

Digital Craft:

Research assignment

1.Chosen artefact



Year: 1997
Material: cow skin
Measurements: 43 x38 x 75 cm
Production: Van Eijk & Van der Lubbe
In collection: Centraal Museum Utrecht,
Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen
Rotterdam, Stedelijk Museum
Amsterdam, Museum of Modern Art San
Francisco USA



'Cow Chair'

This project was Niels van Eijk's graduation project at Design Academy Eindhoven in 1997. His idea was that if a shoe nose can keep its form, a chair can do as well. So he tried to stretch some untreated cow skin, which was still wet, around a chair and let it dry for a week. Afterwards he removed the chair and the cow skin kept the chair's form.

For this project he only used natural components like water, skin and some stitches.

The Cow Chair is also for sale, it will cost you around 3300 euro.

2. Process

Thoughts:

So I chose this Cow Chair because it intrigued me. I didn't know whether I liked it or disliked it. In a way I like the aesthetics of the chair, it creates a horror feeling. Also the fact that it wrapped around something exciting and keeps the form of it is interesting.

So I wondered can this horror look be achieved without using the skin of a living species?

During times of climate change and veganism I wanted to do make an animal free alternative of the material leather. So I started experimenting with cooking fruits and vegetables and biological plastic. Afterwards I wanted to turn the samples into bigger sizes to really replicate the wrapping part of the cow chair too. Unfortunately none of my big try-outs were stiff enough to use for wrapping, so in the future I need to figure out a better recipe.



Recipe

Banana peels / fruit
Water
Glycerine
Vinegar
Potato starch

Banana peels - banana fruit



Fresh



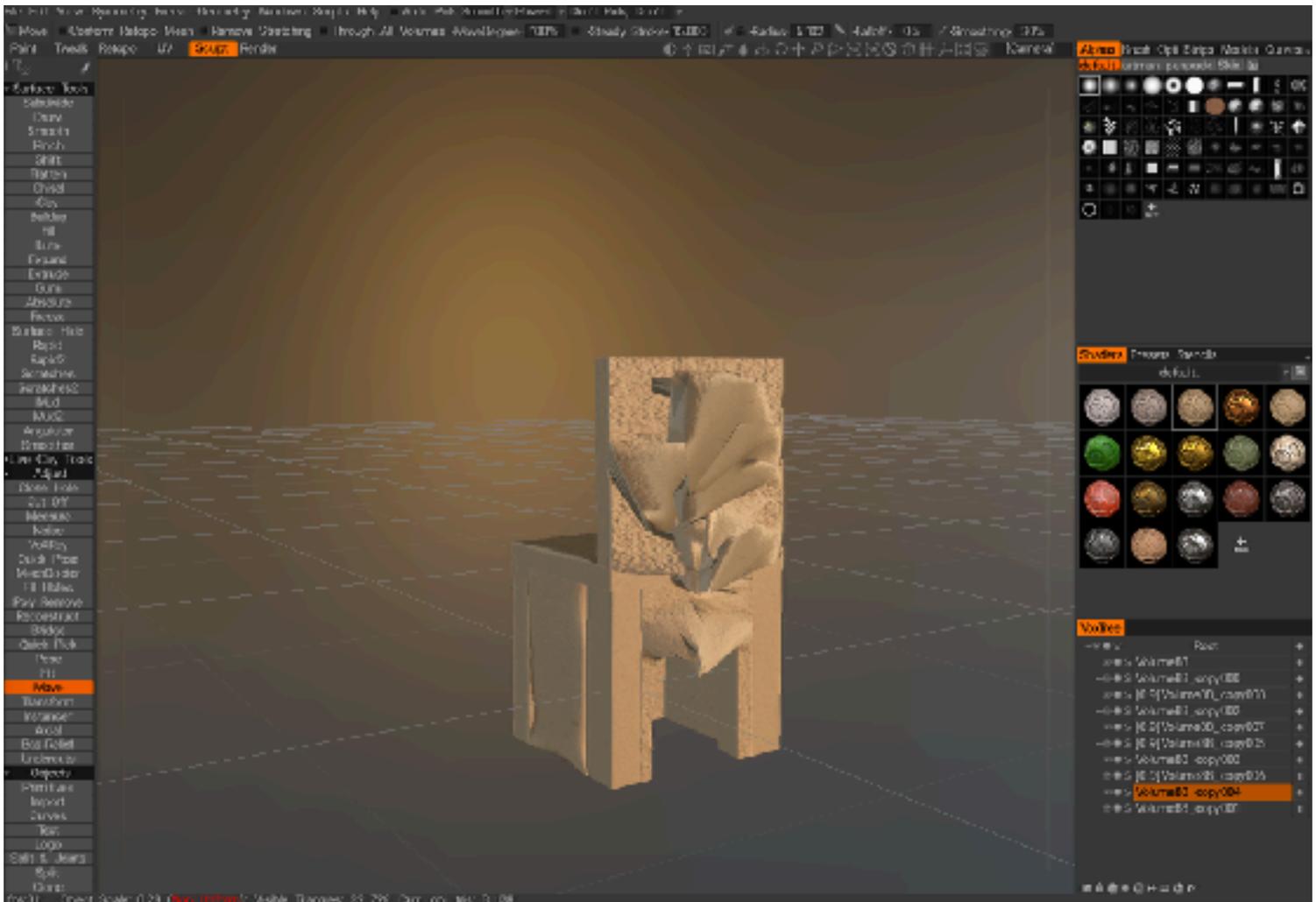
8 hours later in the sun

3.Reproduction of the chosen artefact:



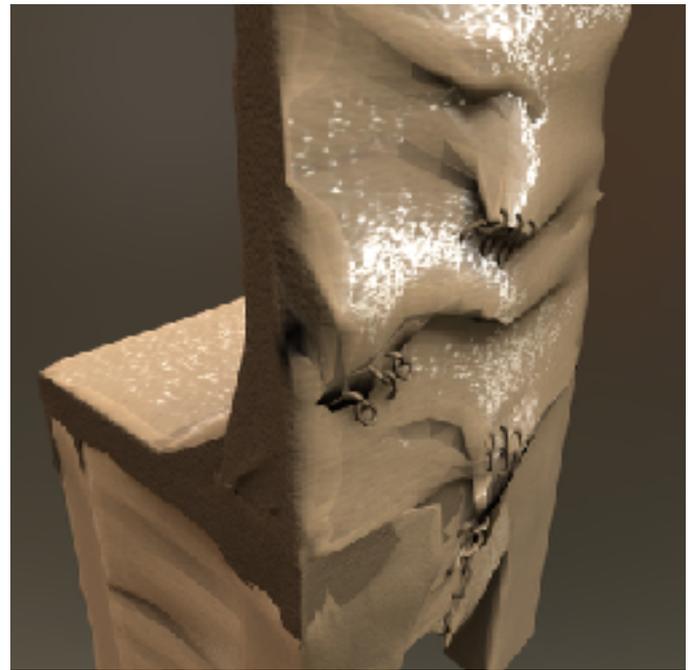
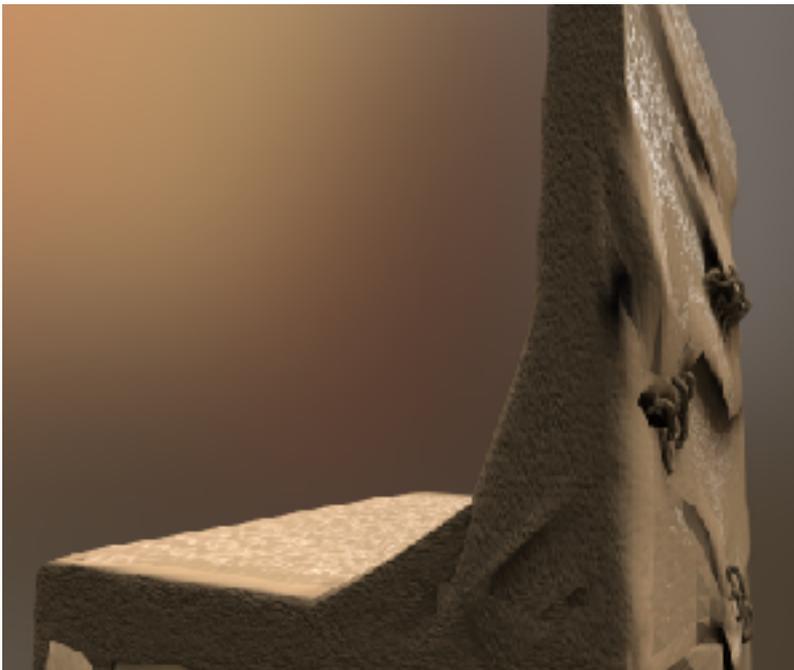
Stealing method:
3D-Coat
Translating the chair design in a digital program, without losing the organic feeling of it.

Relation to the newer technology:
Copying the texture



The reproduction (almost finished):

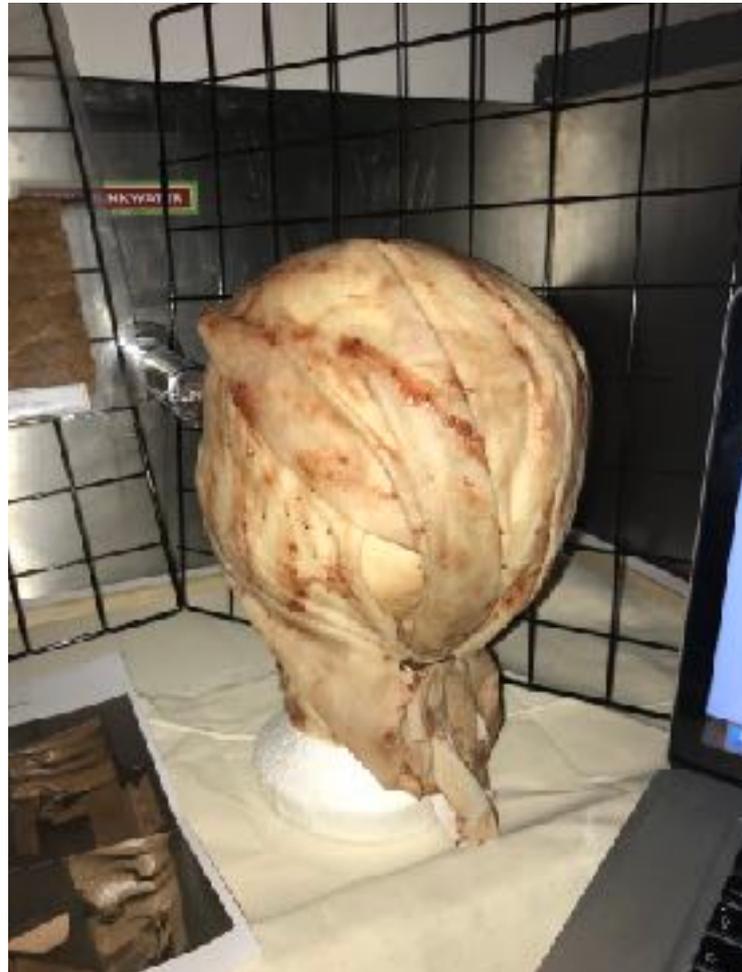
I tried to replicate a potato like material for the chair, to make it a animal free copy of the Chow Chair.



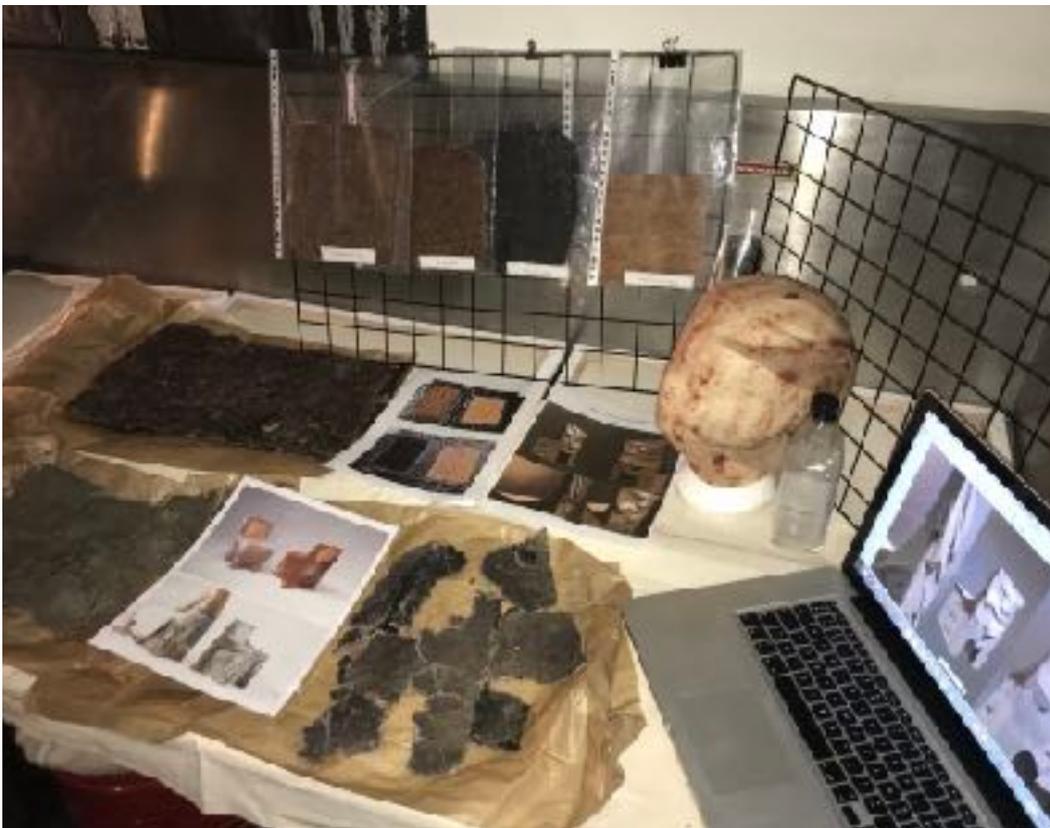
4. transformation of the chosen artefact:



Unfortunately none of these big experiments were stiff enough to use for wrapping. So I made an alternative with cotton and strawberry jelly to translate my idea of the transformation. I wrapped it around a face to create a horror like look and closed it with some safety clips. The result was quite sticky, so I wouldn't use strawberry jelly again, but in the end it did visualise my idea. I would like to use this wrapping technique even more in my future designs.



5. The presentation



Our group presented in the dark Doka room because all of our themes were a little bit mysterious. I presented there my material samples, also the failed ones, and some images of my process, artefact and copy.