Storage Systems: Redesigning Expectations

Furniture contains signifiers of utility that communicate ways to interact with it. Signifiers such as a door, drawer, or shelf are presented in similar ways, resulting in someone using furniture the same way without questioning or thinking differently about their actions. A simple change in materials, composition, scale, and color can uncover how furniture communicates. These transformations change furniture’s relationship with the body and can change the way we use furniture by redirecting our habits. Removing or modifying familiarity challenges how we relate to objects and makes us reevaluate the way we assume furniture is to be used.

This term you will be asked to design one/two single units that can be duplicated to create a storage system. Through everyday observation you will understand how furniture directs your own behavior. You will be encouraged to constantly question why we need another bookshelf, or cabinet to help you realize the place for new designs in our overcrowded world of consumer products. These questions will also be important in finding meaning in the pieces. It will be important during the design process to look at current publications, books, and blogs for research. In the class, you will also be responsible for looking at the role of art in design and how it can help your design process.

You will be assigned one of the following descriptive words to use as a starting point

- Push
- Pull
- Wedge
- Stack
- Shift
- Split

Make/Shift by Peter Marigold

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