

Visual Arts

Title: A-Division

Medium: sculpture/product

Materials: maple, maple veneer plywood, pine w/stain, padauk wood, stainless steel, brass

A-Division is a compact fishing unit that features a preparation center that will precisely slice an apple into distinct dimensional fragments. Each unique apple fragment is then united with a corresponding adjustable, tension assembly to realize a complete fishing lure. This project is an expression of my deep respect for nature, materials, and design; and a dedicated struggle to communicate relationships between natural systems and contemporary life. I hope to encourage viewers to reexamine their surroundings, develop interest in other earth life forms and processes, and reflect upon their own personal values.

A-Division has three drawers at the front, each holding a four lure set, and a single drawer at the back containing operation instructions for the Preparation Center and Lures. Also in the back drawer, located in a separate compartment underneath the instructions, is a complex assortment of spare parts.

A-Division is easily transported to lake or streamside locations. Likewise, the viewer is transported (through imagination) from an exhibition space to a quiet setting in nature. The lures are A-Division's focal point. They represent a curiosity of underwater life, with a primary goal of communication rather than extraction. The lures are inventive, precisely designed, and highly crafted... to illustrate absolute respect and amazement for nature and wildlife. The lure assembly must recognize and respond to material qualities of the apple. An apple is soft enough to be easily pierced by a blade, yet the fruit matrix is sturdy enough to prevent twisting of that blade once it has penetrated the apple. The apple fragments are secured to the lure employing this insight. Stainless steel plates pierce an apple fragment at strategic points while a stainless steel spring (or springs in one assembly) will hold the entire structure in tension. The springs also imitate fish fins.

Food is one of the grand essentials of life, supplied to us by nature and the practice of agriculture (which is essentially the careful stewardship of nature). The A-Division Preparation Center celebrates the spirit of sustenance by regarding the apple with great care and respect. The Preparation Center acknowledges form, density, scale, and structure of the apple, with a mechanism to position, secure, and precisely section the fruit. The apple rests on an end-grain maple turntable that accurately rotates 90 degrees and locks in position for the next cut. The preparation center is fully adjustable for graceful operation.

Each of the three front drawers identifies a set of four lures at a unique development stage. Showing lure dynamics at three stages of evolution allows a viewer to understand and experience the functional operation of each lure without a real-time demonstration. It is a significant design challenge that each lure appears whole and beautiful at every stage of the development process. One drawer exhibits a four-lure set with the appropriate apple fragment united with corresponding tension assembly (the completed lure). A second drawer shows lure assemblies without apple fragments, highlighting the lure void, and the piercing steel plates that will eventually secure the apple slice. Each lure must have adjustment capabilities that make it possible to load and unload apple slices, and allow for size and shape variations of apple fragments. The remaining front drawer presents the lure assemblies unfastened and opened-up to illustrate the loading and adjustment process.

The apple fragments and corresponding lures are bilaterally symmetrical with one exception. The first cut of the apple creates a dimensional center portion with a dome-like fragment on either side. The domed fragment is curved on one side and flat on the other. The lure assembly designed for this asymmetrical fragment features a front and back with unique functional components.

The creation of A-Division involved rigorous pre-planning and design, yet significant spontaneity occurred in fabrication and assembly procedures. Designing and drawing this project included constant back and forth movement from hand to computer. Stainless steel pieces were designed in CAD and laser-cut. Everything else was fabricated by standard woodworking machinery. Concept development, design, fabrication, staging of construction and assembly, and determining project completion, are all part of an amazing process of learning and experimentation. I rigorously document these discoveries and attempt to communicate them in gallery settings and oral presentations. The final photo identifies the potential for process images to substantially increase the understanding and appreciation of a complex project. (The final image identifies the procedure I used for drawer slide attachment).