

Camberwell College of Arts MA Designer Maker 2020/21

Project Proposal

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In what way can “classical” architecture details can be (transform/redesign) into daily necessities?

There are major number of old fashion houses were built densely in Taiwan’s townships and so far the average house age are about 50 years old by looking at the style of tiles and window grills, which is more worthy of concern is most of houses were built by its owners. For example, I interviewed my grandparents and their neighbors which in the same township, according to my family and the neighbours, people in the past need to learn everything such as farming, livestock breeding, and build a house etc. This is because they are mostly in self-sufficient lifestyle, so the house owners must be as a designer and engineer at the same time to build a house.

According to Lester (1983, p.11)., “It is clear that the mighty monuments of ancient architecture can be as instructive today they were in the past.” What fascinates me the most is the design of metal grills, the tiles on the exterior of the houses, and the floor tiles inside the houses. During my online study in Taiwan, I also had arranged my time to observe broadly and take photos to record the design of metal grills and tiles (Figure 1). Around Fifty to sixty years ago, these iron grills and ceramic tiles were manufactured in large quantities by factories, most the factory had many basic shapes and colours of iron and tile, and they were freely matched and designed by the house owners when they were about to decorate the house. Iron window grills are usually composed of single colour and simple geometric figures, and later decorated with symbolic patterns, such as Mount Fuji, flowers and leaves, musical notes, fruits, animals, etc. The image illustrated a typical iron window grill design, surrounded by an exterior wall composed of three colored square tiles.



Figure 1, basic design of iron grill with tiles around

However, Zheng (2020) noted that nowadays more and more emerging architects and designers have combined new construction methods such as, acrylic resin, polyurethane, silicone or fuso to substitute to substitute previous construction method, therefore the tile paste one by one on the wall is no longer the mainstream. In addition, in recent years, there are many negative news of exterior wall tiles, such as tiles falling apart according to (*Falling Objects: Another Hazard for Innocent Pedestrians*, 2020), or due to poor construction quality control, the adhesive material is deteriorated and polluted, and then bulging (hollow drum), peeling occurs, and frequent water seepage becomes wall cancer. To sum up, there have been many reviews on the use of tiles on exterior walls.

Secondly, high-rise buildings have been extensively developed in Taiwan in the past two to three decades. Everyone must go through several door locks to enter and exit the building, and the guards of the building have replaced the work of anti-theft which effect that people no longer needs to install the iron window grills, this also leads to the iron factory is on the verge of bankruptcy or has to choose to hunt for a new job.

Therefore, the main purpose of this project is to encourage people to observe these "endangered" beauty, because people have getting used to living in the environment created by others, and this project helps people review the architectural details - through daily objects.

1. Context [Including Historical, Contemporary and Theoretical Contexts] (Why)

Decades of years have passed, and the tiles on the wall will always be old and defective. If factories don't pretend to keep spare parts from time to time, it is very difficult to find the style and color of the same material to repair.

From the external wall, the directly exposed red brick surface is simple and elegant but has little variability, also it is easy to accumulate dust with the grained uneven texture of the washed finish. The construction period of mosaic tiles is short, and the surface is smooth and easy to brush which became the first choice for residential houses. In order to maintain a stable presence in the market, the factory always looks for new colours and changes. Such prosperity has changed with the import of large quantities of stone and the increase in types of tiles, many mosaic tiles that are still firmly attached to old houses have long been discontinued, so that patch-like exterior walls abound.

It has become very difficult to find a store that sells old mosaic tiles, but through the collection of information on the Internet, still can found out there are 5 to 6 factories in southern Taiwan kept many spare tiles.

Although the old mosaic tiles are discontinued, they can still be found occasionally in nostalgic cafe decoration cases and movie scenes. Naturally, they will not choose to open kilns in cases where it is not a historical site or historical building repair, and the use is so small. Bricks come from stocks everywhere.

2. Methodology (How)

By researching related works in a different area of abilities find out what an idea of their work is. For example, in Taiwan Pingtung, the window grill makers use the excess material to create a rocking horse. This reflects the different ways of presenting the works, and also allows children to get in touch with the culture of the window grill earlier through the way of playing.

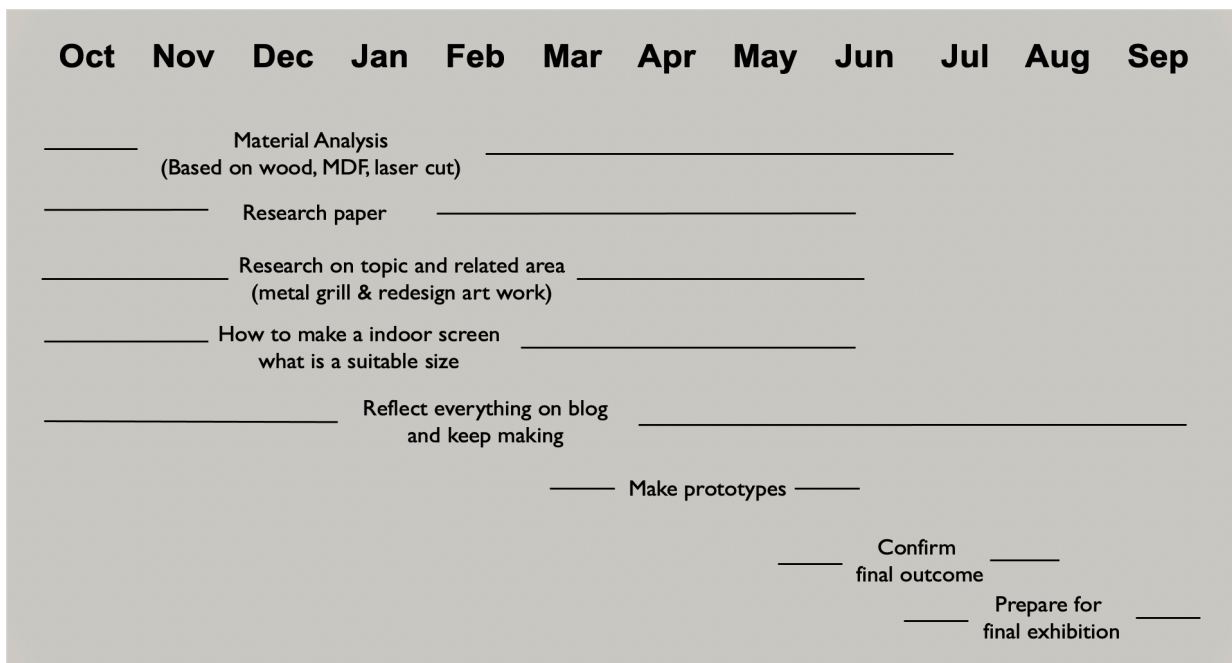


Rocking horse

5. Planned Outcomes

The project aims to create an indoor screen sculpture. The reason for making the screen is because the design of the window grill is not conducive to escape, while retaining the intention of isolation. The representative of the compromise is the screen. Through this work, the user no longer seems to be locked in a beautiful artwork, but can give the artwork a new purpose, so that the window grill is no longer defined by negative images such as iron cage.

6. Work Plan (Timeline)



7. Bibliography

Lester, Wertheimer. (1983) *Architectural History*. Chicago: Real Estate Education Co; 2nd.

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