

**Name:** Maddie Mattheu

**Year:** 2021

**Title:** *Delicate Balance*

This piece began as one plank of wood that measured approximately 24 x 5 x 2 inches. I knew from the start that I wanted to create this hollow cubic structure, so the challenge was in figuring out how to get from the plank to the cube. After experimenting with different options in cardboard, I split the plank into two halves, and then cut each half into 12 rods that then formed the outer cube. In order to make the inner cube light enough to hang, I made the main structure out of cardboard. I then attached yarn around the cardboard cube using hot glue and sealed it with mod podge. I then experimented with several different ideas for the base until deciding on the idea of the three-pronged structure that would provide support on all sides. In order to give the cubes the appearance of floating, I painted the base white.

I am most proud of the juxtaposition and contrast present between the two cubes, as I feel that it effectively communicates the meaning behind my piece. The strong lines of the outer cube add depth and movement to the work, and the cube's geometric structure adds emphasis to the more organic shapes of the flowers. However, I feel that this work could have benefitted from more exact symmetry; since the sides of the cube are not perfect squares, the cube is slightly longer than it is wide, which meant that the inner cube could not hang directly in the center of the base. This changes the visual balance of the piece, as it appears to be leaning more to one side than the other when viewed from certain angles. However, the continuous movement throughout the piece helps to offset this asymmetry.

The two cubes that form this work represent my inner and outer selves. The outer cube represents the side of myself that most people first see when they meet me—someone who is very quiet and reserved. To represent this, I decided to simply stain the wood a dark color and otherwise not embellish it. However, the inner cube represents the side of myself that someone would have to get to know me better in order to understand—the side of me that is more fun and creative. To join the two together, I wrapped the yarn from the inner cube around the top of the outer cube to symbolize how the more creative side of myself is visible to anyone if they simply look close enough. The color scheme and pattern I chose for the inner cube represents the period of happiness and growth I have had as an artist since starting college. I have always loved Pop Art, but I have struggled in the past to incorporate elements of the style into my work. In high school, I felt pressured to achieve a photorealistic quality in my work, which typically meant I gravitated toward graphite instead of exploring the more unique styles I was interested in. However, at SA/VS, I have felt as if I now have much more freedom and control over my work. The floral pattern, which was inspired by a series of floral pieces by Andy Warhol, represents that growth while also bringing in elements of the style I have always wanted to pursue. My decision to tilt the outer cube on its side represents how this period of my life is dynamic and ever-changing, but my use of wood as opposed to a more delicate material symbolizes how I am beginning to build the foundations of myself as a person and artist.

**Course:** A-S 103 3D

**Instructor:** Jeremy Colbert