



**PLAYFUL
AESTHETICS**

SYNOPSIS

Play is an unquestionably valuable aspect of human experience and expression. For many, it is fundamental to the pursuit of happiness. The primary colours and large, round edged, forms that have come to define children's toys become less relevant and more distant as we age.

This project seeks to reconnect the user with their 'inner child' by developing and synthesising a visual language of play designed for contemporary interior settings. The work sets out to promote an emotive vehemence of happiness and fun into the home.

To achieve this, I have produced a homeware collection of lamps and dishes that comprise of 3 shapes: 'square', 'circle' and 'triangle'. The collections are inspired by the archetypal forms of children's building blocks and the colours of pick 'n' mix sweets. Adapted for contemporary interiors, these elements combine to create objects that explore nostalgia and the aesthetics of play.



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PART ONE

PLAY-MAKING

Based on the kinds of making I found playful as a child. A line of enquiry was undertaken to reveal if there is a relationship between 'play-making' itself, and the outcomes of it having aesthetic reminiscence of play. Through part one, mini projects will be laid out and critically reflected upon to open the idea of what constitutes the aesthetic language of play.

ADAM SAVAGE
PROP-MAKER

**‘PLAY IS THE
GATEWAY DRUG
TO MAKING’**

Youtube/Tested:
Adam Savage's One Day Build
10th March 2016

PROPOSITIONS

RESPONDING TO INFLUENCE

Personally as a child 'play making' tended to happen as a result of boredom, suffice to say that making in this instance was not a means to an end or in other words, creating something that I desired, but it was valued as a process that entertained me.

Play making as means of entertainment often derived inspiration from very little or random information and as the outcome was of little importance the initial inspiration had marginal relevance

For this mini project, in order to inform this process of play I gathered single piece of data from random people, the categories were as follows: colour, number, scale, shape and material.

INFLUENCES

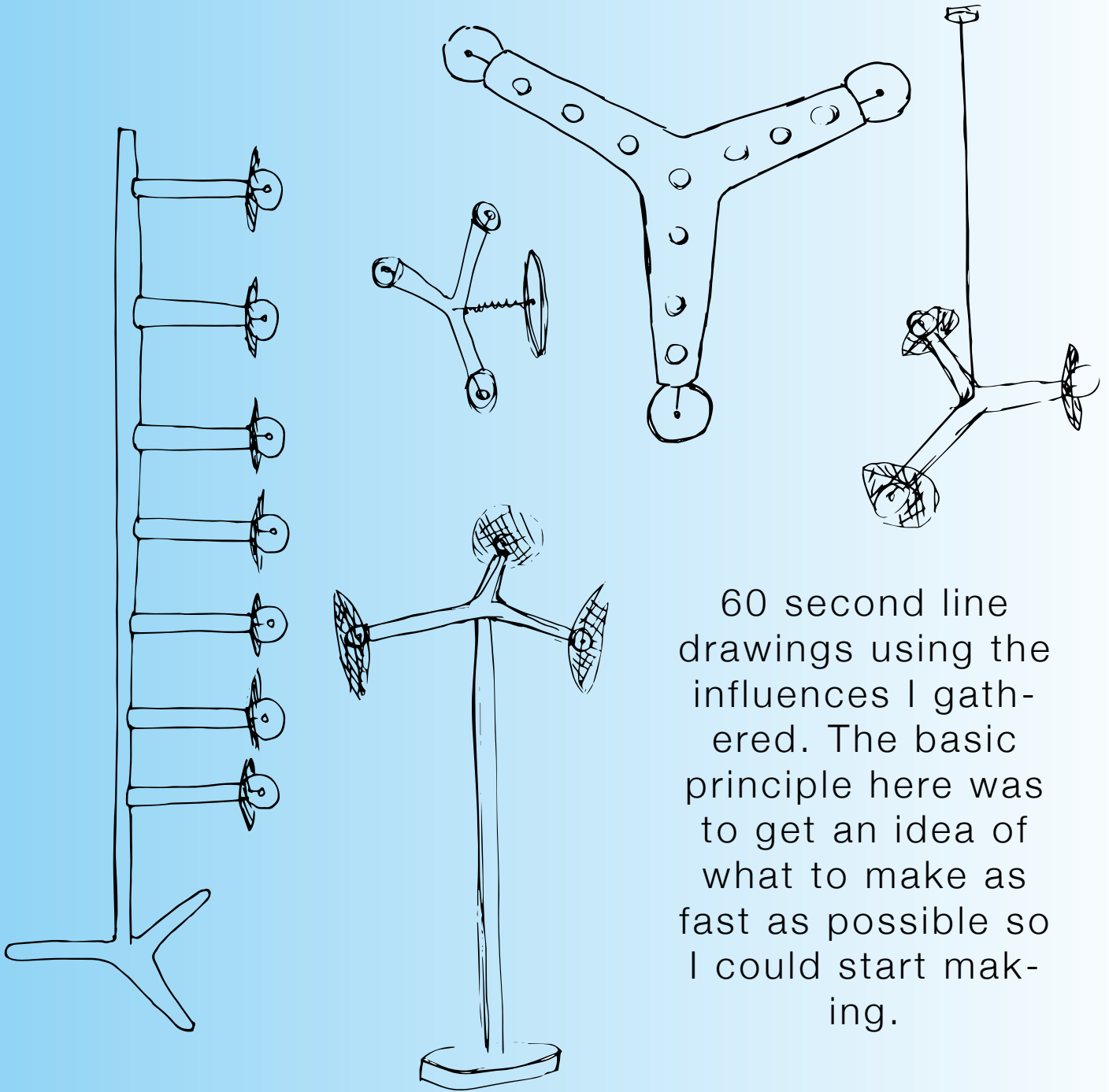
YELLOW

SEVEN

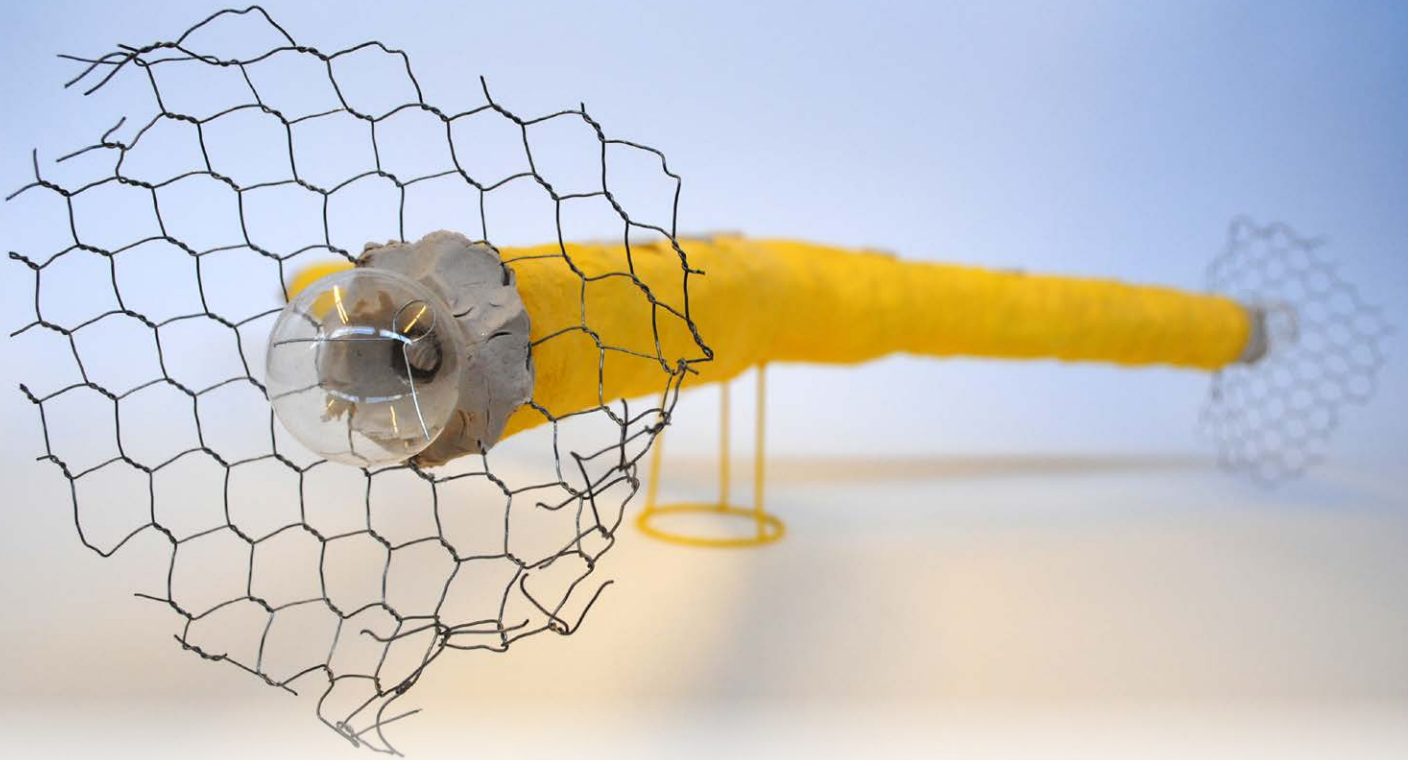
1 FOOT

3 POINT STAR

CHICKEN WIRE



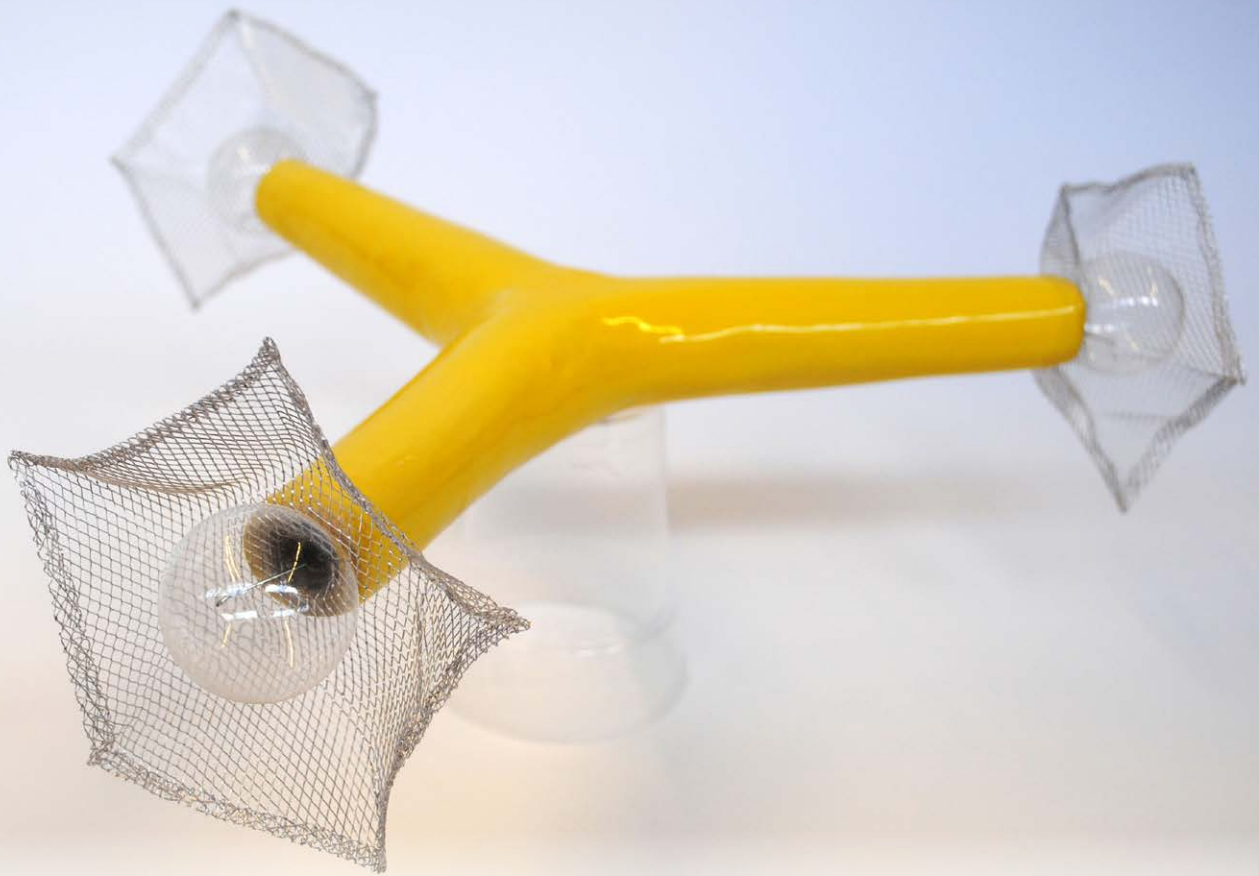
60 second line drawings using the influences I gathered. The basic principle here was to get an idea of what to make as fast as possible so I could start making.



DESCRIPTION OF OBJECT

MAQUETTE

Chicken wire frame, mod-rock skin, yellow spray paint, chicken wire shades, 3 pointed star shape, foot long arms, glass bulbs, 7 sticky dots.



DESCRIPTION OF OBJECT

CERAMIC VERSION

Modelling mesh shades, ceramic body,
yellow glaze, 3 pointed star shape, foot
squared, glass bulbs, 7 sticky dots.

THOUGHTS

These objects turned out to be very playful looking, however without the bright yellow it would be another story. Also, at the same time the outcome carries a subtle look of hazardousness which is not what I'm looking for.

The process of making these kept me entertained as expected although I became frustrated with the process taking too long. I now understand that to be fully involved and entertained with making, the stream of making needs to be consistent and not full of drying periods etc.

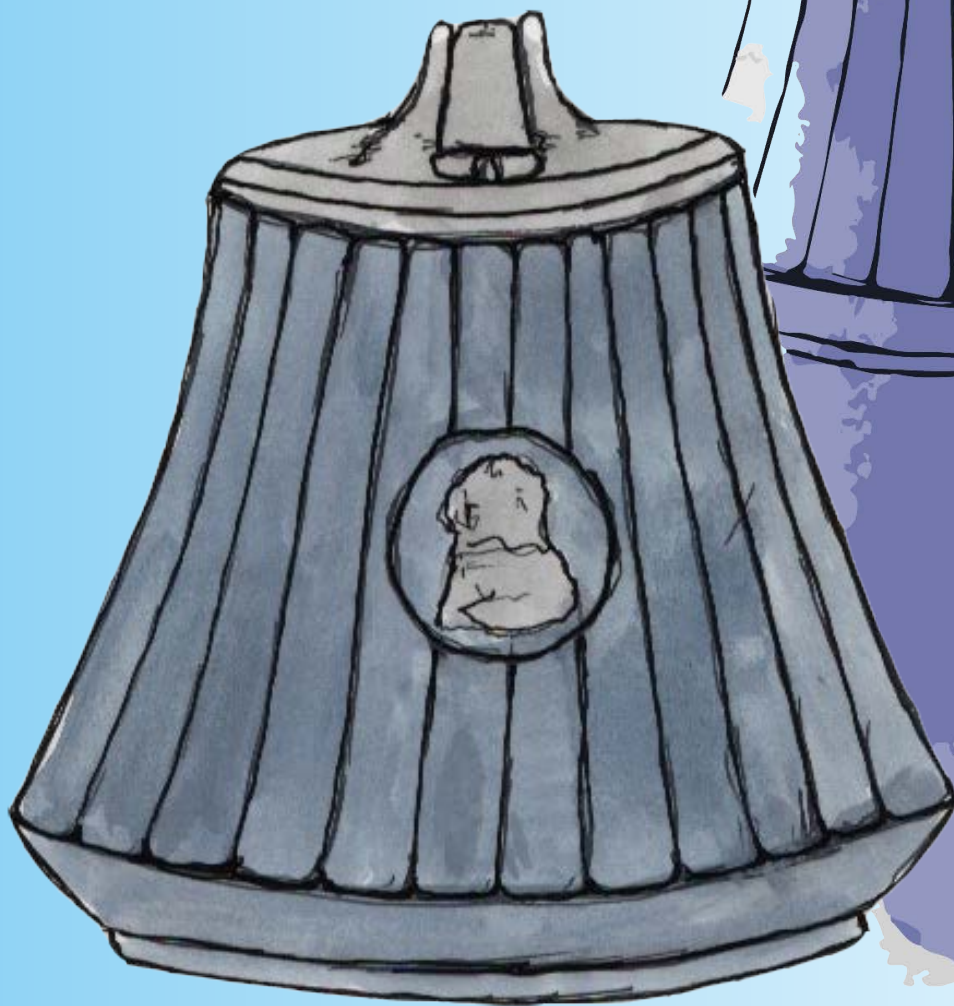
RESPONDING TO OBJECTS OF INTEREST

With the aim to understand how certain objects catch our eye. I thought it'd be interesting to take a trip to snoopers paradise to see what kinds of objects I found as playfully striking. Giving myself 1 hour, I had to select 3 objects to bring back to ceramics and work with.

WEDGWOOD TABLE LIGHTER

This Wedgwood table lighter was designed to be sophisticated but decorative and while at the time this may have been the case, today it gives off different vibes. Its baby blue colour and matte finish have a certain childlike language; also, the objects fluted base and ribbed texture have tactility that feel good in the hand. It would appear that aside from an object's colour, tactility could be a factor in playfulness to.

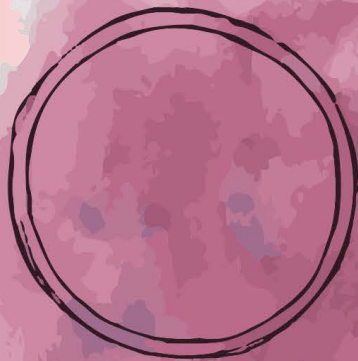




NAPKIN RING

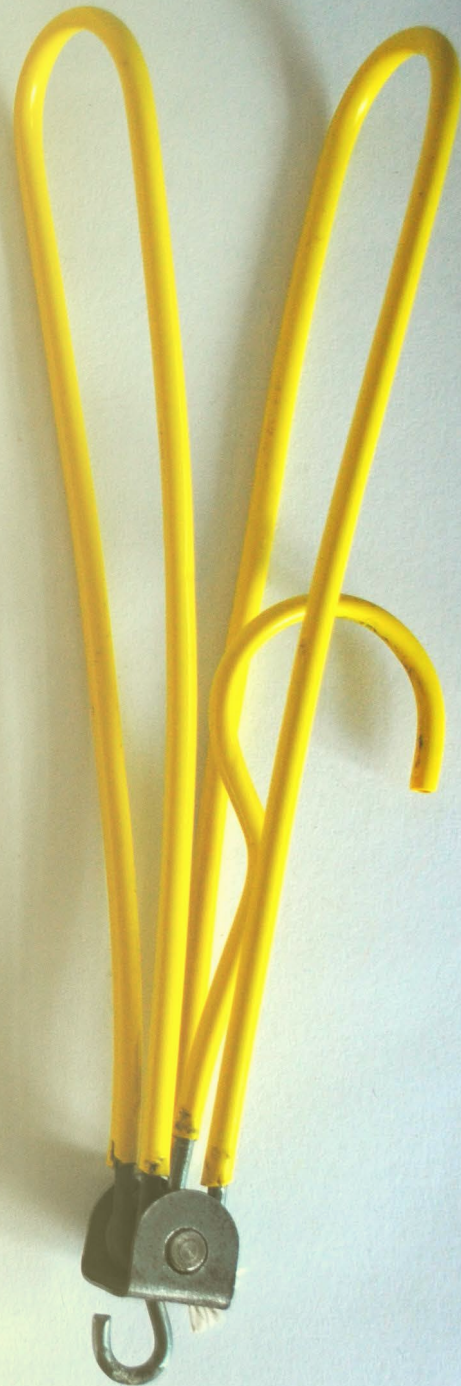
This napkin ring is possibly the simplest type of napkin ring you can find, its shape being almost like a slice of PVC tubing. Perhaps simplicity has an underlying effect of making something playful, however, if it were white it could have a different appeal. The colour of it (pink with mottled blue streaks) combined with its simplicity has a unanimous fun look that suggests that form and colour together can display childishness.

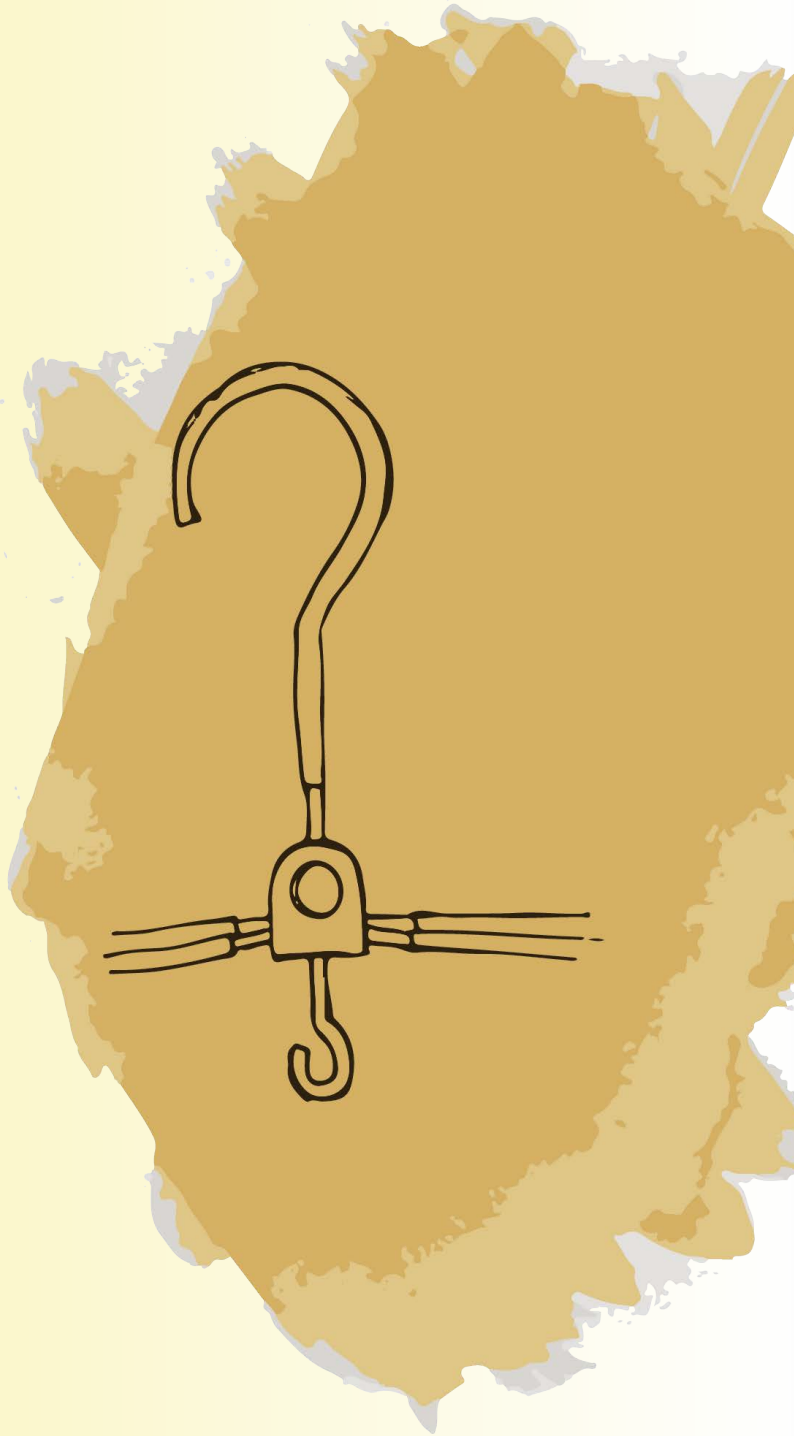




COLLAPSIBLE COAT HANGER

Coat hangers are one of the most mundane home accessories there is. This collapsible coat hanger is an over-engineered one at that. As a hanger has a very small profile and most places one travels to have them already, the need for a hanger like this is non-existent. My attraction to it was not based on me needing it but because I found it to be quite an amusing object, moreover, amusing equals playful.











THOUGHTS

Certain constraints such as time and finances expectedly altered my choices, however the objects I did manage to find proved to be conceptually profitable.

Understanding and building upon the colours and geometry of the objects I bought from Snoopers Paradise resulted in a collection of pots that I believe to be as visually striking as the originals. Furthering my understanding of How certain aesthetics can be transferred.

**STEPHANIE WRIGHT
CERAMICIST**

**‘I’M NOT A TERRIBLY
SERIOUS POTTER,
I ENJOY THE FUN
IN MY PIECES’**

Ceramic Review:
Masterclass with Stephanie Wright
Short documentary - 28th March

SALVAGE MAKING

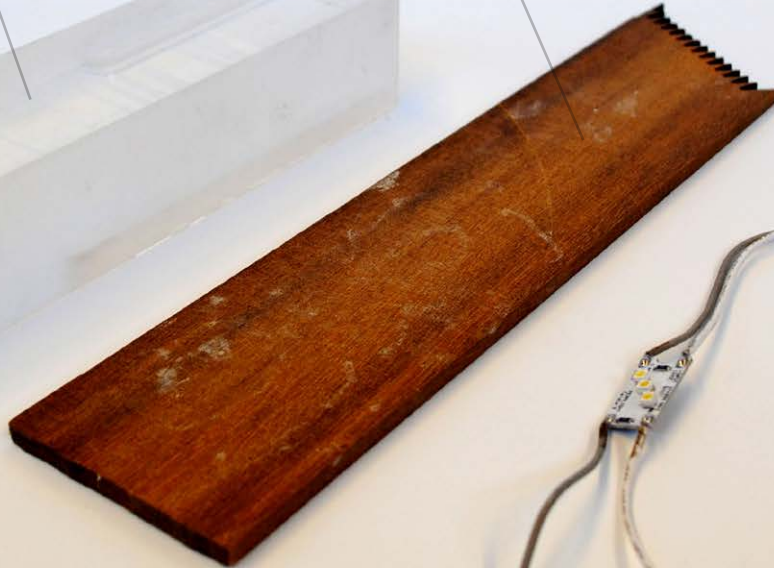
As a child, using the materials I could find around the house was one of my options. Here I aimed to replicate this by using the materials I could find around my bedroom and the workshops. Through this I hoped to see if the process of salvaging ignites a child like scene of nostalgia in me.

FOUND MATERIALS

Acrylic Block



Wooden Slat



LED's





THOUGHTS

While this mini project produced a good outcome I found that the appeal of it is rather sophisticated. I hoped to not have ended up with something so straight looking however it was the materials I had at my disposal that made it this way which I suppose was the point of it.

Making this object didn't fill me with nostalgia although the process of looking for the materials did. Letting ideas and design flow and develop in my head as I sifted through the workshops looking at all kinds of offcuts was interesting and remind me of myself as a child.

PART TWO

COLOUR THEORY

Part two focuses on how colour contributes to the concept of playful aesthetics. Based mainly on the visual language of sweets, critical reflections will be drawn to further my ideas and understanding of the topic. The curious topic of colour association will also be investigated to see if there is any common relationships between colours and shapes, numbers, months, day of the week and letters. Exploration of this avenue will lead on and link to the next part.



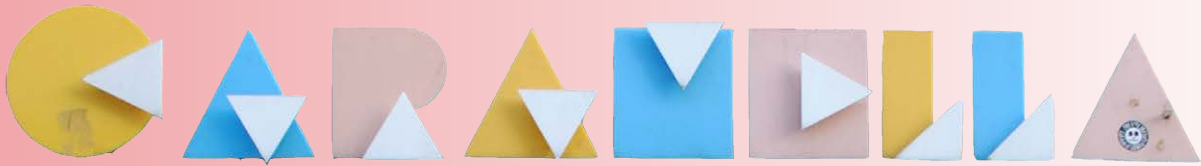
TAKE A TRIP

CARAMELLA SWEET SHOP

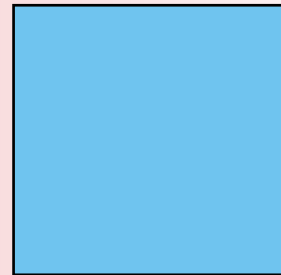
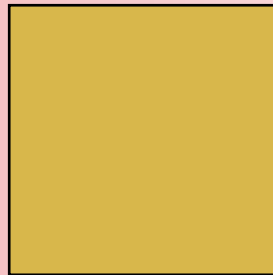
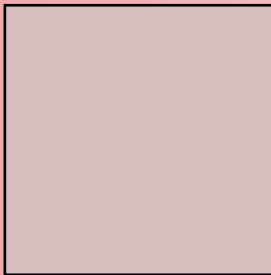
For my creative enquiry trip I decided to go somewhere that was for children. Caramella Sweet Shop is located in Brighton lanes, they offer a wide variety of sweets and treats (pick 'n' mix style). Here I gathered visual research for my branch of research that focuses on colour.

CARAMELLA
SWEET SHOP EST. 1986
BRIGHTON
WWW.CARAMELLA.CO.UK

Over 250
Pick Mix &
Gift
Hampers
Party
Bags
Seasonal
Gifts a
UK
Delivered
5000



Caramellas logo/title in itself presents a clear brand identity that is directed towards a more Playful Aesthetic. using bold shapes and soft/pastle primary colours seems to be a sure way of portraying the visual language of childishness.





COCONUT MUSHROOMS

NON-COLOURFUL

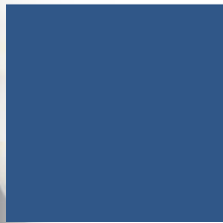
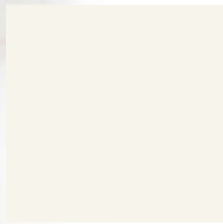
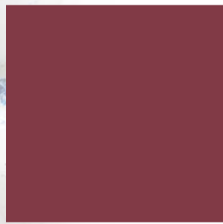
Coconut mushrooms are one of my favourite sweets, probably because my parents love them to. Its not likely that a child these day world be drawn to the because they have very little in the way of colour. Brown and white aren't the basis for a good sweet but they do taste great, much like chocolate.



G I A N T D O L P H I N S

T E X T U R A L

Blue indicates sour, as blue is not commonly found in natural edibles, it has the visual language of synthetic or inedible, however there is something curious about eating blue food. Giant Dolphins are squishy, they have great tactile feedback which is may also a driving point for playful aesthetics.

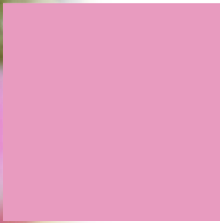
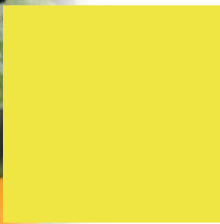
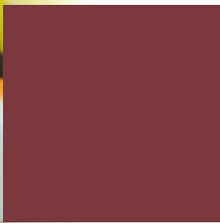
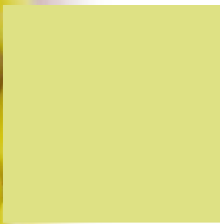


SPECKLED

GOBSTOPPERS

T O Y - L I K E

I have a great fondness for speckled things as they imply a painterly/playful affect. These gobstoppers are reminiscent of marbles both visually and psychologically. I've always wondered why people like them and I think it has something to do with the changing colours.



D O L L Y M I X T U R E

V A R I E T Y

Dolly Mixture is a pick 'n' mix sweet all on its own. Offering variety there is nothing more than a child likes more than choice. These sweets have a multitude of colours and with that, a huge range of languages behind it. To be selective about what colours to put together in a collection is key.



REFRESHERS

G R A P H I C A L

The refresher itself isn't very interesting. The packaging on the other hand is another story. The primary colours are both striking and funky. These colour have a very distinctive relationship to learning and play as they are taught to us at a very early age.



ICE CREAM C O N E S TWO-TONE

Two-tone sweets such as Ice Cream Cones are subtle but effective. In my opinion they look to be like to part or more detailed than they actually are. Pink and white specifically as a colour combination have subtle feminine undertones with helps to make things more childlike.

THOUGHTS

Sweets and their colours possess a great deal of emotive language from pastel pink, to green. It is the difference between baby blue and navy blue that makes clear the power of colour.

Understanding that these colours don't randomly end up these colours is crucial in recognising that colour is selected. The ingredients that make most sweets are white or clear with added pigment. The manufacturers must bear in mind what colours will make their sweets more desirable.



ORANGE



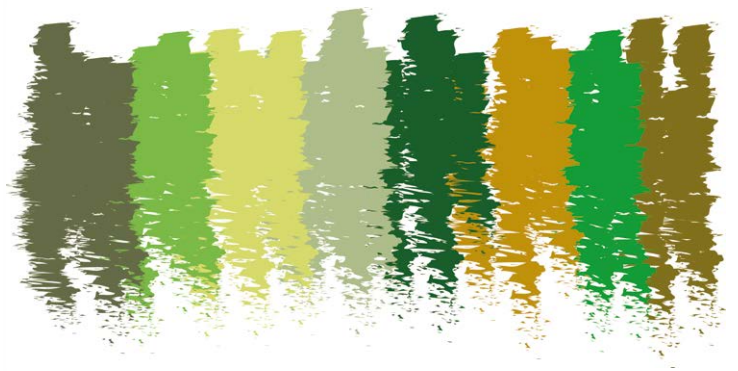


YELLOW



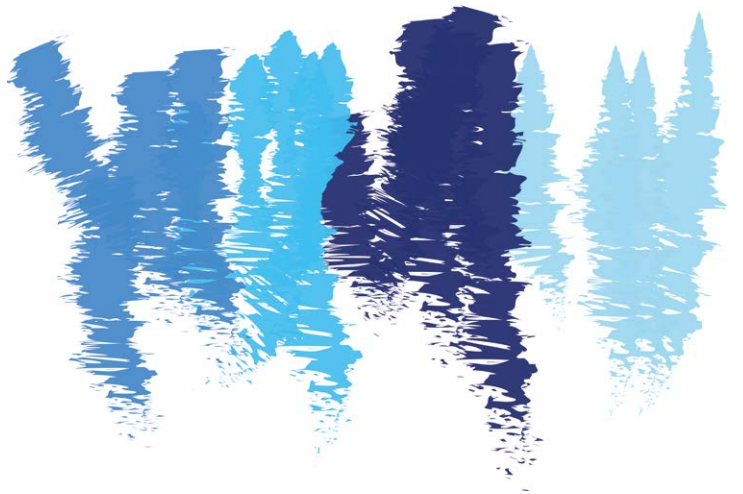


GREEN





BLUE





P I N K




THOUGHTS

The colours of pick 'n' mix sweets are more similar than not. While there are plenty of variations of pink upon my visit to Caramella I noticed a distinct lack of colours such as red and dark green.

Perhaps this is because these are not seen as particularly childlike colours or colours that are associated with something bad.

SUGARY GLAZE TESTS





COLOURFUL

BOLD

CHEERFUL

PLAYFUL

SUGARY

SOFT

TASTY



DARK

HARD


DISGUSTING

DANGEROUS

COLD

POISONOUS

CHEAP



**HEAVY
EXPENSIVE
METALLIC
JEWELLERY
SMOOTH
GIFT
LARGE**



BLAND

LIGHT

SIMPLE

CLEAN

CHEWY

BORING

DELICATE

THOUGHTS

Simply by changing the colour of the sweets can make them appear less or more expensive, lighter or heavier, harder or softer etc.

While the colours of sweets are generally light bright and colourful, it begs the question why are those that aren't still popular. Taste play a part of course but not nearly as much as the aesthetics of the sweet. People say don't judge a book by its cover but people also say that judging a book by its cover is a good indication of what your getting.

COLOUR ASSOCIATION SURVEY




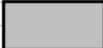

Personally I associate colours with a lot of things. From my experience with talking to people about the matter, they do also.

It is clear that things as simple as shapes and numbers can be associated with colours, the question is, are there any patterns involved. Is there a single or dominant colour for a square for example? I conducted a survey to find out.

MY RESULTS

SHAPE	COLOUR ASSOCIATION	LETTER	COLOUR ASSOCIATION
Square	Red	A	Red
Circle	Blue	B	Green
Triangle	Yellow	C	Yellow
Rectangle	Red	D	Red
Hexagon	Orange	E	Green
Pantagon	Pink	F	Blue
Rhombus	Pink	G	Green
Parrallelogram	Purple	H	Orange
Star	Yellow	I	Blue
		J	Blue
		K	Yellow
		L	Blue
		M	Yellow
		N	Yellow
		O	Black
		P	Red
		Q	Blue
		R	Red
		S	Yellow
		T	Blue
		U	Yellow
		V	Yellow
		W	Yellow
		X	Blue
		Y	Yellow
		Z	Black
NUMBER	COLOUR ASSOCIATION	DAY	COLOUR ASSOCIATION
1	Red	Monday	Red
2	Yellow	Tuesday	Blue
3	Green	Wednesday	Yellow
4	Blue	Thursday	Blue
5	Orange	Friday	Red
6	Red	Saturday	Yellow
7	Blue	Sunday	Yellow
8	Red		
9	Red		
10	Red		
MONTH	COLOUR ASSOCIATION		
January	Blue		
Febuary	Green		
March	Orange		
April	Red		
May	Yellow		
June	Green		
July	Blue		
August	Red		
September	Yellow		
October	Black		
November	Yellow		
December	Red		

COMPILED RESULTS

Colour Association Survey Results					Unanswered		No Result
		Highest Result			Other Results		Tied Highest

		Colour											
		Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	White	Grey	Black	Brown	None
Shape	Square	6		3		8				1	1		1
	Circule	3	1	6	2	4		1					1
	Triangle	5		3	5	1		1		1			2
	Rectangle	3			5	3			1	1	3		2
	Hexagon		2	4	2	2	3				3		2
	Pentagon	3	1	5	1	1	2	1			2		2
	Rhombus	4			2	1		1	2				8
	Parrallelogram	1	1		2	3	1			1	1		8
Star			15		1			1		1			

		Colour											
		Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	White	Grey	Black	Brown	None
Number	1	5		4		2			3		3		1
	2	1	2	2	5	6	1						1
	3	5	1	1	5	3			2				1
	4	5	1	3	2	2		1			1		3
	5	2	2	4	1	2	1	1		2	1		2
	6		5	4	3	2			1		2		1
	7	4	2	2	3	1	3		1				2
	8			5	3	1	1	1		1			6
	9		1		2			2		2	3	3	5
	10	1	1	1		1				2	9	1	2

		Colour											
		Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	White	Grey	Black	Brown	None
Month	January	2		2		5			8				1
	Febuary	2		2	3	4	1		1	2			3
	March		1	1	10	2		1		2		1	
	April		1	5	4	3		4				1	
	May	3		5	5	1	1	1				1	1
	June	2	2	9	1	2							2
	July	1	5	7	1			2					1
	August	4	3	2	2	3	1		1			1	1
	September	2	1	1	4	2			1	1		3	3
	October	1	2	1	3			1		1	1	2	6
	November				3	1		1		4	1	5	3
	December	3			1	5				7		1	1

COMPILED RESULTS

		Colour											
		Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	White	Grey	Black	Brown	None
Letter	A	7		1	5			1		1			
	B	1	2	5	3	4					1		2
	C	1	3	7		2				1			4
	D	2	1	2	1	3						1	8
	E	3		4	1			3				1	8
	F		3	1	2	1	2	2		1			6
	G	1		1	8	1	1					1	5
	H	2		6		2				1			6
	I		1			1	4		4		2		5
	J	4	2		1	1		2				1	7
	K		2	3	3		1				1	1	6
	L	1		3	3					2			9
	M	4		2	5						2		6
	N	2	2		3	1	1		1			1	7
	O		1	1					2	2	1	4	7
	P	2		1	1	1	3	4					6
	Q	2		3	1		2	2					8
	R	5	1	1		2		1		1			7
	S	1		7		2							8
	T	2		1	4	1				1	2	1	6
U	1	3		1	1			1		1	1	8	
V	1	1	1	1		3	2			2		7	
W	1		1	1	2				5			8	
X	3						1		1		5	8	
Y		1	8					1	1	2		5	
Z	1					2		1		1	7	5	

		Colour											
		Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	White	Grey	Black	Brown	None
Day	Monday	4		1	2	8			1	1			1
	Tuesday	2		5	4	4					1		1
	Wednesday	5	1	6	4	2							
	Thursday	5			5	4	2						2
	Friday	4	1	1		1	1		1	1	3		2
	Saturday	5	2	5		1			1	1	1		1
	Sunday		2	5	1	3				3	1	2	2

SURVEY REFLECTION

I receive results from 18 Brighton University students. After compiling the data I found that there were clear dominant colours for things. Square for example, is predominantly red and Monday is blue, ironically. The letter Y is yellow for obvious reasons and the number 10 is black.

What I find most interesting though, is not what got the most results but what got none or the amount that were unanswered. Half the study group did not associate a colour with L, and now I think about it I can only just picture it as blue. There were also no results for a being blue which I thought would be common.

My personal results tend to differ from the popular vote which I found curious but everybody has different life experiences and backgrounds resulting in different colour influences, an influence of mine being, a triangle is green because its green on a Play Station controller.

PART THREE

SHAPE AND LANGUAGE

Form has a place in defining the difference between an object that does carry the aesthetic language of play and one that Does not. Exploring different objects will help me to understand the different types of forms that could play a part in playful aesthetics. Hard edges Vs. soft edges will also be investigated to better peruse the more specific aspects of a form.



SUBJECT FOUR

Standard bulldog clips are not particularly fun or playful, however these ones have been supersized to a scale that implies a much more fun function. To be used in a playful scenario different to the use of an average sized bulldog clip. These object show that scale can have a big impact on even the most unassuming items. This coupled with the objects colour changes the function of the bulldog clip.



SUBJECT SIX

A collapsible water bottle isn't exactly the most useful thing, as it would usually have water in it. Although, this one's collapsible mechanism has a fun kind of movement, and the form that allows this movement is oddly satisfying. The object's function is poor as it won't hold liquid properly, nor is it durable enough to survive its own mechanism, however a toddler would probably find it very entertaining.



SUBJECT NINE

When shopping for a present for my 10-year-old chef cousin I came across this whisk. And after small talk with the sales assistant at the check-out I found that it wasn't a child's utensil at all. It was pointed out to me that I assumed it was because of the colours it used. Psychologically this whisk appeared to be childish which shows me that I will have to be selective in my choice of colours in my work.



SUBJECT FORTEEN

Shot glasses are a terribly grown up object however these ones are quite the opposite. Made from plastic they have that durable, soft and playful appearance and also being pink green and yellow, together as a trio, have a sort of childish undertone. If I weren't well informed I would have assumed they were a part of a children's tea set. Embracing a plastic aesthetic is sure to encourage playfulness.



SUBJECT FIFTEEN

On the hunt for a new sugar pot in Tiger I was immediately drawn to this for its colour and mechanism. It's fairly assumed that a sugar pot doesn't need to be more than simply a pot with a lid however this one had some wow factor. This bring to mind that perhaps an object having more than it needs in terms of colour, decoration and mechanism offers its owner with a little more appreciation and interest.

THOUGHTS

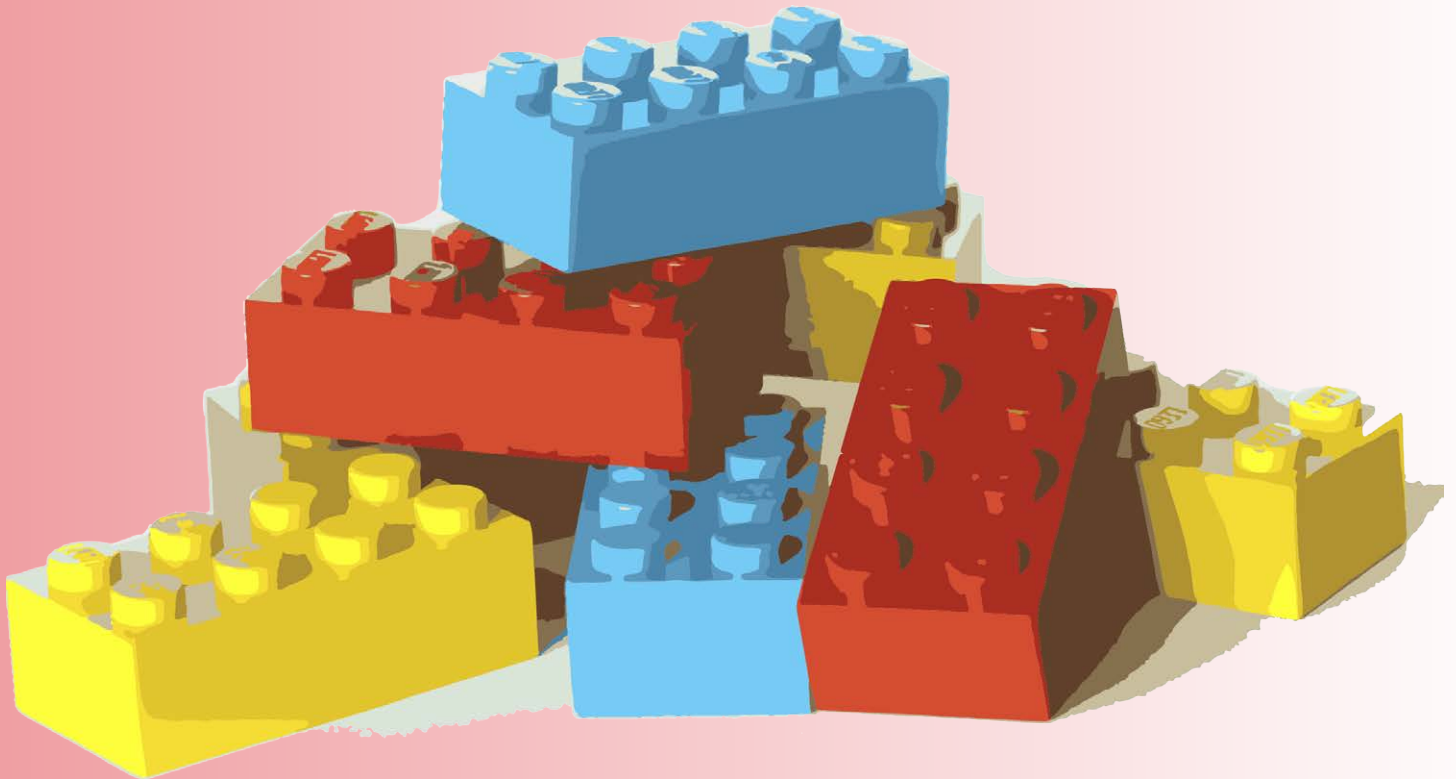
Colour not only affects the general aesthetics of an object but the scale of it dose equally. The whisk just goes to show that a perfectly normal object can be coloured to look more playful than it actually is. Interestingly the bulldog clips were not sold as a joke gift but a totally serious object. With primary colour in a group, such as those, you really can make anything look childish.

DUPLOFY

'Duplofying' refers to Lego Duplo. It is a term I came up with for the softening of harsh/hard edges and enlarging a form. You can take an object such as a square and soften its edges and make a marked difference to how the language of that object comes across. Much like how Lego created Lego Duple, a bigger, rounder version of Lego bricks for younger children.

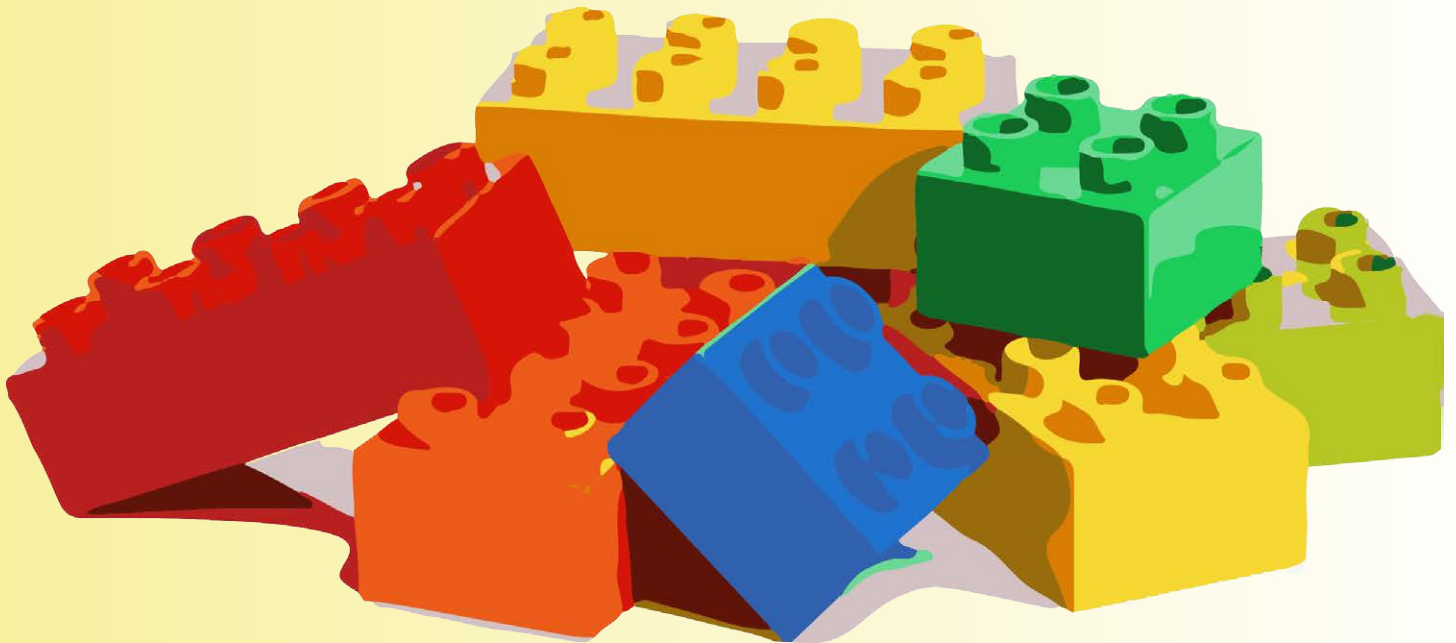
LEGO BLOCKS

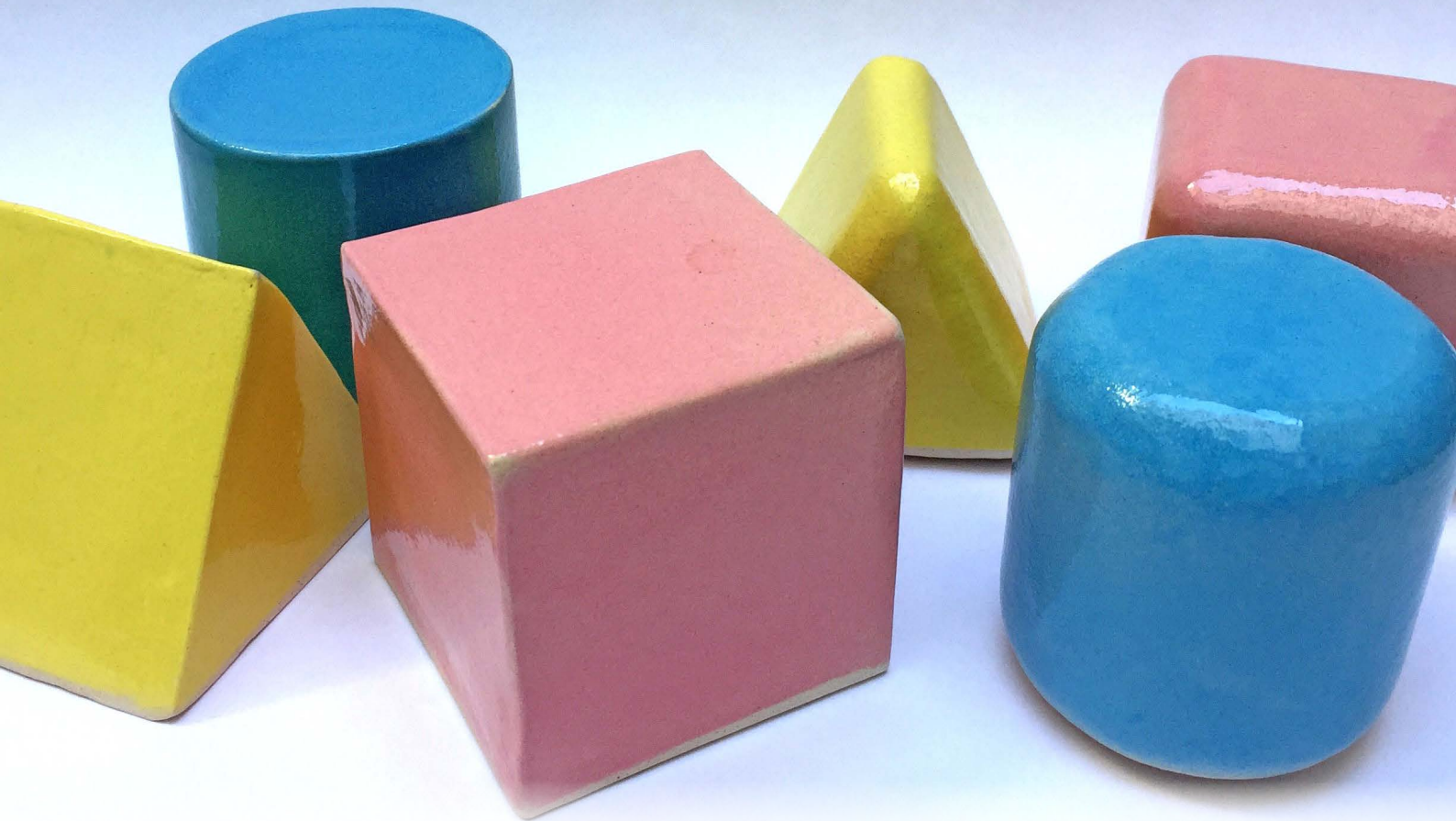
- POINTY
- COLOURFUL
- HARD EDGED
- SMALL
- STACKABLE
- FUN
- INTRICATE
- 4 AND ABOVE



DUPLO BLOCKS

- POINTY
- COLOURFUL
- HARD EDGED
- SMALL
- STACKABLE
- FUN
- INTRICATE
- 0 - 4



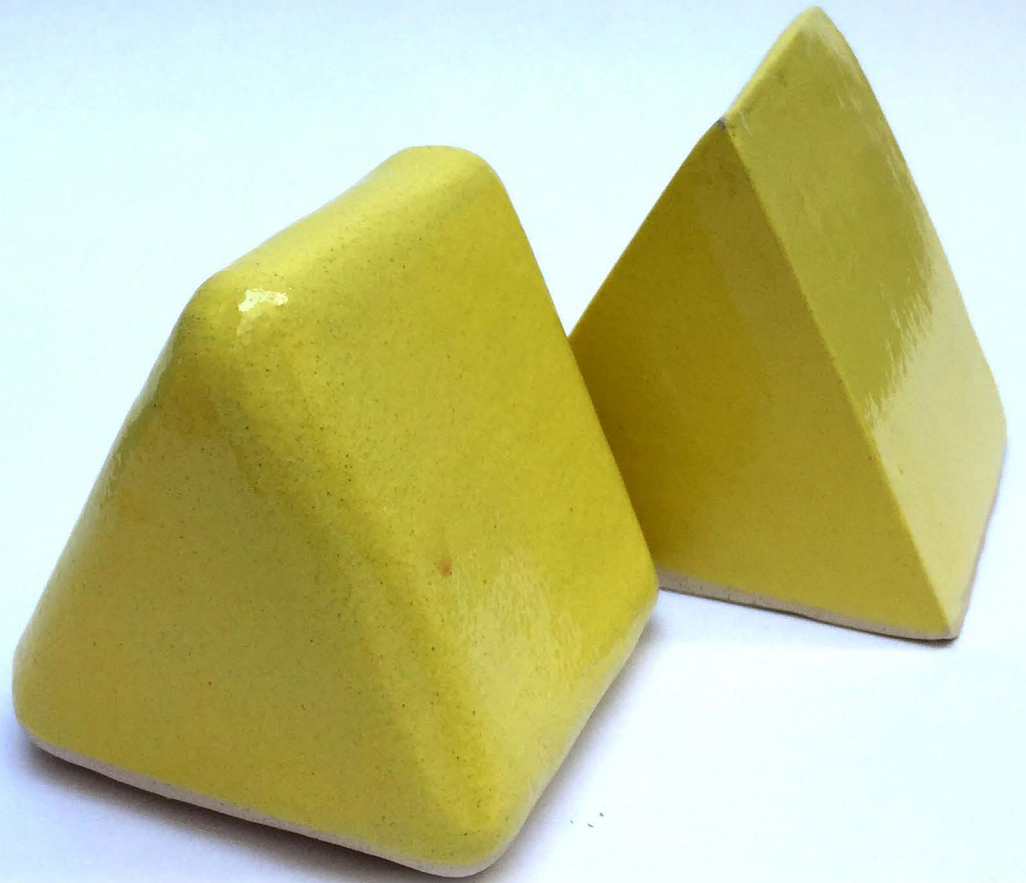


HARD VS. SOFT CERAMIC BLOCKS



HARD VS. SOFT

S Q U A R E S



HARD VS. SOFT

TRIANGLES



HARD VS. SOFT

C I R C L E S

PART FOUR

FRUITIONS

This part defines my term 'playful aesthetics' in reference to my final body of work. Each of my final piece materials will be listed and finally a review will explain the finer details of how these outcomes came into being.

PLAYFUL AESTHETICS REQUIREMENTS

Round Edges (Duploification)
Geometric Forms (Building blocks)
Primary/Secondary Colours (Sweats)

Playful aesthetics would simply be the correct use and composition of bright colours (primary and secondary) preferably pastel, combined with simple forms. Duploification, where appropriate, lends a subtle undertone of softness and chunk like that of children's toys.

S Q U A R E
L A M P
O R I G I N A L



S Q U A R E
L A M P
O M B R É



MATERIALS

TIN GLAZE - FLESH PINK AND SIGNAL RED

PEARL WHITE SLIP CAST BODY

OPAL PLASTIC INSERT

2.5M BLACK & WHITE FABRIC CABLE

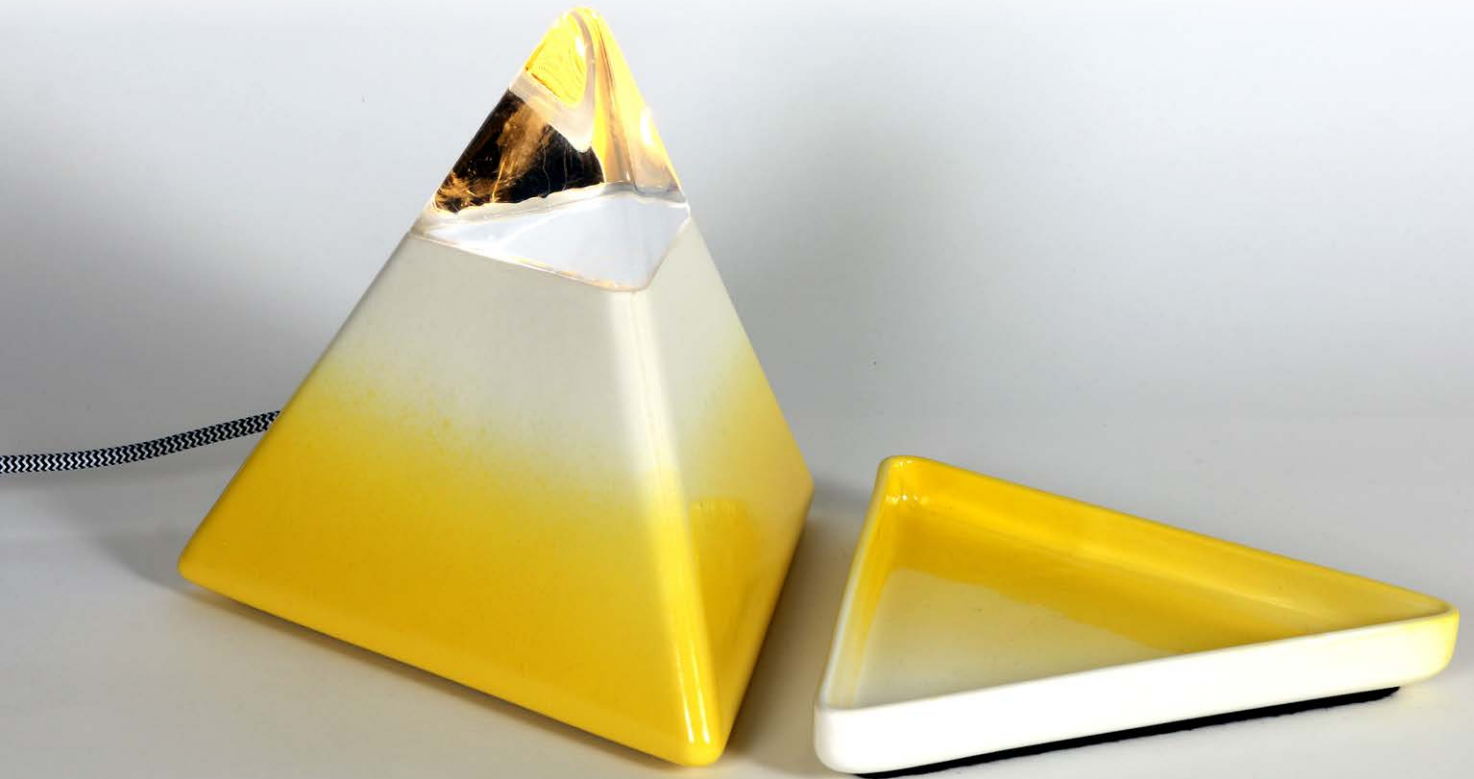
12V LED CIRCUIT

FELT BOTTOM PAD

TRIANGLE
LAMP
ORIGINAL



TRIANGLE
LAMP
OMBRÉ



MATERIALS

TIN GLAZE - BRIGHT YELLOW

PEARL WHITE SLIP CAST BODY

CLEAR CAST ACRYLIC BLOCK TOP

2.5M BLACK & WHITE FABRIC CABLE

12V LED CIRCUIT

FELT BOTTOM PAD

C I R C L E
L A M P
O R I G I N A L



C I R C L E
L A M P
O M B R É



MATERIALS

TIN GLAZE - TORTUROUS

PEARL WHITE SLIP CAST BODY

FROSTED POLYPROPYLENE SHEET INSERT

2.5M BLACK & WHITE FABRIC CABLE

12V LED CIRCUIT

FELT BOTTOM PAD

DARWIN SIMMONDS

BA(hons) 3D Design & Craft

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