



FAMILY TREE

GRACE
PARSONS

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STATEMENT

Family tree is a project that explores my personal connection to trees and the intimate role they play in our lives. Woodland has a significant role in my life from childhood to today, providing calm and solace. I believe many people can relate to this, with woodland being the ultimate haven from our everyday lives.

This project is particularly focused on the theme of family and connection. My final body of work consists of four sculptures, symbolising different members of my own family. Each piece is created using techniques of hand building and traditional smoke firings resulting in subtle, natural colours and textures that are evocative of trees.



WHERE I STARTED



Second year project exploring the landscape of the South Downs through smoke fired, abstract sculptures and vessels.





YORKSHIRE SCUPTURE PARK


Research for this project was undertaken through visiting various woodlands and natural sites, completing sketching and photography to inspire my forms, textures, and designs.

TATRA MOUNTAINS





PUZZLE-
WOOD



“The plants’ rootedness in place, their fidelity to the soil, is something we can only admire, especially because our condition is that of an increasing and merciless uprooting.”

(Michael Marder, professor of philosophy, university of the Basque Country)

INSPIRATIONS

Forests are much like families, with trees communicating with each other through ‘The wood wide web’. This is the underground ‘social network’ consisting roots, fungi and bacteria in which trees share information and exchange nutrients.

NEW ENGLAND WOOD





DODDERHILL
COMMON

We go into the trees... the dream
Will be made in us by celestial
virtue.

We go into the trees; the night
Will be soft, the grief light.

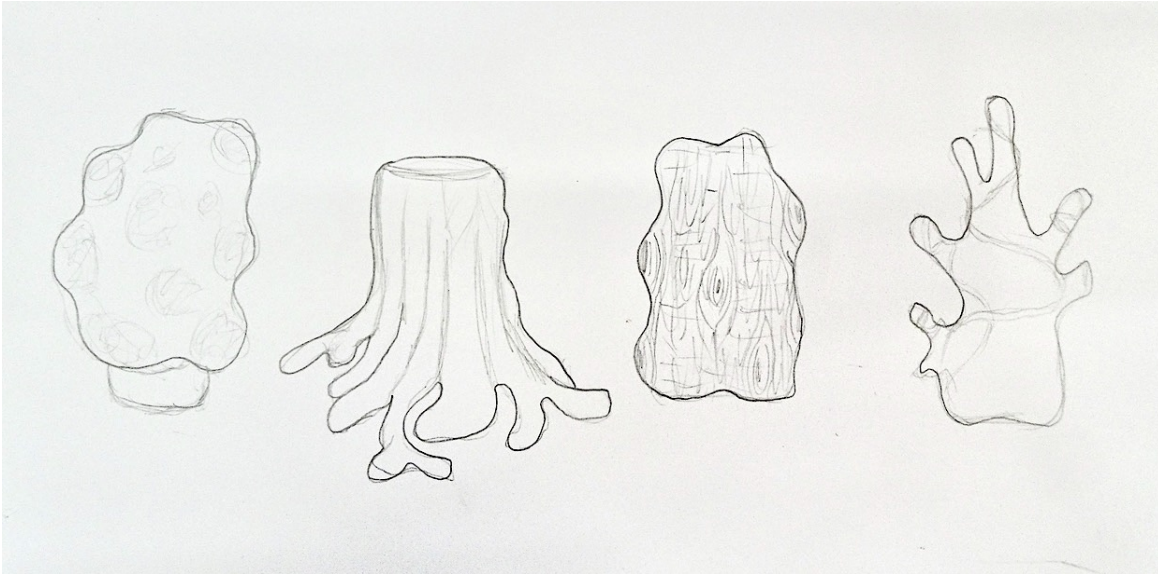
We go among the trees, the soul
Drowed by the perfume of the
land.

But silence, you mustn't speak, be
pious;
You mustn't rouse the birds that
sleep.
-Alfonsina Storni-

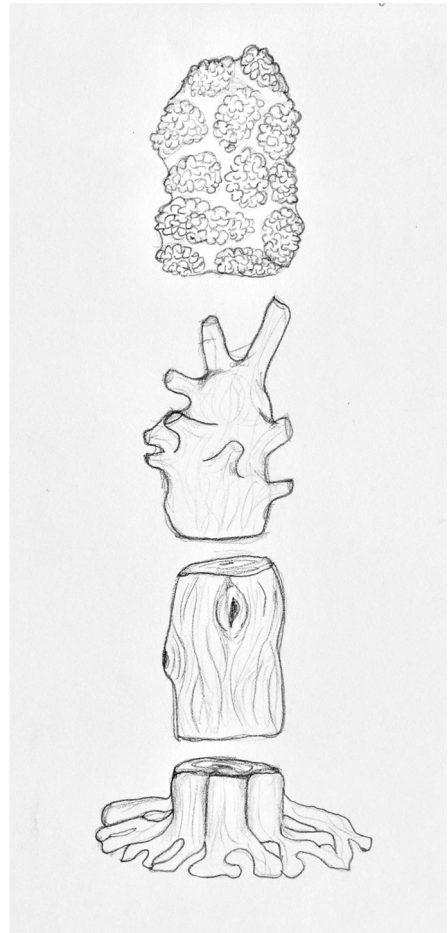
INSPIRATIONS



FINAL CONCEPT



Four final sculptures, each symbolizing a member of my family, represented by a different part of the tree.



I explored raku and saggar firing for my work as it incorporates natural materials in the process, allowing nature itself to create tone and leave its signature.

SAGGAR FIRING



Saggar firing involves surrounding the piece with materials such as seaweed and banana skins in a sealed clay container.

Copper
Carbonate



Copper wire



Seaweed



Copper oxide



Bark and ash



Banana skins





RAKU FIRING

The firing method of Raku involves removing pieces from the kiln when red hot and cooling them rapidly in combustible material like sawdust,



To my raku pieces I added matte copper glaze, adding colour and depth.





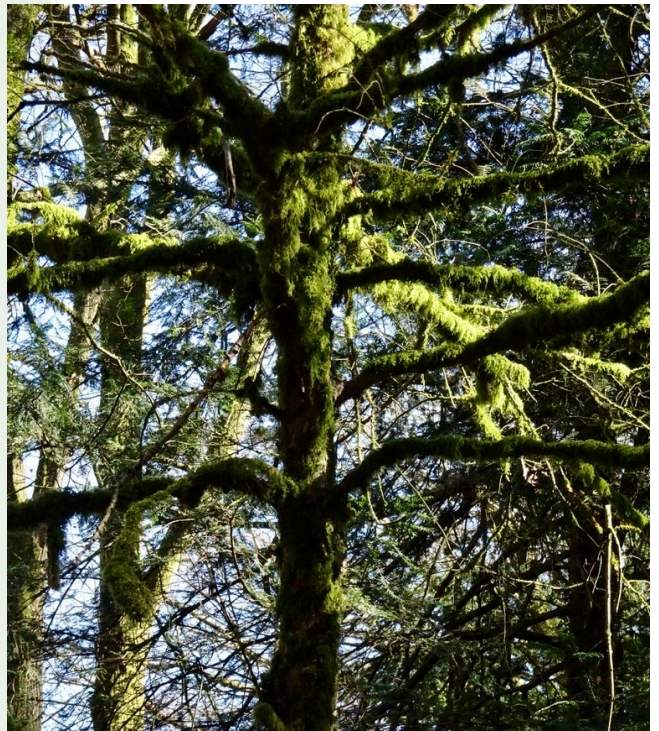
BRANCHES

The Tree's branches provide a way for the trees leaves to act as a net for sunlight, branches grow to give the leaves the most lights, necessary for photosynthesis.



SISTER

Growth – Support –
Communication



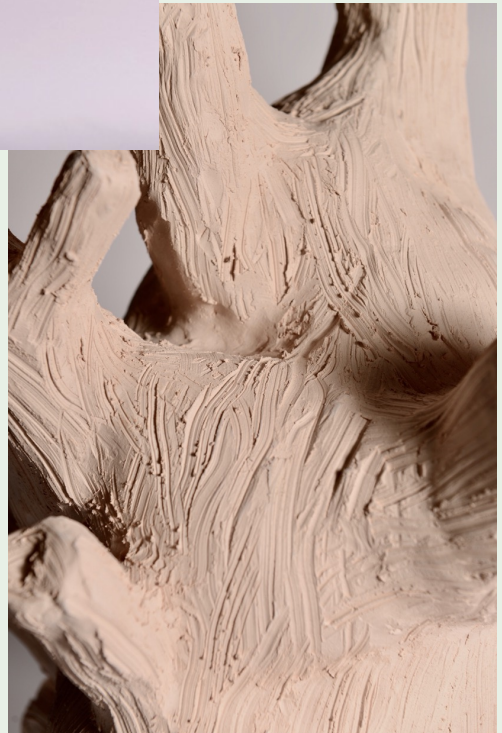


FORM EXPERIMENTATION





FINAL FORM AND TEXTURE



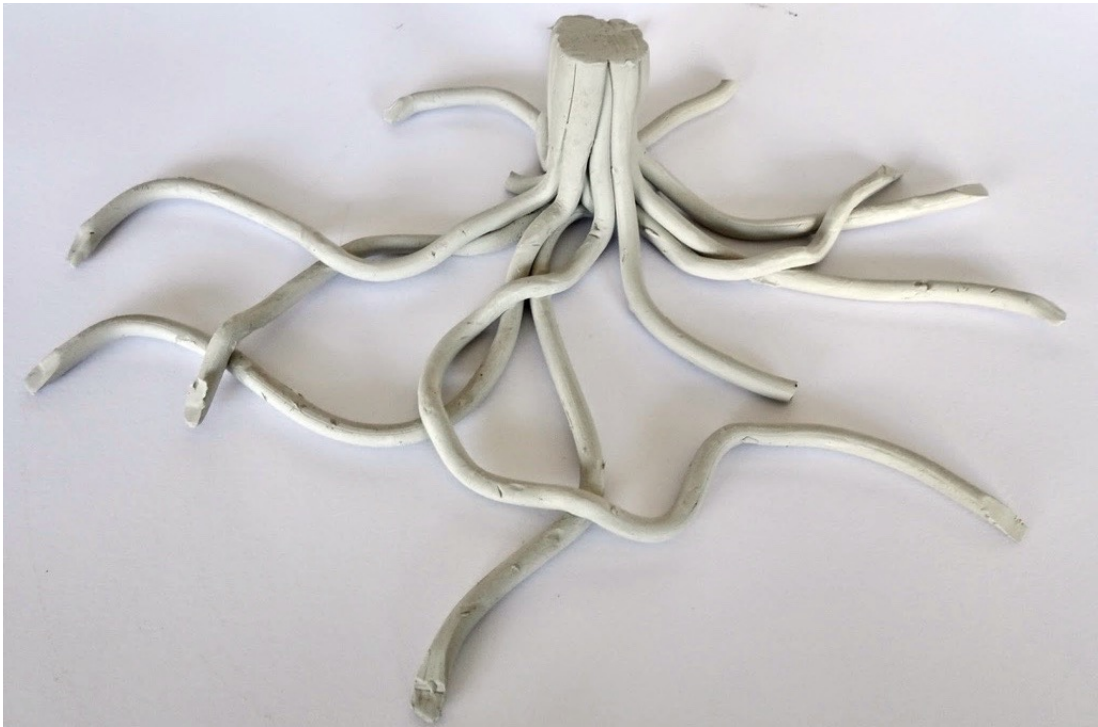
ROOTS

The roots provide the nutrients and water that allow the tree to prosper, and also anchor the trunk, allowing for the branches and foliage to capture light.

MOTHER

Support – Grounding – Connection





FORM EXPERIMENTATION





FINAL FORM AND TEXTURE





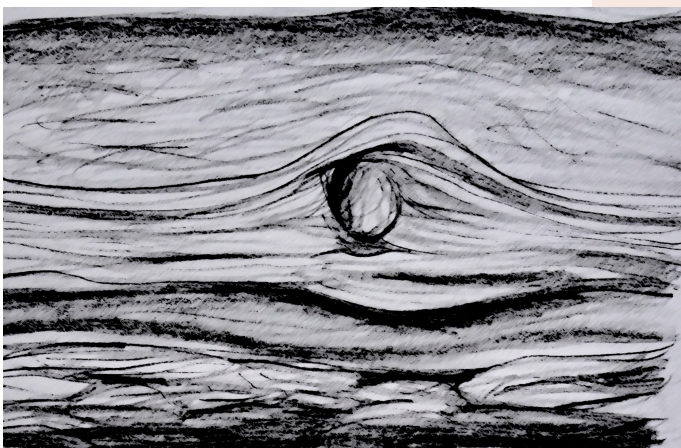
BARK

The bark acts as a thick durable skin to protect the living parts of a tree against parasites and external damage.



FATHER

Protection – Security
– Layers





TEXTURE TILES

Texture tiles created by pressing pieces of wood and bark into the clay then saggar firing.





Small scale models made to experiment with form and texture for my final bark piece.



First attempt at making my final bark sculpture.

Raku
Fired



FINAL FORM

Saggar
Fired



I was unhappy with the results of saggar firing for my bark pieces, therefore I raku fired them with a matte copper glaze. This gave more tone, colour and depth.



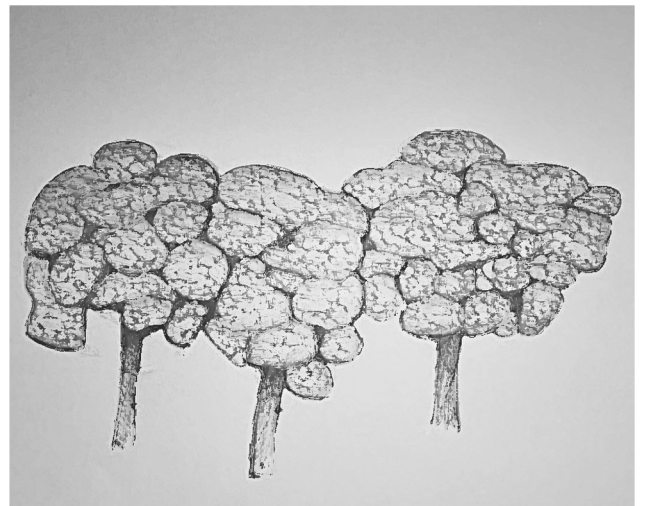
LEAVES

The function of a leaf is to produce life for the plant by photosynthesis.



DAUGHTER-ME

Youth - Fragility - Light





FORM EXPERIMENTATION



Initial experiments with more abstract forms, however these lacked the qualities that resembled trees and reflected my theme.



Experiment for a moss like texture with the polymer's technique of flocking.



TEXTURE EXPERIMENTATION



FINAL TEXTURE



FINAL FORM



FINAL COLLECTION

Images here will be replaced before printing with photos of my final revised sculptures.

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3D DESIGN AND CRAFT
2022



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