

THE ARCHITECTURE OF  
MYSELF

[ FRANCESCA WOODMAN ]

Uncovering My Identity



*[ Only when you become authentic to  
yourself is when you can start thinking  
outside the box ]*



[ \_ UNDERSTANDING WHO AM I \_ ]

The Architecture of Myself: Francesca Woodman is a creative portfolio that explores my architectural work as a medium for self-discovery. Rooted in a personal journey from Perú to London, it reflects how design has become inseparable from the process of understanding who I am. Back home in Lima, Perú, I ran my own architectural practice, which has been fundamentally reshaped by my move—London has unveiled new layers of awareness, transforming the way I inhabit space and create within it.

Through material experimentation, AI exploration, and the interplay between my passions—architecture, fitness, and reflections on mortality—I've come to see design as a mirror of my inner world. This evolving portfolio reveals unexpected connections between body, space, and emotion, and captures my deep desire and curiosity to rethink and reshape the understanding of things.

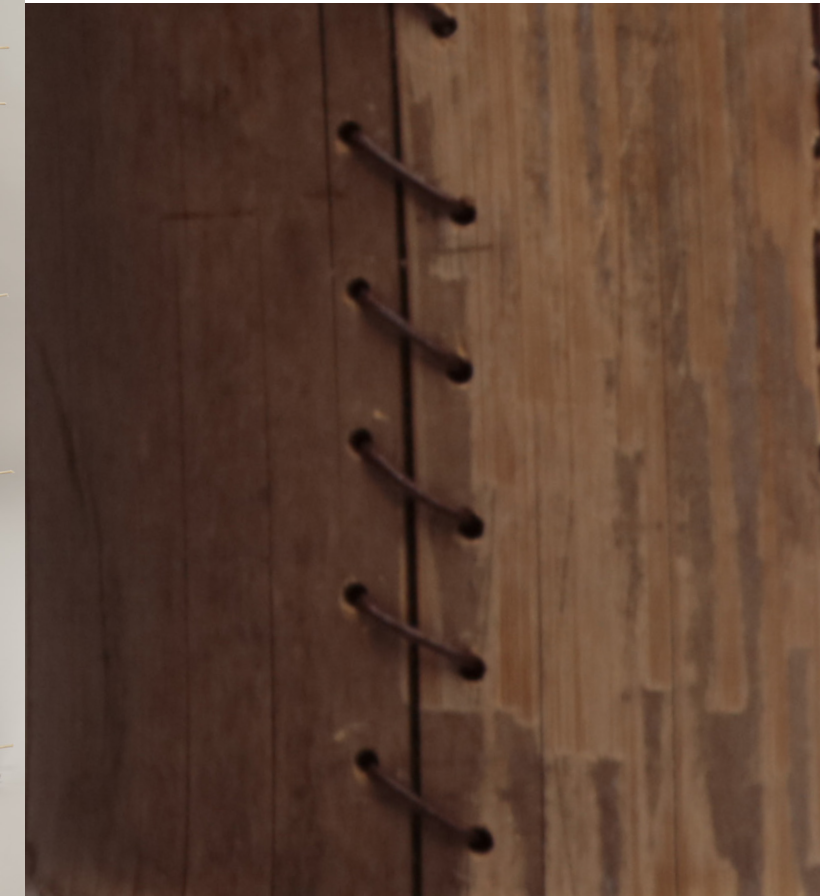
It does not seek to define who I am, but instead uses my curiosities and architecture as tools to meaningfully explore that question. It is both a record of my practice and a reflection of the person behind it.

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## THE START OF THE JOURNEY

[ MATERIALITY AS IDENTITY:  
BAMBOO AND LEATHER ]

In the early stages of my MA Interior Design course (SuperMatter), I **explored identity through material literacy**. Questioning how bamboo and leather—**contrasting yet complementary**—interact revealed deeper insights into my inner dialogues. Photography paralleled this journey, **capturing presence, intimacy, and emotional resonance, intertwining material, space, and self.**



[ moments of presence, intimacy, and  
emotional resonance ]



[ DIALOGUES BETWEEN OPPOSITES:  
STONE & CARDBOARD]

Building on this exploration, I turned to stone and cardboard—**materials seemingly at odds yet filled with latent synergy**. Their interplay reflected how my passions—architecture, fitness, curiosity—**could coexist rather than conflict**, unveiling a quiet rhythm and a new architecture of self.



# MIRRORING MYSELF THROUGH AI & DESIGN

[ DREAMLIKE SPACES:  
BRIDGING BODY AND DESIGN]

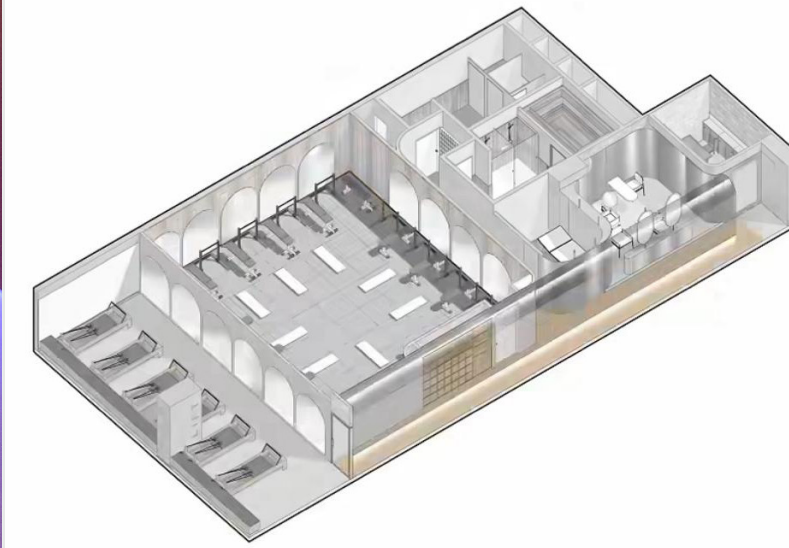
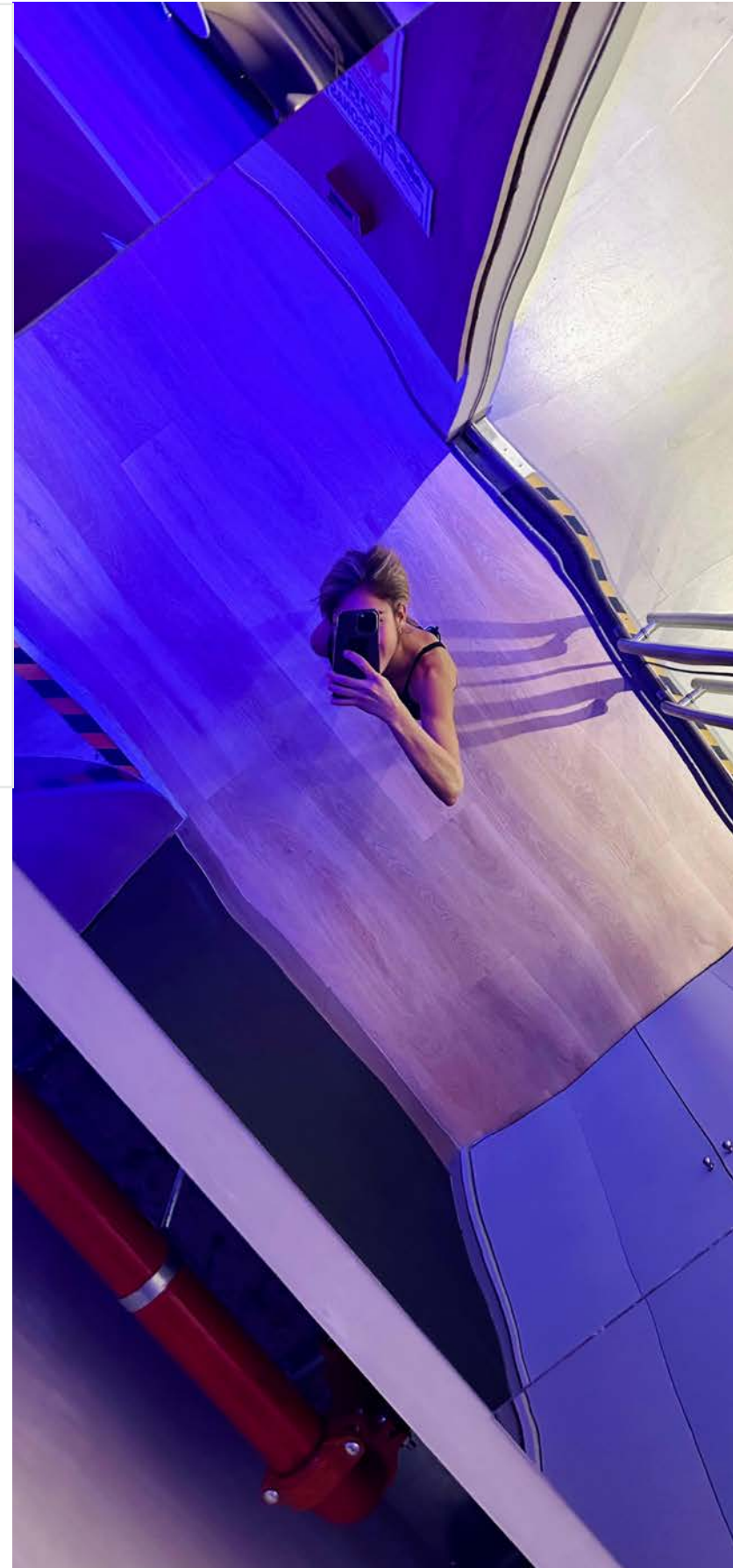
I realized contradiction/curiosities lived within me not as tension but as coexistence. Crafting dreamlike spaces where fitness and architecture merged, design became a tool for unveiling unseen parts of myself—raw, tender, fluid, protected. Digital explorations further expanded materiality into the intangible, blending body, space, and curiosity.



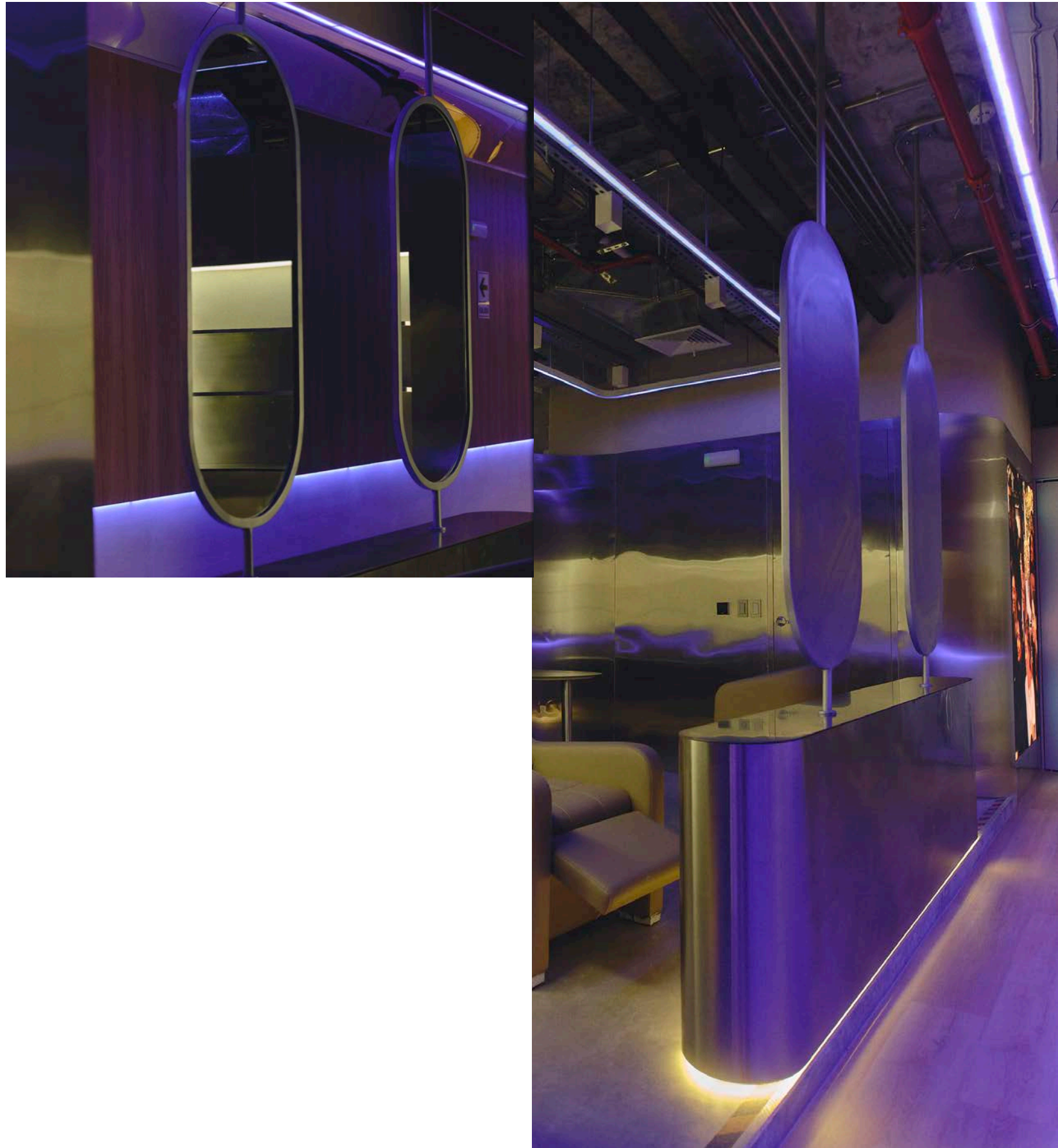
**AI dreamlike space**  
3ds max / Magnific AI / PSD

[ SPATIALIZING CURIOSITIES:  
DESIGNING FEMALE LIFT GYM ]

This convergence materialized with LIFT, a women's gym in Lima. Here, I designed a space that **embodied the emotions I sought through movement and experienced during training**. Contrasting materials, especially mirrors, became not just surfaces, **but instruments of self-realization—where architecture translated bodily awareness into spatial experience**.



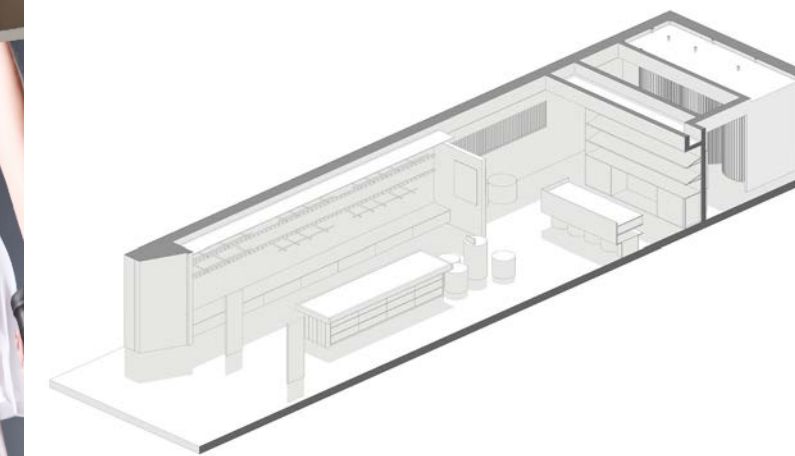
**Axonometric Drawing of project:**  
Archicad / PSD  
Stage: Finished



**Photography:**  
[01] & [02] Hairdresser station  
[03] Strength Train Space

[ MATERIALITY AND IDENTITY IN RETAIL:  
MITRE STORE ]

Shortly after, Mitre, a sports brand that sponsored me back home, entrusted me with designing their first retail store. I grounded the space in raw, natural textures—concrete, steel, rough surfaces—**evoking the feeling of a protective cave.** **Strength and vulnerability coexisted**, and once more, space became an extension of my evolving identity.



**Axonometric Drawing of project:**

Sketchup / Corona / Archicad / PSD

Stage: Implementation

Inspiration: AI image of dreamlike space.

## PUSHING AI EXPLORATIONS FURTHER: MIDJOURNEY

[ CONTRADICTIONS AND AI:  
EXPLORING MATERIAL DUALITIES ]

As **materiality, contradiction, and technology intertwined**, I developed models pairing conflicting materials and posed the following prompt: "Contradictory materials. Unbalanced connections in relation to the human condition." AI-generated imagery deepened my exploration, unexpectedly **unveiling a profound curiosity around mortality and healing.**

[ 1 ]



[ 2 ]



[ 4 ]



[ 3 ]



*Curiosity Prompt: "Contradictory materials.  
Unbalanced connections in relation to the  
human condition."*

Physical models + midjourney

[ HEALING THROUGH MATERIAL:  
WOOD AND PLASTER ]

In one wooden model, I used plaster to heal a wooden knot—a small but symbolic gesture that **reflected my own process of healing** after personal loss, of someone who had fundamentally shaped who I am today. The materials revealed not just resilience, but the **quiet beauty of transformation**, shaping my evolving understanding of identity through making, and deepening my **need and curiosity to connect more profoundly with the ideas of loss, healing, and how these experiences continue to shape me.**

[ 1 ]



[ 2 ]



[ 4 ]



[ 3 ]



*Curiosity Prompt: "Contradictory materials. Unbalanced connections in relation to the human condition."*

Physical models + midjourney

# I AM FRANCESCA WOODMAN

[FRANCESCA WOODMAN:  
DIALOGUE WITH MORTALITY?]

I explored Francesca Woodman's work to better understand my own identity—delving into the unknown, attempting to imitate her delicate, haunting imagery, and ultimately failing in the process. **Yet that failure became my success. I am Francesca Woodman**, but suspended in another moment: detached, soaring toward my own meaning.

Approaching her work carried an inevitable unease—the gravity of her tragic death, the brilliance of her fleeting legacy.



But now, living in London—the city where our shared surname took root—I find not a mirror, but a pathway. **Change, distance, and loss have given me clarity: mortality is not an ending, but a fold within life itself.**

**Loss, like architecture, reshapes us.** Through her, I came to understand that **endings and absences are not voids, but material to build with.** Exploring Francesca Woodman became a way of exploring myself—**realizing that my name does not define me, but instead opens evolving layers of who I am becoming**

## Images:

- [01] Francesca Woodman suspension work
- [02] Imitation
- [03] Failure
- [04] My suspension as my success

3ds Max / Corona / PSD

## HEALING THROUGH DESIGN

[ DESIGNING MORTALITY:  
THE SUICIDE BUFFER ]



This realization of **mortality as material extended into my MA studio**. Researching the Earl's Court development, I discovered the **tragic suicide crisis among construction workers** and was deeply moved by this news. In response, I **designed a "preposterous apparatus" that simulated a near-death experience**, offering a symbolic second chance while raising awareness of the "silent pandemic," as it is often described. **Healing, vulnerability, and resilience were woven through contrasting materials and forms.**

### Mental health in construction: building the next storey

By Belinda Liversedge on 08 February 2023

Share this

With rising numbers of suicides in construction, how is the industry responding to the crisis?

Poor mental health in construction has been called the 'silent epidemic'. Yet a great deal of noise has been made to raise awareness of the issue. Thanks to the efforts of campaigners and others, we know a lot about the causes, conditions and of course, the statistics showing the extent of the problem.

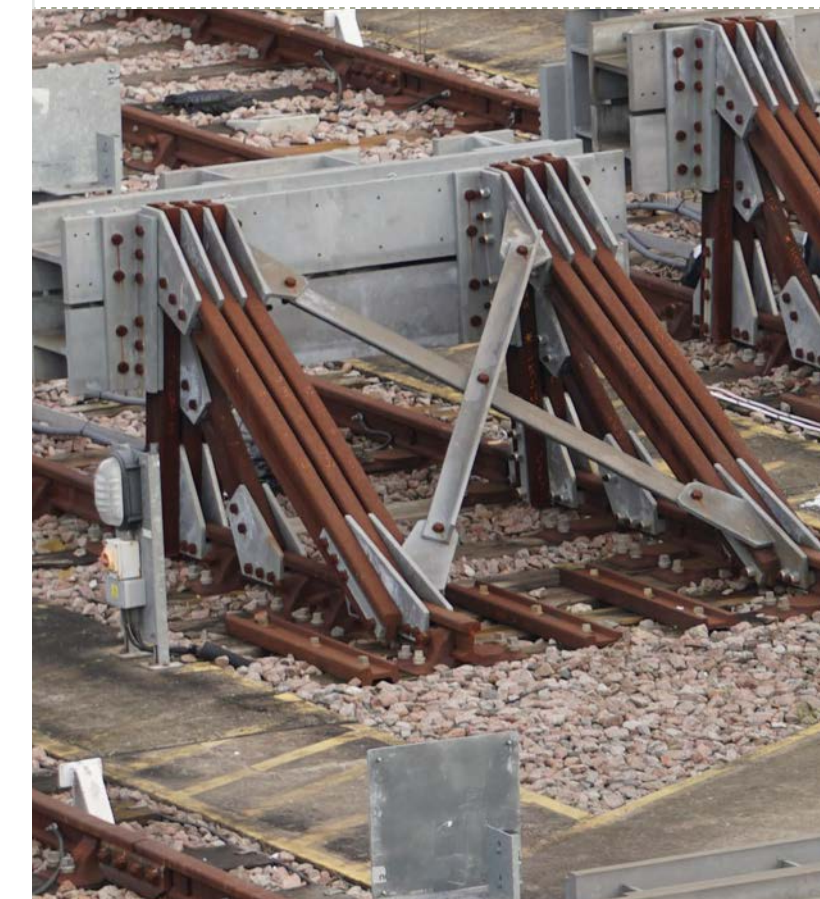
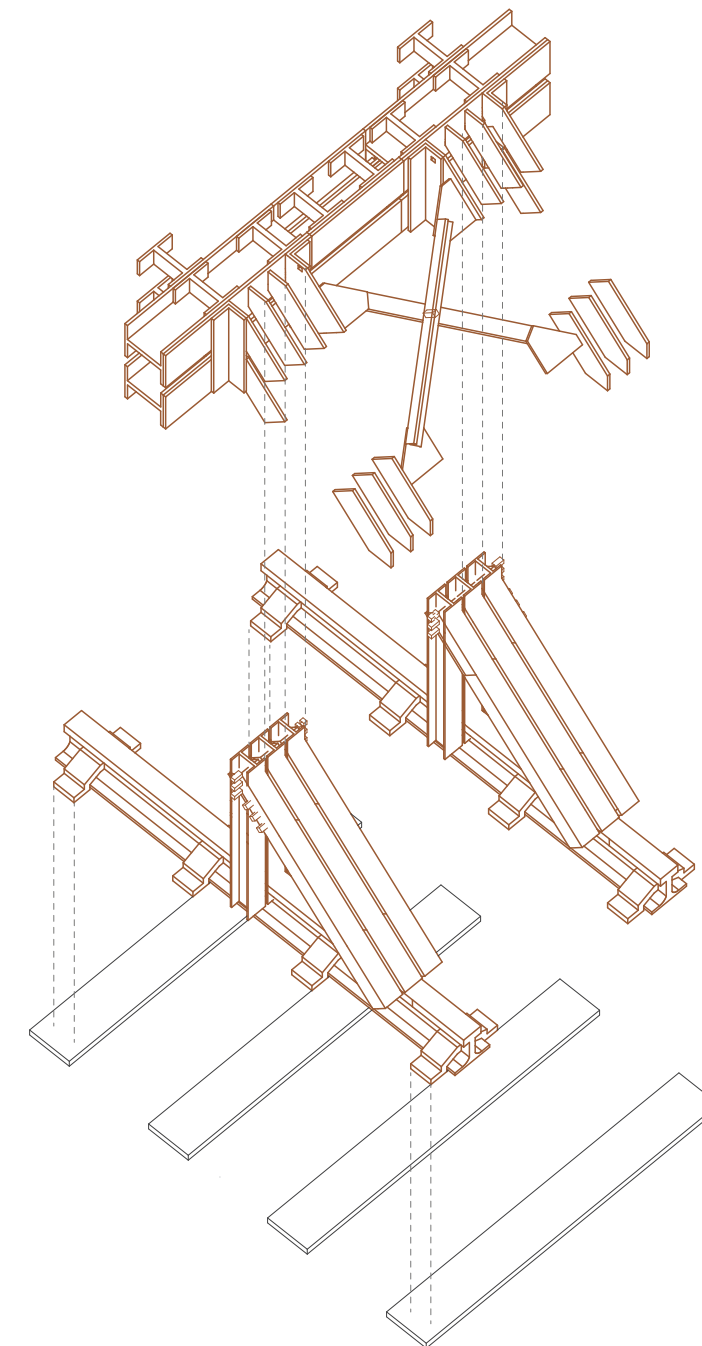
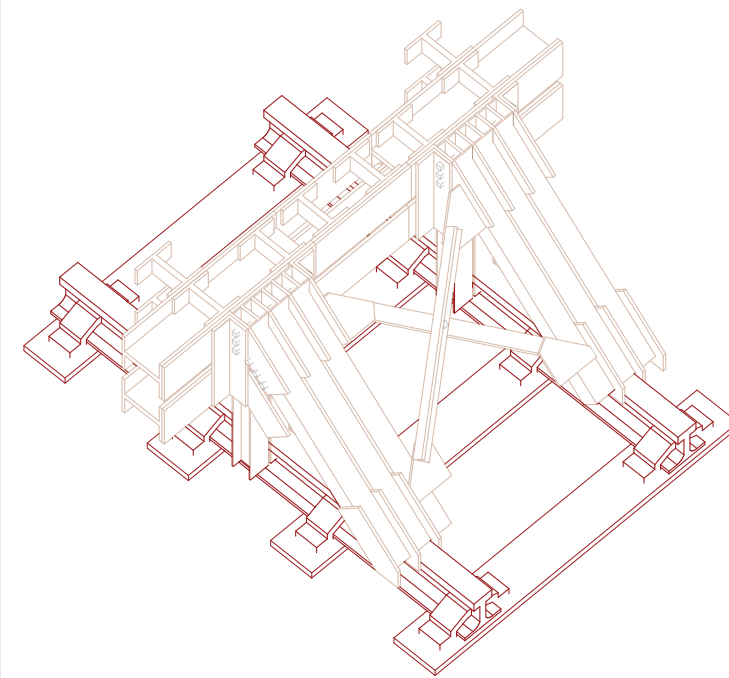
The starkest of these statistics are those on suicide. According to latest data from the Office for National Statistics covering England and Wales, workers in construction are now nearly four times more likely to take their own lives than in other sectors.

Suicide rates have also increased in recent years despite the growth in mental health support available. In 2021, 507 construction workers took their own lives, equivalent to two workers every day. The death toll equates to 34 people per 100,000 in employment – up from 26 per 100,000 seven years ago.



[ MATERIAL RESONANCE:  
THE BUFFER STOP ]

A site encounter with a buffer stop—steel absorbing force, wood lending warmth—**inspired the project's core. It embodied the workers themselves:** externally strong, internally fragile. My design sought to honor that balance, **proposing design as a quiet intervention in the fragility of life.**

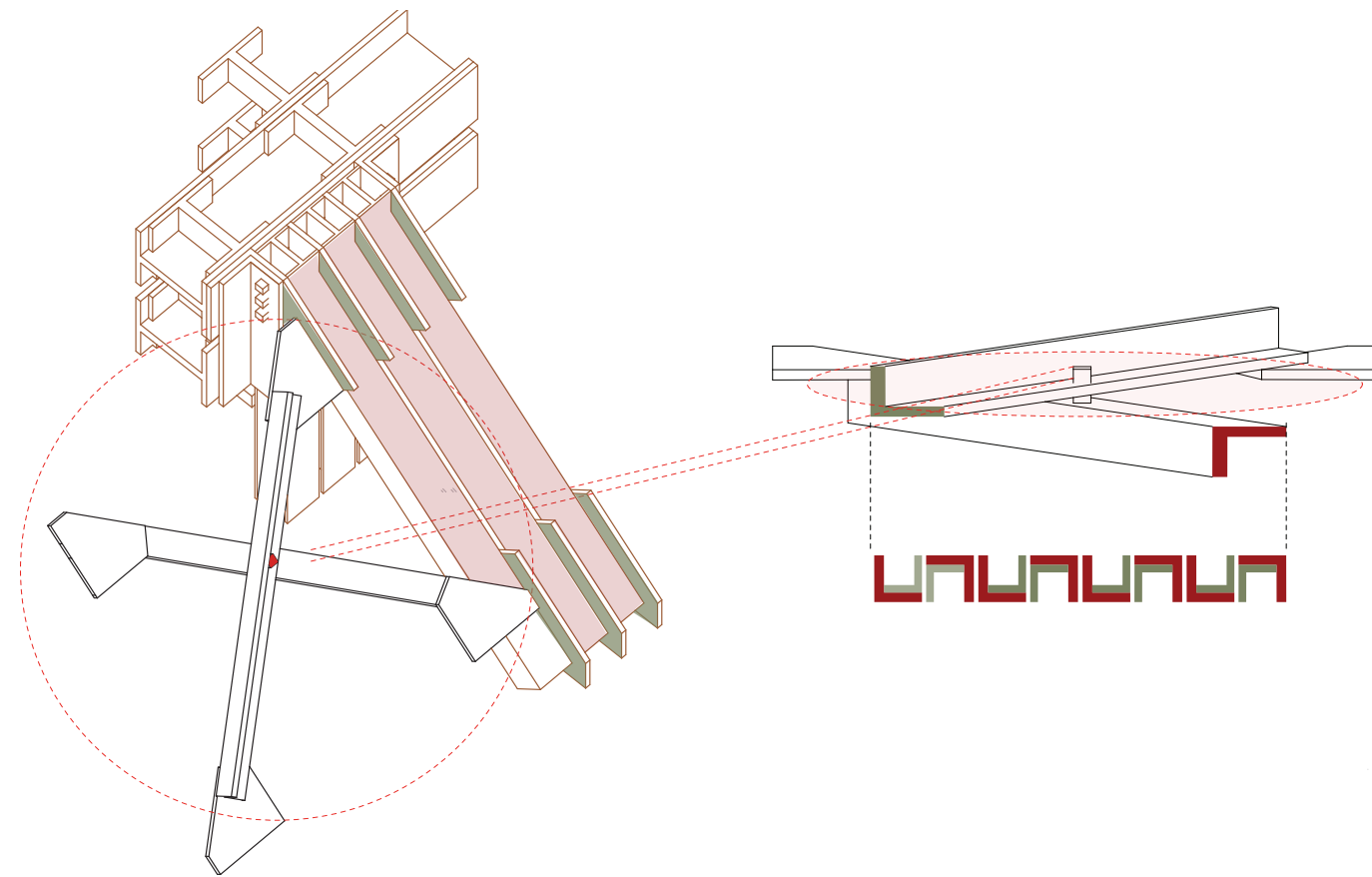


**Images:**

- [03] Train Findings on site.  
Always working with the existing.
- [01] 3D modelling of object curiosity
- [02] Decodification of object

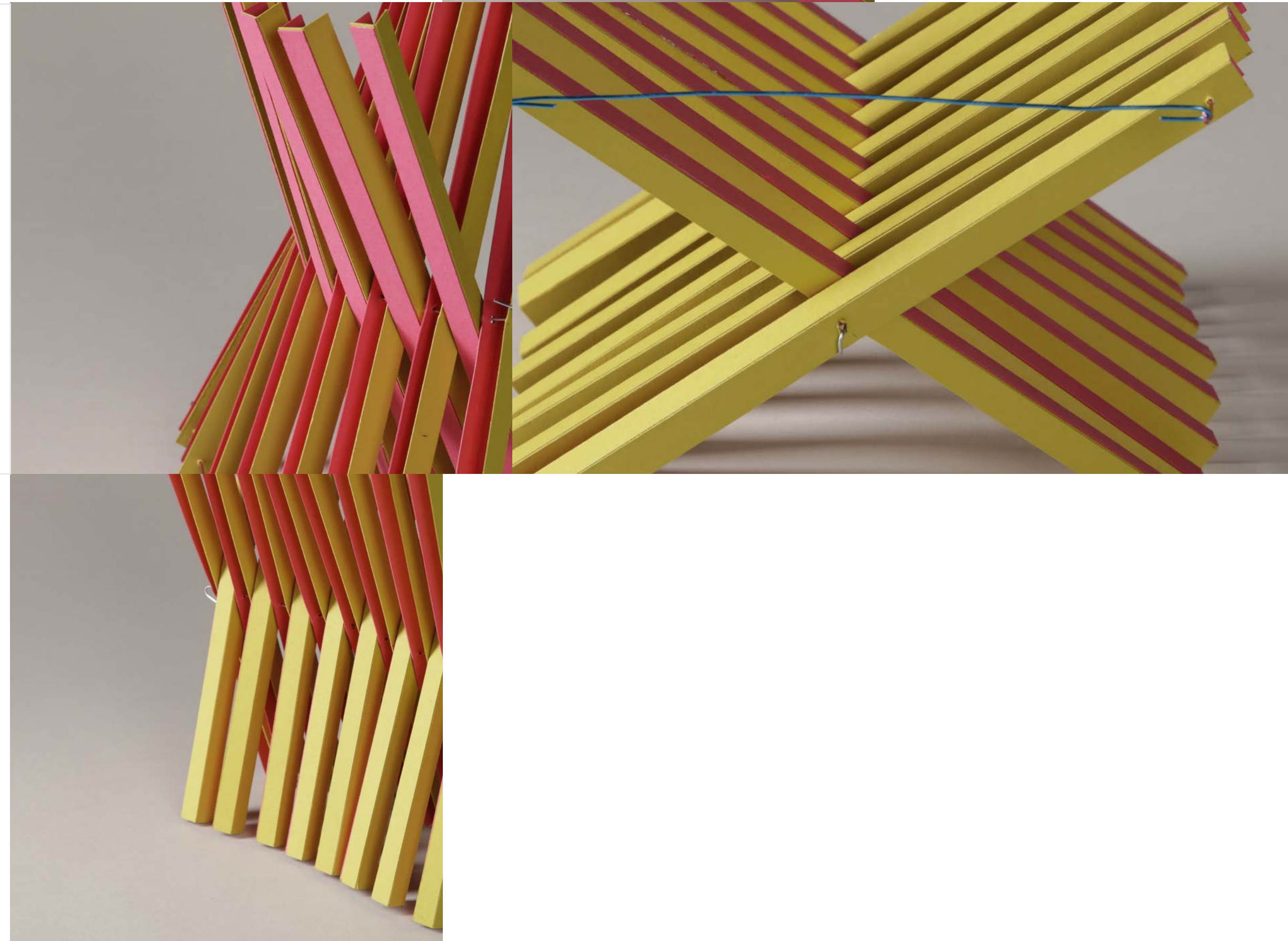
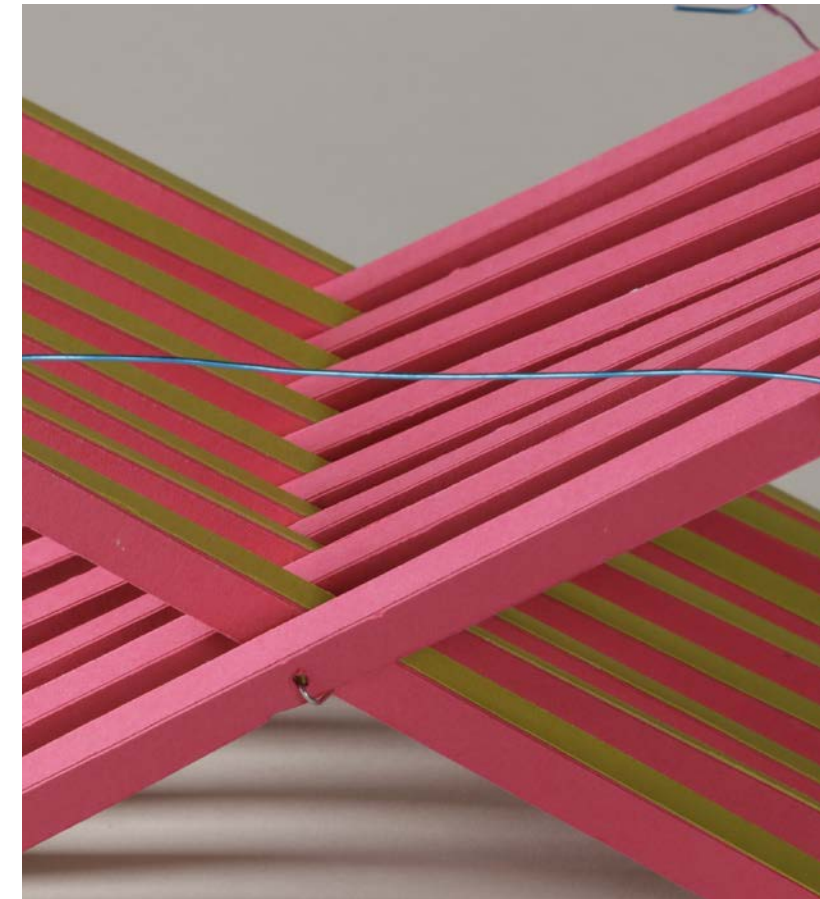
Sketchup / Illustrator / DWG

[ PAPER AS MEMORY:  
MODELLING MOTION AND HEALING ]



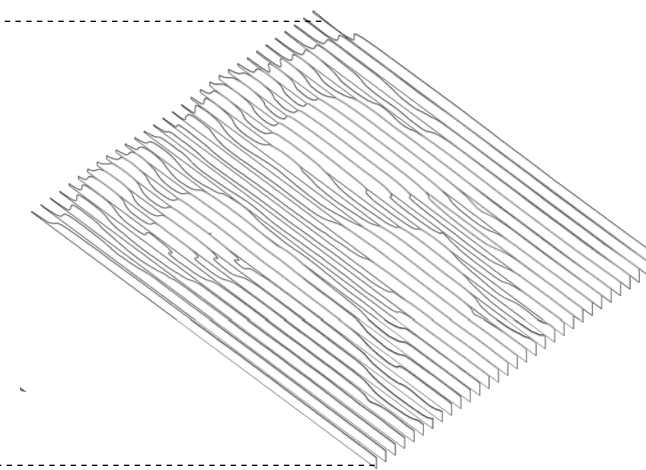
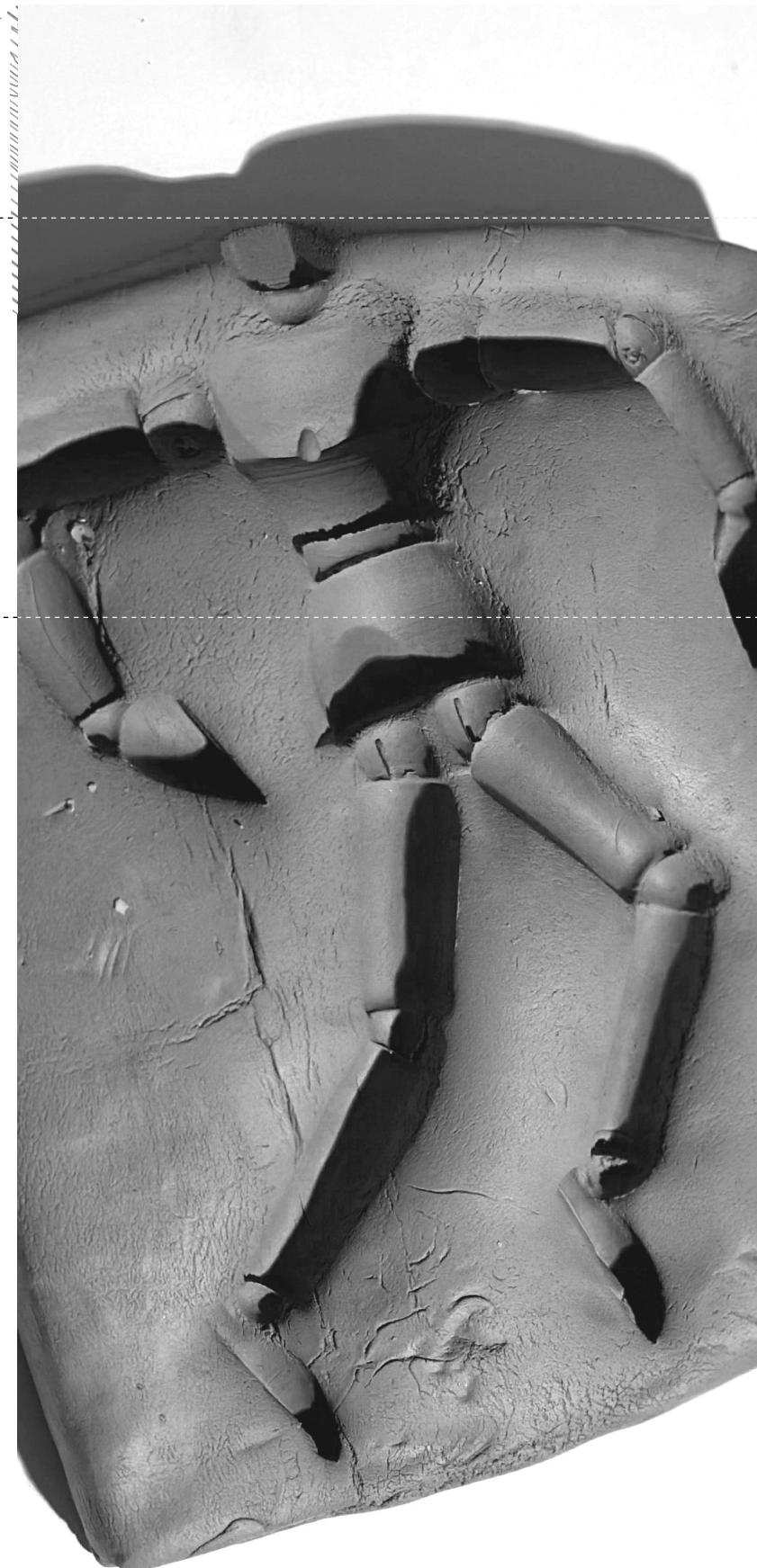
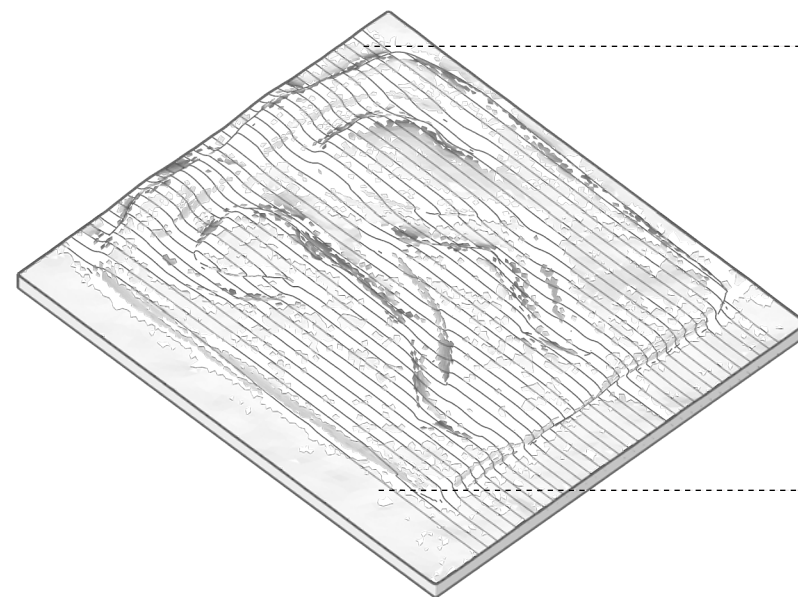
[ PAPER AS MEMORY:  
MODELLING MOTION AND HEALING ]

Decoding the buffer stop's construction, I crafted a vivid paper model. **Its shifting form reflected how healing and understanding are never static**, always in motion. Bright hues met themes of mortality, suggesting resilience through play, movement, and material softness.



PREPOSTEROUS  
APPARATUS

[ SUICIDE BUFFER:  
ABSENCE AS PRESENCE ]



[ SUICIDE BUFFER:  
ABSENCE AS PRESENCE ]



**Physical Mode:**  
Wood and Steel  
Joins and Junctions without glue

[ SUICIDE BUFFER:  
ABSENCE AS PRESENCE ]



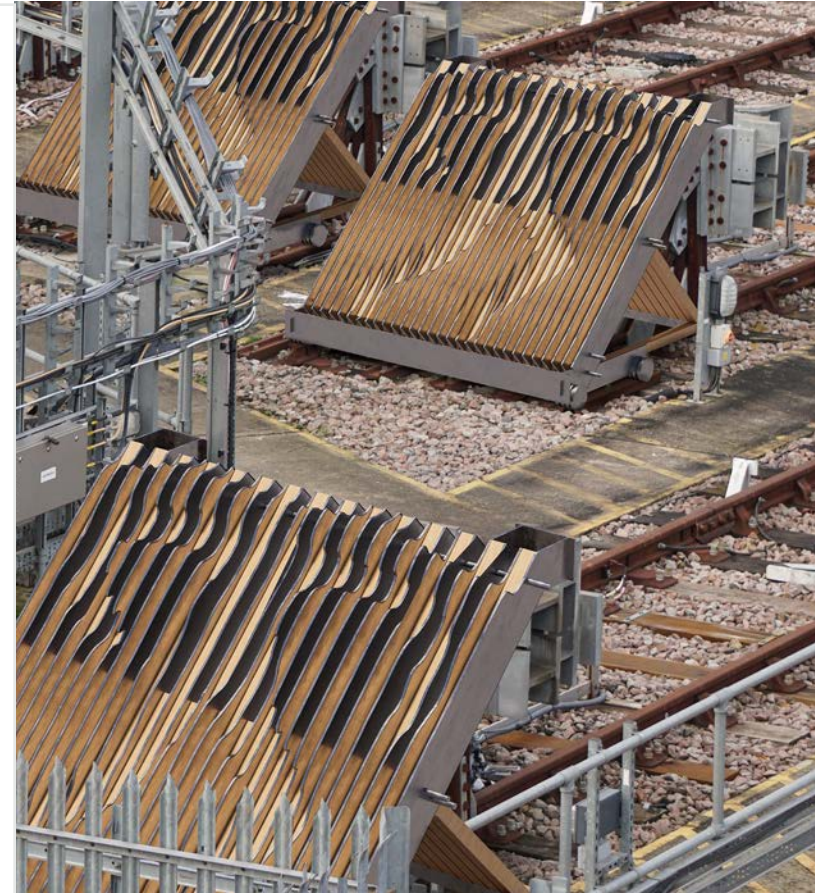
**Suicide Buffer** confronts a silent epidemic with layered meaning: steel and wood merge, strength and tenderness converge. A fragmented human imprint appears only from certain angles—**allowing absence to speak louder than presence, and adding a layer of swift perspective.** In this case, it prompts a shift in perspective about life, but also a change in perspective to see differently. Here, design becomes both a memorial and a provocation. Once again, **it represents the intangible: the search for identity, the search for awareness, the exploration of much deeper topics through design.**

**Physical Mode:**  
Wood and Steel  
Joins and Junctions without glue

# PREPOSTEROUS APPARATUS MEETS AI

[ EXTRAMUNDANE LANDSCAPES:  
AI AND MORTALITY ]

Pushing the concept further, I incorporated AI-generated imagery set in otherworldly landscapes, continuing my inquiry into **themes of mortality, healing, and time**. This integration of digital art allowed me to **extend the narrative beyond physical space and into symbolic realms**, using the imagination to delve into deeper existential questions.

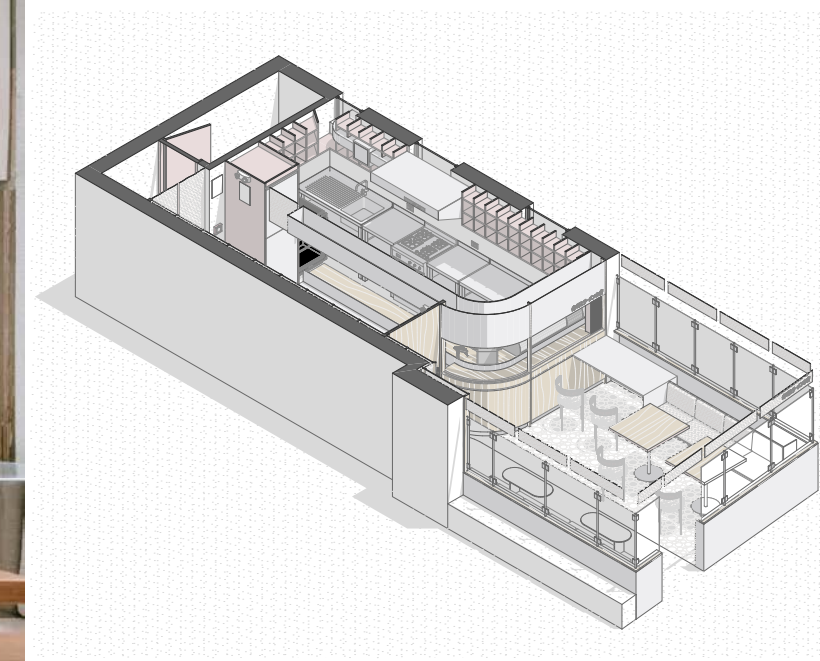


**Images:**  
Midjourney, PSD, 3d Max

# YAKIMO: FENG SHUI PHILOSOPHY

[ HARMONIZING OPPOSITES:  
EXPLORING MORTALITY, HEALING, AND  
IDENTITY THROUGH ARCHITECTURE ]

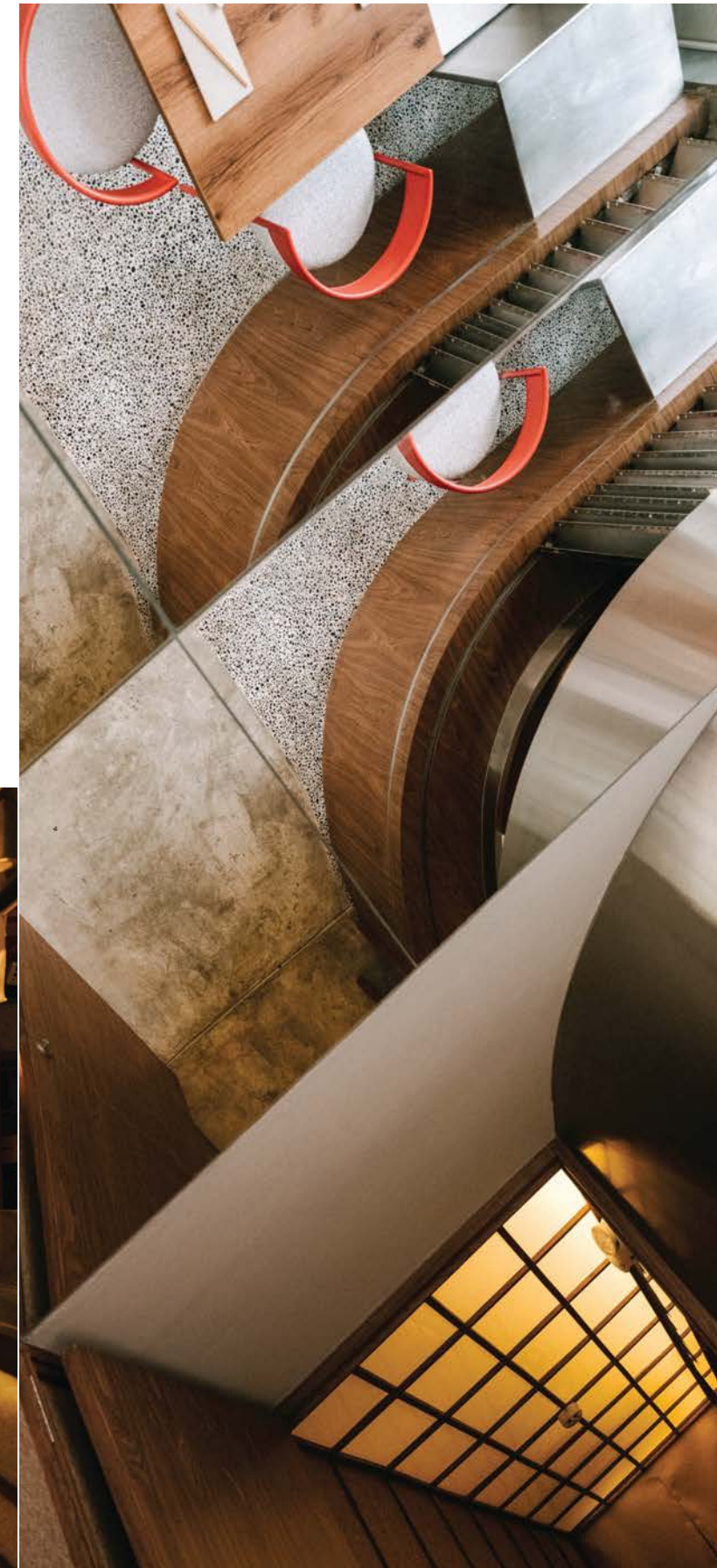
In parallel with the preposterous apparatus proposal, I was developing a design for a Nikkei restaurant in Lima. In this project, I **extended my exploration of mortality, healing, and identity into a tangible architectural form.** Inspired by Feng Shui, the design seeks harmony and balance through the flow of energy, **reflecting my broader inquiry into the interplay between opposing forces—strength and vulnerability, life and death.**



## Images:

- [ 01 ] Frontal View
- [ 02 ] Archdaily publication
- [ 03 ] London Design Award / Silver
- [ 04 ] Axonometric Drawing

[ HARMONIZING OPPOSITES:  
EXPLORING MORTALITY, HEALING, AND  
IDENTITY THROUGH ARCHITECTURE ]



Photography:  
Ivan Salinero

## MATERIAL EXPLORATIONS: SITE AND MORTALITY

[ EXPLORING MATERIALITY AND TIME:  
THE EARL'S COURT DEVELOPMENT ]

Continuing my MA work on the Earl's Court Development, I deepened my exploration of materiality, where my **curiosity extended beyond conventional building materials**. Concrete, metallic structures, sand, vegetation, and archaeological bones (represented through chicken bone samples) found on-site became key textures for inquiry. Bones, often dismissed as waste, persisted through time, reminding me that **memory, structure, and identity endure even in decay**. In this context, **time itself emerged as a material in my design language**—an active, shaping force that influences both the physical and conceptual layers of my work.

[ 04 ]



[ 01 ]



[ 03 ]



[ 05 ]



[ 02 ]



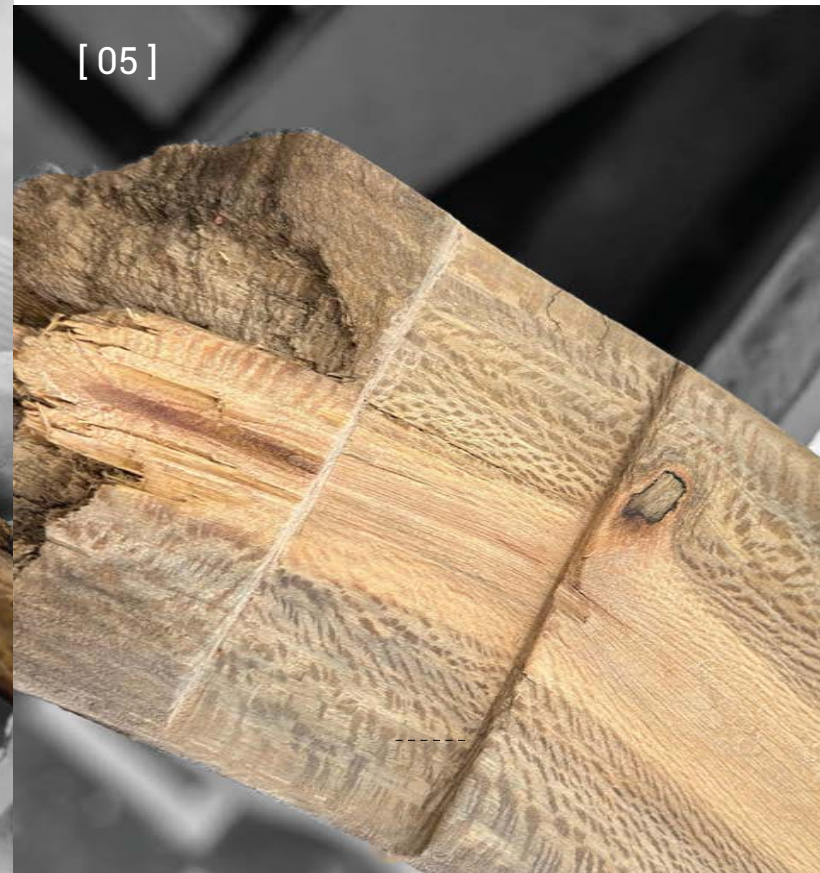
### Samples

- [ 01 ] concrete, bones, metal mesh
- [ 02 ] plaster, resin, bones, metal mesh, moss
- [ 03 ] plaster, resin, chicken grease, moss
- [ 04 ] concrete, crushed chicken bones
- [ 05 ] plaster, sand, chicken bones

# MATERIAL EXPLORATIONS: 'WASTE MATERIAL'

[ NATURE AS ARCHIVE:  
TRACING TIME, DECAY, AND RENEWAL ]

This exploration of **materiality, time, and waste naturally extended beyond the site.** In a parallel investigation, I split a fallen branch from Hyde Park, revealing its inner rings—the silent story of resilience etched by time. Nature's slow, steady architecture resonated with my own evolving ideas, **blending themes of decay, endurance, and the cyclical renewal of self.** These material studies became a framework for understanding not just structures, but the deeper narratives of **transformation that unfold across time.**



## Process

- [ 01 ] Branch
- [ 02 ] Cutting fragments
- [ 03 ] Slicing
- [ 04 ] Sanding and cleaning
- [ 05 ] Detail for encounter of dif. materials

## SUSPENSION AS A PROPOSAL

[ SUSPENDING TIME:  
A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT EARL'S  
COURT ]

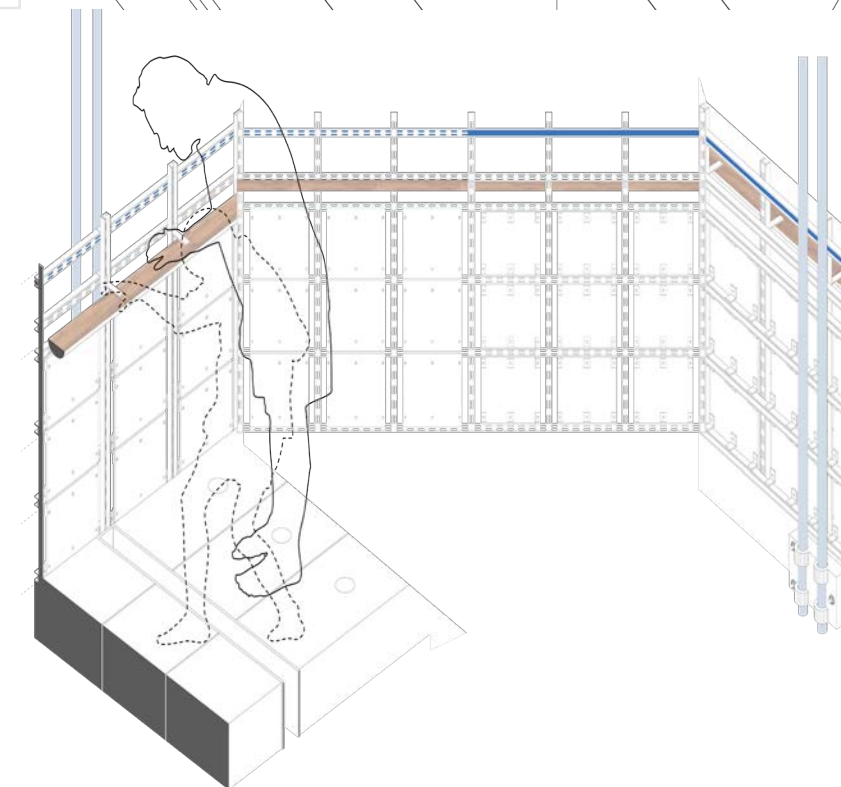
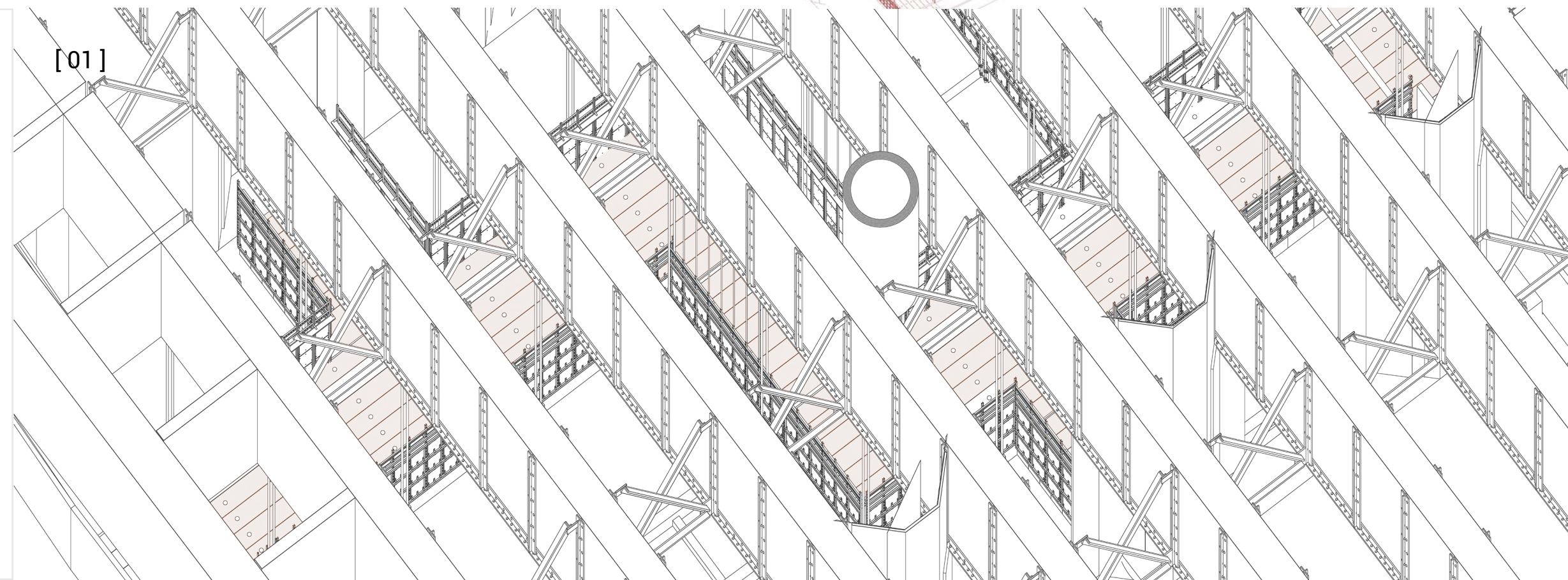
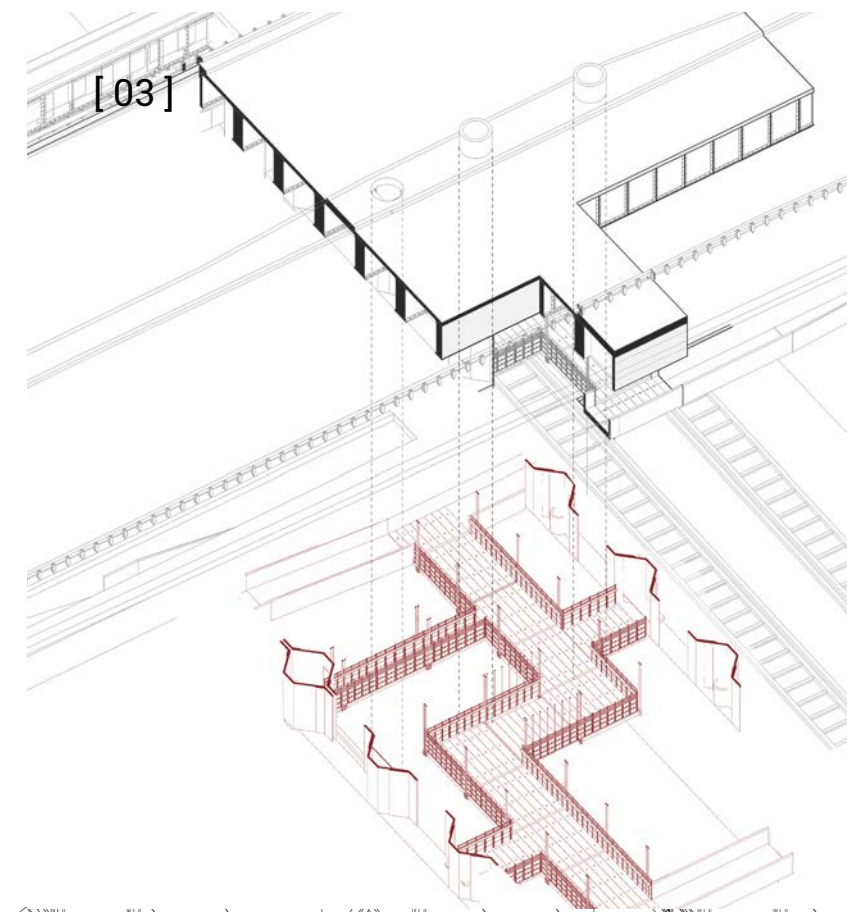
In my second term, I proposed a suspended pedestrian crossing beneath Earl's Court's highway—an "interior-exterior" space where time and movement could slow. **Suspension became both a structural and emotional device, creating moments of pause and reflection** within the city's rush. For me, it symbolized the essential need for suspension in time—moments of stillness and self-reflection—as **a way to better understand identity** and the process of personal growth.



**Photography**  
Cromwell Road Bridge  
Beneath Cromwell Road Bridge

[ SPACES OF PAUSE: RECLAIMING URBAN MOVEMENT ]

By suspending movement beneath the highway, the project sought to offer a moment of respite from the speed and noise of Cromwell Road. Here, **architecture responded not only to spatial conditions but also to fundamental human needs** for intimacy, stillness, and renewal within the overwhelming currents of urban life.



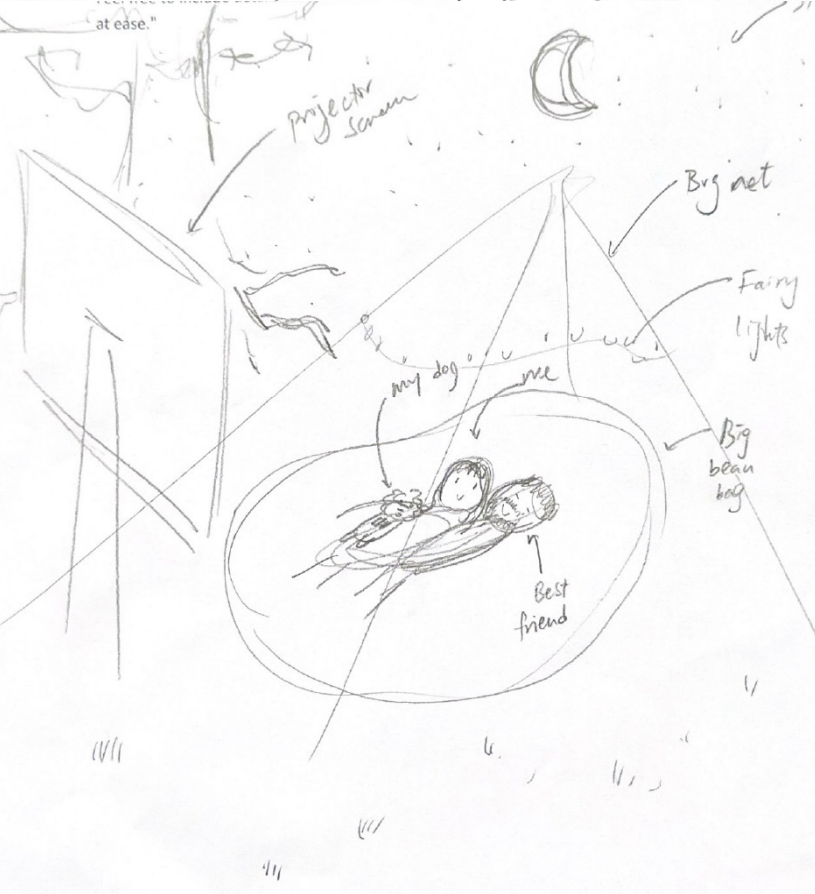
**Drawings**

- [ 01 ] Fragment of pedestrian crossing from existing bridge structure
- [ 02 ] Detail that articulates design
- [ 03 ] proposal on site

Sketchup / DWG / Archicad / Illustrator / PSD

[ PARTICIPATORY DESIGN:  
A COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY ]

Recognizing that self-discovery happens in relation to others, I invited colleagues and tutors to sketch their visions of an ideal, stress-free space. Their drawings—filled with nature, water, and comfort—shaped the program of the project, ensuring it grew from collective imagination rather than individual authorship.



[ WEAVING IMAGINATION AND SITE:  
3D MODELLING AND AI ]

I merged my 3D modeling with AI, prompting images inspired by the site and communal sketches. This collaboration of technology, imagination, and human input gave the proposal a shared, living purpose—**beyond individual identity, into collective belonging.**

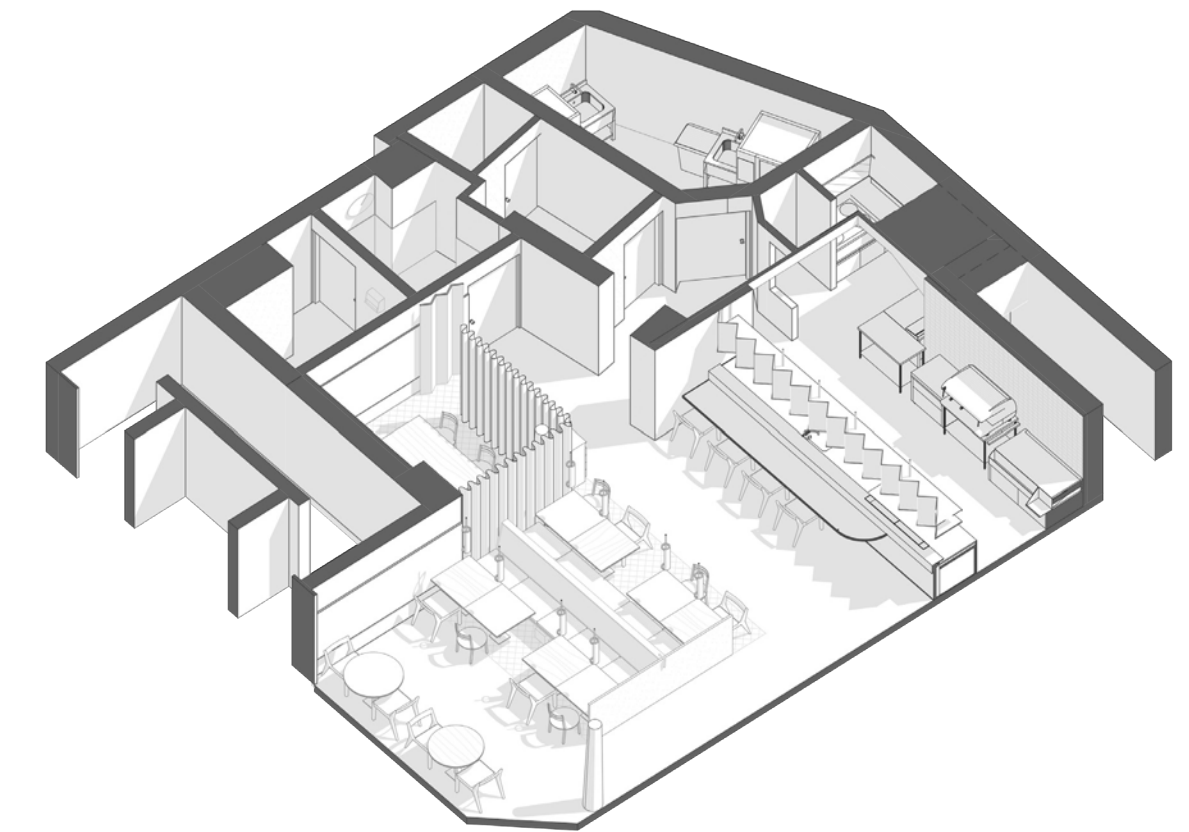


**Images**  
3d modelling: Sketchup and Archicad  
PSD and Magnific AI

## THE PRESENT

[ FAN: MATERIAL HONESTY, COLLABORATION, AND THE EVOLVING SELF ]

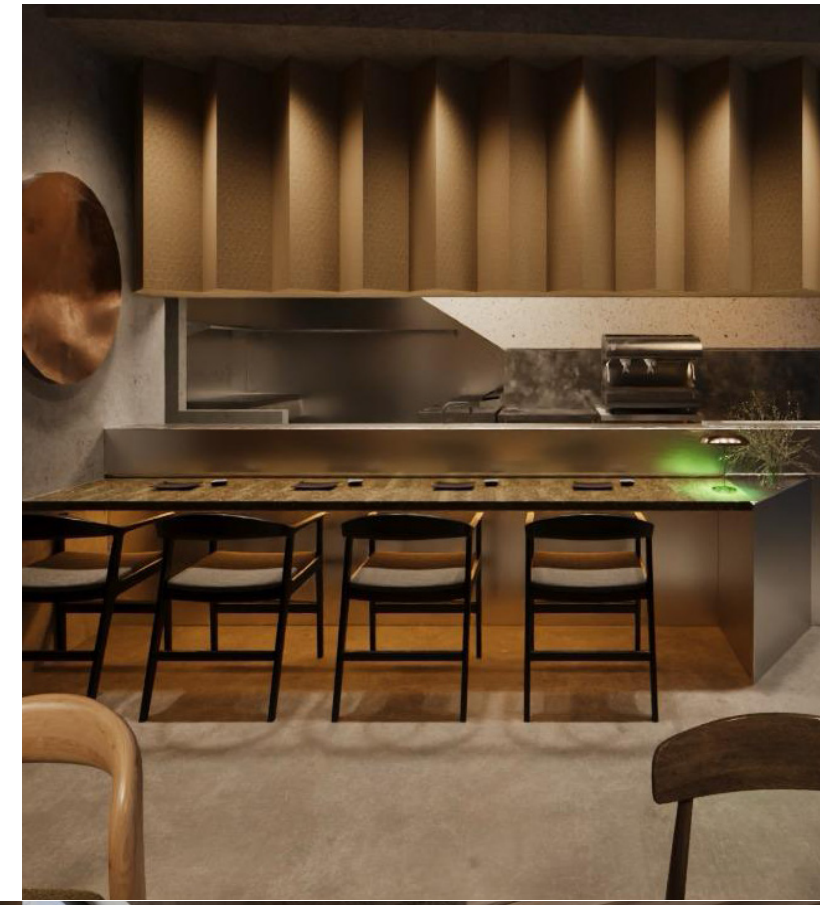
Today, I am finalizing the design of FAN, a Nikkei restaurant in London. Building on these themes, I **embraced material honesty** by reusing timber boards found on-site, exposing old concrete walls, and **restoring hidden layers**—allowing the imperfections of the space to narrate its own story. I also sought collaborative work with people developing new types of sustainable materials, such as rice panels, and connected with a group of construction workers who have generously shared their skills and knowledge with me.



### Images

- [ 01 ] [ 02 ] Santiago / client / and me the day we started the implementation
- [ 03 ] Sandro and me exposing the concrete wall
- [ 04 ] OTTAN team with rice panel
- [ 05 ] Axonometric view of proposal

Through the process of designing FAN, I returned to the ideas of **opposition, reuse, and the beauty of imperfection**. Collaborating with workers, creatives, and a new city, I realized that **the exploration of self is never static**—it evolves continuously through spaces, materials, and the shared stories that shape who we become.



**Images**  
Renders of proposal

This portfolio is a **living document**—an ongoing process of mapping my identity and discovery of self through architecture, material exploration, and collaboration.  
**Rather than presenting a finished definition of who I am, it reflects a restless curiosity and a deep commitment to evolution through making, participation, and storytelling.**

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