

Xi Xon Series

DES 503 | Winter 2026

by Iris Pham





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Designer's Note

At the beginning of this journey, I asked myself a simple question: *if I were a piece of furniture, what would I be?* This question led me to reflect on my childhood memories and my life back in Vietnam. My childhood home has become a kind of sacred space for me, not in a religious sense, but as a place that holds memories of family gatherings, daily routines, and sentimental moments that shaped who I am today. These memories are an important part of my identity, and I aim to translate them into my designs. I am drawn to furniture that feels grounded, warm, and approachable, the objects that support daily routines and moments of gathering. While restraint has always guided my design language, I also want to introduce softness and whimsy, allowing my work to feel cozy, playful, and human.

I hope to create furniture that grows with its user over time. For this reason, I am particularly drawn to materials such as cherry wood and textiles, which naturally change through use and carry traces of everyday life. Their warmth and tactility resonate with the emotional connection I hope my designs can create. Craft plays an essential role in my work. Having practiced crochet for thirteen years, I value processes that reveal the hand and the time behind an object. I have always loved making things by hand, often losing track of time as I become fully immersed in the process. Through making, I invest not only effort but also emotion into my designs, allowing each piece to carry a sense of care and presence. I allow the concept to guide the choice of materials and processes, creating furniture that invites interaction while holding stories of memory, comfort, and home.



Quây Quần

Wooden Stool

Dimensions: 15 x 15 x 18 in

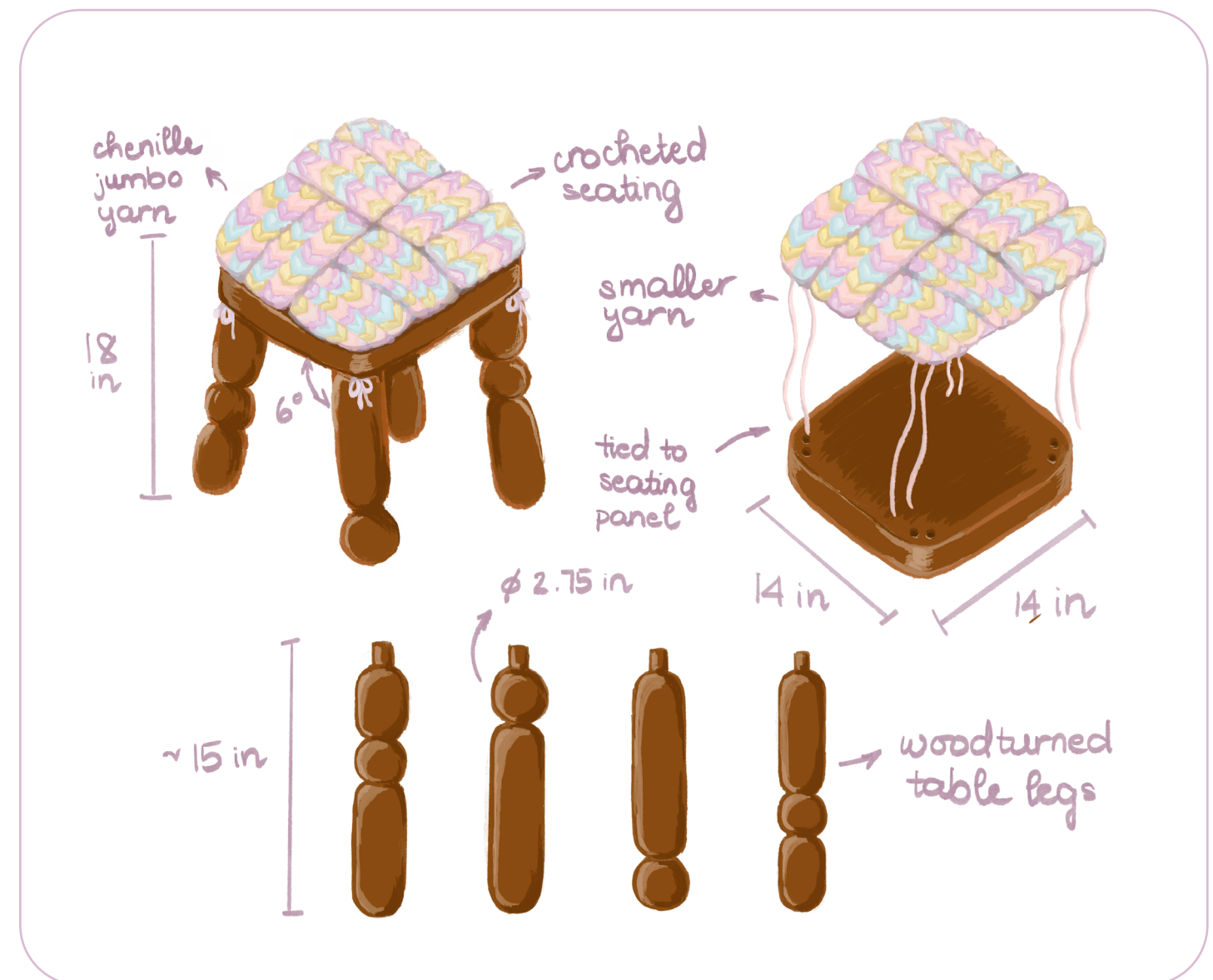
Materials: Cherry Wood with Crocheted Seating

Timeline: January 5 – March 6, 2026

Overview

Quây Quần is a stool that reflects the warmth of shared meals and the quiet rituals of everyday family life. The name, meaning “gathering” in Vietnamese, speaks to moments of togetherness that shaped my childhood, where my family would sit on plastic stools instead of dining chairs, gathering closely around meals. These experiences became a foundation for the design, informing both its form and emotional intention. Rather than recreating the stool directly, *Quây Quần* reinterprets it through material, proportion, and detail, translating memory into a whimsical piece of furniture.

The stool combines cherry wood and crocheted yarn to express both structure and softness. The turned wooden legs reference the beaded curtains commonly found in Vietnamese homes in the early 2000s, while the crocheted seat reflects my long-standing relationship with craft. Together, these elements create a balance between stability and comfort, between permanence and change. As both materials age through use, the stool is intended to grow alongside its user, carrying traces of everyday life. Through this piece, I aim to create more than a functional object, it becomes a holder for memory, care, and the enduring warmth of gathering under one roof.



Quây Quần Stool Concept Sketch.



Tòong Teng

Room Divider

Dimensions: 15.75 x 47.25 x 51.5 in

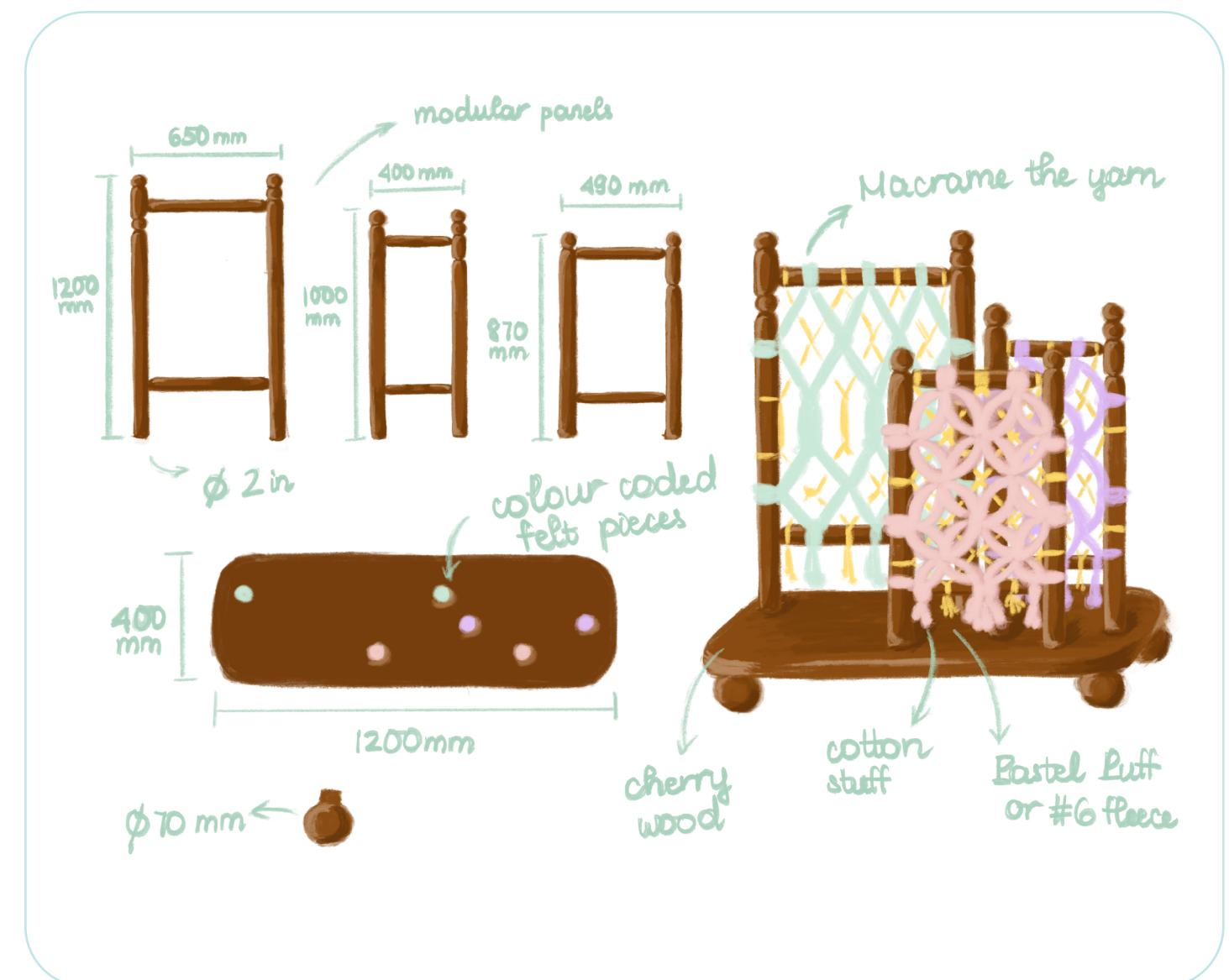
Materials: Cherry Wood with Macrame Yarn

Timeline: January 27 – April 10, 2026

Overview

Tòong Teng is a room divider that explores the idea of privacy through the lens of memory, movement, and care. The name comes from a Vietnamese reduplication describing danling things, capturing the physical quality of the piece. Growing up in my childhood home, privacy was never defined by walls or enclosed rooms. Spaces were shared, and boundaries were non-existent. My grandmother's bed, placed under the stairs where people frequently passed by, became a strong reference point for this project, an in-between space that was neither fully private nor public.

Rather than creating a rigid boundary, *Tòong Teng* proposes a softer, more permeable form of separation. The yarn panels filter space instead of blocking it, allowing light, movement, and interaction to pass through. Inspired by beaded curtains and architectural details from my childhood home, the piece invites touch and engagement, recalling moments of childhood play. The oversized scale of the yarn and the act of knotting further embed a sense of care and connection into the object. Through this work, privacy is reimagined not as isolation, but as something gentle, flexible, and lived, that is held within the rhythms of everyday life.



Tòong Teng Divider Concept Sketch.





Tòong Teng Divider Finished Vision.

