

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



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Team

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Partners

Our collaborators are Sally and Ecaterina from SHOP Preston CIC.

SHOP Preston CIC emerged from establishing a venue dedicated to fostering and accommodating diverse cultural events at the heart of Preston. Situated at 3 Syke Street, it has served as the backdrop for many activities. From numerous exhibitions to enriching workshops and calming yoga sessions, the space has been utilized for many purposes. It has also been the setting for intimate gatherings and innovative endeavours such as experimental installations, immersive sound experiences, and evenings filled with soulful music.

This dynamic environment has thrived thanks to the collective efforts and support of a broad spectrum of contributors. Visual and mixed media artists, musicians, various organizations, and individuals from across the North West have all played a pivotal role in shaping and enriching the offerings of SHOP Preston CIC. Their collaboration has infused the space with vitality, creativity, and a sense of community, making it a vibrant centre for cultural exchange and artistic exploration.

Introduction

1:1

SHOP Preston CIC approached us with a loose but detailed brief - multifunctional furniture that can accommodate their varied calendar, able to be stored away when necessary and brought out at a moments notice. Prior to the action weeks, we planned how time would be spent, spoke with the collaborators to refine the brief and estimate costs and the scale of our outputs. This collaborative approach to planning was crucial, allowing us to respond accurately to the partner's needs, ensuring that the final output is usable and designed to be flexible, accommodating activities varying from workshops to installations and DJ sets.

One thing we did not plan for was the number of designs we would develop over the course of the two action weeks. Every student involved had a well considered, developed concept that served multiple functions, meaning much time was taken reviewing and refining ideas until we decided upon the final design. A flexible action plan allowed us to integrate this into the two action weeks, ultimately creating a well considered prototype of modular furniture for the collaborators.

It has been an incredibly rewarding process for us all, starting designing at 1:20 and 1:10, developing drawings and visuals and bringing to life a refined prototype at 1:1 scale. We have been able to refine our skills in time management, planning, budgeting and team organisation over the project, in preparation for our time in practice. Working with a team of Foundation and BA students has benefits in both directions, they have refined their architectural thinking whilst bringing their fresh perspective and creative solutions to the action weeks.

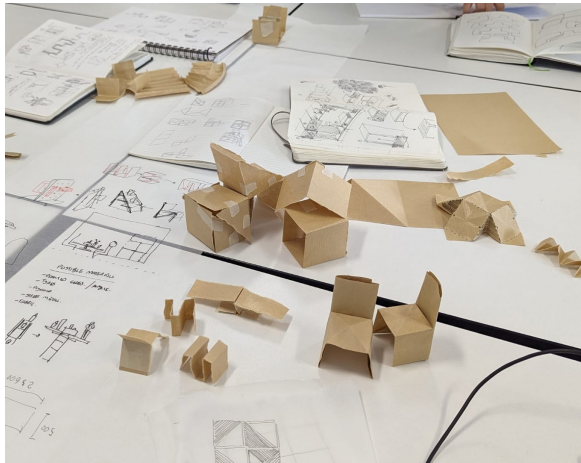
This booklet documents this collaborative process between students and partners, illustrating the journey from over 15 concepts to a final prototype, able to be extended and further developed that serves many functions.



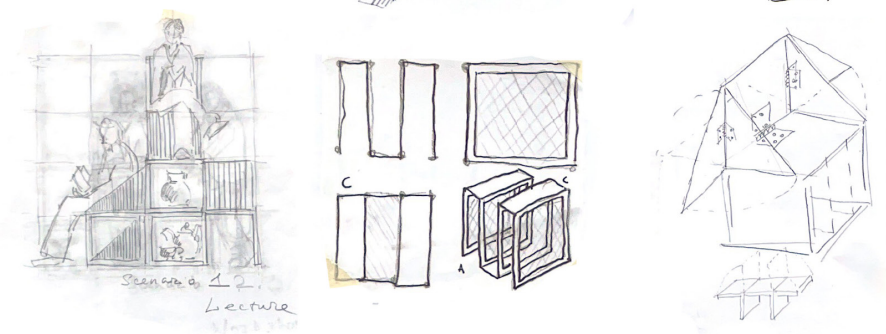
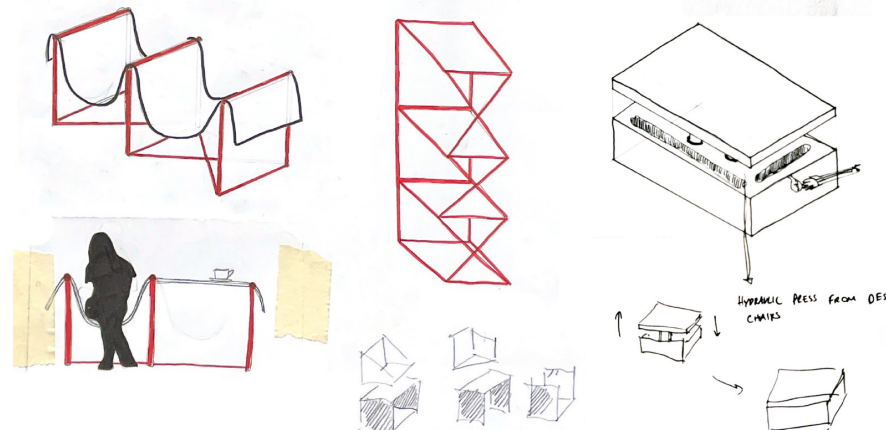
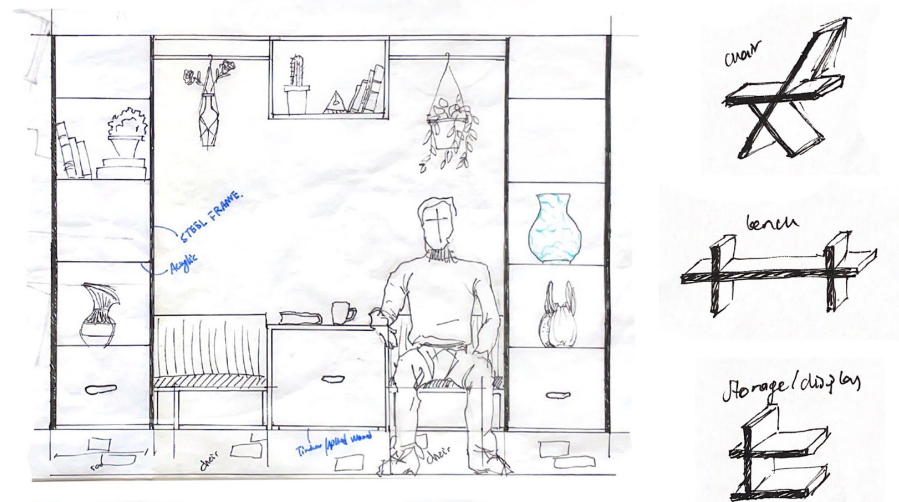
north west
design collective

DAY 1 AND 2

We started off the first day of the MSA Live action weeks meeting the entire team and introducing the project and brief. Everyone was bursting with ideas as soon as the brief was presented, keen to get designing. Each student began looking for precedents in groups sketching out initial ideas, and making paper sketch models. From here, we developed our ideas into more detailed drawings, considering materiality, cost, and size to ensure that their designs work within the parameters of the brief before presenting them to the whole team for review and further collaboration.

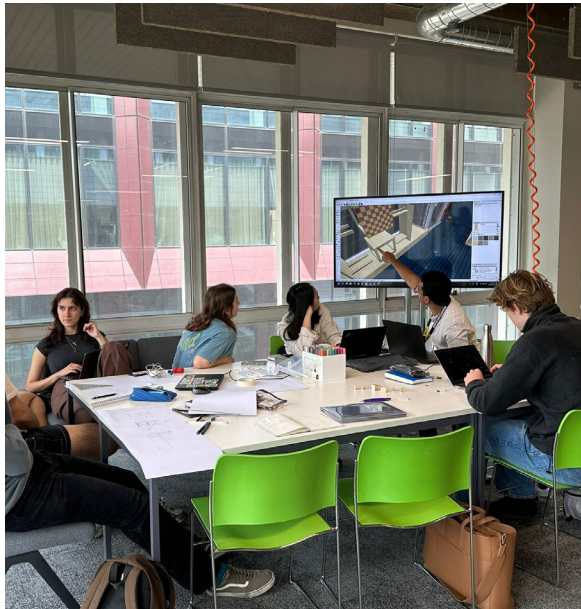


On day two we had a guest lecture from Angus, ex-student of the MSA who now works at Tim Denton, a local furniture design company. Angus' expertise proved very insightful, presenting us with considerations on functionality and craftsmanship. Angus also reviewed our initial designs providing feedback on areas to improve and develop upon. In the afternoon we visited Furniture4Reuse at the University of Manchester to explore the possibility of reusing materials or components from existing tables and chairs in novel ways. This deviated from our initial Action Plan, however finishing the day at Furniture4reuse offered a valuable alternative approach to furniture design that we had not previously considered.

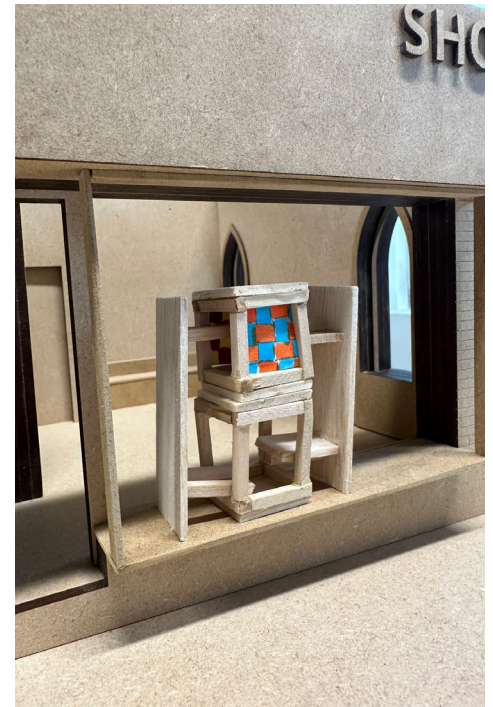
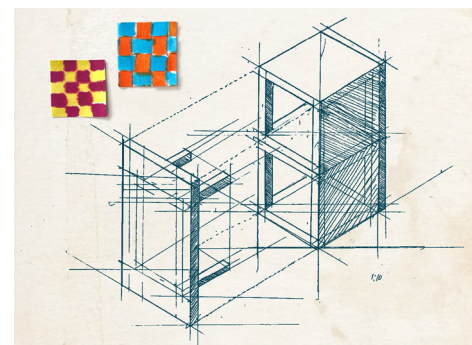
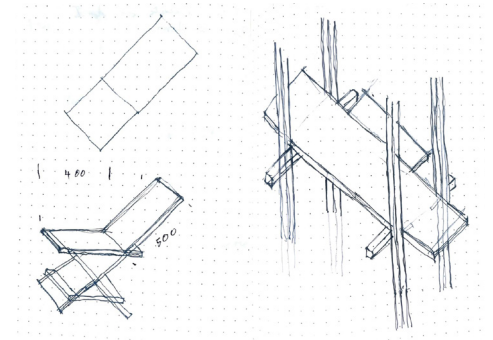


DAY 3 AND 4

On day three we had a modelmaking workshop where each student developed their concept ideas further to consider how the piece will function for several different scenarios for SHOP's many events. We found two main approaches as everyone developed their concepts; designs comprising sheets that slot into each other and solid units that join or stack. We split into two groups under the two themes, working up physical and digital models, visuals and hand drawings to be presented to the clients on Friday, 10 May. The collaborators were thrilled to see the two final designs and the many ideas and models that were made in the process, and expressed their opinions, highlighting the pros and cons of each design, before voting on which we should develop into a final concept.



Overall, we followed our Action Plan fairly closely, as it provided adequate time to review and plan ahead. Setting aside time for digital workshops proved useful to all the students, allowing them to actively participate in every output and develop their skill set further. We did not think that we would have so many well considered concepts so did spend longer than anticipated narrowing down to two concepts, however the additional contingency in our Action Plan allowed us to do this without taking away time from other activities.



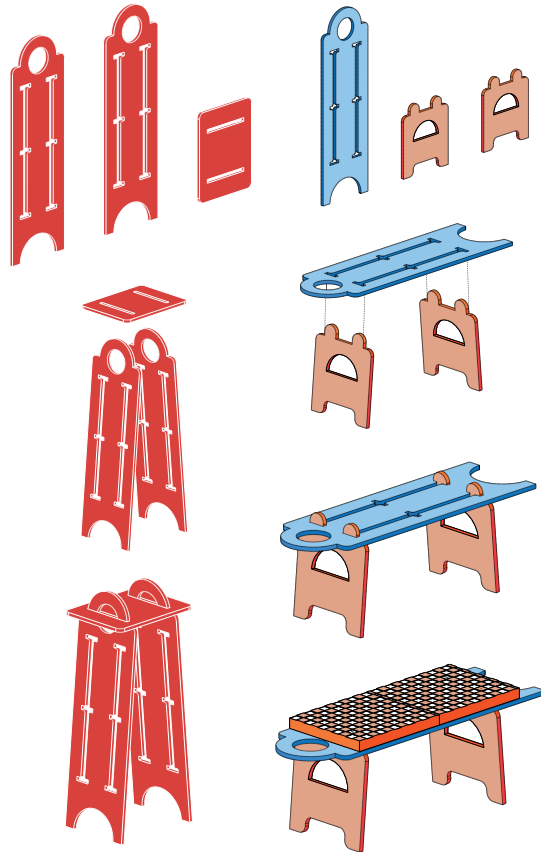
DAY 5 AND 6

Following the meeting with the collaborators, we adjusted the chosen design proposal to serve four functions: display stand, stool, bench, and staircase barricade to prevent visitors from going up to the office on the first floor. We also integrated the features of the other design option that the collaborators liked, such as a woven seat for additional comfort. On the first day of week 2, we traced out the design on the plywood sheets in preparation for making our design at 1:1.



After an Adobe Illustrator tutorial by Alina, all the students worked together to prepare an instruction manual including some Ikea-style assembly visualisations for the multiple uses. On day 6 we began our first of four days in the workshop, with a changing group of students assisting with the production and finishing of the pieces. Instead of starting in the workshops on day 5, we pushed it back to day 6 to ensure we fully understood the process and pipeline of making the prototypes and scale models.

Materials were sourced over the weekend to free up time on Monday to develop the design and minimise time in the workshop. As well as this, by having a changing group of students in the workshop it allowed everyone to gain experience and ensure that everyone was utilised effectively in the workshop.



Students preparing the frame for the seat.



Cutting the exhibition stand.

DAY 7 AND 8

The final few days of MSA Live were dedicated to completing the 1:1 furniture and refining the design to improve it. Throughout the making process, some design flaws became apparent in the 1:1 that were immediately addressed. To make the stool and bench more stable, we designed an additional support piece joining the legs. Students were also constantly doing research and searching for materials to make comfortable cushioned seats and an adjustable sliding mechanism for hanging fabric on the exhibition stand.

Once all the models were finalised at 1:20, 1:5, and 1:1 we took photos of all the work and updated all the digital drawings and visuals to match the prototypes we produced. By effectively planning who will be in the workshop and what we were doing each day, we were able to have the majority of the outputs completed by day 7, and were able to refine the models to a higher standard. Students chose which days they wanted to be in, working around their studies and deadlines to design fixings and woven patterns for the seat cushion, as well as producing more sketch models and material tests to trial finishes and details.



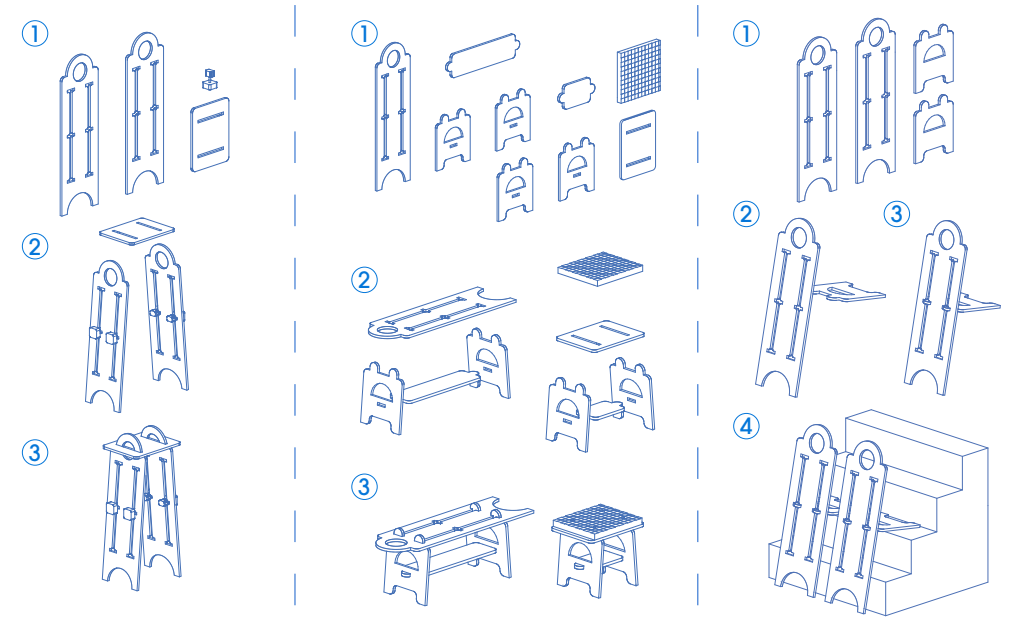
DAY 9

Our experience of MSA Live was incredibly positive. By effectively planning each day and activity through the Action Plan, we ensured that adequate time was allowed for each activity whilst allowing students time to complete personal deadlines and existing commitments. We were able to refine our planning and organisation abilities and develop communication skills with peers and clients to work towards a final output we are all incredibly proud of. Materials were sourced between the two action weeks, differing from our action plan. Although this deviation meant working in our own time, it allowed us to utilise the second action week entirely to producing high quality models and visuals. Outlining 5 days of workshop activity in our Action Plan, we were able to produce more final prototypes than initially intended in 3 days by allowing students to sign up to various teams including digital twin production, visuals, models, and prototypes. Collaboration with our clients was integral to the project. Our collaborators allowed for creative freedom in terms of design and scale but provided us with adequate parameters to respond to their needs. Meeting with them at the end of the first week allowed us both to communicate changes to the brief and approach the second week with a clear vision of output.

Thank you to our team of FDN, BA1 and BA2 students for their incredible design ability and engagement!



Instructions for use:



Assembling the exhibition stand.



Testing the seat.



ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1 and Masters of Architecture & Adaptive Resuse students with those in BA foundation, year 1 and year 2 and Masters Landscape Architecture 1 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA LIVE projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA LIVE projects are for community benefit or have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

STUDENT-LED

Our MSA masters students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. Other cohorts joined for an eventful 2 weeks of activities at the end of the academic year.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 600 students from 6 cohorts in MSA have worked on 40 projects with partners.

QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:

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BLOG

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SOCIAL

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