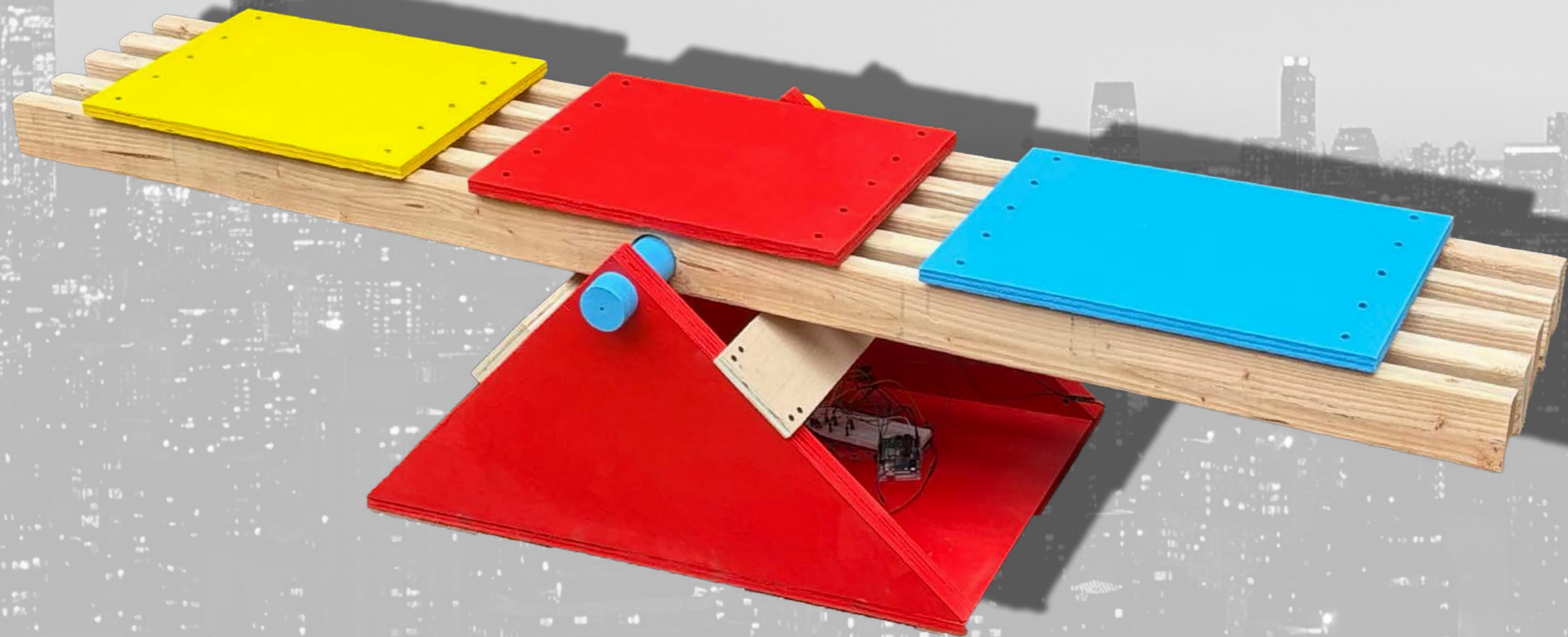


SIT WITH ME

A critical public bench that transforms private isolation into shared awareness through tilt, sound, and embodied interaction.



PRIVATE ISOLATION IN PUBLIC SPACE

Physical proximity no longer guarantees relational awareness.

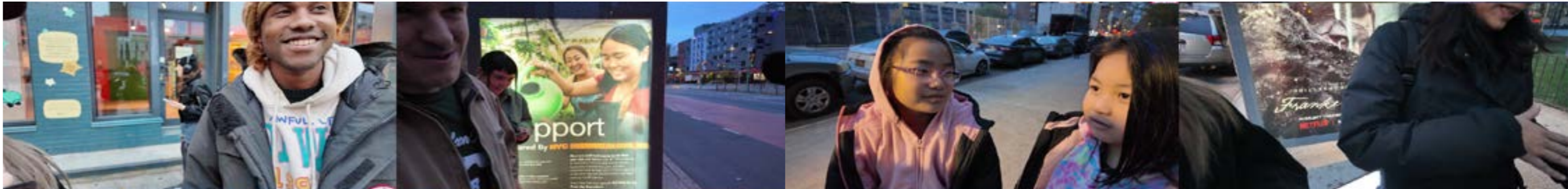
Public benches support shared seating without requiring shared awareness.

People may sit side by side, yet remain absorbed in private digital worlds.

Observed Condition



Street Interviews



“When waiting on a bench, there is often nothing to do except use a phone.”

“People may sit side by side, yet remain socially disconnected.”

Observed condition

People sit side by side, but remain absorbed in private digital worlds.

Why it matters

Physical proximity no longer guarantees shared awareness in public space.

Design question

How might public seating interrupt parallel isolation and redirect attention toward others and the surrounding environment?

A CRITICAL PUBLIC OBJECT

Rather than stabilizing the body, the bench introduces controlled instability to make shared presence perceptible.

Intervention Mechanism



Conventional stability vs. shared instability

Instability

Tilting interrupts habitual sitting.

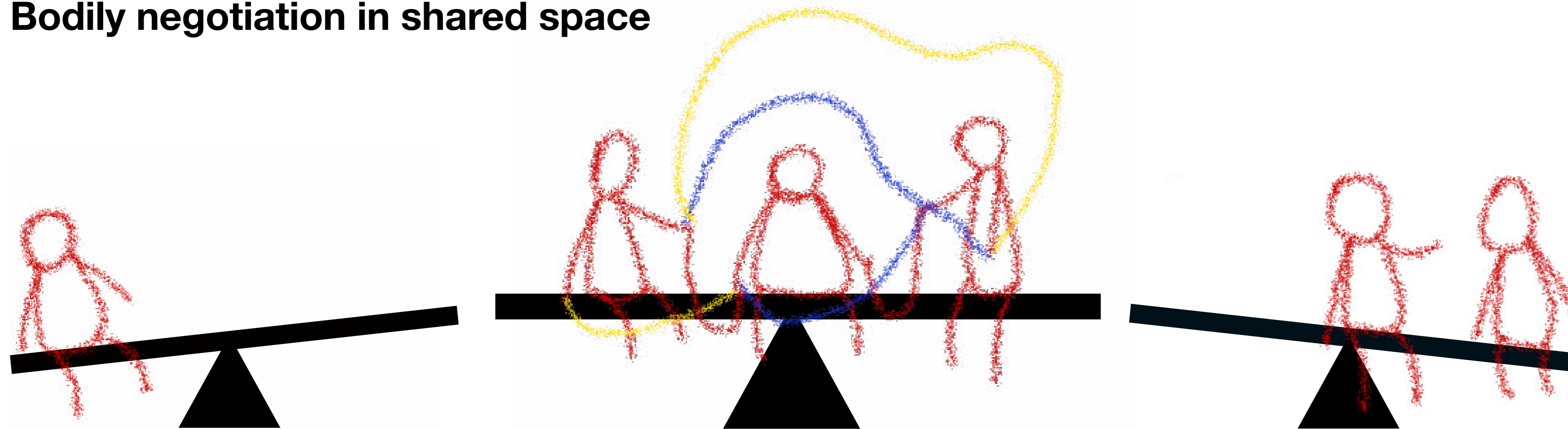
Reciprocity

One person's movement affects others.

Environmental Sound

Audio feedback reconnects users to surrounding space.

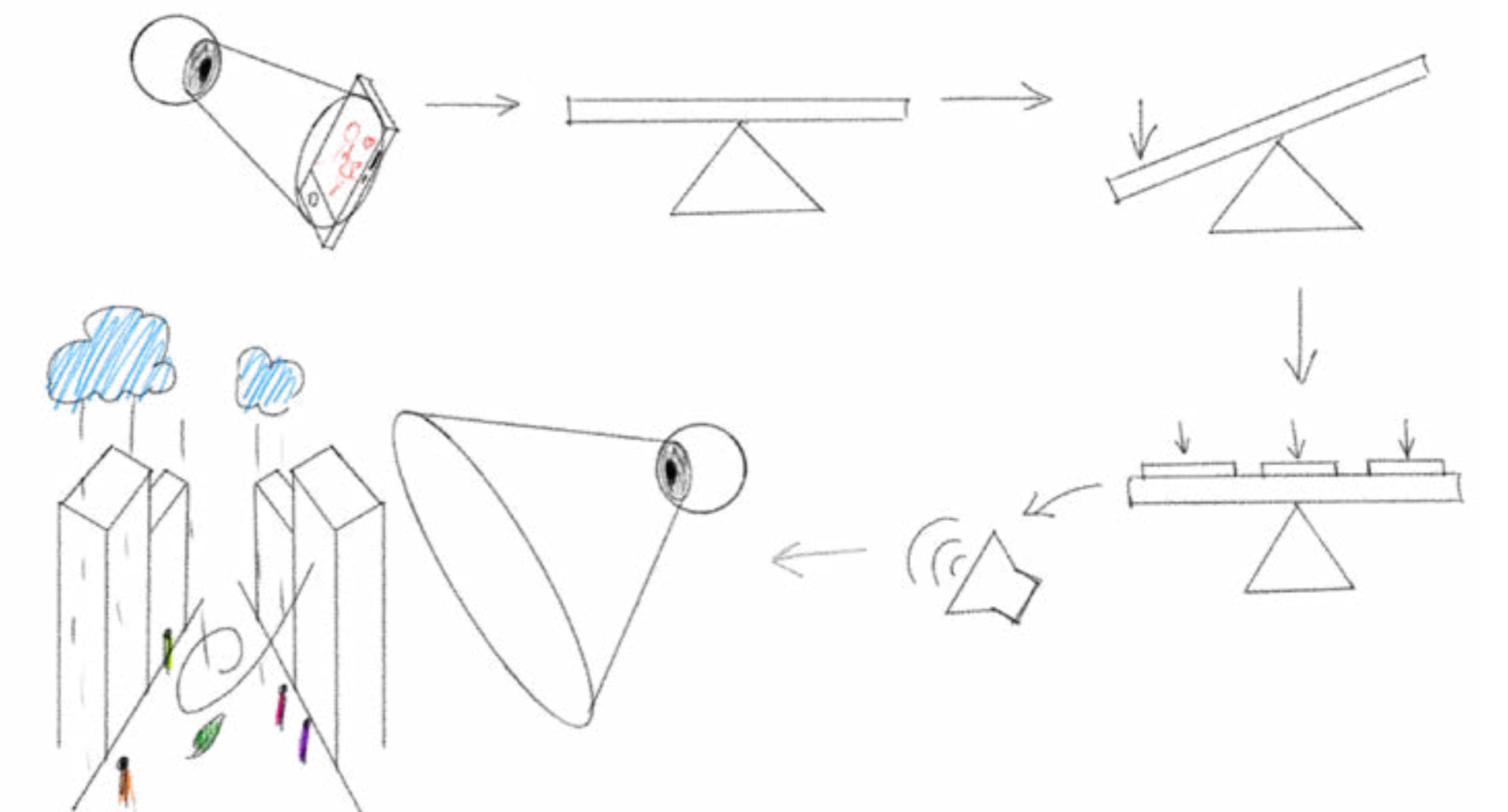
Bodily negotiation in shared space



Controlled instability turns sitting into a shared act of adjustment.

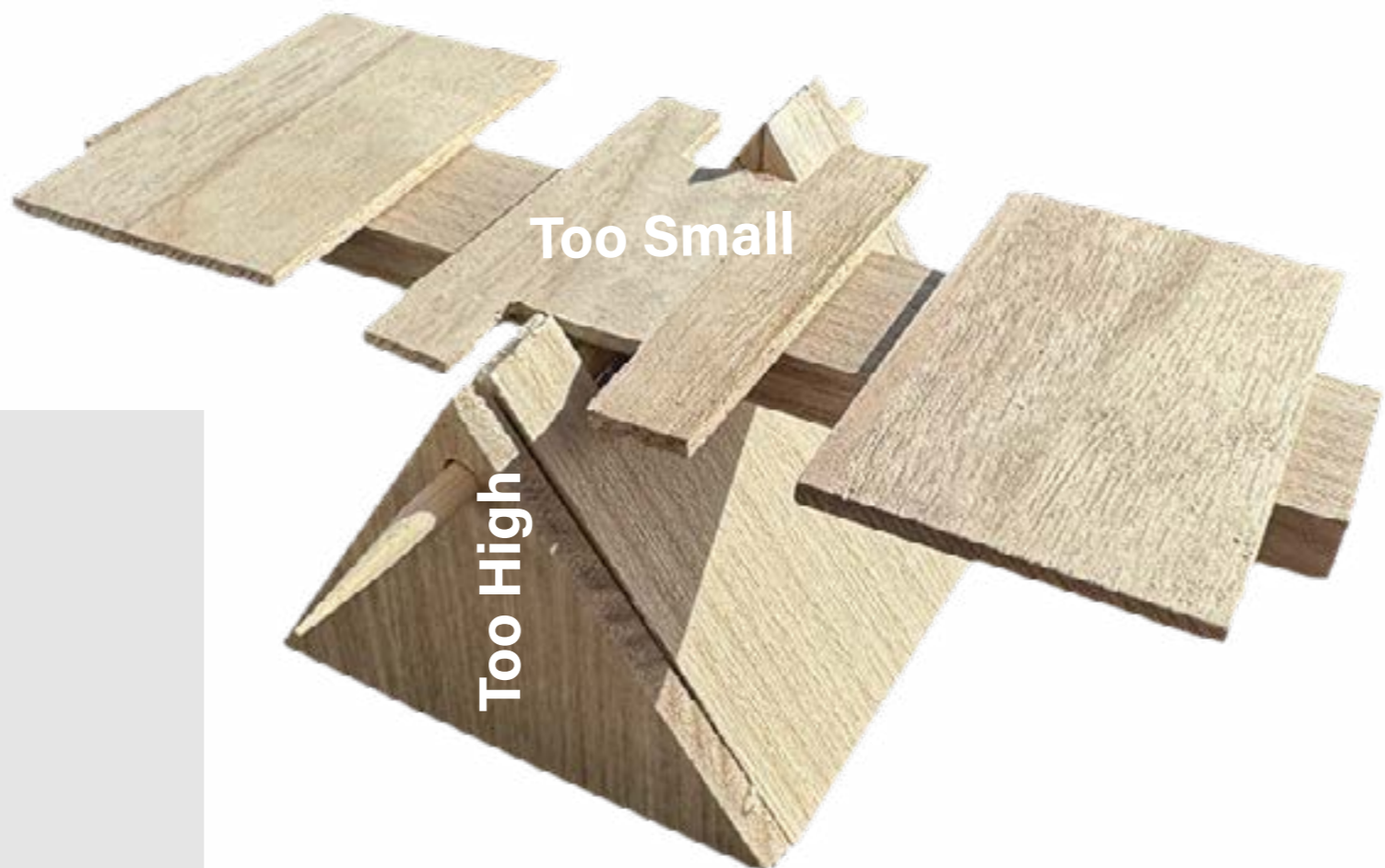
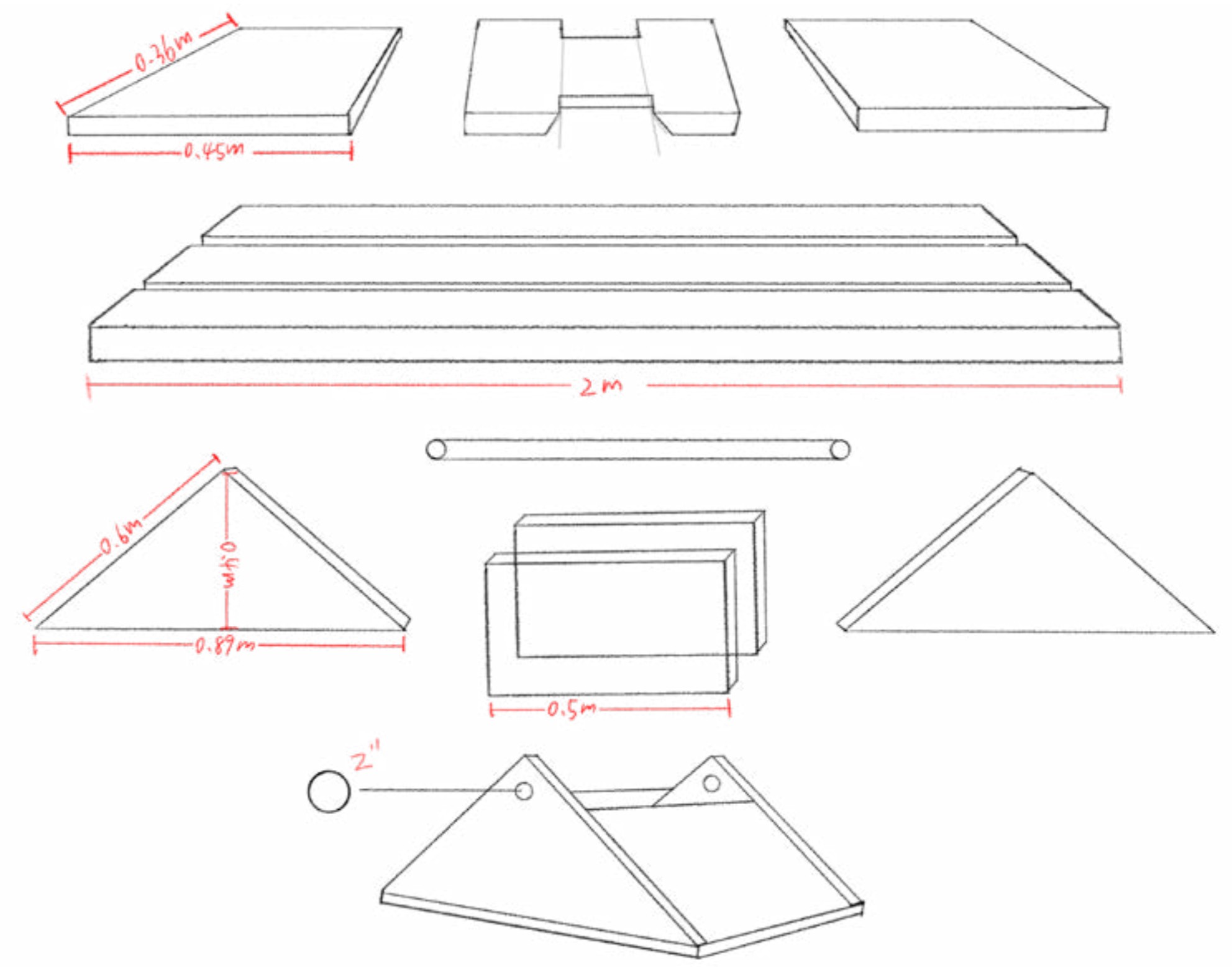
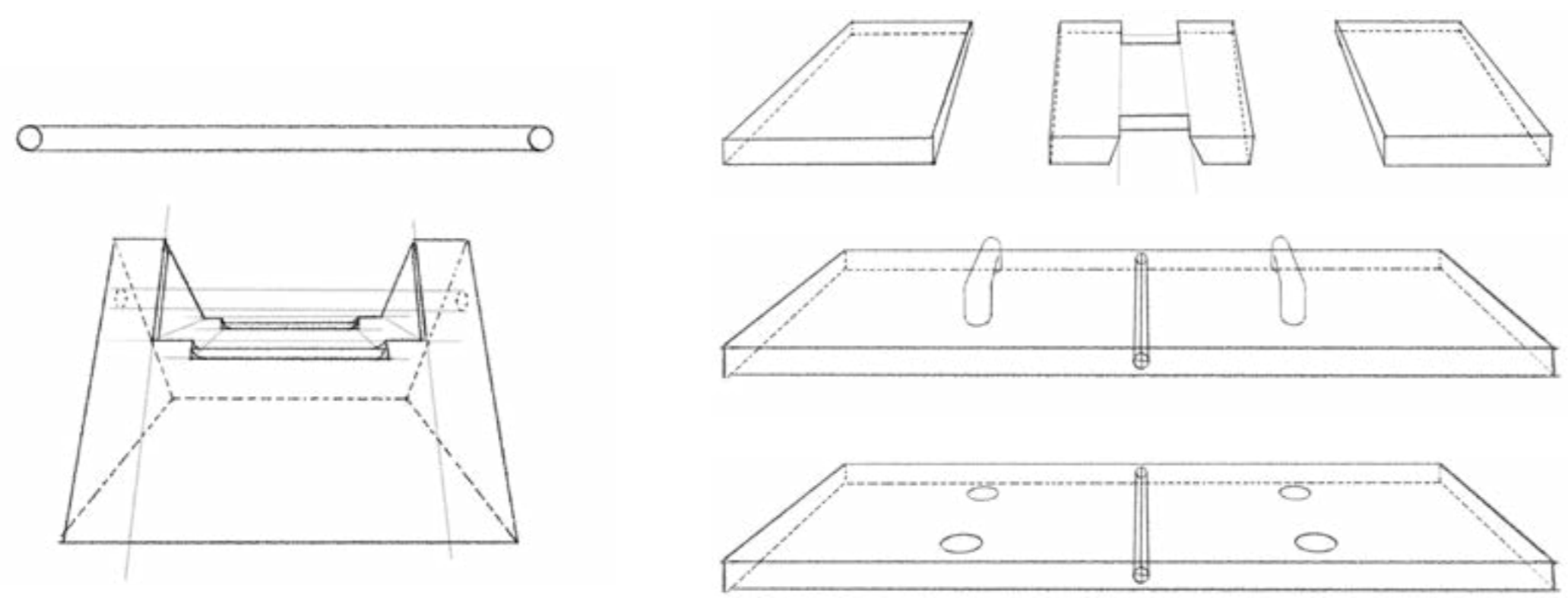
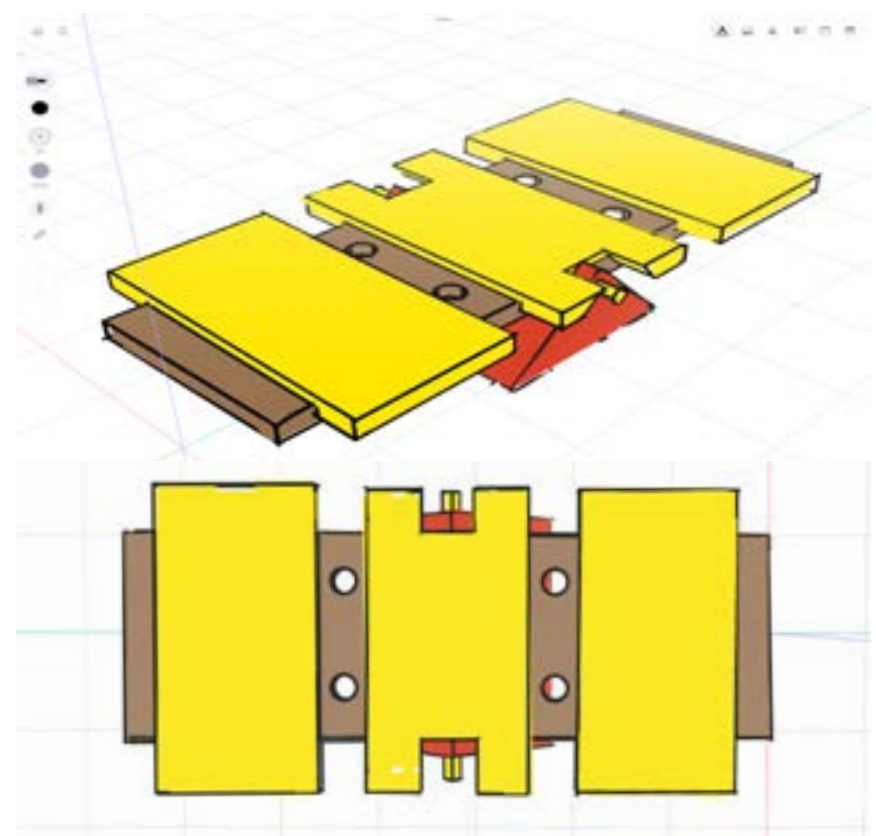
Interaction Logic

Controlled instability interrupts habitual phone use and redirects attention into shared space.



STRUCTURAL REFINEMENT THROUGH MODELING

Model development revealed how seat width, beam thickness, base height, and tilt control would shape comfort, balance, and interaction quality.

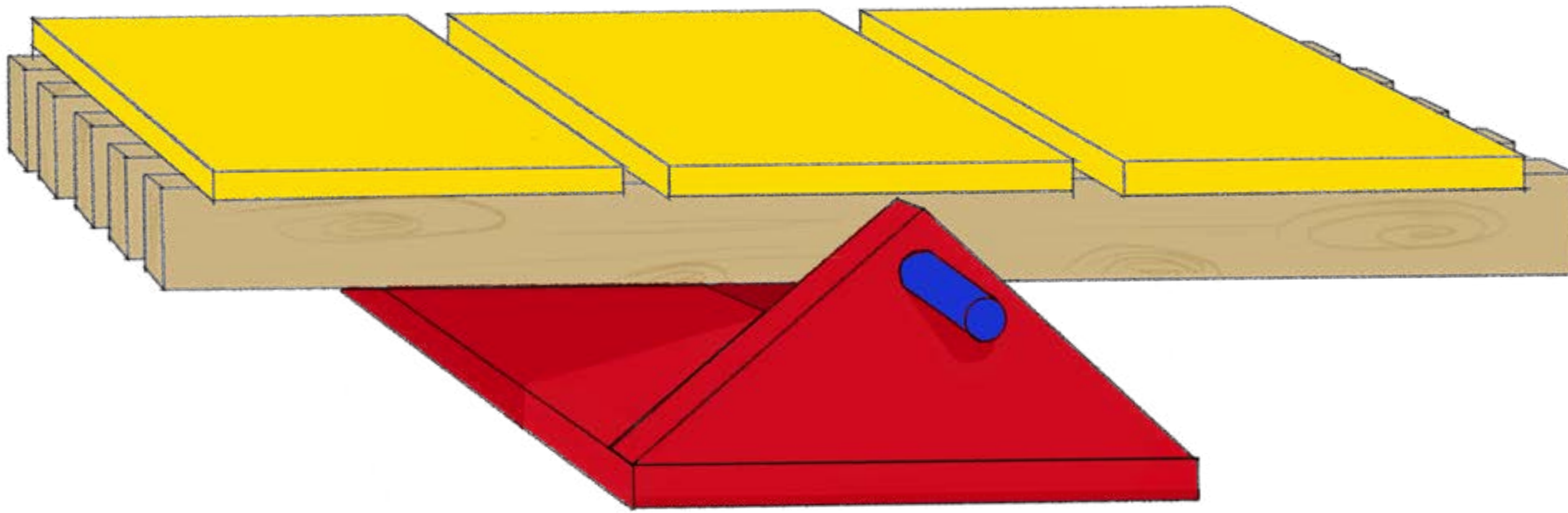


Seat panels too small
The seating area felt cramped and unstable.

Beam too narrow
The structure could not reliably support the load.

Base too high
Users' feet dangled, weakening bodily grounding.

Tilt needed control
The angle required regulation for a more stable interaction.

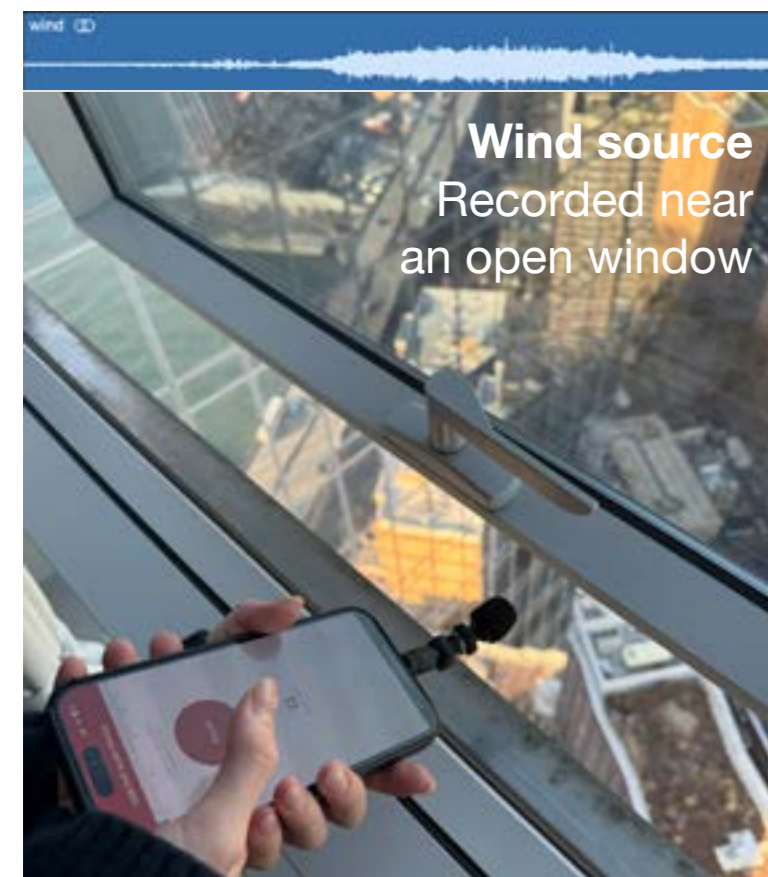


SOUND AS SHARED ATTENTION

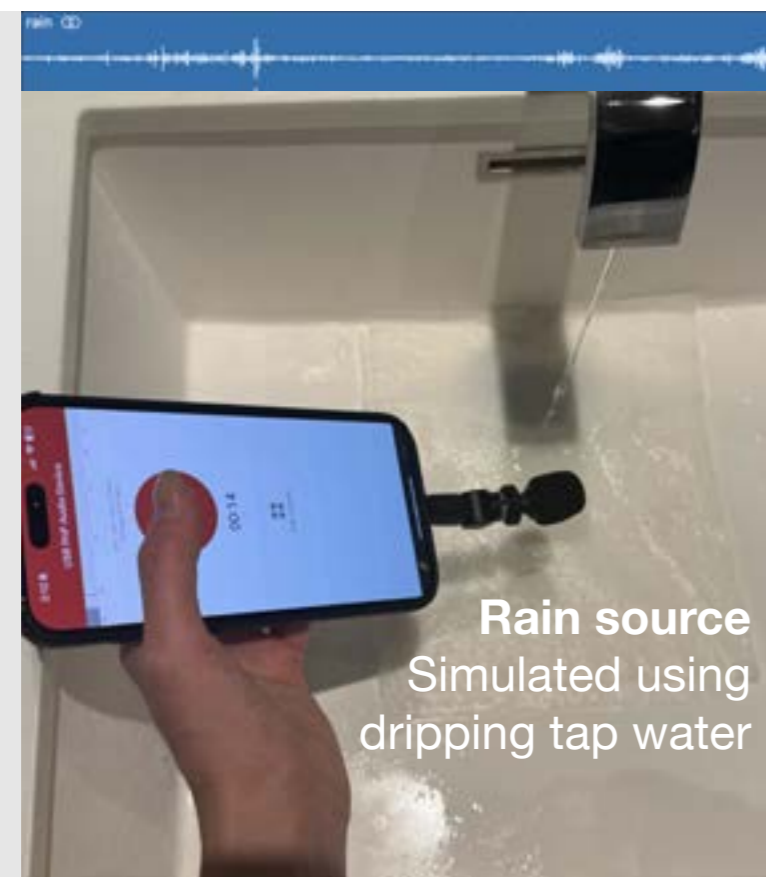
Environmental sound externalizes bodily movement and redirects attention toward others and the surrounding space.

Recording Urban Sounds

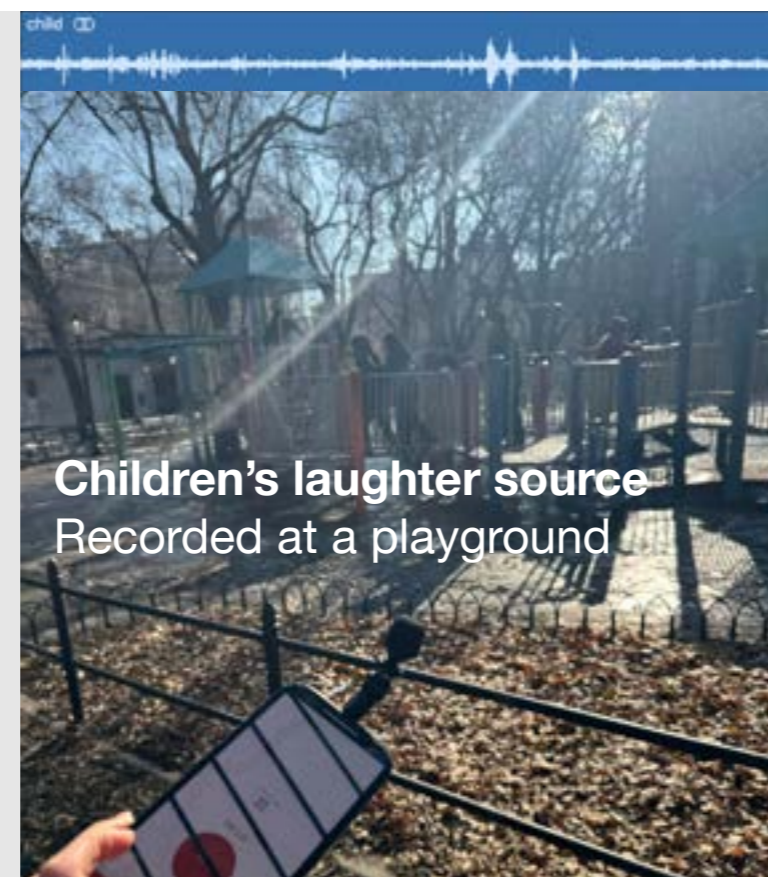
Recorded often-overlooked ambient sounds from the city.



Wind source
Recorded near an open window



Rain source
Simulated using dripping tap water



Children's laughter source
Recorded at a playground

Wind
open, atmospheric, outward

Rain
rhythmic, layered, intimate

Children's laughter
collective, playful, social

Editing and Blending Audio

Middle balance
Sound of Wind and Rain Blending



Left tilt
Sound of Wind



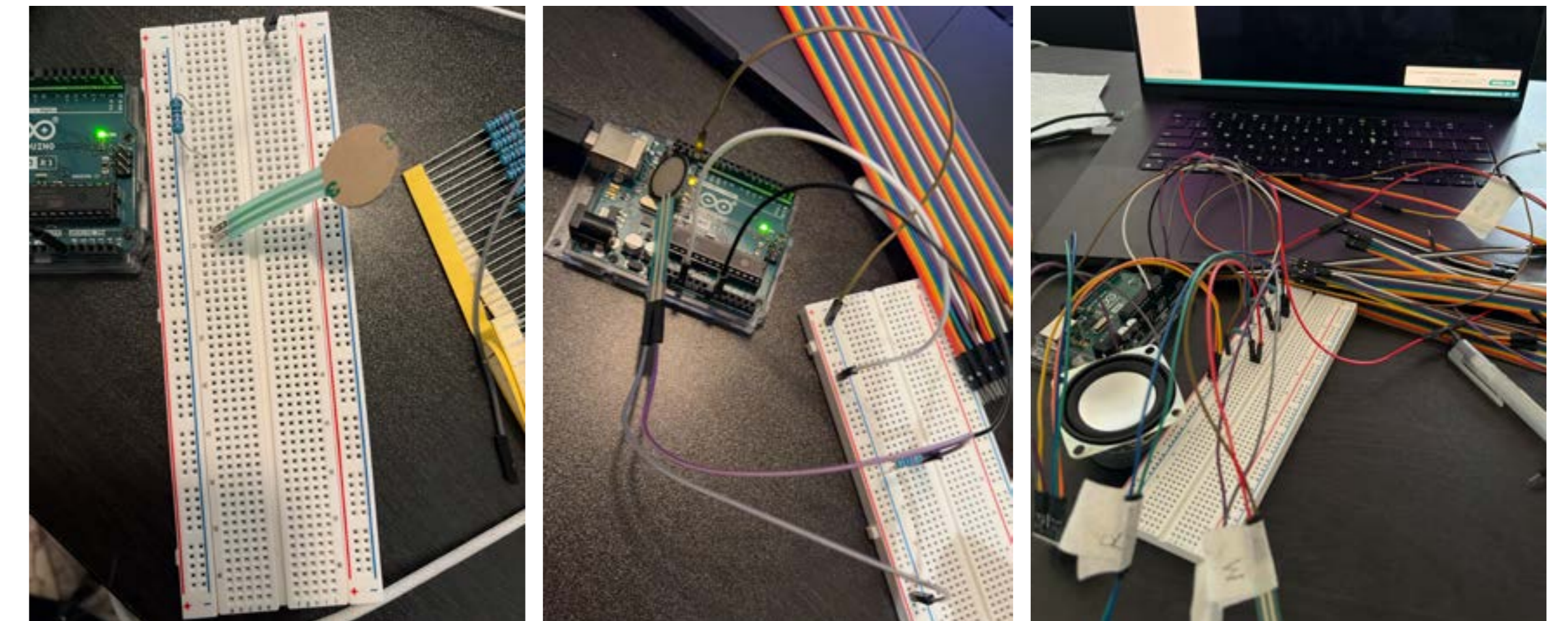
Right tilt
Sound of Rain



Shared activation
Children's Laughter



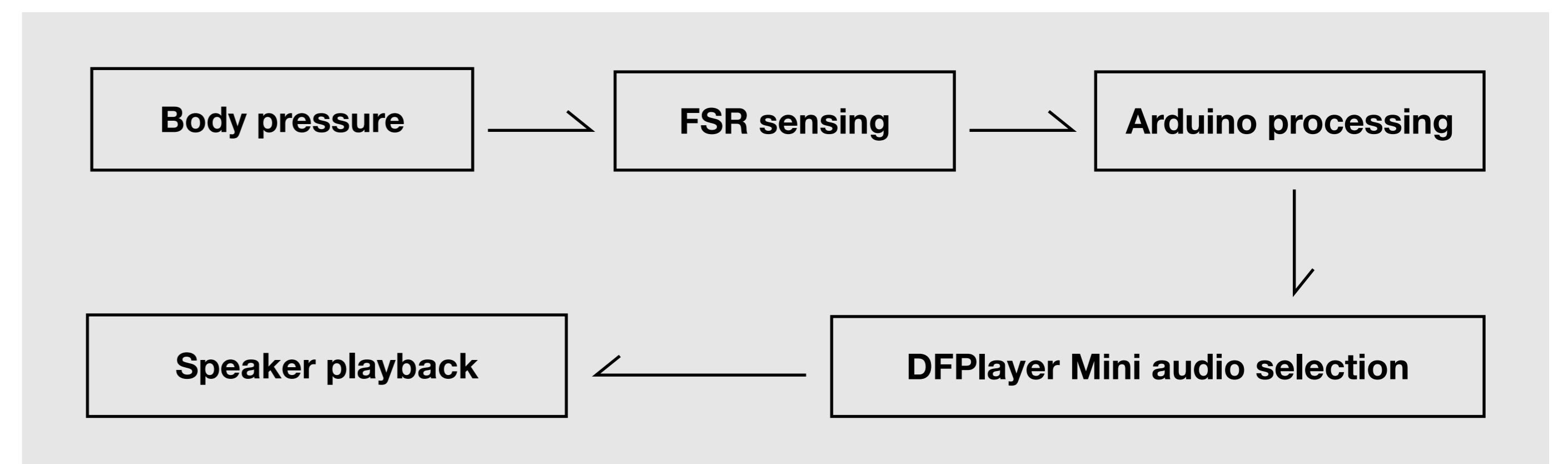
Sound activation system



FSR sensors were connected to Arduino through a breadboard to test pressure values and map different sound layers. Audio files were stored on a microSD card, read by a DFPlayer Mini, and played through a mini speaker.



System Flow



COLOR AS PUBLIC SIGNAL

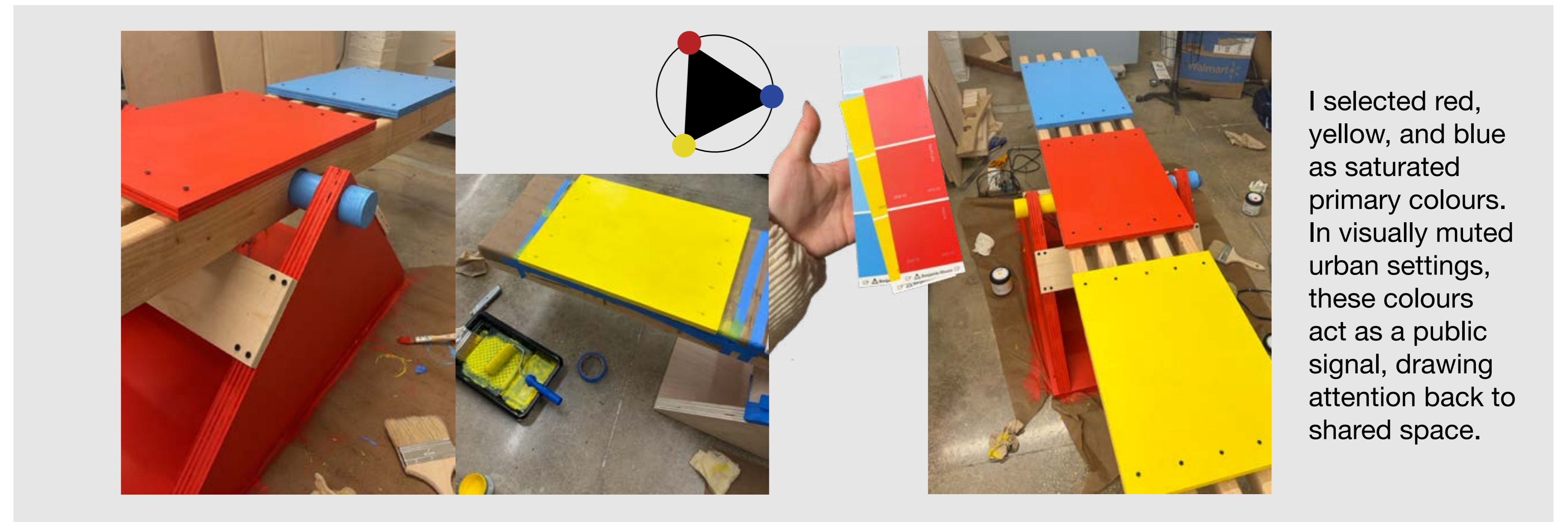
Saturated primary colors make the bench legible as a public signal within visually muted urban space.

Against the black, white, and grey tones of the city, red, yellow, and blue draw attention before interaction begins.

Spatial Visibility



Color Selection



I selected red, yellow, and blue as saturated primary colours. In visually muted urban settings, these colours act as a public signal, drawing attention back to shared space.

From Private Attention to Shared Awareness

The bench redirects attention through bodily imbalance and sound, turning parallel presence into shared awareness.



Approach while looking at the phone



Sit down and suspend phone use



Adjust balance while searching for the sound



A second person is attracted by the sound



Both begin to listen and adjust together



Shared attention develops into interaction



Listen to the city.

Listen to each other.