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Final Year Project Proposal

A reoccurring thought that I have been investigating is the fluidity of function. A certain event can manifest which triggers a cause and effect pattern that modifies an object’s function. Such changes have been detected in the space of my apartment, like the transformation of my dining table into a classroom where I sit and receive my education, or the shift of my house corridor into a tennis court. These shifts in function were a reaction to the urgency of existing in one space free of infection and adjusting that space to accommodate all of our activities.

In this project, I intend to create a table tennis/ ping-pong table that fits in my corridor. During the lockdown period, my friend and I used Frescobol rackets to pass a ping-pong ball to each other. The wooden rackets acted like a ping-pong table and bounced the ball without moving or swinging the racket. The challenge was at finding the right angle for the racket so when the ball lands on the racket it bounces towards my opponent in the right direction. The only rule in this game is that the ball should not touch the ground. Unlike the traditional ping-pong, the new game requires minimal physical movement and mental effort which helped in keeping it a frequent break activity in between our daily tasks.

At the beginning of my process I was looking at surrealism and surrealist artists. I tried adopting some of their approaches like Paranoia and Automatic Writing to help me suspend my logic and get started somewhere. I then read Walid Sadek’s *a Room with a Conversation in the Middle*. It portrays an image from the war when corridors were being used as an escape space as bombing took place outside. His portrayal and close observations of how corridors change function relate directly to what I am trying to inquire into. Bruno Murani’s work lead me through ‘designing’ my table, looking at his work process answered my questions when it came to functionality and influenced my design decision.

Designing a new ping-pong table that fits in my corridor allows me to practice playing and avoid the virus by staying at home. Since this activity has been integrated within my daily routine, and my skill level is still quite low, I decided to design a ping-pong table that would provide me with a clear and distinct advantage as it is more fun to be winning than losing.

I therefore intend to create a modified ping-pong table that would allow me to win. I have decided on a few adjustments that would help me achieve my design without being obvious to my opponent. The first adjustment is the size of the table, usually ping-pong tables are cut in the middle where the net lays. I am going to use that to my advantage and make my opponent’s side longer than normal by 20 cm making it easier for me to land my shots on their side. My opponent’s side should also gradually rise to a height of 10 cm upwards. This would also help me land the ball on my opponent’s side but would serve more as an obstacle in the way of their racket swing. I would like to point out that normal ping-pong rackets are going to be used in this game. As for my side of the table, the surface material will be made out of hard rubber, this serves the function of absorbing the spin of the ball and would also decrease the ball’s momentum, making it easier to hit. My side would also become narrower by 10 cm as it moves further from the opponent. This will make it more difficult for the opponent to land their shots on my side. The final adjustment would be in color; I decided to have a bright surface color on my side of the table to visually trick my opponent into believing that my side has a regular size rather than narrowed, and have their side painted in matt dark color to hide the fact that their side in longer and lifted upwards.