Furniture Design Studio

TWO + TWO

Project:
In this studio students will design and build a simple furniture prototype that includes storage. For the purposes of this studio we will focus (at least initially) on the compositional challenges of TWO parts: the container and the support and we will loosely define storage as the ability to do TWO things: safeguard and reveal stored objects.

As a part of our design process we will examine the typology of storage furniture through historical examples of furnishings and stored objects. There are multiple examples of furniture composed of containers or boxes that are physically supported by means of brackets, stands, legs or hangers. These types are ideal for our purposes because they provide an excellent vehicle for understanding composition and offer variety of construction and material options to explore. In addition, we will discuss physical possessions as stored objects and the desire to safeguard and/or display these. How does furniture respond to specific or general requirements for storage? How does storage furniture adapt to new and different contents over time?

Objectives:
The furniture design studio is a compelling lesson in how design impacts materials and fabrication. The dual focus on design and fabrication will be carried throughout the 10-week time as design decisions are tested in a series of prototypes. Students are expected to reconcile conceptual and technical requirements in their finished prototype. Designs should be appropriate to (at least) small-scale production.

Furniture design provides a unique opportunity for students to explore three-dimensional composition through scale models, mock-ups and finished prototypes. Scale and proportion are key elements of this studio and students must be able to articulate and defend compositional decisions.

Method:
Function is kept simple and open in this studio to encourage a focus on composition and concept. Rather than beginning with a functional program we will begin with compositional exercises. Construction of boxes and stands that follow specific proportional rules early in the term will be used to spark thinking and build precision.

Cooperative spirit and willingness to work together in this studio is crucial. A technical consultant will be an integral part of this studio. This consultant will be available during studio time and at additional scheduled times to assist students in fabrication and safe/proper use of tools. Students will be expected to make use of open shop hours to complete their projects in a timely fashion.