution of any imagined perfect logic system by Kurt Gödel's incompleteness theorems - I have been keen to search for a flexile and careful strength that employ the inevitable authority that is needed to act in the world in a way that achieve results in line with whatever one cares for. In short: *authority* guided by *care*.

By the use of experimental thinking, practical testing of various wood types, various tools and types of approaches attempts have been made to achieve a flexible strength in the developing of the earlier mentioned wood treatment technique. To make it adaptable to context and open for external expertise has been a methodological strategy.

The most important and influential parameter in the experimental modelling and thinking have been for whom or what I care. To shift my focus of care from one thing to another was used to generate changes in how I exercised my authority as a designer. These changes were studied and analysed in order to improve the further development of the wood treatment technique.

Defining *care* and *authority*

The definitions of *care* and *authority* have influenced my thinking and approach to the wood treatment technique I've developed. After reading María Puig de la Bellacasa's *Matters of Care*[6], I managed to orient myself among the many different definitions and understandings of the term *care*, and after reading Alain Badious's *Ethics*[7] I managed to find inspiration and support for a fundamental understanding of the term *authority* based on his ideas of how we contribute in the maintenance of what he calls events (of truth). These events is a sort of agreed points in time where the conventional is abandon and from which a sense of reality can emanate if agreed upon. What events one agree upon naturally generates consequence.

The definitions that I used for *care* and *authority* were for a long period a vivid and ever-changing matter - and I have no illusions that I'll be able to fixate them - but for the sake of a decision and for the sake of being able to discuss my efforts in this text I suggest these temporary definitions:

Authority is according to my understanding one of the most fundamental aspect of being. Regardless of what you do, what you say or how you move, you will harm, help, hinder or influence matter and other beings. There is no life without consequences. At the end of the day does the human body depend on digestion and the reorganisation of matter and energy, which is a rather drastic and crude process. But the fact that we have a certain degree of authority at our disposal is the very condition for our ability to express love, care or any other will.
An authority is not per se authoritarian. An authority is legitimate when the authority's acting is requested, and authoritarian when it's forced upon someone or something.
With no acceptance for the concept of authority, there are no possibility for a sense of responsibility.

Care is according to my understanding the directing of energy and efforts, often including an emotionally dimension. It's the guiding light that inform us how to employ our inevitable authority, in order to achieve the acts necessary for whatever the care inquires.

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6 Puig de la Bellacasa, María. *Matters of Care*. University of Minnesota Press, 2017

7 Badiou, Alain. *Ethics*. Verso, 2001.

Regardless of how I have put the definitions I've notices how the object of care always have guided and informed how I've used my authority as a designer. Sometimes it has been a conscious process, but often not. Even at the times when I consciously have elaborated with caring for the "wrong" things such as profit or maximum exploitation of machinery and the access to timber, I've noticed that it still has made sense to describe these ambitions as my objects of care. All people have to justify their acting, and even people acting "wrong" do care for certain things. I think that even a distorted care can cultivate some sort of sense of meaning, and that's why I promote increased reflection among designers, to decrease the consequences of oblivious and misdirected care.

It has been valuable to survey how care for different aspects of the development of the wood treatment technique has produced so different end results. If care, for example, have been given to the specific pieces of timber used in the production, the production have demanded me as a human to read every surface and adjust the patterning depending on what I see, feel and according to what I know about this specific piece. The production then land closer to the classic understanding of craft, sometimes bordering to sculpting. Production cost are driven up but a high quality and a high degree of potential customisation are achieved.

If I instead have focused my care on a general resident of Stockholm, the care have guided me toward a more affordable and accessible end product, which adress the problems of housing shortage and that informs me to suggest a production where the level of rationality is made a stronger factor. Suddenly has the need to hold down costs in order to provide greater volumes turned more urging. Empathy have been evoked for making the general Stockholm home a slightly more pleasant and long-term home. Ideally it would need to be modular and somewhat standardised in order to be easily accessible and attractive for architects planning large scale housing project meant to provide many people with a pleasant home.

How the changing of what I care for directs my authority in different directions, pinpoints my ambition to put pressure on designers and architects to constantly reflect on what they care for.

As an experimental model for how care affects and generates consequences this project have been a success to me. Whether the insights are accessible and useful for colleagues within the design and architecture industry is up to others to decide.

But what I'm certain of

What I'm certain of is that it's important to know what one cares for! Regardless if one then draws the conclusion that a designer is obliged to resign from as much authority as possible or if one thinks that a designer should be ready to argument for her or his exercised, but legitimate, authority, ideally with arguments derived from a reflected sense of engagement and care. This project is plainly a long and complicated way to urge designers and architects to reflect on their own inevitable role as agents of consequence and cause.

Designers and architects often work with experimental models and representation of ideas. In this they test and evaluate various proportion and orders of care and authority. This sort of practice closes in on classic ideas like Plato's theory of forms[8], generally known as the theory of ideas, in which it's described how non-physical essences of things precedes the physical objects. In a playfully distorted and partly inaccurate parallel to the theory of forms I can see how design depends on what ideas and objects of care they are derived from.

As mentioned In the introduction I have set the core of my theoretical investigation to be centered around on how practising designers and architects could relate to the terms *care* and *authority*. In workshops and conversations with fellow master students, sociologist and practising architects I have provoked them to formulate personal definitions and to start reflecting on these matters. I'm self critical towards the fact that I

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[8] Platon. *Staten bok III*. Atlantis, 2003.

have not taken measures to include and in detail list, map and analyse different formulation and attitudes. I still believe my main prioritising was correct, this text was never meant to be a mapping of attitudes and definitions, but rather a suggestion of how to reflect on care and authority when practising. But had I been to develop and unfold this project further would that have been the natural thing to do next - to have my approach being tested alongside already practiced approaches.

Taking help

To deepen the relevance of my project and to apply a critical gaze on the reasoning I've consulted experts. In order to make the imagined manufacturing process relevant for the real world, I've searched to establish relevant contact with practising architects and designers. For this project I've worked collaboratively with a practicing architectural office which have proved incredibly helpful to inform my decisions along the way. Early in the process I found an understanding and benevolent architect in Daniel Johansson, which is co-founder of the architectural office BYGGFENOMEN. In conversation with him I've been able to process ideas, potential methods and directions.

To exactly describe the result of a project like this is complicated. In one sense the result of my degree project consist of a suggested approach to semi-rational production, in another it consists of piles of surface material being produced with a developed wood treatment technique, and in a another one it consist of visions of how this technique and product can be applied in architectural projects. Some results exists physically present, other results of the project are scattered all over as ideas, evoked interests, collaborations and a developed ambition to understand how design can be made more relevant today. My vain hope is that this text and my practical experimental modelling somehow can contribute to a deeper understanding of how architects and designers could be more reflective over how they exercise *care* and *authority* in their daily practices.

Nuanced view on rationality

I hope that an interest of more nuanced views on rationality has been evoked through the project. My position is that rationality is a great tool, but never an intrinsic value. At least not from a human perspective. Rationality can be dangerous if taken to literal and if not being questioned by other counter weighting qualities. The absence of rationality can also be destructive, if there is no structure och normative form, there can not be such things as commonly understood or agreed matters. The sense of the collective is at risk. My suggestion is that we are to tread gently when praising rationality.

Practical applications

Potential application areas for the developed wood treatment technique are many. I have mainly focus my suggestions and visionary direction toward architectural interiors such as windows niches, interior walls and kitchen cabinets door. But even coffins with customised patterning have been considered, where the high degree for customisation of detail and subtle ornamentation could be embraced and directed by care for the missed one.

Applications of the technique could easily be integrated in many architectural projects, especially the sort of architectural projects using solid wood and prefabricated cross laminated wall elements, which is a building technique that has increased during the last decade and have become an innovative and growing share of the building industry. In that context I can easily see how this wood treatment technique could serve as a medium for the care of the user, manifested in the details and in the surfaces. It would offer a quality and a vivid surface, far more attractive than the standard surface of plasterboards painted with dull plastic plaint.

I'd like to see this wood treatment technique work as a trojan horse, that manages an entrance into the planning of large scale architectural projects, and then serves as a subtle example and argument for quality.

Concluding discussion

So did I managed a controlled flight just like the Wright brothers?

It depends. On one hand I think that I didn't - the ideas and the concepts that I brought forward in the project and in this text are not revolutionary or new in any sense. On the other hand I believe this to have been the most valuable academic project I've ever planned, lived and executed. To provoke myself and others to formulate their views on complex matters such as *care* and *authority* have rendered me great insights, generated interesting conversations about responsibility, what the role of an architect or a designer is - and I can honestly not imagine a better stepping stone than a project so reflecting and concluding than this before entering the professional world of architecture and design.

I'm certain that the results of his project will let me be better prepared and aware of how I personally will exercise care and authority once I'll start practising. *How* I'd like to do architecture will always need to be supported by a clear sense of care for someone or something. Also the reasons for *why* I'd like to put my efforts within the fields of architecture and design will be more easily explained and demonstrable, both for colleagues and for clients.

Whether I managed to actually lift from the ground and demonstrate something revolutionary or not isn't really important. The matters I've worked with has proved to be a rich and promising streak of potential future research themes, so if understood as the start of a long interest and a long professional venture into these matters, I feel this project to have served me with a great amount of leads and opportunities on how I could contribute to the profession of architecture and design in specific, and how I could contribute to the collective in general.

Lastly. I believe direction to be more meaningful than goals, and if that has been the ambition of my degree project - to formulate and stake out a meaningful direction of my future efforts within architecture and design - this project have been an important success. To borrow the concept of *events of truth* from Alain Badiou[9], this project has been an event of truth for me, and If I'll continue to maintain this event as a truth and consciously reflect on the consequences that my exercised authority produces, I hope that I will be able to contribute to a manifold of good architectural and design projects in the years to come, all performed with knowledge and insights possible to derive from the thinking that I've been developing during this project and in this text.

[9] Badiou, Alain. *Ethics*. Verso, 2001.

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John Andersson
3th June 2022

Appendix

Appendix to *The curious Bagatelle of Care and Authority,* thesis by John Andersson for the Master of Design - Individual Study Plan at Konstfack, May 29 2022.

Introduction

In this text I will describe and reflect on my experience of exhibiting my degree project *The curious Bagatelle of Care of Authority* during the spring exhibition at Konstfack 2022. I will mainly concentrate on how the design of the exhibition space has been an attempt to reflect the degree project itself, how decisions regarding the exhibition was taken and how the reception of the exhibited project has been.

Preparations and strategy

During preparations for the Konstfack spring exhibitions 2022 I pondered long on how my degree project would be exhibited. During the previous months I had been deeply focused on the project itself and the majority of my time and effort had been devoted to conversations with architectural firms and interested collaborators. I sought ways to secure collaborations beyond the window of the degree project. Accordingly to this ambition I have in practice been exhibiting and presenting my project, my prototypes and my results time after time, little by little in valuable conversations with future collaborators.

Aspects and dimensions of the degree project which could not be realised or made meaningful in these conversations were saved for the public exhibition. The importance and responsibility to showcase, explain and make ones work at university accessible to the public is not to be neglected. For the exhibition I therefore concentrated on the parts of my project that are easy to instantly engage with. The instant instinct to touch the surface material that I've been developing and to embrace the visitor's curious wondering of how the surfaces have been achieved, have been my main focuses during the preparations of the exhibition.

Exhibition

In line with my ambition to create what I've called proto-products in my degree project I wanted to manifest this perspective in the exhibition itself, I wanted to provoke personal engagement and questions rather than achieving a neat and informative info-dump onto my visitors. As often as possible, I've been present at my exhibited material to explain and to perceive, join and create conversations on how the visitors imagine my developed technique and the resulting material could be used or manufactured. The amount of conversations that actually have gone in this direction has by far exceeded my expectations. At the 100 percent presentation I felt less confident in taking these decisions regarding the exhibition, but during and after the exhibition week I have felt more and more grateful for having taken these decisions.

I struggled with the layout of my exhibition space and with the selection of objects to exhibit. It was crucial for me to split and shatter the visitor's attention, I did not want them to focus too much on one single object, but rather to equally divide their attentions on a range of objects. I didn't want them to understand any of the exhibited objects as a fixed product, but rather lure them into my concept of proto-products which has been a useful term for me during the work, and which is meant to trigger the engagement and imagination in the visitor to themselves suggest and elaborate on how the developed technique and resulting material could be used and manufactured, regardless if they are practising architects, designers or not.

It was important for me to shatter the attention of the visitor. I was striving not to mediate that any of the objects would be read and understood as fixed and finished products, but rather as proto-products meant to trigger architects, designers and non-designers to imagine how the surface material could be applied and used. During the exhibition I hoped to achieve conversations on this topic. In line with this ambition I designed the exhibition space with my own suggested applications on a level of subtleness where imagination would be triggered, but not limited: as part of a window frame, a single kitchen cabinet door and as an unpainted section of a wall.

In order to steer the visitor's imagination toward the segment of doors, windows or other surfaces moving along an axis, I decided to exhibit the developed technique on a single kitchen cabinet door.

I exhibited a large test piece (to the left), which abstractly showcase the simple and beautiful qualities that this technique produces, next to a very detailed and particular architectural scale model (1:5) where the first piece are intended to work as a component (the vertical pieces of the window niche). My intention of exhibiting these two objects side by side was to showcase how easy this abstract and unfixed technique could be integrated into architectural details familiar to most people, again with the intention to make sense of the idea of proto-products.

At times it was hard to understand if the strategy had worked as planned or not, but when I asked how visitors had understood the project, most expressed that the abstract technique itself had over-rided the reading that the actual objects would be understood as proposed and fixed products. In addition to comments similar to this one, one visitor also added that it was a nice and generous exception from other very forced and fixed products. This comment, even if not representable for every visitor, was what I had hoped for when designing the exhibition space: a generous and open exhibition which invites the visitor to engage and imagine together with the degree project and ideally take it even further themselves, beyond my imagined applications, rather than an exhibition which only informs the visitor about *my* fixed ideas.

Reflections and future corrections

There are decisions and details that I would have liked to make differently, but on the whole I'm thankful for prioritising the project itself over the exhibition. The project's potential to put me into meaningful conversations and future situations beyond this course have been immensely important to me. My personality and experience have guided me to present and explain the content of this degree project directly toward collaborators and interested parties. But a little surprisingly I also found great values in the act of exhibiting in the school context. Once I started to work on the exhibition design I found myself interested in the potential such an activity could have. Therefore I directed much time and efforts during the very end of the term to create a sort of exhibition that I hoped could go in line with, and strengthen, my work. After having evaluated the reception of my work at the exhibition it has by far exceeded my expectations and I've got a valuable access to how the project is being perceived.

What I'm still critical of is my lack of information for how the technique works. Even though the very same lack probably has lead me into great conversations, I still regret not having provided some simple and pedagogical explanation. This is the point of critique, both coming from critics during the 100 percent presentation and from my own critical voice that best go in line with each other. For future exhibitions which I might take part in I will take this learning into careful consideration.

Conclusions

The final conclusion from me must be that even if exhibiting is not my strongest suite, I did enjoy it this time and I'm happy for the reception it got and the results it produced, even though there are details that I would not have repeated.

My ambition to manifest this degree project in the exhibition itself have, understood from the reception, at least in parts been recognised by visitors. In the tradition of the french architect firm Lacaton & Vassal which occasionally plan their projects with parts intentionally unfixed in order to let the intended user have a natural personal entry point into the project, I have managed to trigger engagement and achieved conversations that will lead me onwards. The mild provocation of the unplanned detail (or in my case the suggested but intentionally never fixed application) is the point of personal engagement for the user or visitor, and once the unplanned detail is fixed with the help and investment of the user by letting it use it's agency, I believe this sort of arrangement to create a much more emotional and long term perspective and relation to a house/apartment/product/object.

If my degree project and the exhibiting of it has come somewhat close to these sort of consequences I'm satisfied and eager to continue the project beyond the window of a degree project course.