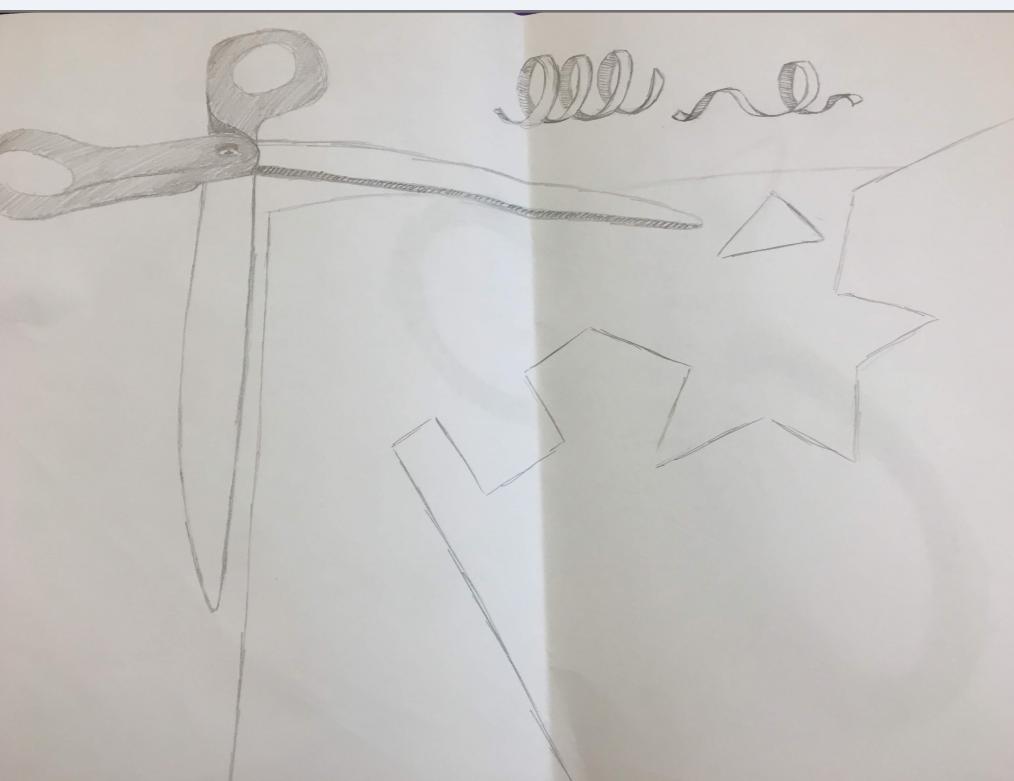
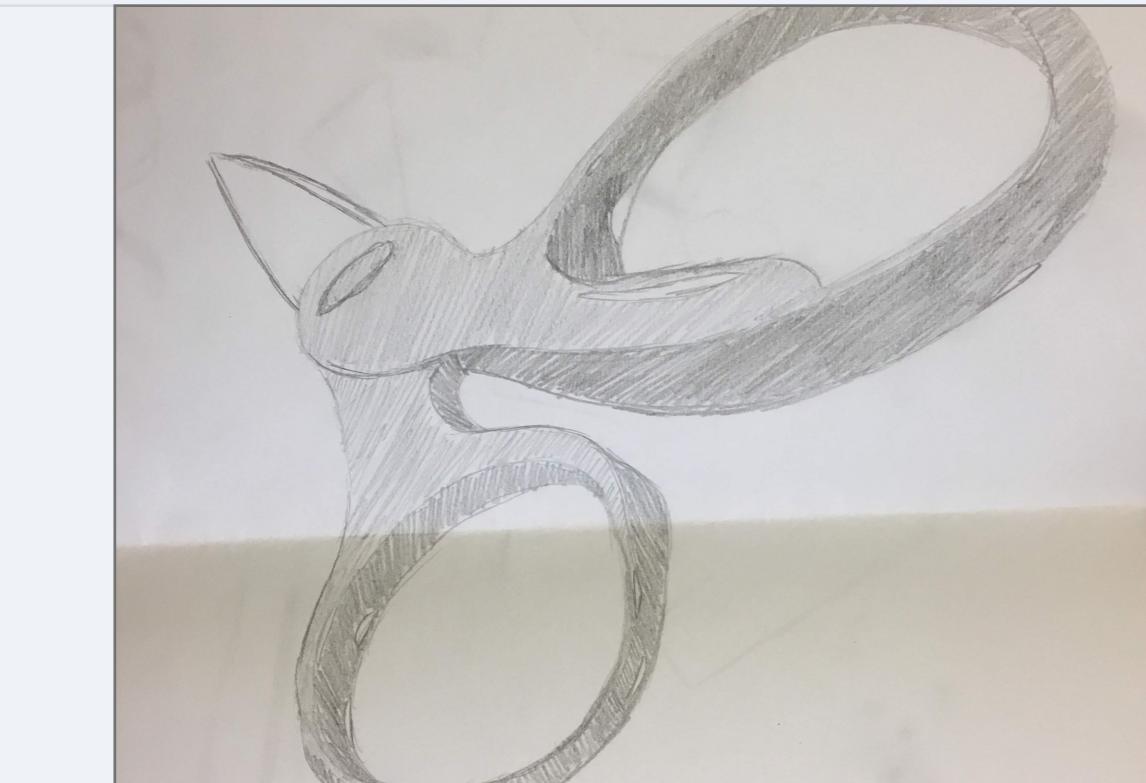


The Designed Object

Scissors

In Situ • Public Sculpture

The Designed Object



Scissors

Affordances:

There are two holes, a smaller rounder one and a larger oblong one, that afford holding by putting your thumb through the smaller hole and fingers through the larger. The blades afford cutting because they are sharp. There is a non-sharp side covered in plastic that affords that the part a person touches should be there (rather than the blades). The pivot/hinge affords that the blades must be opened and shut to cut things, and that the side with the holes should move to force the blades to move. In my scissors' case, the shape of the handle affords right handed cutting. The scissors can still be held in the left hand, just less comfortably.

Historical:

Blades preceded scissors, but scissors aren't a young invention. Spring-type scissors (two blades connected with a C shaped piece of metal) originated in the Bronze Age. Many regions used them including the Middle East, Europe, and East Asia. Scissors evolved to use an open/close hand motion rather than a squeeze, although spring-types do still exist. In the 19th century, many scissors were handmade with ornate details, but this was later simplified so that scissors could be mass produced.

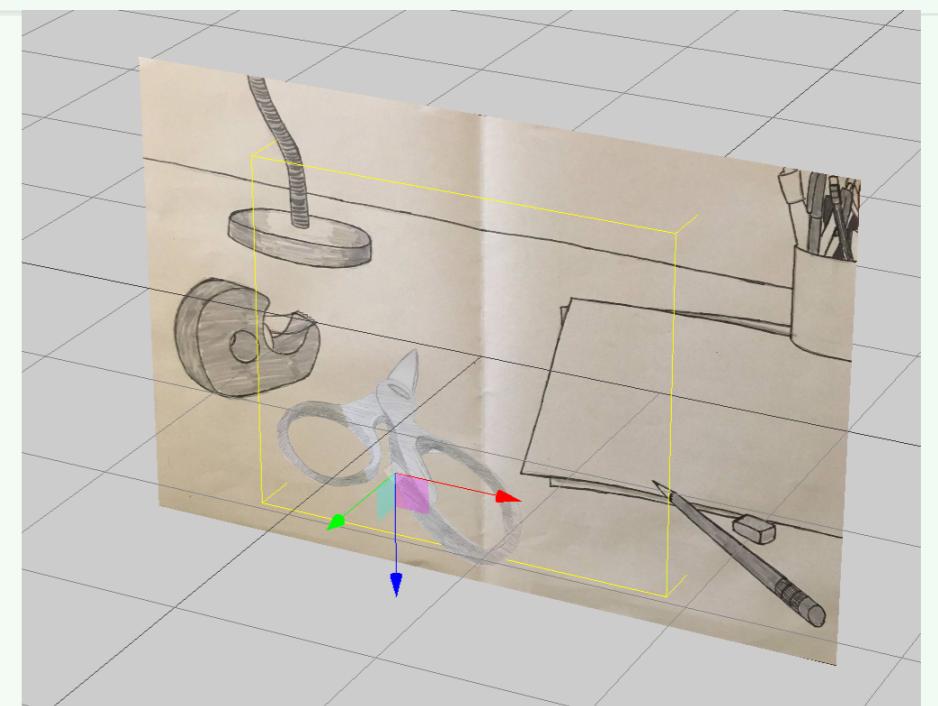
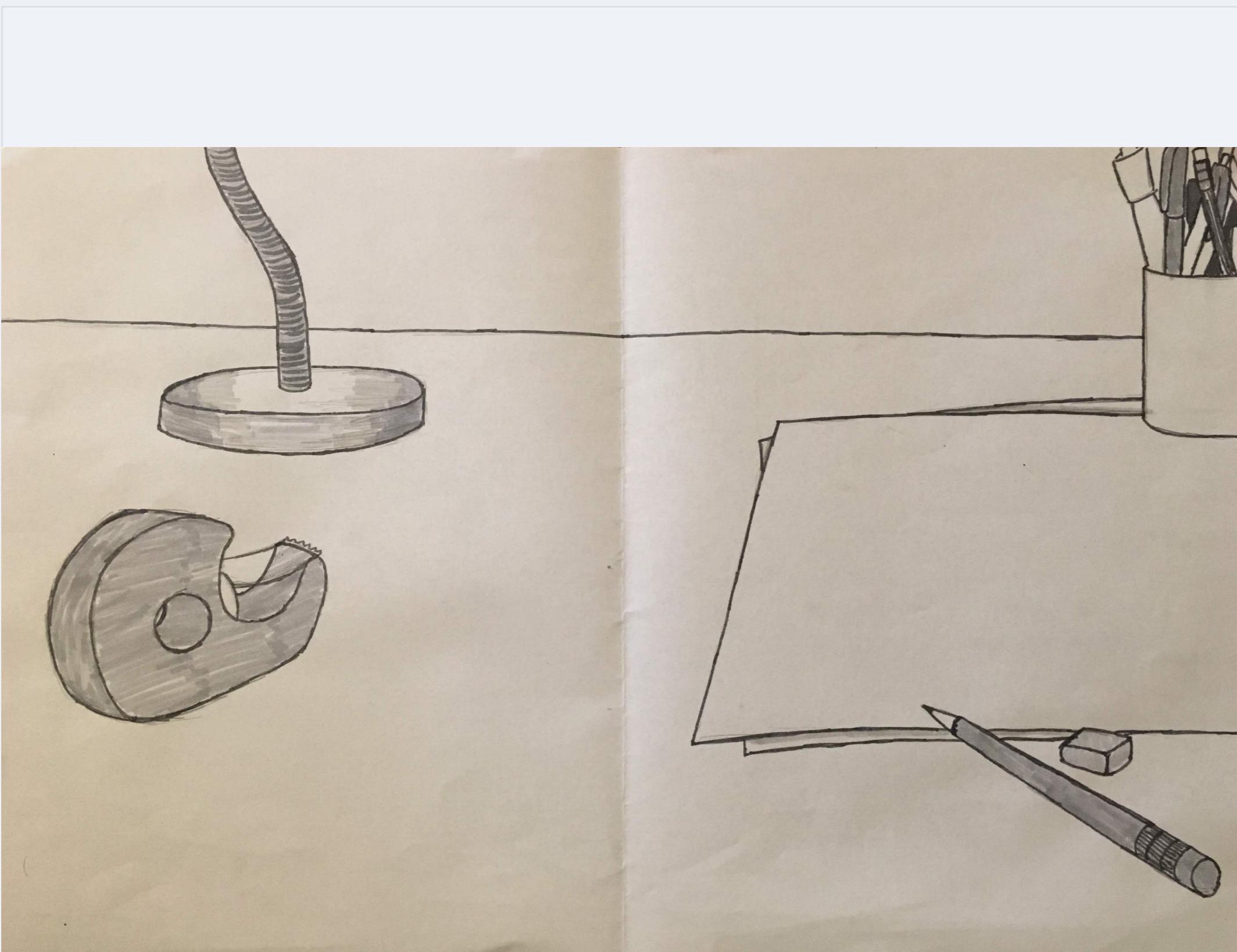
Constraints:

Scissors can't cut large stacks of paper or thick objects. For that, a single larger blade is needed at the expense of safety. For my scissors specifically, the object being cut can't be flush against another surface because opening your hand to get ready to cut would force you to bump the handle on that surface. Surgical scissors with the blades at an angle are an example of scissors without this constraint. My scissors were also made with preference for right handed cutting, which is a slight constraint for left handed people. No environmental elements are necessary to use scissors, but depending on the metal used it might be better to keep them dry or else they might rust.

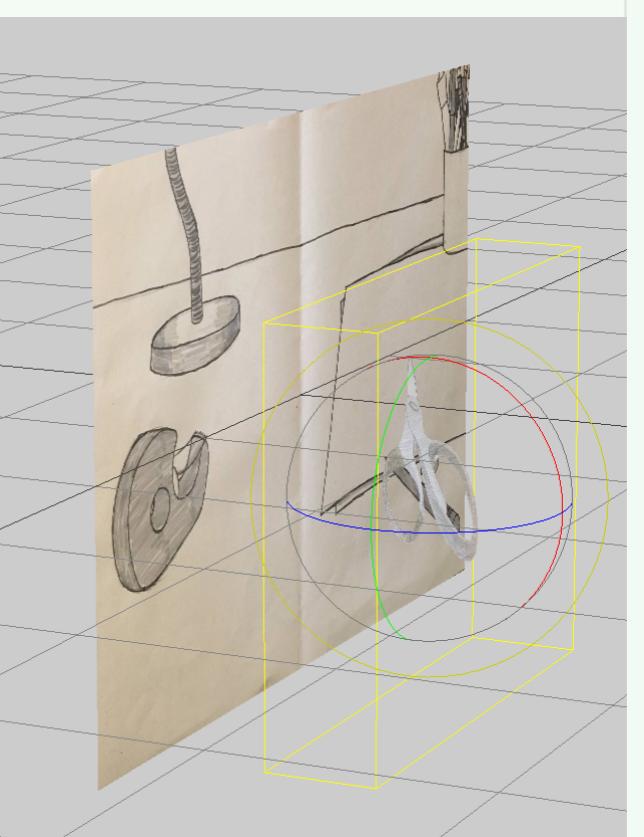
Cultural Constraints:

Scissors have had a very interesting effect on culture. "Scissor" has become a verb meaning a specific way of moving one's legs. Rock Paper Scissors is a game most people know, with what many view as scissors' main function, cutting paper, coming into play. There are also many superstitions surrounding scissors. For example, opening and closing scissors at a wedding in some African cultures can make the groom unable to consummate the marriage. Many cultures think dropping a pair of scissors will bring bad luck, especially if they land upright with both points embedded into the floor. Other superstitions state that scissors can be used as protection from evil spirits.

The Designed Object



Constructing the project
in Artivive



The Designed Object



A sculpture on a zebra crosswalk.

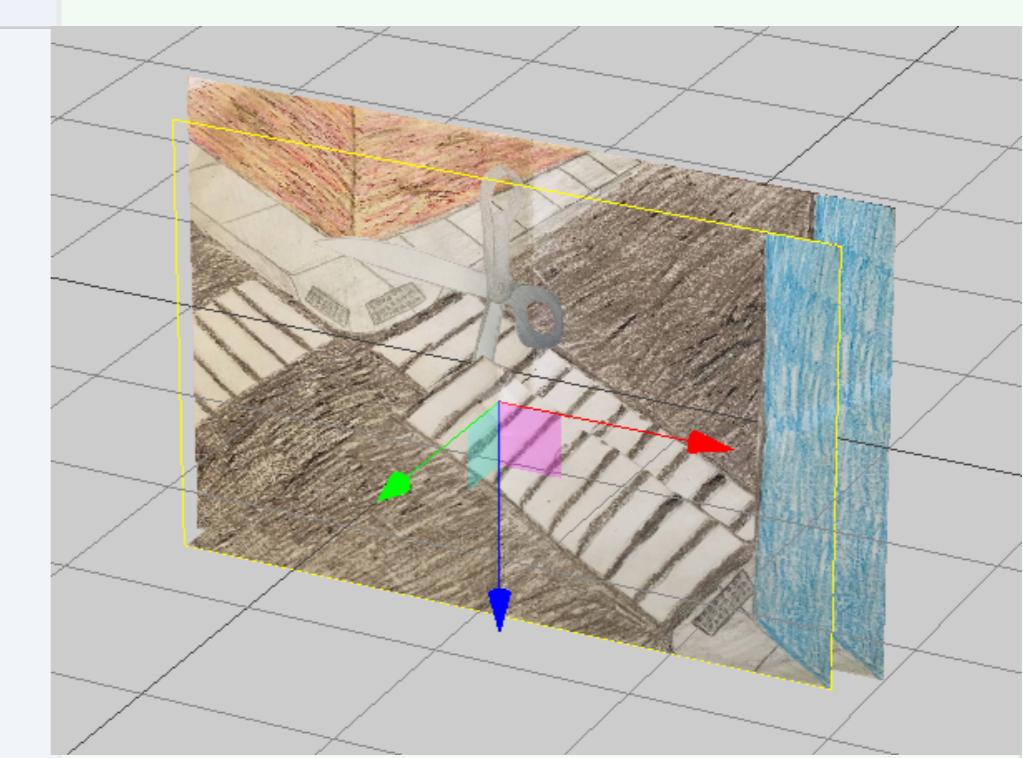
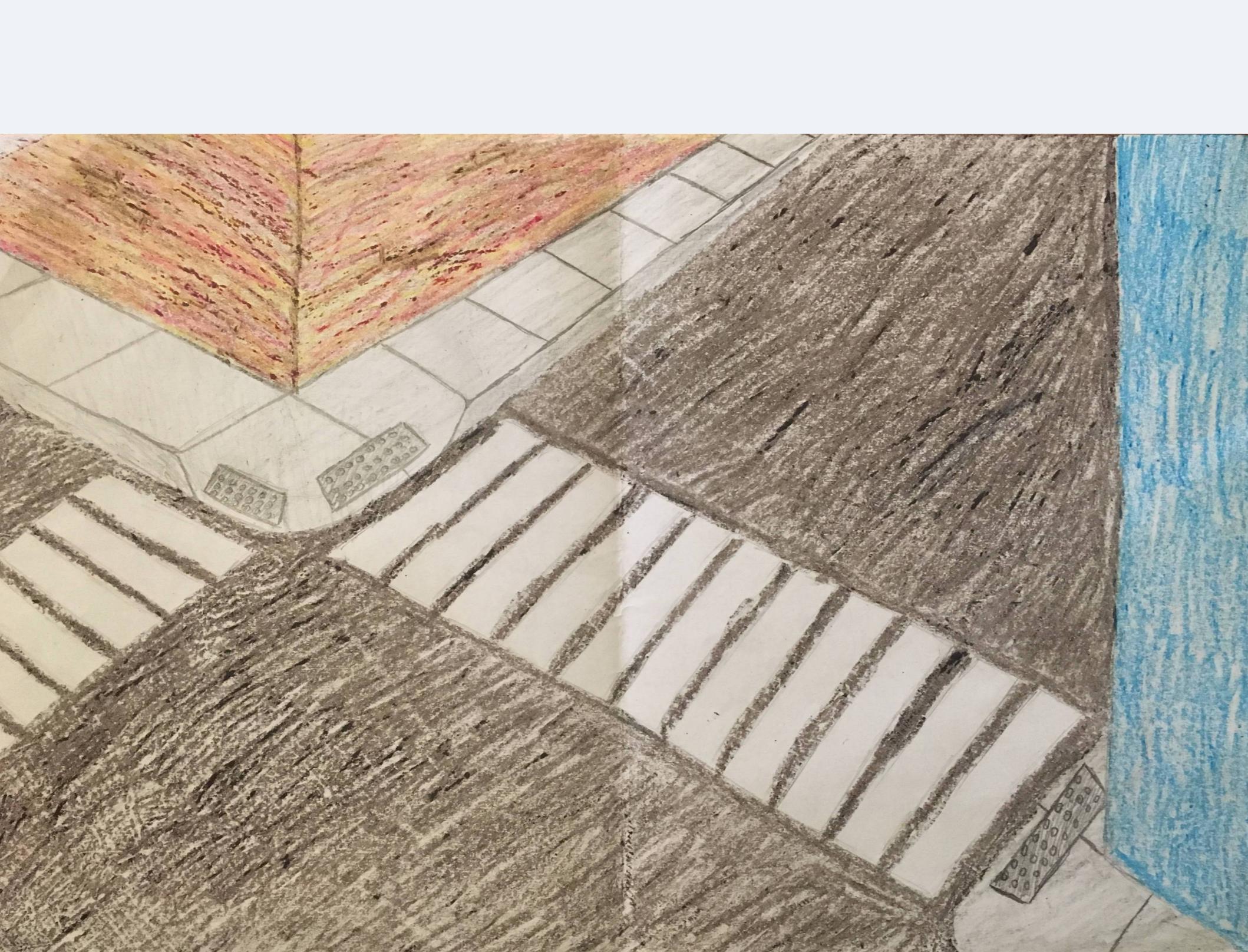
IThe scissors are very large. The scissors' handles are above the ground, as is one of the blades, reaching about 5 feet tall at its highest point. The other blade is embedded into the ground as if it's cutting through the road at the crosswalk. I want it to look like the scissors are cutting the last strip off of a white paper or something so it can be glued onto the road to construct the crosswalk. To cross the crosswalk, people will either have to walk around the scissors or duck under the top blade.

One way the sculpture would alter the viewer's idea of scissors is by showing the viewer what will probably be the biggest pair of scissors they've ever seen. It seems like scissors are seen as a small generic tool. Even ceremonial scissors aren't that big. By using a pair of scissors so large, this sculpture will highlight details of scissors that viewers may notice for the first time.

The sculpture would also challenge commonly held ideas of how scissors are used, since no one would think to use scissors to cut rocks, let alone asphalt or road paint. On the other side, the sculpture would provide an interesting alternate take on crosswalks. Crosswalks are paint on asphalt and it's pretty easy for a viewer to see that, but the sculpture will make it seem like white strips are being cut and laid out to form a crosswalk on the road.

[Next ↗](#)

The Designed Object



Constructing the project
in Artivive

