

Positions through Iterating

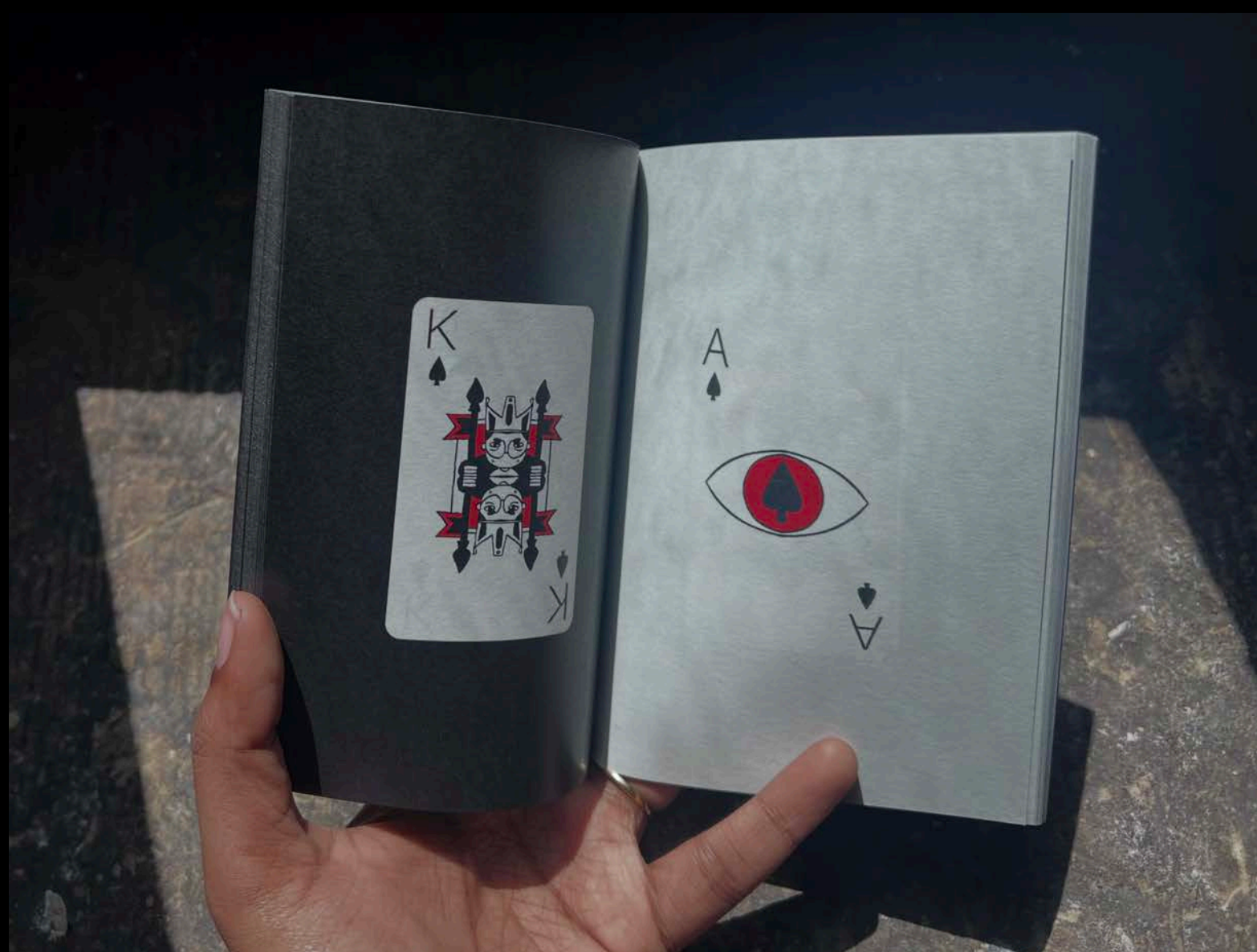
Week 02 // Final Iterations + Writing

Uma Bhojraj

Previously

For my 100 iterations, I decided to make a standard card set based on the “hierarchy” structure of bridge and then add an ‘alter ego’ to each ‘lower ranking’ card to explore a deeper relationship. This began as an exploration in ‘privilege’ in hierarchy, but of course, iterations soon became faster and less calculated. Towards the end it lost its direct connection to the question, but created its own logic and world within itself.



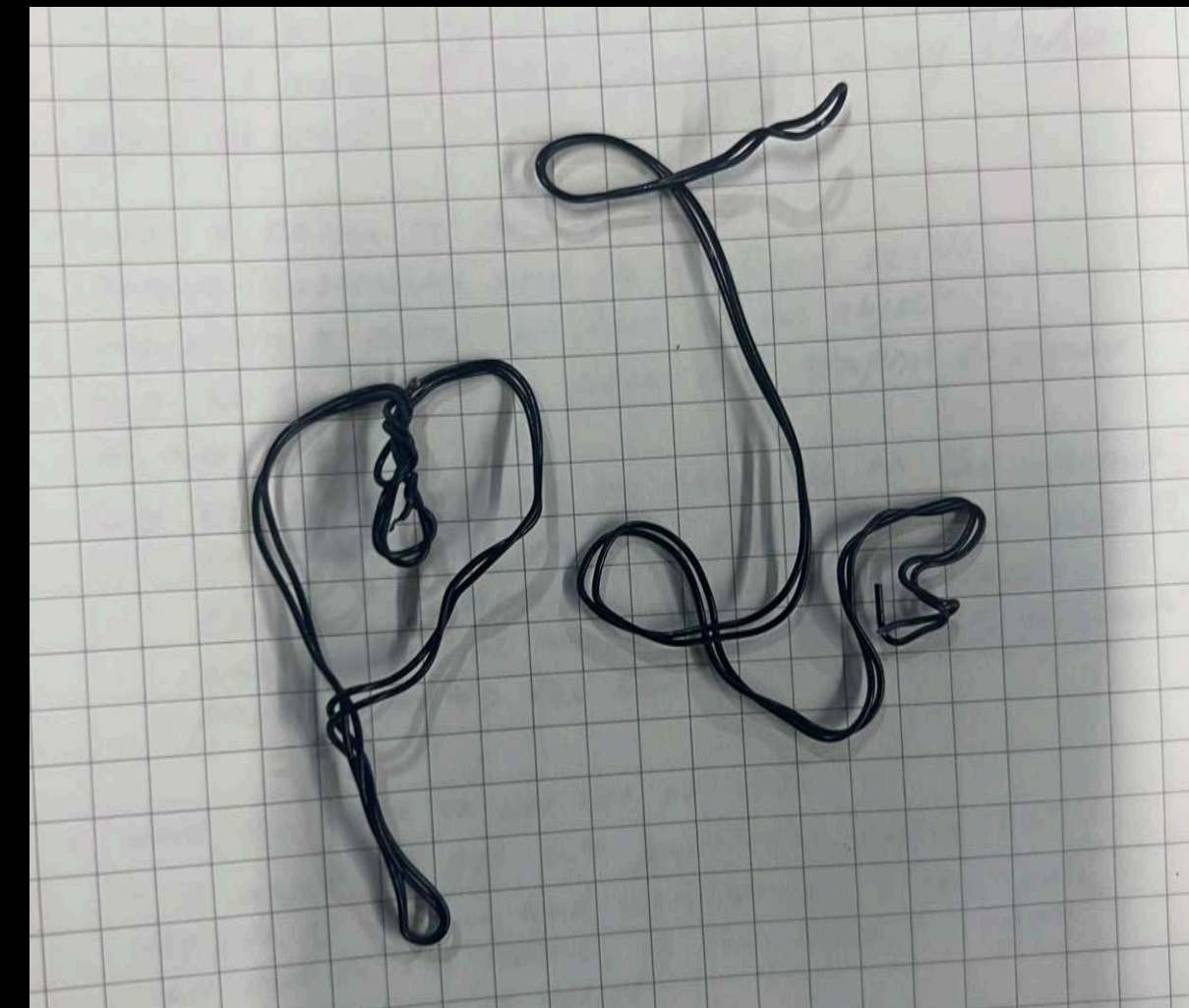


Developments

Materiality and Hierarchy

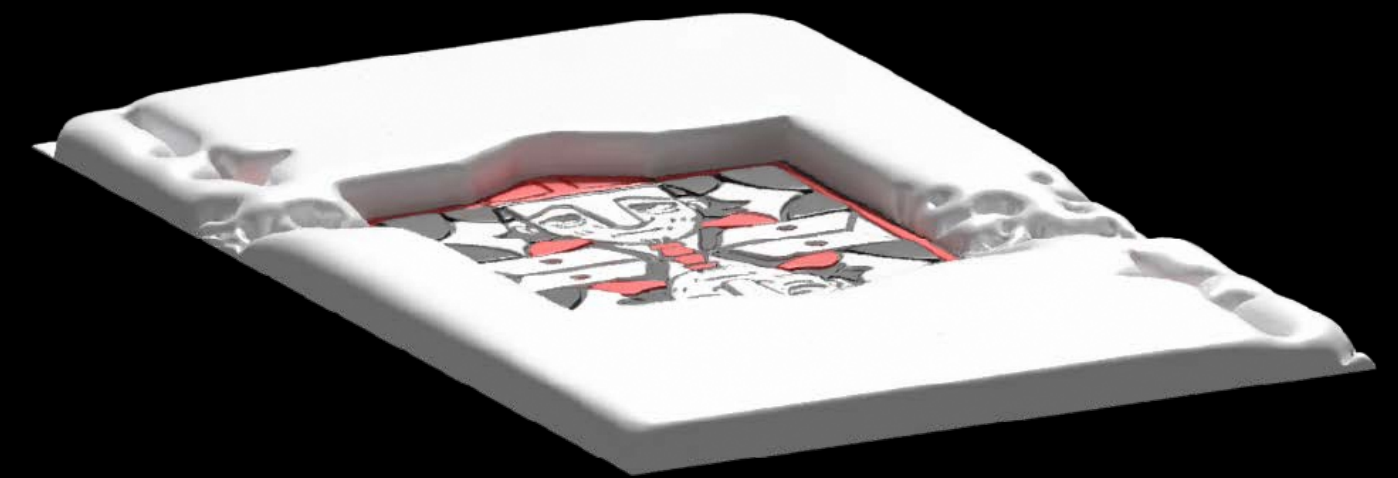
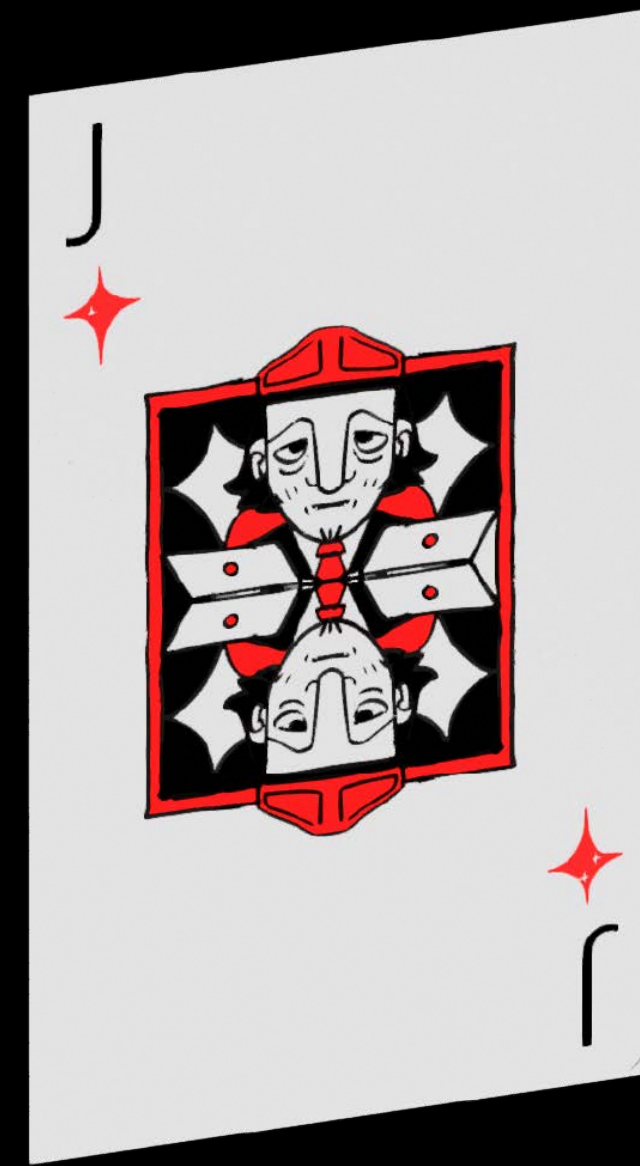
I wanted to keep working with the idea of embedded hierarchy and privilege - but taking feedback into consideration, I decided to play more with the iterative side of my cards before I align them with a concept fully.

I tried using epoxy clay and wire for some iterations, to try to come up with new ideas, but nothing sufficiently interesting transpired.



3D forms of cards

I brought my designs into illustrator eventually, to vectorize it - and started playing around with its 3d form. At this point, the idea of materiality started showing in my work and I wondered what it means to turn the a 2D standard card into 'material'



Ref. 1

Caps Lock

By Ruben Peter

The Designer as Scribe

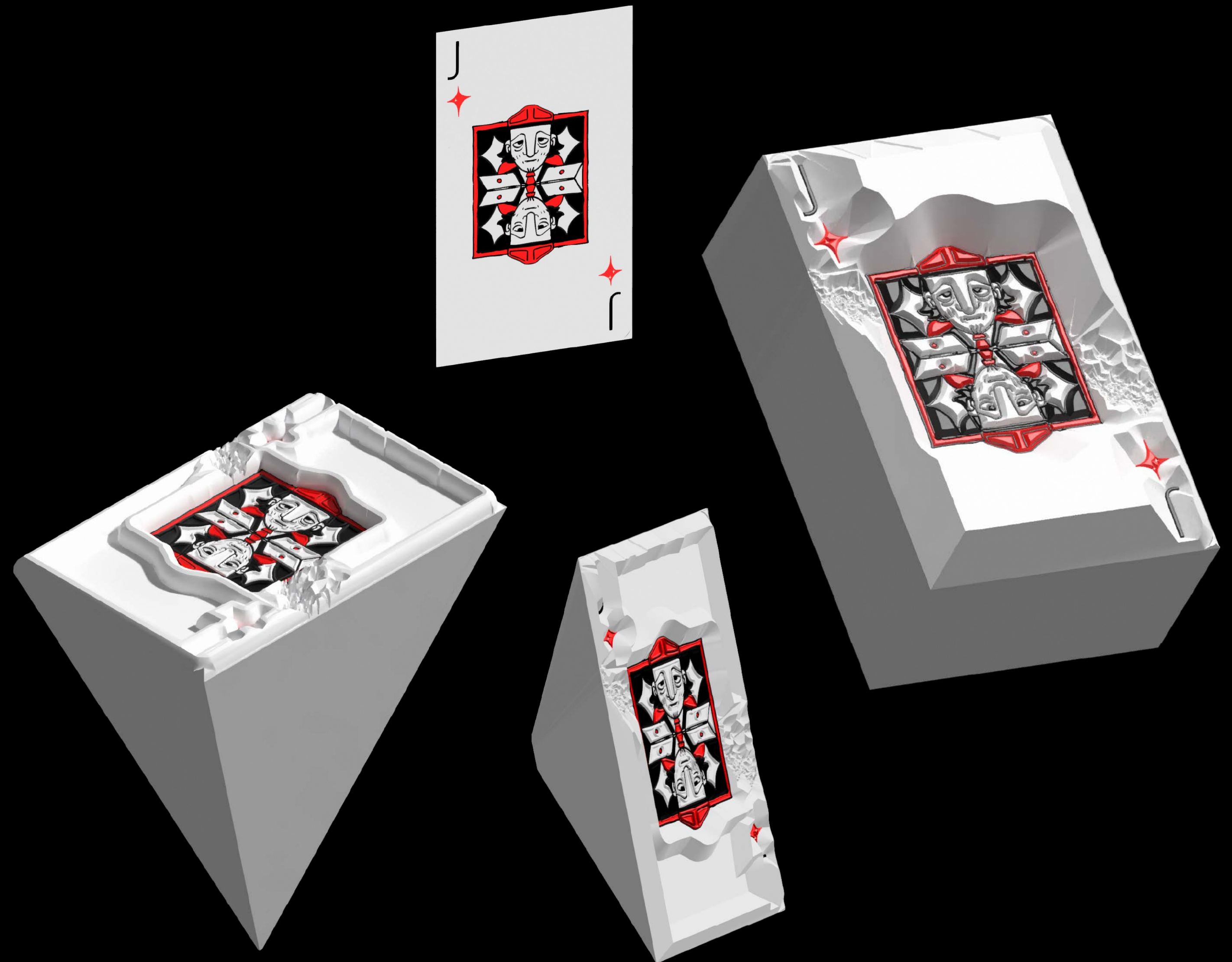
Peter describes in his discussion on “Notes on the Bank” (Peter, p. 46, 2021) how designers were inherently privileged from the beginning of traditional design - as they had literacy, had means to create a portable and legible object- leading to currency.

I see this as a concentrate of identity, also in playing cards (that create a transaction) - ultimately the power to create visualizations of the world we see.

The Jack of Diamonds

I felt there was a relationship between material and the ‘Jack’ card a figure that is represented by the designer and creates the “image” of one who is in between ranks.

This brought hierarchy back into my explorations.



Ref. 2

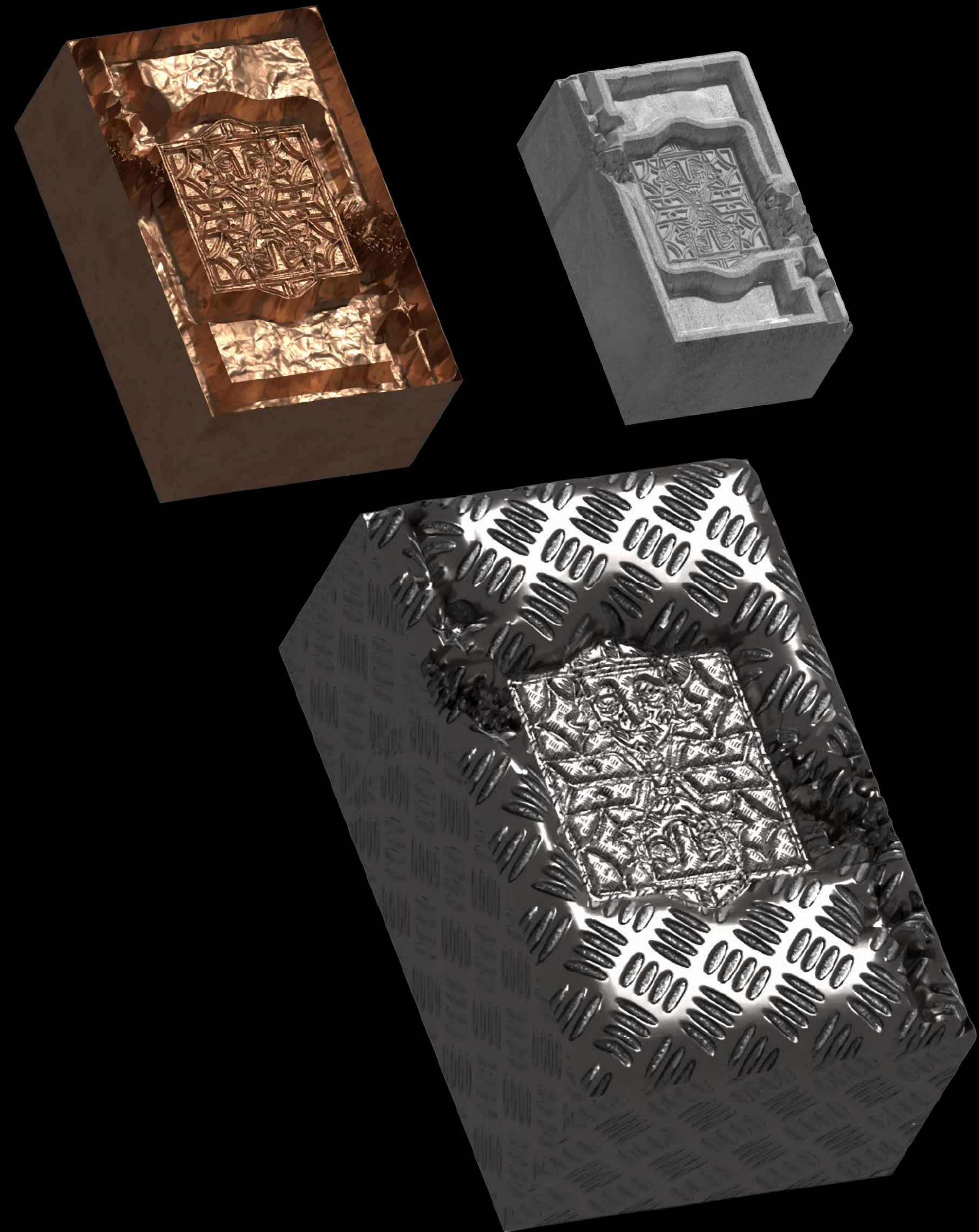
Unlearning Imperialism
By A. Aisha Azoulay

Violence and Raw Material

Violence has a very clear visual link to raw material. Raw material is often “extracted” “fracked” “mined” and “dynamited”. These create an understanding of force.

Azoulay quotes in her book, “... the origins of imperial violence, that presumes people and worlds as raw material, always as a resource.”

The Jack, too, becomes a resource.



Ref. 3

@Kiernian

“Modern Archeology”

Technique: Imposition

@Kleinian creates artifacts - that look dug out like little trinkets from a past civilization - with the imprint of today's digital life onto it.

This creates a juxtaposition between something so rooted and natural with something that is overwhelming panoptic and omnipresent.



Ambient-rock



A meal deal sandwich rock

Ref. 4

@KimyaGandhi

“Language and Type”

Technique: Type

The Jack is representative of today's world but even the Jacks has differential citizenship rights and privileges. Around 10-15% of UK workforce is estimated to be from the "middle-income origin countries" - but as Azoulay puts it, who's for it determine these rules?

In my personal experience from hailing from India, so many of my friends and family prefer working in and for countries outside of their own in order to secure better financial prospects, which makes them a 'Jack' with huge power within their own country, but nearly negligible in the ones that buys their labour.

For this, inspired by the Devanagari typography by Kimya Gandhi, I added more cultural nuance to the Jack.

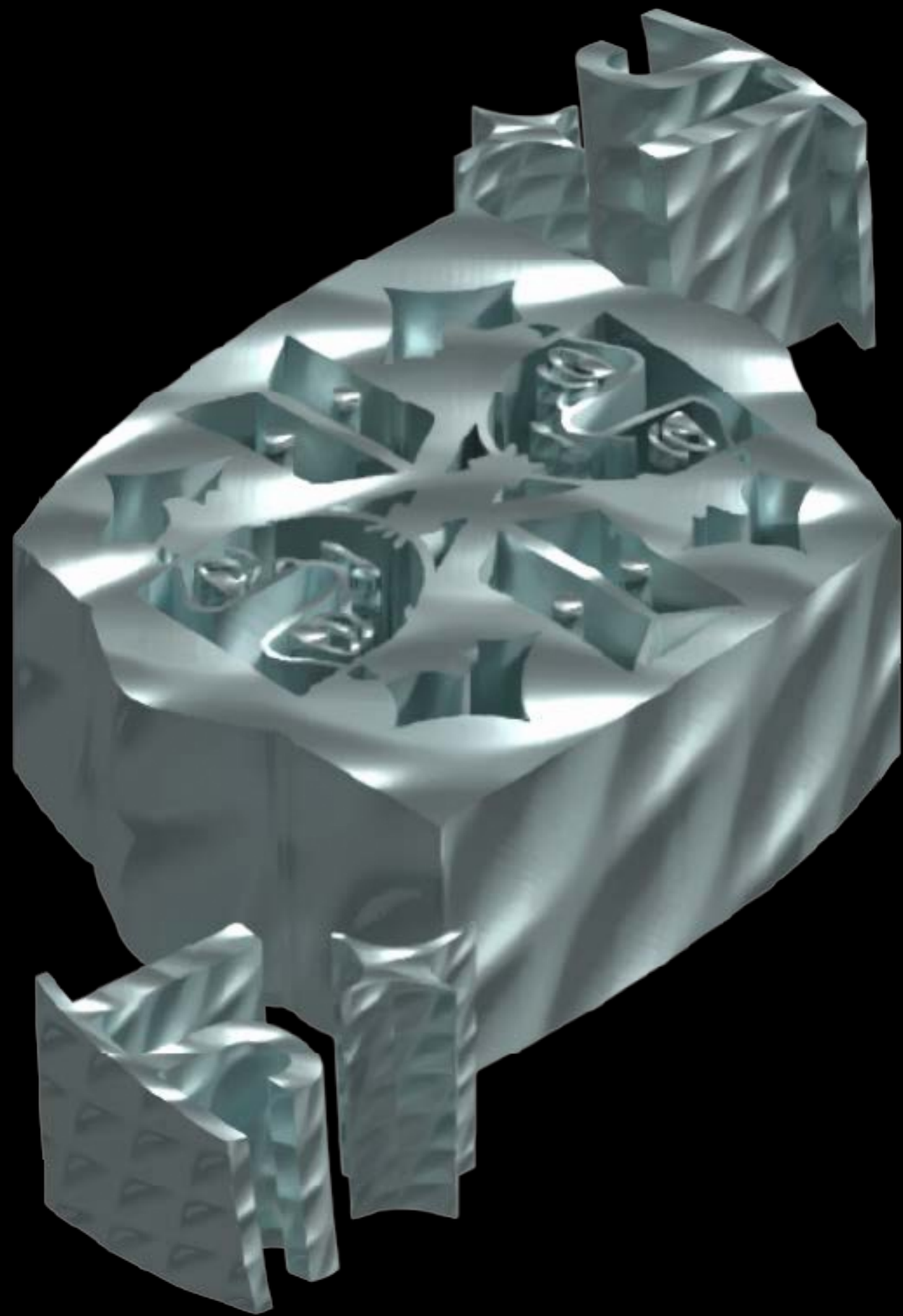
(+ Textiles: the most expensive item exported out of India at the beginning of the East India Company's rule)



A "Sans" adaptation of Devanagari



"G" or ग symbolic of the word for Jack in Hindi/Marathi



Enquiry Statement - Draft 01

In this project, I started out with the idea of placing and exploring privilege across different hierarchies, and how privilege is activated conditionally and is intersectional. To explore this idea, I worked with the catalogue set of 'playing cards', given there is often **an embedded hierarchy within them that gets selectively activated** based on the "rules" of the game, i.e. the **system**.

My first iterations explored an 'alter-ego' for each card, which set out to explore the biased nature of symbols and labels, working with **idea countering any founding 'neutrality' of hierarchical structures even when they are unactivated**. The issue here, however, was that it was not entirely iterative, but instead answering a premeditated hypothesis.

In my second week, I added **materiality** as a dimension to my enquiry - which led to adding weight and material to the cards, changing and revising the role that has been assigned to the card. Using 'Jack' as my new iterative snippet - one which has their own role in the deck- started to see itself in different structures and materials, taking on new shapes that changes its levels of roles.

The **materiality then builds the idea of raw material, extraction and exploitation to it**. It is removed from its natural state- there is a disconnect when the card meets raw material. That tension creates open ended questions about the moving space between resource as neutral and resource as political and extractive.

References

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Please see publication :)

Thanks!!