

Architectural design

The formation of design idea

Vietnamese-German University

Module: Architectural Design _ Computer-Aided Design I

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project is to design a separator that separates a room into two distinct areas. In this case, a room is divided into a studio and a reception. Besides its dividing function, the separator also provides some additional amenities: lockers, a reception desk, a kitchen, bookshelves, and a relaxing cove.

METHODOLOGY

There are four main operations which were conducted in the formation of the design idea: (1) investigating previous study, (2) inquiring for required functions, (3) determining material and forms, and (4) generating alternatives.

(1) Previous study

The core idea was based mainly on the Denari project. To transform the original Denari's separator into a new structure carrying a different design language, two architectural styles were investigated: Modernism, and Deconstructivism.

Denari project was a "wall" that would separate a 2000-square-foot loft space in SoHo, New York, into two different spaces, a reception and a design studio. Besides its bisection function, this separator also served as a storage on the one end and a worktable on the other end. It was commissioned in 1990 by a furniture company, Steelcase, and ordered by Details (1_Denari_Project.Pdf, n.d.).

Modern architecture is characterized by the idea that form should follow function, the adoption of minimalism, and the elimination of ornament (*Modernism*, n.d.). Moreover, the most noticeable attribute of modern constructions is the preservation of primary forms such as cube, cone, cylinder, sphere, etc.

Deconstructivism is an attempt to break away from modernism's rules. This architectural style often expresses a sense of "controlled" spontaneity, achieved through fragmentation and the transformation of the structure's exterior (*Deconstructivism - Designing Buildings Wiki*, n.d.).

(2) Functions & requirements:

There was only one restriction when designing the separator, which was the height shall not exceed 3 meters (Scarlet, 2013). The separator divides a room into two distinct areas, a reception and a working studio. In the reception area, the separator serves as a reception table and lockers. On the other side, it provides users with a small kitchen, bookshelves, and a relaxing cove. To go from the reception to the studio, employees and customers must pass through a door. The door acts as a stop to the flow of people. It gives the employees who work in the studio privacy and space for concentration as it blocks information and curious gaze coming from the outside.

(3) Determining characteristics in terms of material, form, etc.

The chosen material for this project is wood. Wood can withstand compression forces very well, but not bending forces. The laminated wood panel is preferred as this structure balances the material's weakness (*Course: Building Construction 1*, n.d.). The material decision implies that the favorable form is cubical as this shape is generally pleasing to the eye and structurally stable (*Course: Drawing and Sculpture 1*, n.d.).

(4) Generating Alternatives:

Multiple prototypes were made to evaluate their pros and cons. Satisfying features from each prototype were selected and combined to come up with the final complete design.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION (FOCUSING ON EVALUATING RESULTS)

The final result was an orthogonal shaped separator. The design has two prominent elements: the cubes, and the wooden texture. The rectangular cubes were put together in a calculated manner to produce an aesthetically and functionally satisfying product. The wood's color and patterns were carefully selected and integrated to deliver color harmony and liveliness.

The dominant design language presented in this project was Modernism. After testing various design ideas, it was realized that the designer (the author) was prone to this style. Two of modernism's rules were unconsciously applied, which were: form should follow function, and the elimination of ornamentation. The furniture was also designed to possess the same design language as the whole structure to express uniformity and coherence in style.

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APPENDICES