



**SOMETHINGS**

**BUREAU411**



## BUREAU411

Founded by Assi Joseph Meidan and Dror Tshuva, Bureau411 is a design and architecture studio dedicated to exploring aesthetics that reveal the structural and material truth of objects and spaces across various scales and scopes of work. The studio's projects blend creative expression with architectural purpose, resulting in spaces and objects that strive to be both visually compelling and functional. This approach allows them to navigate between art, design, and structural integrity. Together, they practice minimalism that enhances significance, stripping designs to their essence to ensure every element serves a practical or emotional role.

Craftsmanship is at the heart of effort. The designs are grounded in a respect for materials and the process of creation. Whether it's a "one-of" object, a series, or an entire space, each project is made with attention to detail, ensuring a final product rich in texture or in lack-there-of, and techniques - and thus, in meaning.

By reusing materials—often salvaged or recycled—not only reduced waste is achievable, but also a small history is embedded in a new object. In other words, reused material is curated, rather than merely used, as every object, structure, and space is one part of an ongoing dialogue between past and present, where the memories of materials are as important as their functional role.

This principle forms the core of Bureau411's aesthetic - celebrating what has been, while embracing what can be, and what could have been and hadn't.

**SOMETHINGS** is a booklet that includes reflections from theorists and practicing designers, written in response to some of the presented objects created by the studio in 2024. These texts—though written in hindsight—offer insights into the ideas and approaches that shape the designs or engage with the designs as completed works, creating a space for deeper exploration and opening up new layers of dialogue around pieces.







# LAMP BVB01







# LAMP A CONCRETE TILE SYSTEM

## PROCESSING MATTER / Arch. HADAR PORAT

### Moulding

“In order to produce a form, one must construct a certain defined mould” writes Gilbert Simondon, explaining the evolution of creating a clay brick, which needs to be “prepared in a certain fashion with a certain type of matter.”<sup>1</sup> The mould itself embodies certainty: its initial structure, its intentional emptiness ready to be filled, and the anticipated order that emerges as concrete flows into shape, gives the mould its inherent power. Creating it requires envisioning the eventual object, accounting for its specific holes in its specific composition for their specific use. Although the mould’s geometry is designed for consistency, each object exhibits a uniform yet subtly distinct sequence, evolving within the mould’s intended order.

### Grounding

Concrete begins as an assortment of multiple materials – crushed stone, sand and cement. Each element carries its own history of extraction, refinement, and transportation, whether locally sourced or salvaged. Together, these disparate elements form a dense slurry, brimming with potential for form. Once poured, the mixture takes on a fluid state, yielding to the shape of the mould yet retaining a certain unpredictability in how it will settle, bind, and eventually harden, becoming an object. This transformative moment marks the material’s shift from formlessness to permanence, as the liquid mix solidifies and embodies the contours of the mould. Upon release, the concrete reveals a surface that captures both smoothness and texture, evidence of the varied pressures and temperatures it endured during curing. Now a unified mass, the concrete stands as a material relic of its making, a solid structure whose form, weight, and texture narrates its journey from raw aggregate to completed cast, a calculated imperfection allowing other materials to join.

### Foregrounding

The cast concrete, designed to integrate additional materials, acts as both infrastructure

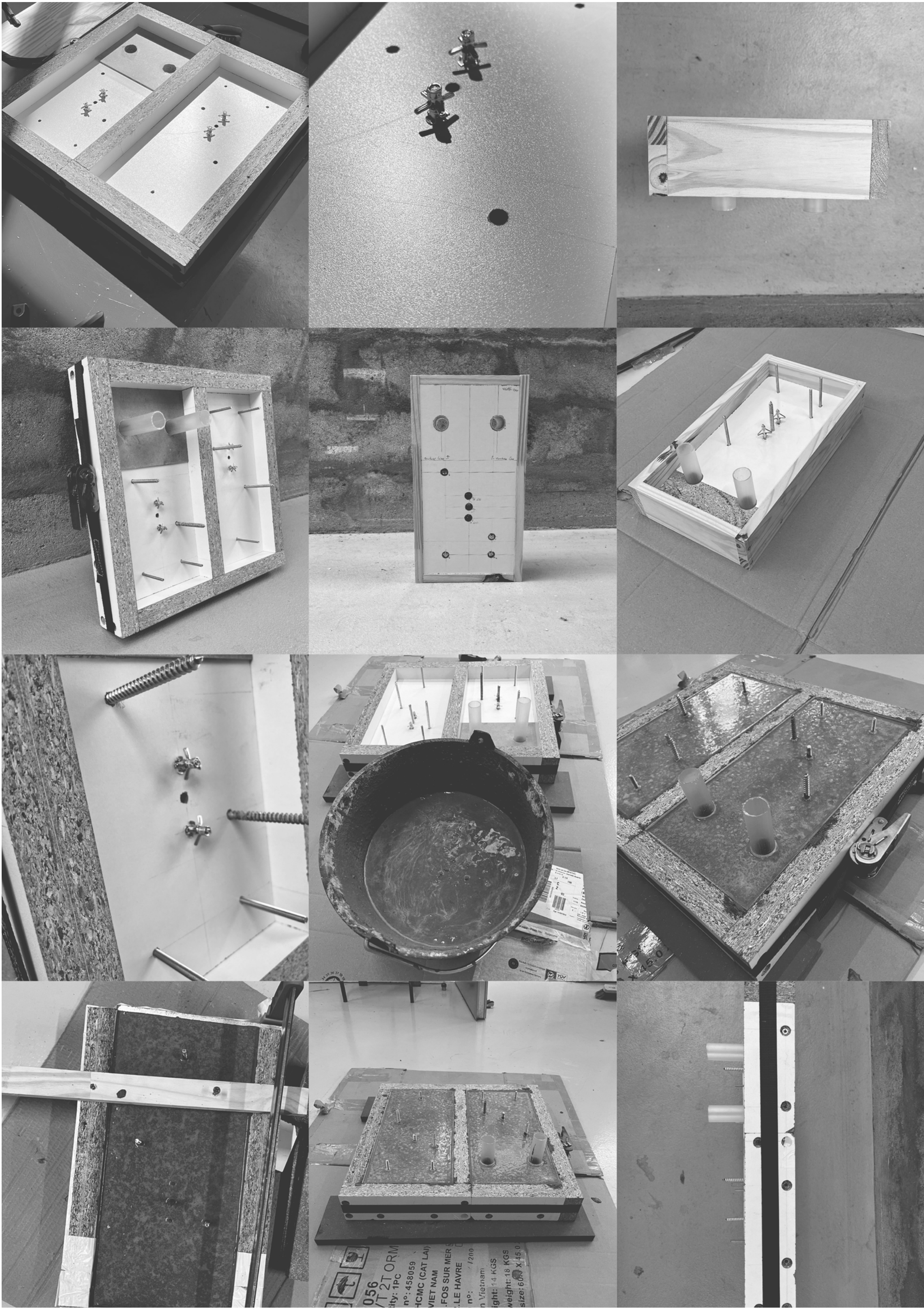
and instrument, facilitating the creation of an assemblage. This “Thing-power”, as Jane Bennett terms it, is the inherent agency of materials, producing a dynamic interplay as concrete, marble, and glass momentarily transcend their usual

forms as they coalesce into something new.<sup>2</sup> This formation bridges dimensions, blending scales and qualities as it moves from flat components into a cohesive, layered three-dimensional structure. Here, the material itself acts as a potent force, influencing form, function, and beyond as it interacts with its immediate surroundings. This agency grants it the ability to not only shape the object physically but to ripple outward, impacting broader spatial and environmental realms. Matter thus becomes an active participant, a source of influence that challenges and reshapes the spaces and contexts it inhabits.

Hadar Porat is an architect and a researcher currently pursuing a PhD in the Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology.

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Simondon, *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information*, trans. Taylor Adkins (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2020 (1964)). 23.

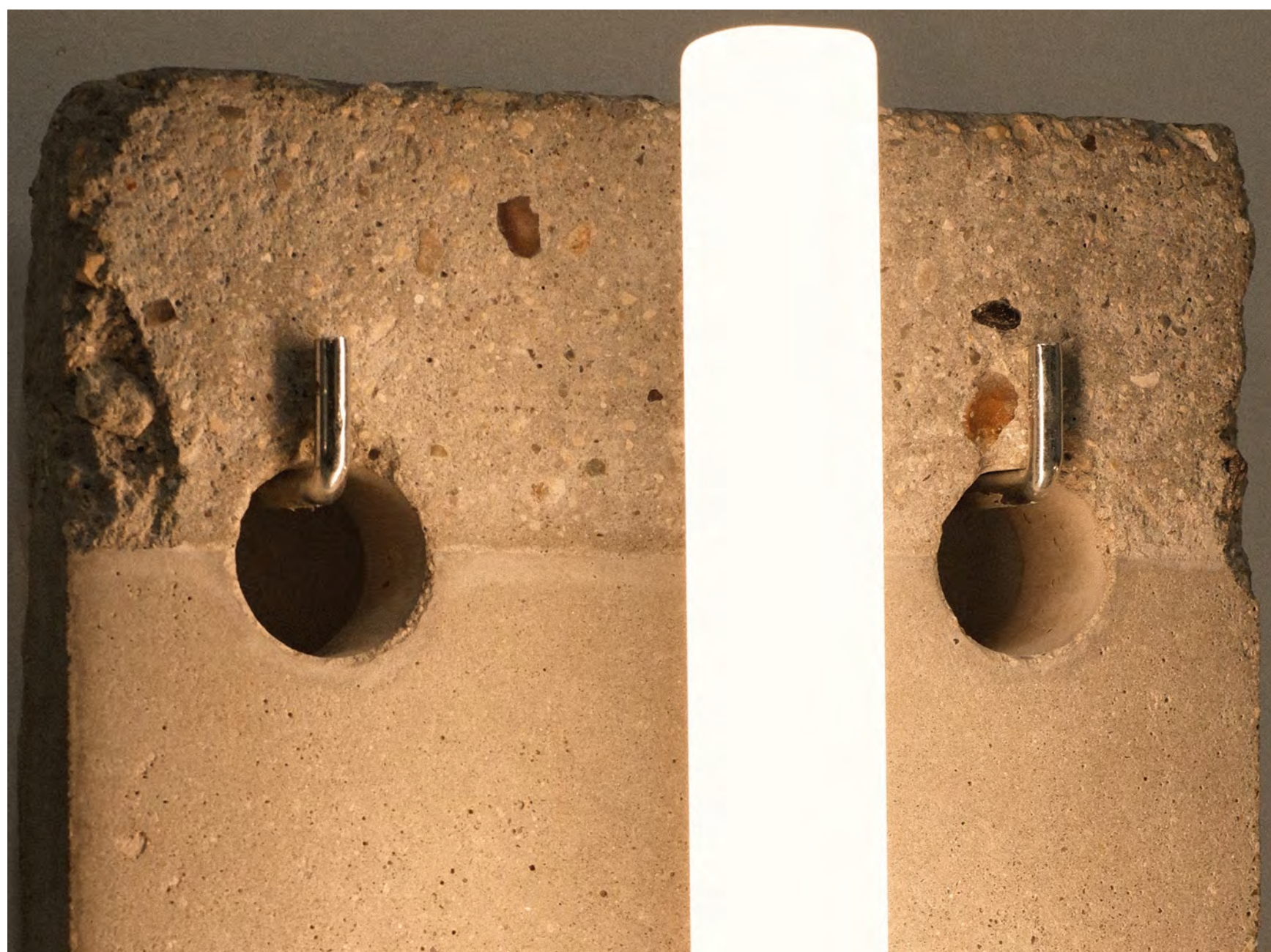
<sup>2</sup> Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Duke University Press, 2010). 3.







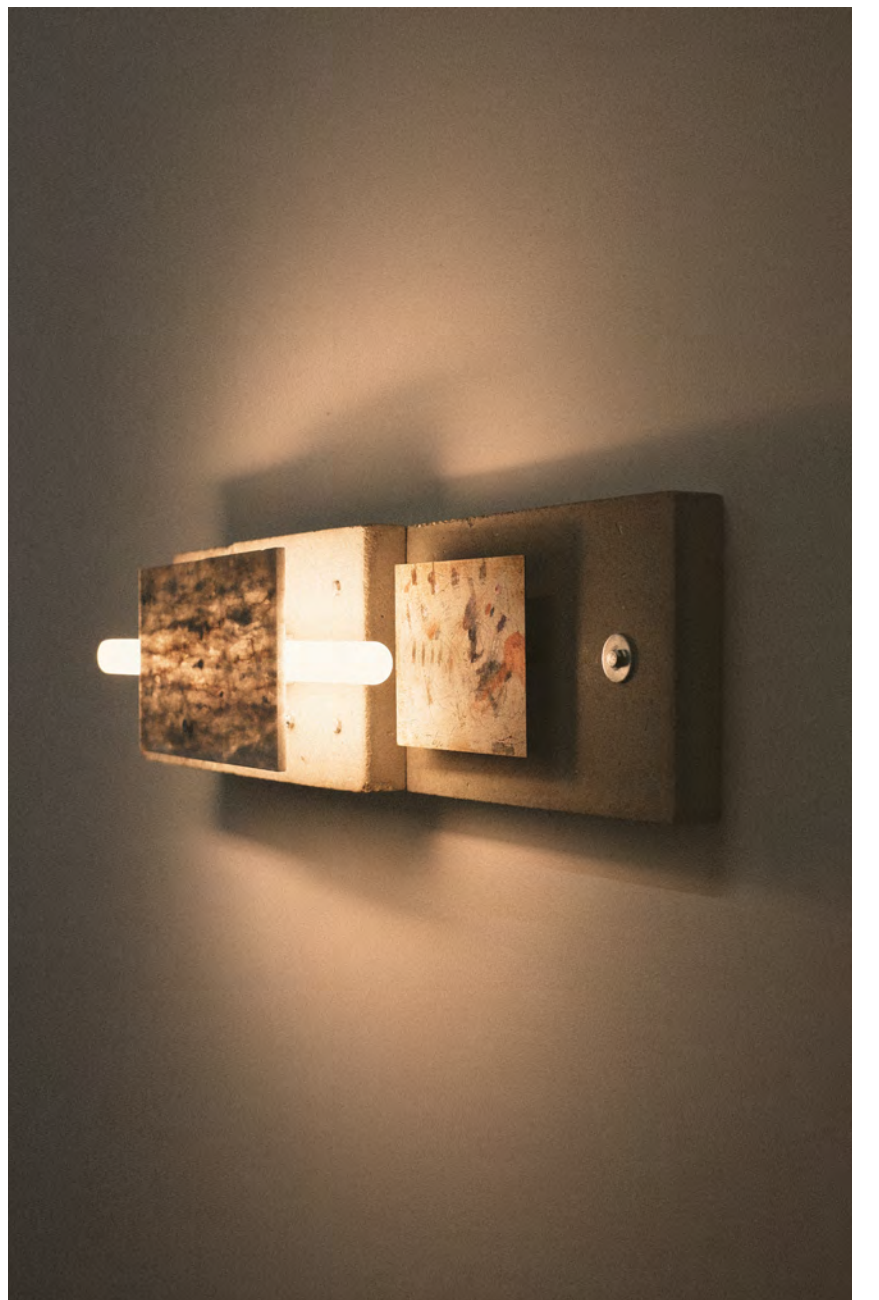
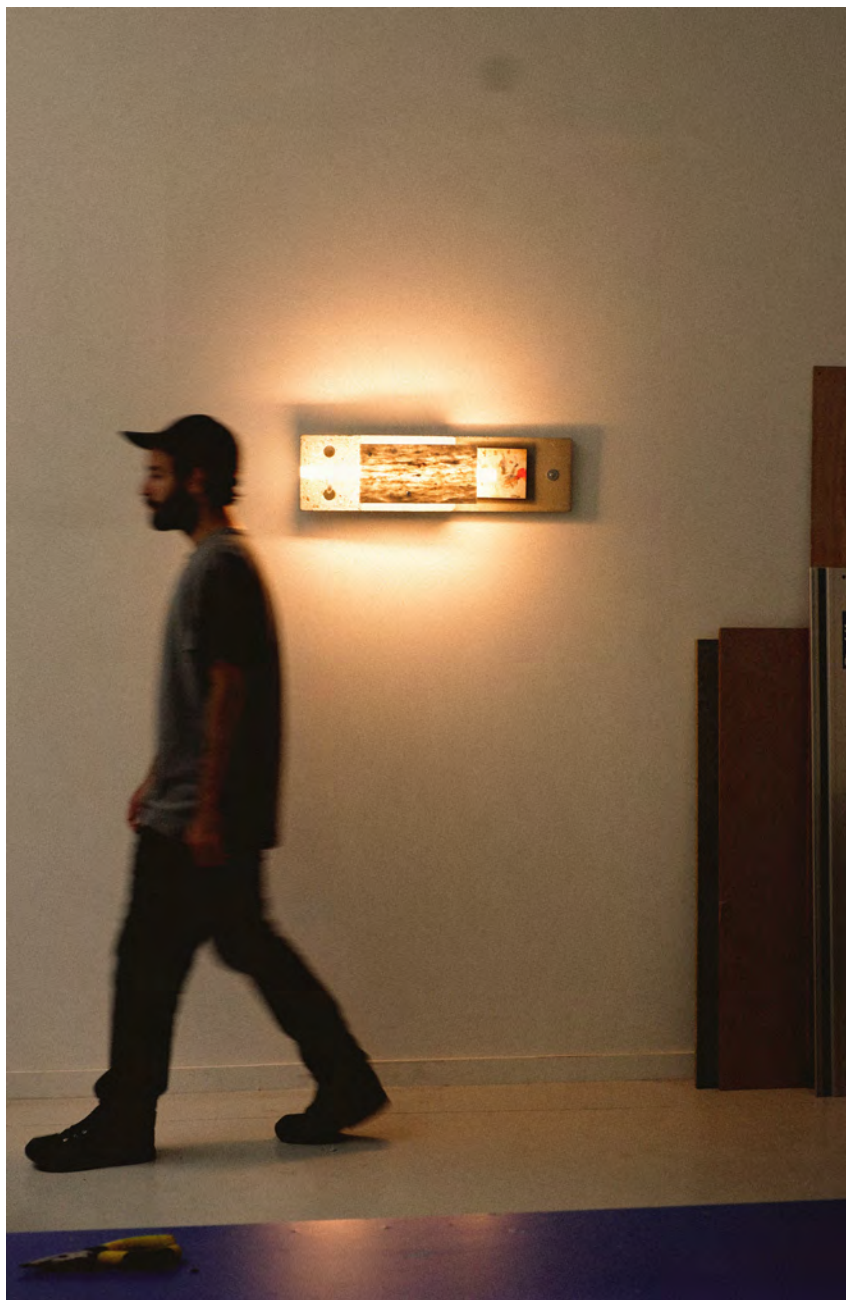














## COOL BEING / JONATHAN SHMILOVITZ

What is striking in System L's design is that it is simply cool. Composed of exposed concrete, metal, and glass, this modular lighting system stands out for its confident indifference to traditional aesthetic categories. After casting, its body is fractured by hand, only to be recomposed prosthetically. This process – where the rigidity of concrete is brought to its breaking point in advance – anticipates the lamp's own potential for fracture, creating space within its own density. The anticipation here is distinct from predetermination: it is not about setting an exact trajectory but about allowing modulation, an openness to possibilities that remain undetermined. This indetermination and modularity align with the essence of coolness, which resists fixed definitions and remains adaptable, uncommitted to any governing principle of form or function.

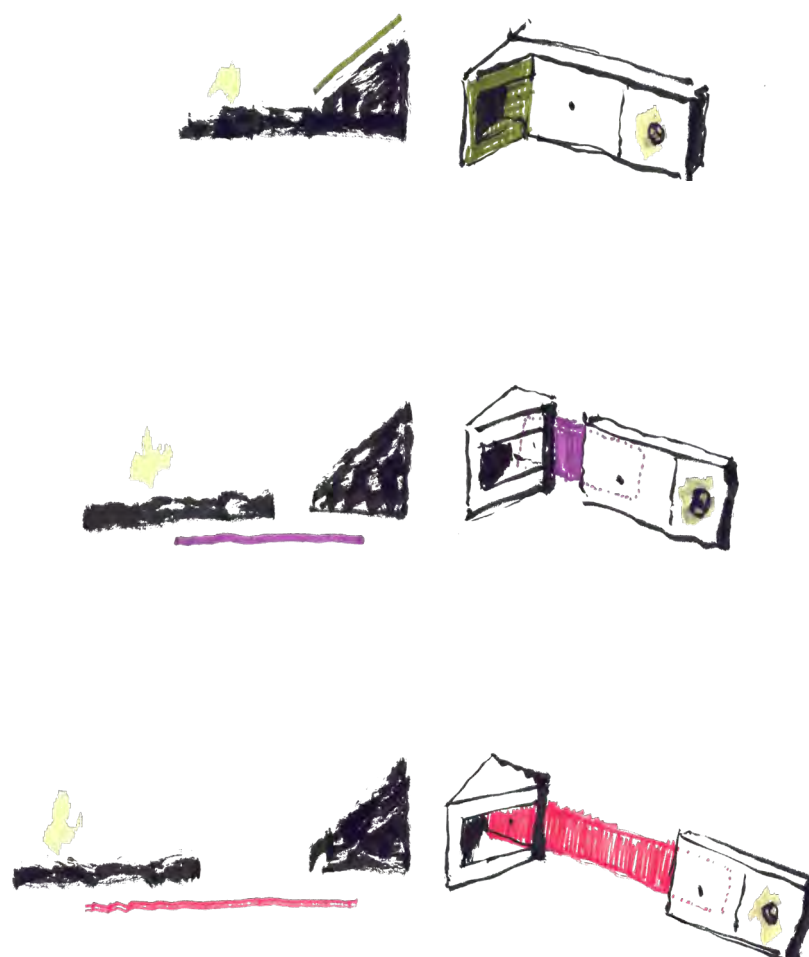
In contrast to categories like beauty or uniqueness, coolness possesses a singular quality: it does not demand admiration through perfection, nor does it assert itself through novelty. Coolness must thus be distinguished from other judgments that traditionally govern design. Whereas Kantian beauty is grounded in a harmonious agreement of the faculties, and the sublime in a sense of overwhelming grandeur, coolness exists in a state of relaxed assurance. It neither seeks nor refuses attention, exuding an effortless control that reflects its ease with indeterminacy.

Nor is coolness reducible to tastefulness or trendiness. While tastefulness aligns with aesthetic conventions and refinement as such, trendiness reflects an always fleeting alignment with current norms. Both the trendy and the cool maintain some relationship with historical or contextual norms; however, coolness stands apart in its indifference. Unlike the trendy, which courts fashion and risks obsolescence, the cool maintains a detachment. Coolness may indeed become fashionable or trendy, but when it does, it is no longer cool – it has been absorbed

by the norm it once eluded. The cool is thus not tasteful nor trendy without being reactionary: it is a preference of detachment and distancing.

System L exemplifies this cool detachment. It does not captivate through elegance or provoke through innovation. Instead, its fractured yet composed form suggests a self-possessed neutrality. It is this very modulation – this openness to the potential for fracture and reassembly – that renders it cool. System L achieves a kind of aesthetic distance: neither pretentious nor passive, it exists in a state of quiet, effortless control. Its coolness lies in the balance between rigidity and fracture, between concrete and modulation, producing an aura of nonchalance. It is not an object designed to scream for attention but one that, through its material tension and composure, signals a deeper understanding of form and function – a calm that radiates from within its fractured, prosthetic body.

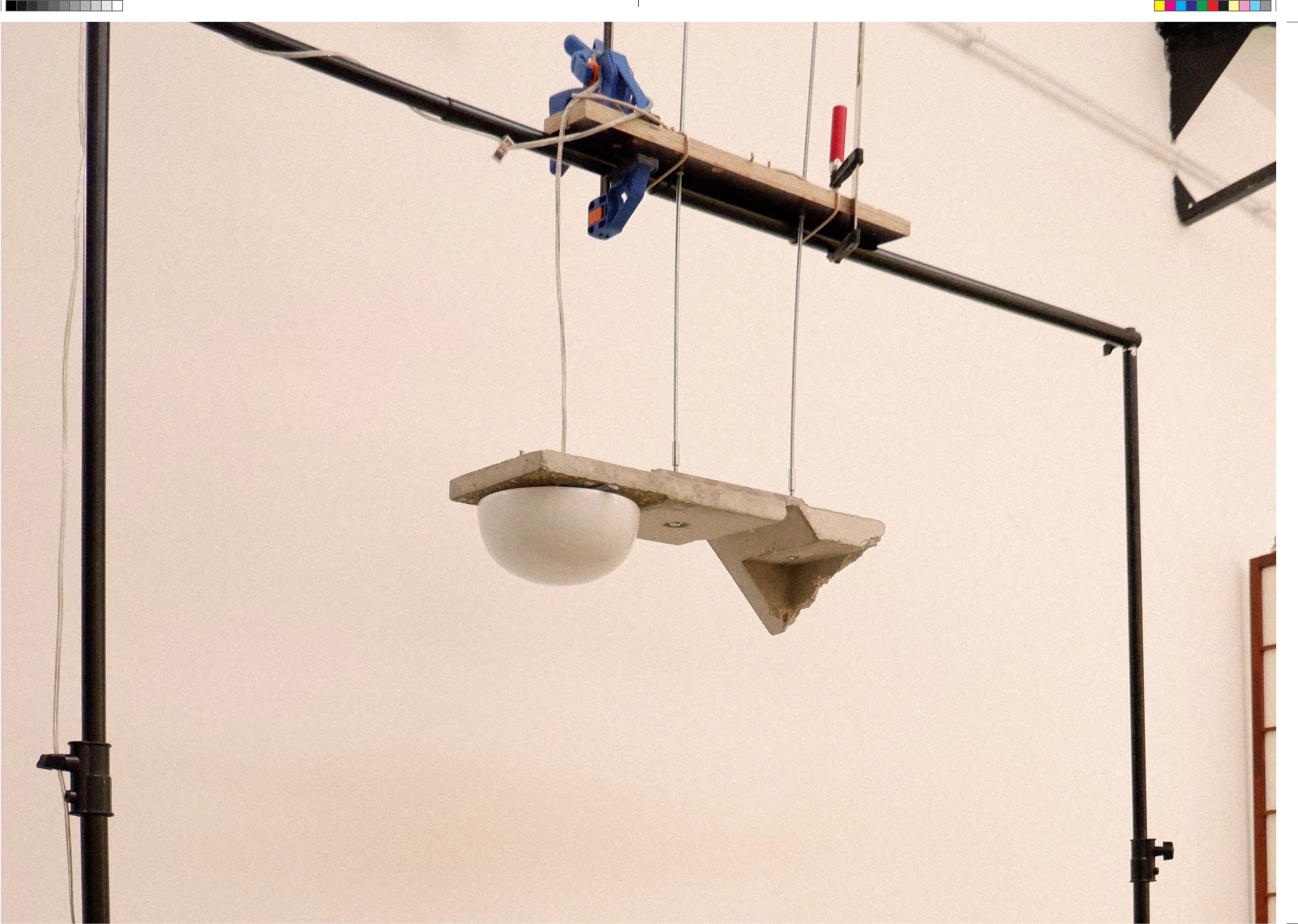
Jonathan Shmilovitz is a PhD candidate and lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at the École Normale Supérieure, Paris.



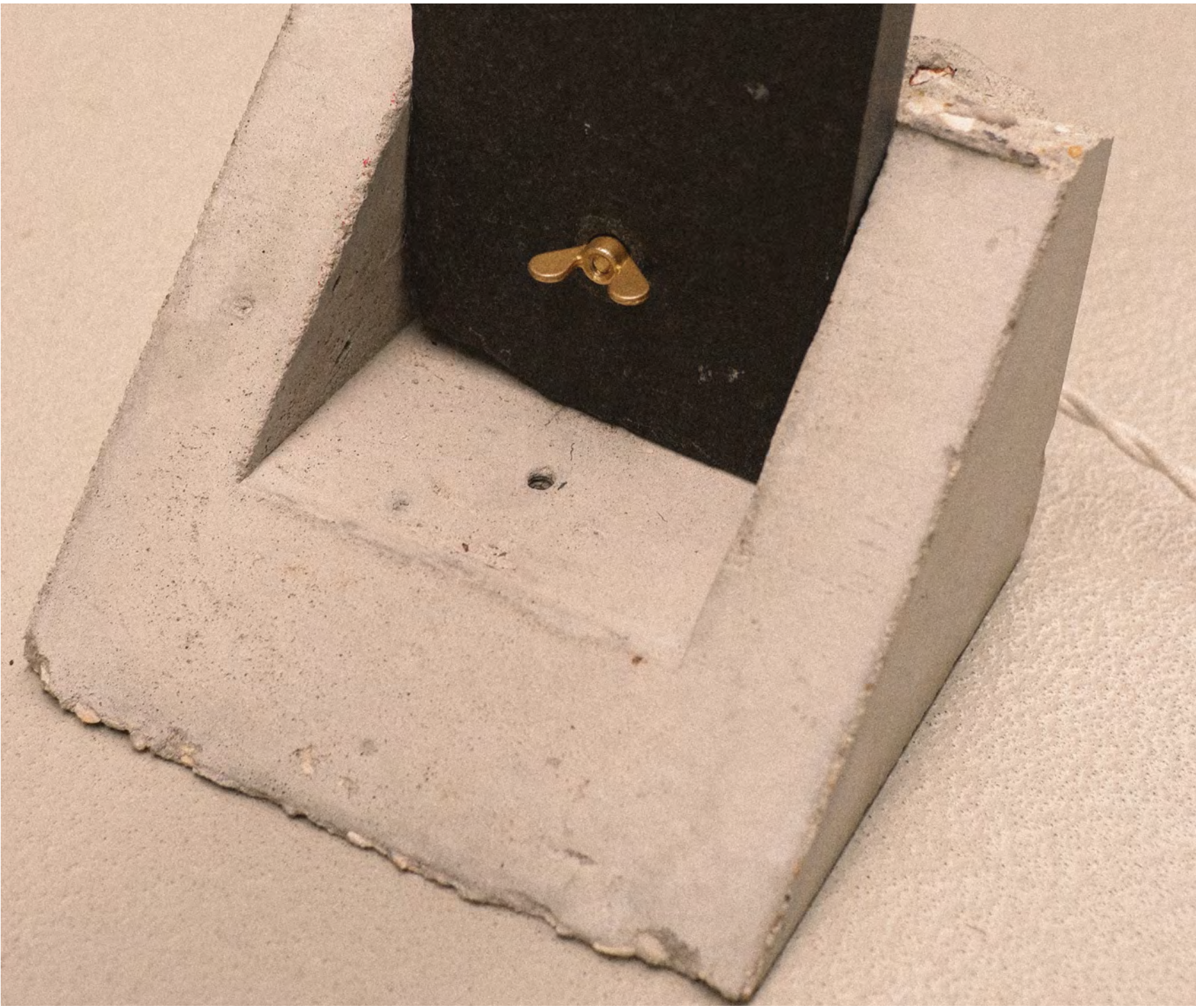
















# INNER SPACES



## LIGHT MATERIAL / Arch. GINOSAR WOLF HANSEL

The nature of light—whether it can be considered a substance—has long captivated the minds of artists and thinkers and remains a subject of fascination today. It often arises in philosophical discussions exploring both the physical and metaphysical aspects of light. Light is visible, can be experienced as warmth, and even applies pressure, yet it lacks mass in the conventional sense that defines matter.

Light requires no intermediaries; it imposes itself on different materials and transforms them. When it originates from a natural source, it is never static; it constantly shifts, altering the elements and spaces through which it travels. Light has no clear beginning or end and is defined only by the material objects with mass that stand in its path.

The first light fixture consists of a system of elements made from diverse materials, assembled into suspended components. The shapes seem to float in space, and at first glance, they form a long, uniform horizontal structure. However, upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that each component is crafted from a different material, each revealing its intrinsic characteristics. A folded, lightweight stainless steel surface wraps around a heavy, hollow concrete casting, which is joined to a fragment of roughly broken granite, reportedly repurposed from a different location.

The arrangement of these elements creates a linear accumulation of volumes and spaces, emerging from the framework of the materials that define them. The connections between elements are characterized by honesty and straightforwardness. There is no attempt to conceal the joins; the pieces are placed together almost as if a hand had casually gathered them, attaching them without artifice. The craftsmanship is exposed—the cuts are plainly visible. On the side facing the back wall, even the electrical connections are overtly revealed. The entire construction process, in all its stages, is laid bare before our eyes. Yet, despite this—or perhaps because of it—the magic unfolds.

This system is deceptive. Its unity is held together by the threads that bind it both vertically and horizontally. While the center of mass (which is not centered within the element) is suspended by delicate vertical strings that seem to defy gravity,

the series of volumes is interconnected by a new material. Here, light is no longer an intangible, dimensionless phenomenon. Instead, it takes on a physical presence, acting like a needle, bayonet, or knife that pierces through the material. As light passes through these materials without obstruction, it emphasizes their relationships and reveals its own tangible, material quality.

Similarly, in the second lighting structure, light serves as the scarlet thread that binds together components otherwise disconnected from one another. While the first element emerged as a cohesive object, this one presents an earlier stage—a series of individual pieces strung together like a necklace. Once again, the element that unifies them is something we don't usually recognize as a material: light.

This new manner in which we experience light imbues it with a material essence while also confining it to specific dimensions, with defined beginnings and endings. Light has once again become just another substance.

In the context of the historical debate about energy and matter—which questions whether the universe is a continuous entity divisible into infinite parts or made up of finite units—a possible perspective emerges here: the effort to connect and unify disparate elements only serves to highlight their inherent material differences.

Ginosar Wolf Hansel is an architect and designer based in Milan and Tel Aviv, a member of PadLAB — the Post-Anthropocentric Design Lab, and a faculty member at Shenkar College of Engineering, Design and Art.







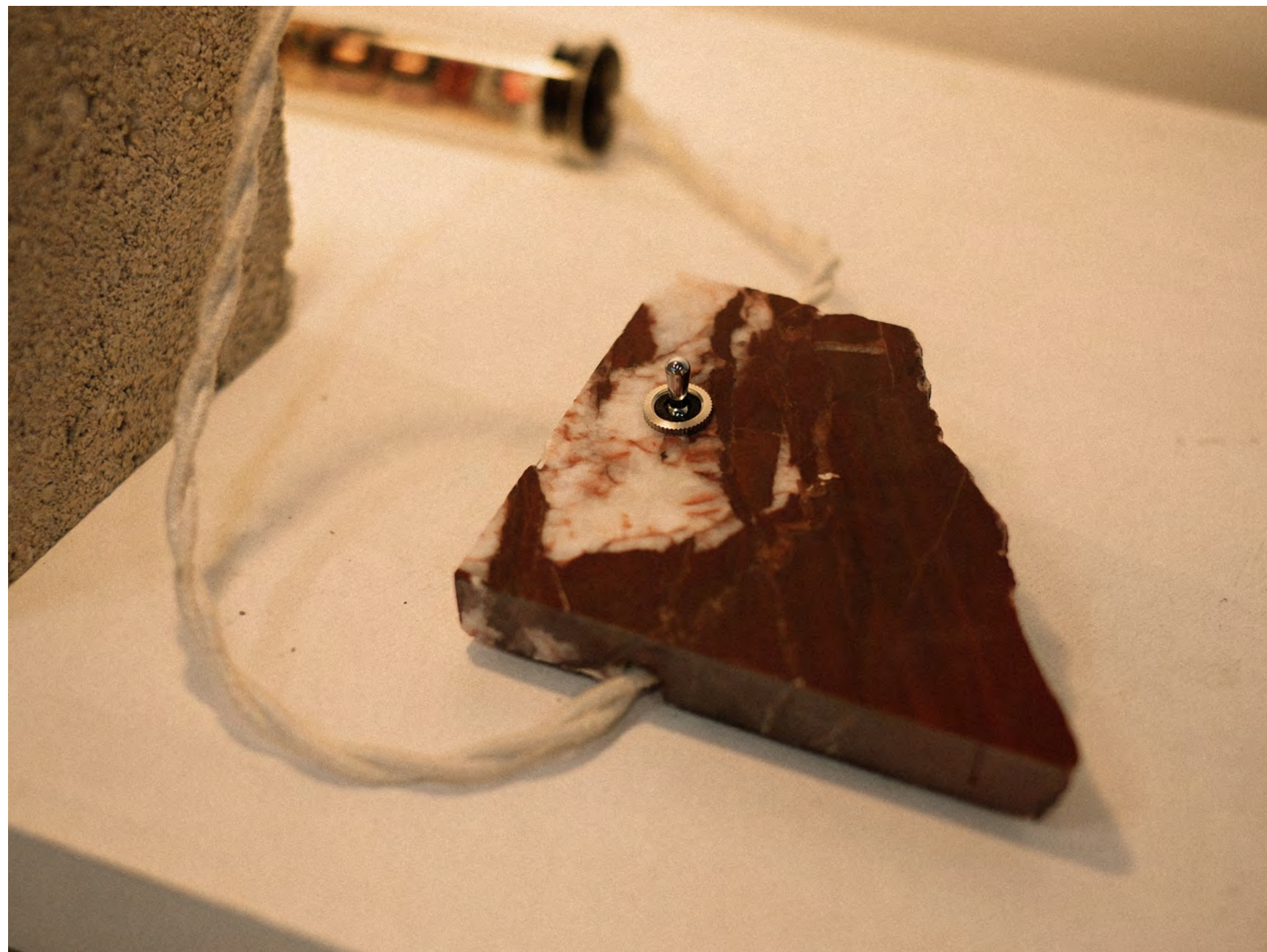












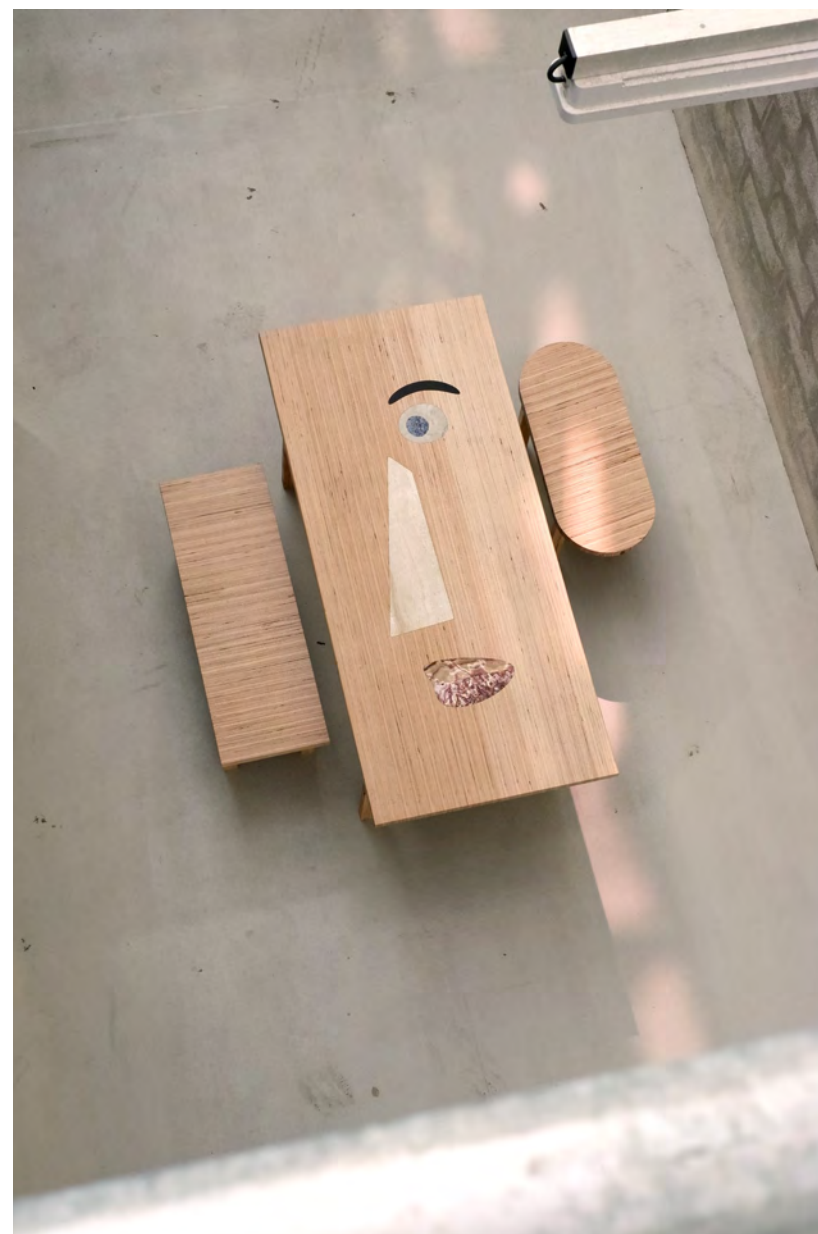


# SEE YOU TABLE

## THE PRESENCE OF OBJECTS / Jeanne Boujenah

From wood to marble, to the embodiment of material. A face looks at us, with a clear and steady gaze. An egg that tempts us to savor it. The nose, simple as a child's drawing. Then the mouth, a kind of marbled delight. The cold of the stone cools the warmth of a dish, while the wood's texture caresses our hands. Everything in this object exudes presence. The simplicity of the lines and the tension of the curves create harmony. We are no longer merely in the presence of an object; we are facing a character, and this face invites us into its intimacy. Over days, its daily life becomes ours, and we share a common time and space. Its presence eases our solitude..

Jeanne Boujenah is a scenographer, co-founder of Brunoir Studio, and a lecturer at the Lisaa School of Interior Architecture and Design, Paris.















# WOOD CHAIR 02











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**BUREAU4II**