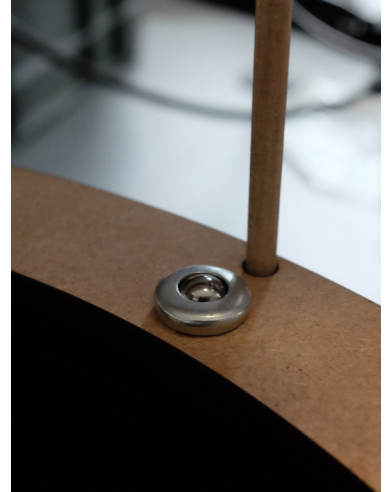


Stay with me

Design Products
Design as Catalyst
Tianyi Zhou
05/2023



Urbanization has led to unprecedented population movements and changes in family structures. On the one hand, more people are leaving their hometowns to work and live in the cities, thus breaking up previously extended families; on the other hand, the busy urban life has led to the younger generation being less likely to meet up with the older generation. Dispersal and separation have led to less and less communication between family members and blurred memories. This trend is compounded by digitalisation, with traces of young people's lives almost entirely online and rarely left in the homes where they lived, and older people finding it difficult to interact with their younger family members online.



The dining table, as the centre of information and emotional exchange in a family, sees family members come and go. This project attempts to materialise and preserve the unique traces of different family members' lives in the dining table. The table is equipped with three transparent layers that allow the user to assign them to different generations of a family to hold physical traces of their daily lives, such as photographs, receipts or notes. Each layer rotates at a different speed, and the rotating layers allow different stories in a family to overlap together. Family members in the home can easily change and rearrange their areas, while the traces of members who leave the home will be kept in the table. Compared to mobile phone albums or video calls, the physical mementoes offer a more real-time and active companionship, and in this way, I hope to ease the impact of urbanization on the family structure and help everyone think about each other and come together more.

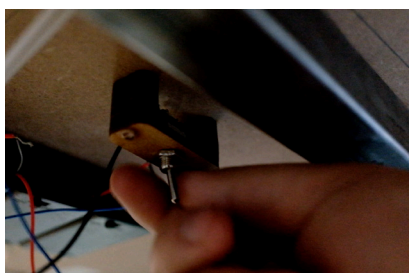
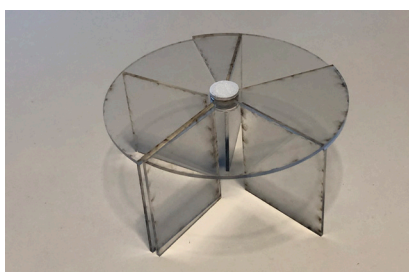
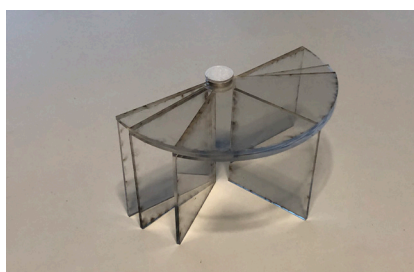
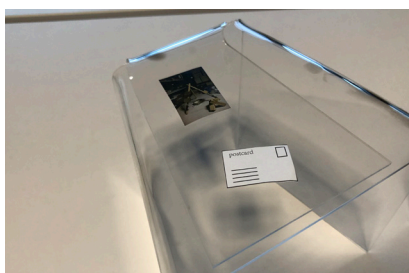
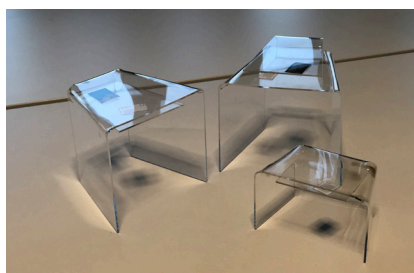
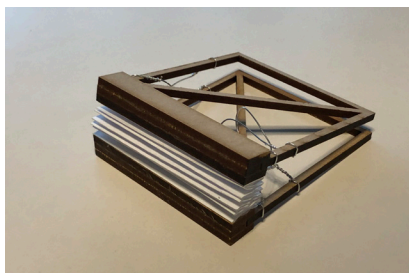
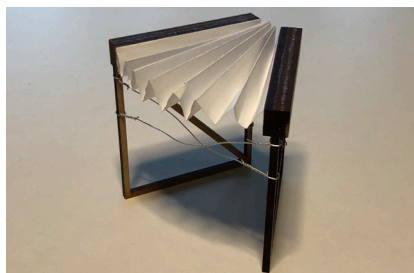
Iterate and test

Design Question

How might we make dinnertime fun to deal with urbanization's impact on family relationships



How might we keep traces of family members on the table to adapt to the changing structure of the family as a result of urbanisation



Inspiration & References

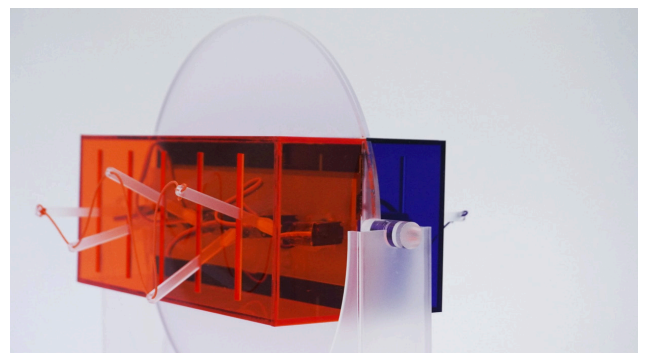


The older generation of Chinese people like to put a piece of glass on the desktop and put photos, notes, letters under that glass



Carrie Mae Weems, The Kitchen Table Series, 1990

The author has set up a camera at her family's dining table to capture moments in her life.



Yihan Bian, Emotion Bank, 2022

The authors use the dining table as a place for the exchange of emotions and information between the family members of families with evening shift workers.

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