

PORTFOLIO

Máté Levente Mérey

KEYCHAIN HOLDER

Our first craft task was to make a keychain, with the requirement to choose some kind of animal. So, our keychain guardian had to be depicted in some figurative way.

For this, I chose the motif of a stag beetle larva, as I encountered them often during my childhood gardening, and they live in my memories as friendly, dear creatures. However, they evoke disgust and repulsion in others, so I aimed to evoke a protective effect by appealing to instinctual emotions.

The technique used for making it was wax casting in bronze, for which I first made a turned mass model to aid in carving. I crafted a wax carving head for my basic form, allowing me to create uniform torus that later served as the basis for carving. Casting presented difficulties due to the material's high absorption, which required some post-processing work to resolve.





BODY TUNING



The first task of our semester was titled „Body Tuning,” which involved transforming the human body in some way, whether in proportions, appearance, or movement.

Primarily, I focused on concealing and hiding the human figure. To achieve this, I concentrated on covering the face, head, and then the entire body. During the modeling phase, I experimented with various types of paper, with the following three capturing my attention the most.

I repeated the final body-concealing, performative action several times at various points on campus, even in the center of communal spaces. This negative sculptural act culminated in the reduction of forms and the disappearance of the individual.





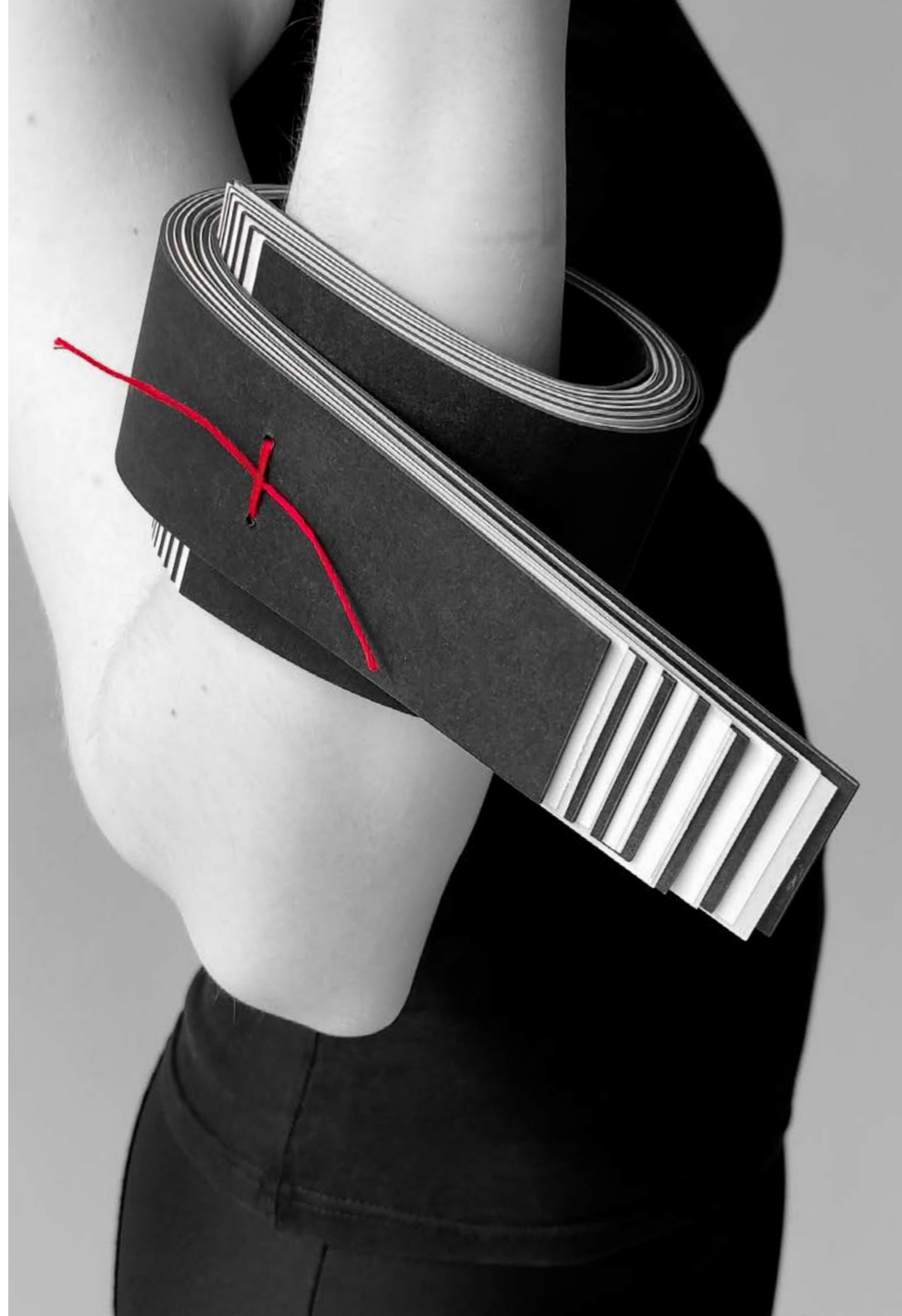
PAPER JEWELLERY

Our next design task of the semester was the utilization of paper at the level of jewelry. In this, I found the layering of various qualities of paper to be an exciting challenge. The rhythmic alternation of crepe, photo cardboard, and tracing paper resulted in dynamic striping.

The papers were fastened together using bookbinding techniques, evoking the mood of Japanese notebooks. To enhance the concept's dynamism, some jewelry pieces featured red-and-white binding thread.

After finding the baseline and establishing a regular system, I expanded the work towards more chaotic arrangements to explore the widest palette possible. In the latter, emotional expression began to emerge, serving as a therapeutic approach to stress management.







MONOLITH

The design task of this semester was titled „Monolith” requiring our jewelry to be made from a continuous material. My goal was to experiment with materials, for which I found the mycelium composite to be a promising innovation.

Thematically, I aligned this ear-ring with Stella McCartney's Spring 2022 collection, which featured mushroom leather bags. For the basic appearance, I chose the ear protector shape worn by water polo players, fitting with the breakthroughs seen in the collection, which add excitement to the visibility of the ear.

The material experiments yielded good results with the mushroom. Through multipart gypsum and wax growth forms, the jewelry pieces were fully formed.





QUAIL EGG SETTING

In this design task, we had to safely encase a blown quail egg in an alternative way in jewelry. In contrast to its small, fragile shell, I began to think about a flexible encasing layer, the final material of which became a dual-layer silicone.

In its formal design, I returned to the motif of the egg, creating a turned-out, flipped-up caricature of it, tying a knot on its pinched „white“ to make the jewelry wearable around the neck. The pattern form was turned from aluminum, from which the silicone pattern was created.

Due to the jewelry's hollow and flexible nature, it can be stretched and fitted with a tool, allowing the delicate eggshell to be placed inside. Thus, the opening serves not only an aesthetic role, showcasing the internal content when worn, but also functions as a functional aperture.



ALTERNATIVE SETTING



Another design task of our semester was to create a novel setting for a traditional, faceted gemstone.

For this, I chose wood as the base material, intrigued by its flexibility. I designed an elongated shape that, through wedging, would accommodate the stone snugly. To prevent breakage, laminated wood proved most suitable for the task. Pre-cutting the stone bed ensured its stability, and to prevent it from being pulled out, I also equipped the ring with an additional copper strap.

Formally, I was inspired by the rounded nature of the stone's cut and the central symmetry of its grip. By shifting the cleavage in one direction, a more unified, gestural form emerges when viewed from the side.





SPHERE SETTING



The craft task related to the semester also aimed at setting. Here, we had to design a ring with an alternative grip for a given shaped stone.

As a challenge, I aimed to create a tension jewelry piece, for which I began using steel early on due to its flexibility and toughness. To split the hard steel wire ring that tensions around the spherical mineral, I personally made the hand-operated tool.



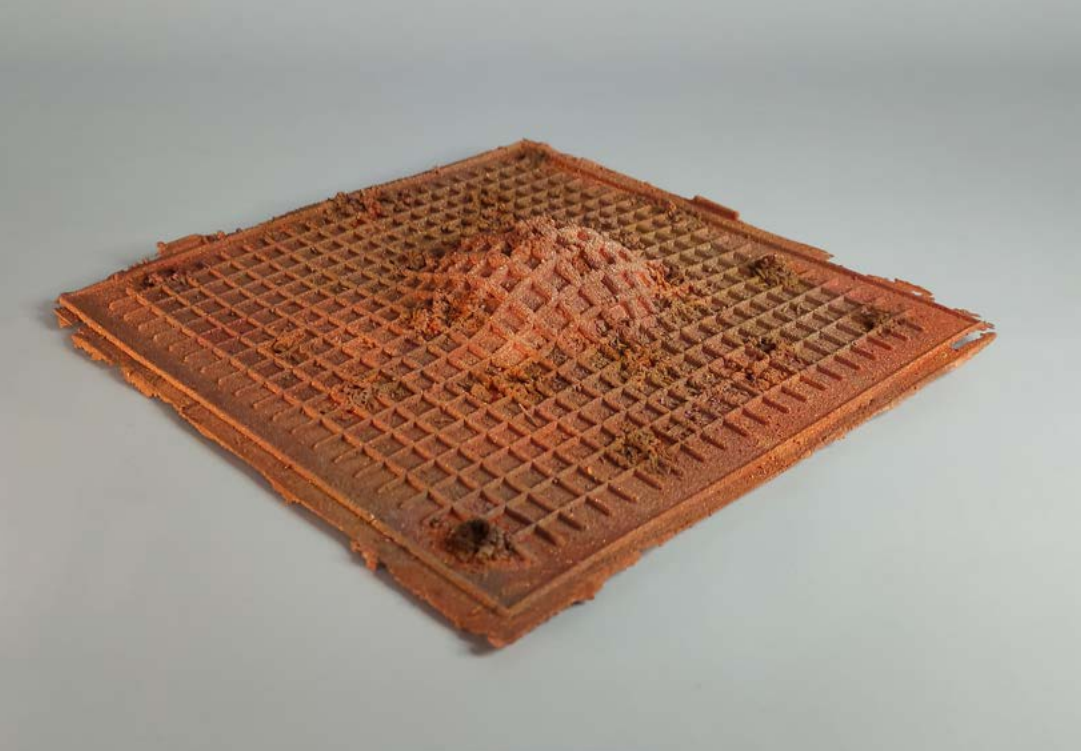
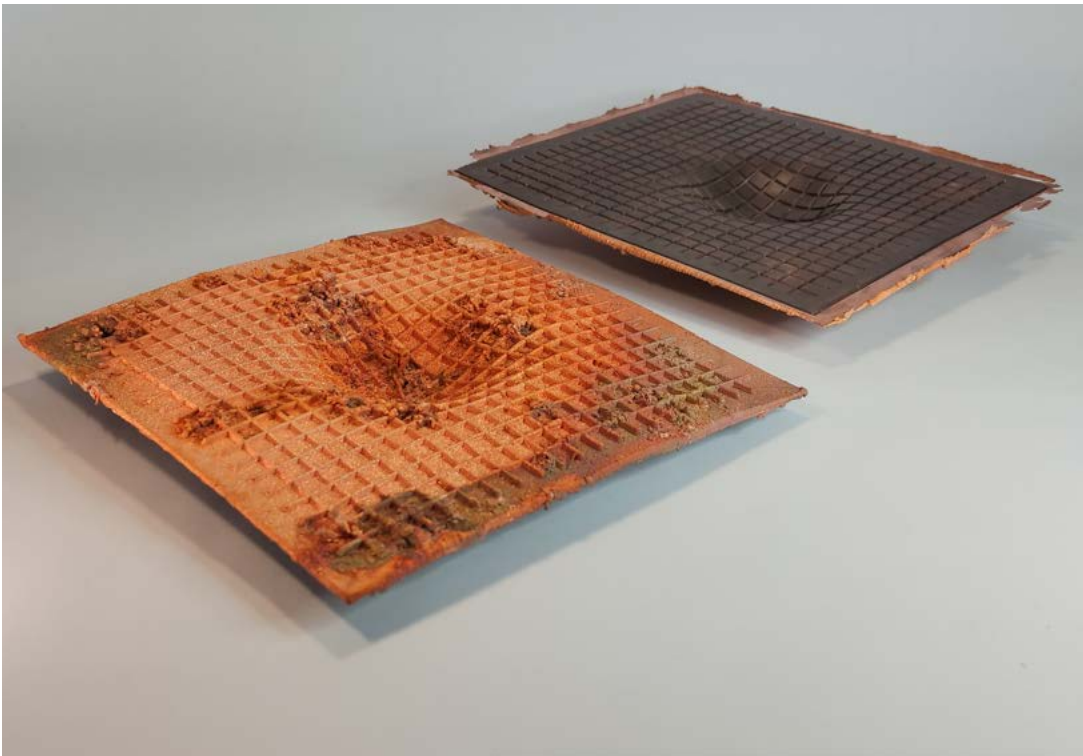
GALVANIC-BOWLS



In our fifth semester, our task was to design a bowl, with the requirement of using metal as the central material. Once again, I embarked on an experiment, this time delving into the technique of electroforming.

The essence of this technique lies in creating a thicker metal layer through electrolysis, either as an independent object or as a coating. Historically, it was primarily used in printing, and currently, it's used for museum replicas. However, the crystalline, wild formations produced as a byproduct were considered undesirable in the industry and were concealed.

I aimed to showcase this duality of objects created through this technique in my bowl set, drawing formal inspiration from 20th-century digital diagrams depicting the effect of gravity on the space-time continuum.







CIRCUS AWARD

Our final semester's task was to design an award in a client-based situation with the participation of the Capital Circus of Budapest. I chose to design for the Newcomer Show Prize.

For this, I started my research along the keywords of tradition, playfulness, and status. This led me to the classic, pointed clown hat as the main motif, an emblematic form that has accompanied circuses for centuries, from the commedia dell'arte troupes through Pierrot to today's white clowns. This way, passing on a hatful of tradition to young talents.

My material choice fell on porcelain due to its pure white appearance, nobility, and ability to be mass-produced.





STRUCTURE

Our admission to university began with our first summer camp, during which we familiarized ourselves with the technique of bronze casting in a task named „Structure”. Using wax sheets and rod materials, we were tasked with creating a structure, preparing it for casting, pouring it on-site, and then refining it later in the semester.

I aimed to create a freely treated constructivist-style sculpture, where the rod materials seemingly penetrate the sheets, whose surfaces vary in pairs.





SMOKEY-PUFFBALL

In the elective course of the second semester, under the title „Body of Smoke,” we were tasked with creating a plastic object with an incense holder function. We had to choose some form of vitality as our inspirational basis.

I drew inspiration from the shapes of puffball mushrooms, as their spore dispersal is very similar to the movement of smoke, thus creating a fitting combination. To achieve this, I poured plaster into flexible tubes and manipulated them until I obtained the desired form.

During our usual summer camp in Mezőtúr, the object was cast. For this, I needed to build an internal inlet system to preserve the natural surface of the casting outside.



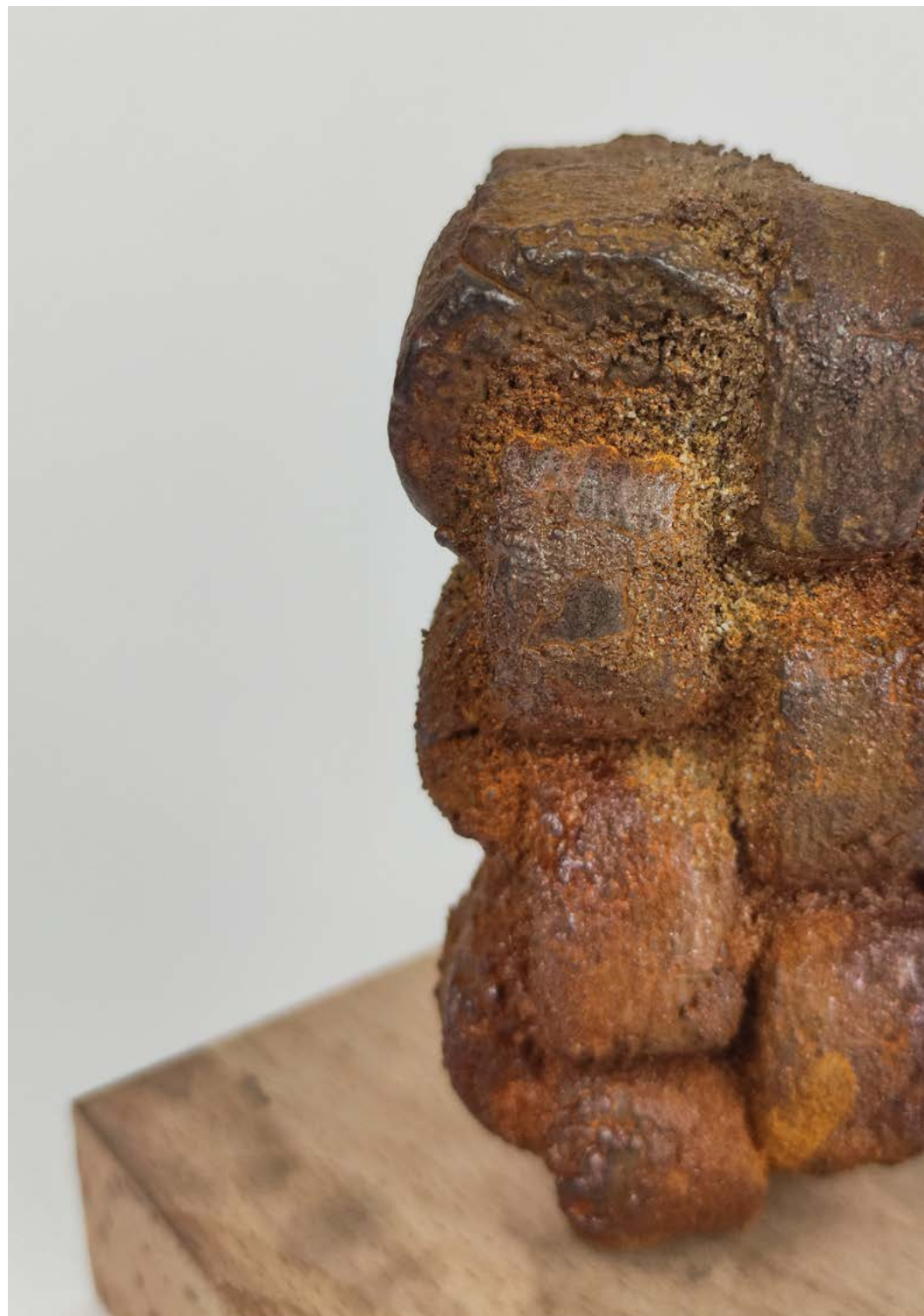
RUST KNOT



I created this object during our foundry course called „Malmivalu” in Tallinn. The technique used was a special foam casting method, where I made a knotted form out of styrofoam. After creating sprues, I molded it in sand, and as the molten iron flows in, it burns away the foam form, taking its place.

The idea of knotting comes from my childhood, where the four-square braid is its name, which I usually used for my zippers and other items.

The knot itself is a symbol of infinity, intertwining into itself, forever standing unbreakable. The rusting, as a surface treatment, symbolizes the factor of time in the context, questioning the eternity of the sculpture's afterlife.



SWINGING



This smaller sculpture was also created during the Malmivallu foundry course, using wax casting.

My playful concept encompassed an object that, like the „Jack-in-the-box,” always returns to its original position. The base shape was a sphere, from which I carved out the hollow object with a heavier bottom. To further enhance the playful aspect, I also made a conical rod with a strong magnet inserted into it, allowing the rocking sculpture to be pulled out of its initial position.

