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Autor: Marot, Sébastien
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THEORY SEMINAR: LANDSCAPE BOXES

by Sébastien Marot

Building tools, articulating thoughts, and collecting oneself

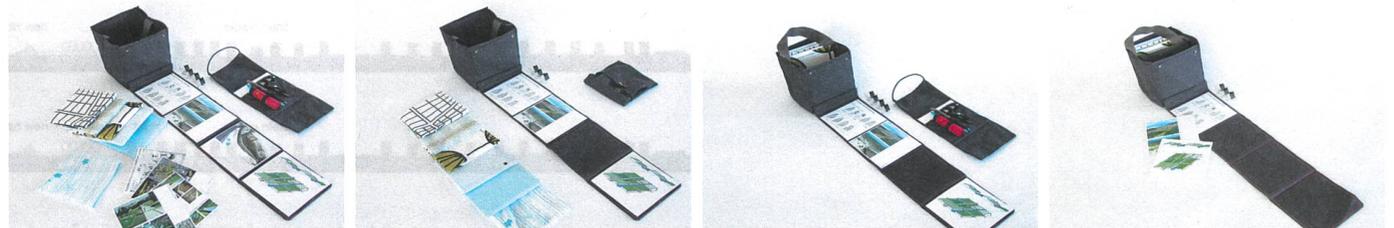
Designing consists, in part, in bringing together ideas, selecting and comparing references, and devising tools. This continuous process (fed by books, images, classes, lectures, trips and conversations) often occurs between some dark room located in the back of our mind and the more or less organized mess on our desks, hard drives, and drawing tables. The designs feeding on and emerging from that substrate necessarily have to refine, abstract, obliterate, and finally cut the umbilical cord linking them to this confuse background of contingencies, in order to make sense and develop the logic of their own agenda. If one is not careful to record, arrange, order and build them in the process, some fertile thoughts, associations of ideas, makeshift concepts and creative tools (which could become the springboard to other investigations and designs) might get lost.

Throughout this past year, students in the theory seminar were challenged to give shape to this substrate in the form of a box or a suitcase, in reference to Marcel

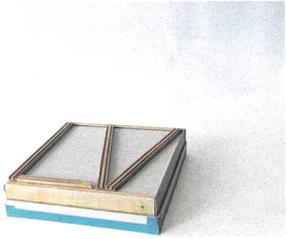
Duchamp's famous 'portable museum'. In this three-dimensional paper which they had to design and build, students were asked to gather, articulate and display tools, images, texts – ingredients and devices which happen to play a significant role in their design and thinking process – as a kind of mediator or 'suitcase' for commuting between theory and design.

Many different models were experimented with: the picnic basket transformed into a designer's set for field trips (Sabine Gresch); the fisherman's box turned into a bank of data and materials collected on site (Martina Tomsic); the rubic's cube or construction game of references (Carolin Fickinger, Sandra Schlosser); the babushka set of cities and parks (Ging Gal Metchanun), the portable laboratory for making models and experiencing with landforms (Hailiang Gong), the jigsaw plaster model of one's own garden used as a tool for taking measurements across new sites (Rupert Muldoon); and even a replica of Duchamp's 'Box-in-a-Suitcase' turned into a very engaging designer's laptop (Liesl Vanautgarden). Particularly convincing were a travelling greenhouse growing plants from a compost

of earth mixed with trivia collected in local newspapers (Ramzi Mezher), a stunning theater box for stage-setting landscape effects (Chantal Wuhrmann), and an exploded 'landscape office' of extremely inventive tools devised to analyse and translate the spatial texture and organization of territories (Matanya Sack).



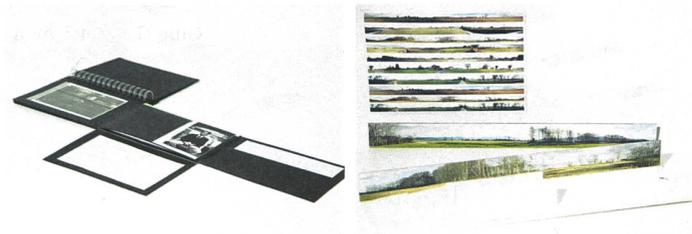
Sandra Schlosser



Liesl Vanautgaerden



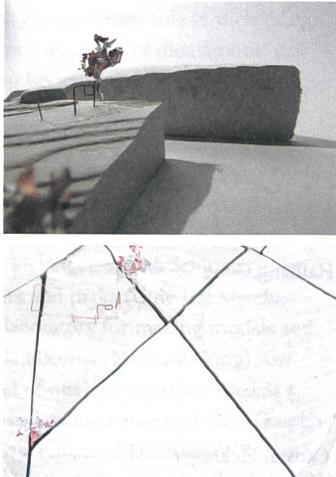
Matanya Sack



Hailiang Gong

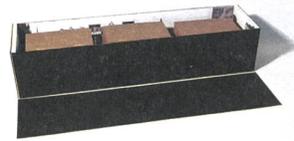
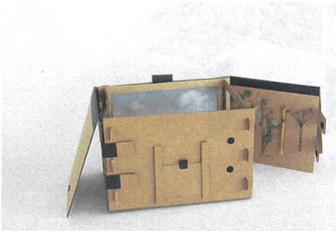
Carolin Fickinger





Rupert Muldoon

Chantal Wuhrmann

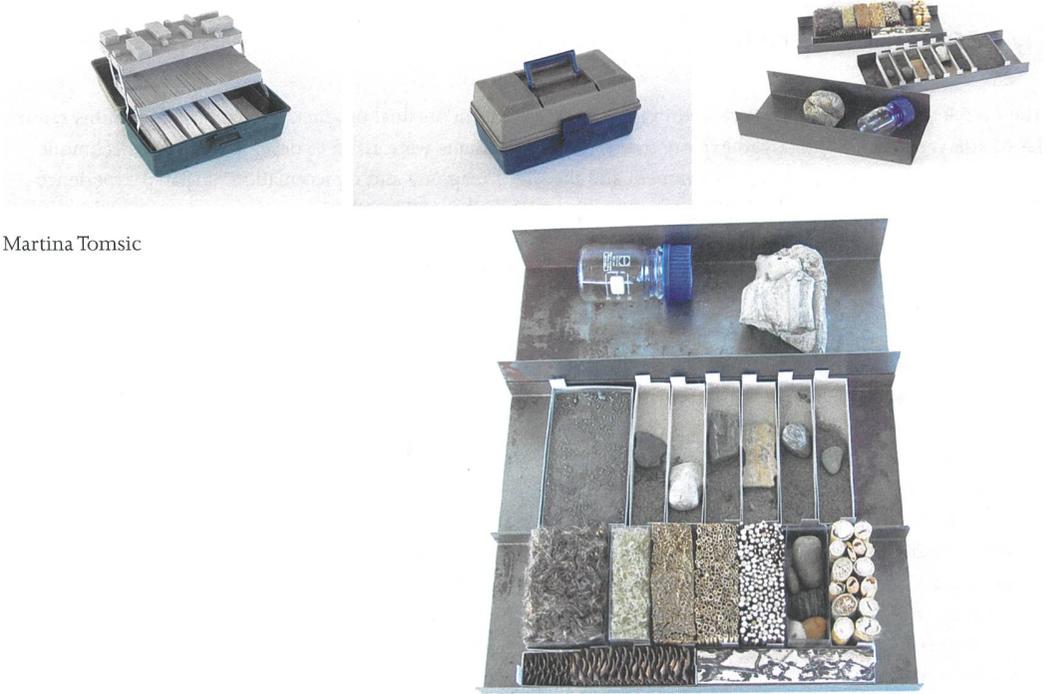


Ging Gal Metchanun

Ramzi Mezher



Martina Tomsic



Sabine Gresch

