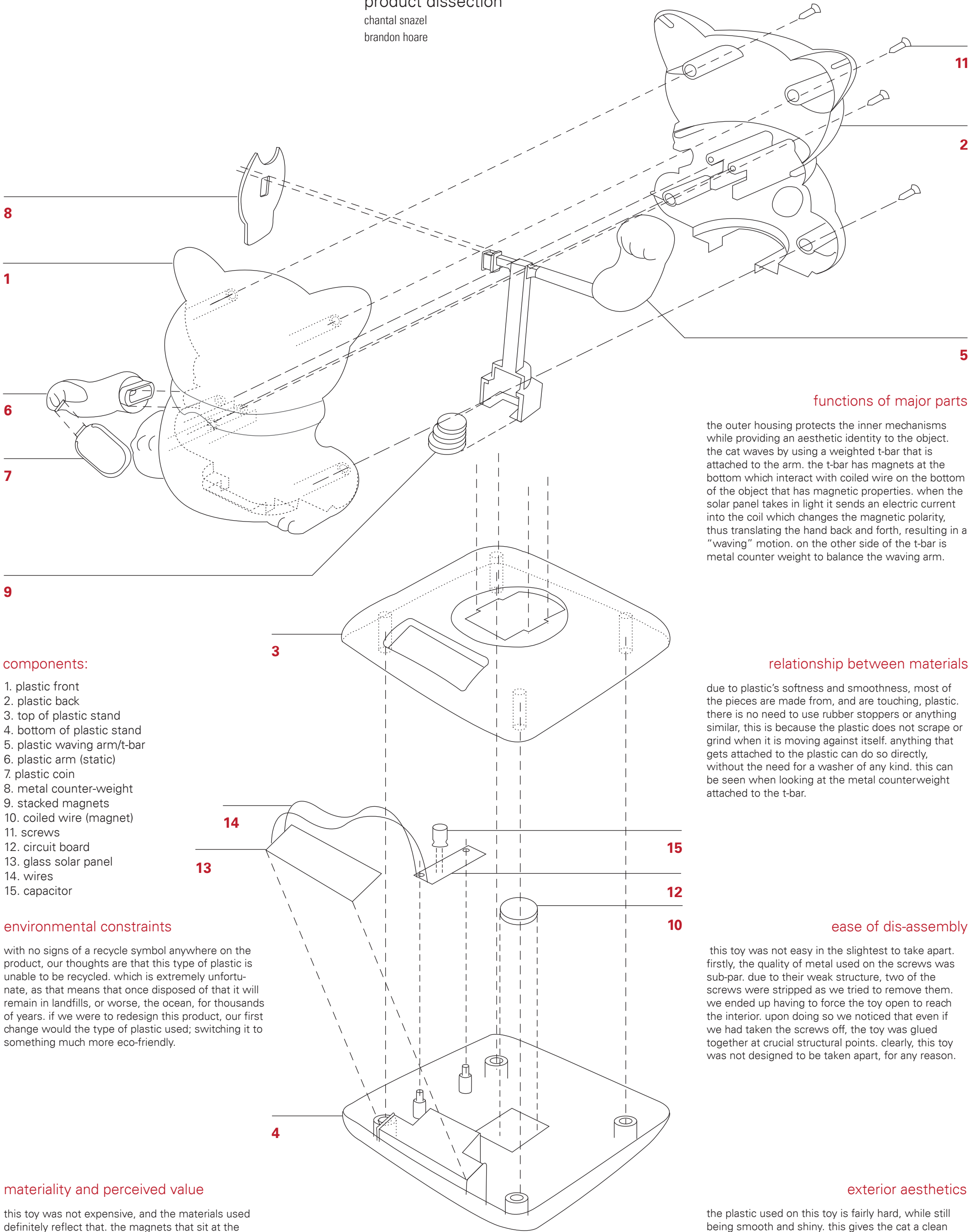


lucky cat toy

product dissection
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brandon hoare



components:

- 1. plastic front
- 2. plastic back
- 3. top of plastic stand
- 4. bottom of plastic stand
- 5. plastic waving arm/t-bar
- 6. plastic arm (static)
- 7. plastic coin
- 8. metal counter-weight
- 9. stacked magnets
- 10. coiled wire (magnet)
- 11. screws
- 12. circuit board
- 13. glass solar panel
- 14. wires
- 15. capacitor

environmental constraints

with no signs of a recycle symbol anywhere on the product, our thoughts are that this type of plastic is unable to be recycled. which is extremely unfortunate, as that means that once disposed of that it will remain in landfills, or worse, the ocean, for thousands of years. if we were to redesign this product, our first change would be the type of plastic used; switching it to something much more eco-friendly.

materiality and perceived value

this toy was not expensive, and the materials used definitely reflect that. the magnets that sit at the bottom of the t-bar were affixed using a low quality glue that would not last the test of time. this resulted in the magnets falling out and the arm now exhibiting non-standard waving motions, also known as, now being broken. as mentioned earlier, another indicator of the level of quality is the screws used for assembly. lastly, it is plastic, and the plastic is not particularly nice in any way. lucky cats, like this one, can be made from a range of materials. often more expensive, such as ceramic. the plastic does however provide the product with a long lasting exterior shell that will not wither away easily at all.

functions of major parts

the outer housing protects the inner mechanisms while providing an aesthetic identity to the object. the cat waves by using a weighted t-bar that is attached to the arm. the t-bar has magnets at the bottom which interact with coiled wire on the bottom of the object that has magnetic properties. when the solar panel takes in light it sends an electric current into the coil which changes the magnetic polarity, thus translating the hand back and forth, resulting in a “waving” motion. on the other side of the t-bar is metal counter weight to balance the waving arm.

relationship between materials

due to plastic’s softness and smoothness, most of the pieces are made from, and are touching, plastic. there is no need to use rubber stoppers or anything similar, this is because the plastic does not scrape or grind when it is moving against itself. anything that gets attached to the plastic can do so directly, without the need for a washer of any kind. this can be seen when looking at the metal counterweight attached to the t-bar.

ease of dis-assembly

this toy was not easy in the slightest to take apart. firstly, the quality of metal used on the screws was sub-par. due to their weak structure, two of the screws were stripped as we tried to remove them. we ended up having to force the toy open to reach the interior. upon doing so we noticed that even if we had taken the screws off, the toy was glued together at crucial structural points. clearly, this toy was not designed to be taken apart, for any reason.

exterior aesthetics

the plastic used on this toy is fairly hard, while still being smooth and shiny. this gives the cat a clean and polished look, at least originally. over time the gleam of the finish has faded and left a matte surface behind. the plastic has been coloured to give each aspect of the toy its own personality. for example, the use of red for the base could be translated into the cat is sitting on top of a lucky red pillow (red being a lucky colour in japanese and chinese culture).