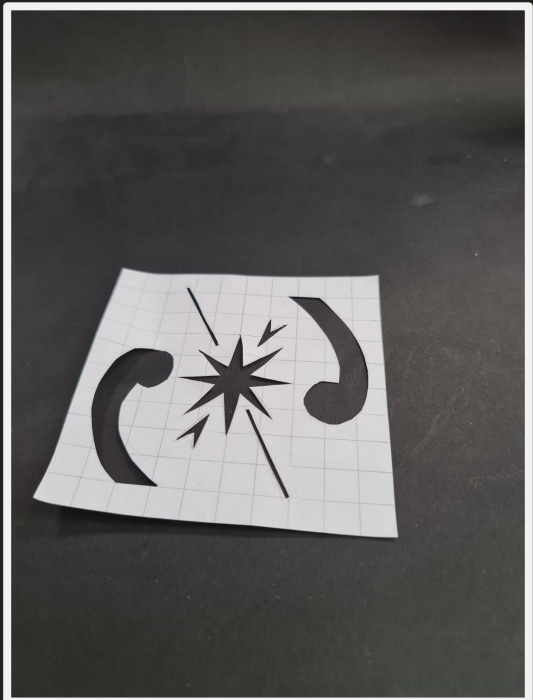
Moko of Light Project 3

Brendan Dutton

Hand Cut Concepts



First Cutting Practice - (100mm x 100mm)



First Concept - (100mm x 100mm)



Second Concept - (150mm x 150mm)

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Final Design



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Casted Light







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Reflection

For my final project, I focused on the story of Māui capturing the sun, a famous legend from Aotearoa/New Zealand. This story represents Māui's strength and cleverness in his quest to slow the sun and give people longer daylight hours. I designed a graphic cutout that casts a moko of light and shadow on the forearm, which I chose for its symbolic association with strength. The forearm represents both physical power and resilience, which parallels Māui's determination to control the sun.

In my design, I positioned two hooks symmetrically at the edges of the piece to represent the tools Māui used to capture the sun. These hooks mirror each other, symbolizing the balance and order Māui brought to the natural world by controlling the sun's movement. The hooks also highlight the effort and tension involved in his task. At the center of the design is the sun, which serves as the focal point of both the composition and the story. Its central placement reflects the sun's importance in daily life, as well as its role in the narrative.

To further illustrate the act of capturing the sun, I added two lines on either side of it to represent the ropes Māui and his brothers used. These lines connect the hooks to the sun, symbolizing the connection between Māui's actions and the sun's capture. Inside the sun, I included two koru designs shaped like yin and yang, symbolizing balance, growth and harmony. The koru is a powerful symbol in Māori culture, representing new life and strength which ties back to the themes of the story.

In addition, I incorporated arrow-like shapes pointing toward the center of the sun, symbolizing the concentrated energy of Māui's efforts. These arrows guide the viewer's focus inward, reinforcing the sun's role as the heart of the story. The symmetrical design of the arrows and hooks creates a sense of harmony and purpose in the composition.

One of the biggest challenges I faced during this project was balancing the aesthetic elements with the practical function of casting a shadow. I wanted the design to both tell a story and work as a functional cutout that casts a moko of light and shadow on the forearm. Achieving this balance required multiple iterations of the design to ensure that the cutout would work effectively in both roles.

Overall, this project taught me how to integrate form and function in design. By refining my ideas through research and experimenting, I was able to create a final product that successfully told the story of Māui while maintaining its practical purpose. This experience has increased my understanding of how aesthetic choices can support both narrative and functionality, and it has shaped my approach to future design projects.

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Visual Diary

