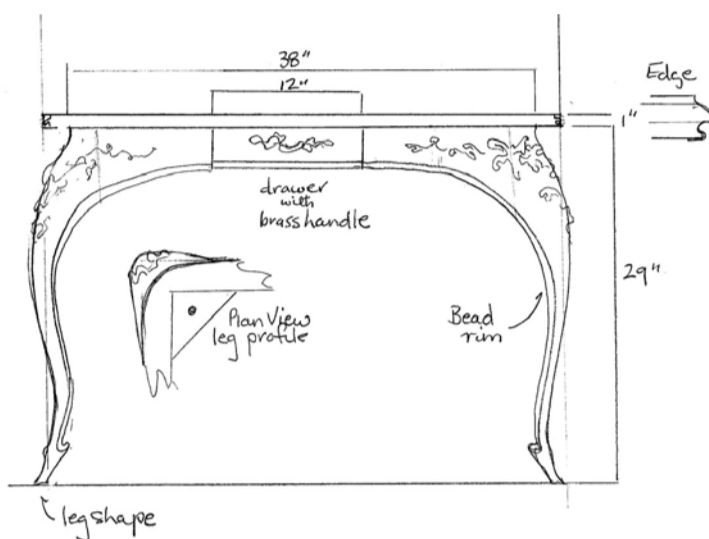


Love Letter Desk: From Oil to Acrylic

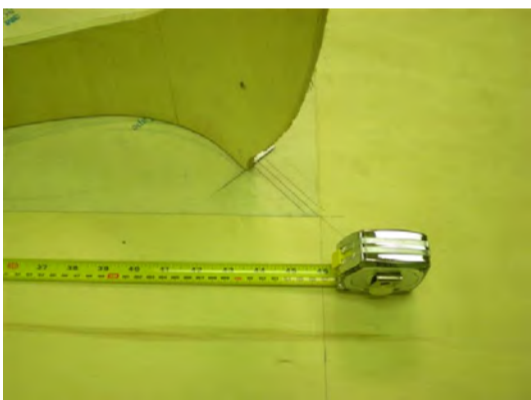


Jean Honore Fragonard, a fashionable painter in the time of Louis XV, applied a cheerful palette to poetic narratives on the court life of the mid 1700's. It was a romantic culture and games of courtship were favourite subjects. Fragonard's work naturally included furnishings and "The Love Letter", in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, features a particularly fine desk. It inspired me to attempt a contemporary version of the desk first in wood, then in acrylic.

Sleek contemporary interiors are gentrified by an occasional visual flourish. The highly refined barely-curved serpentine line of Louis XV court furniture, a high water mark in design history, is a fitting choice for a decorative piece.



The idea was to pair a well-carved chair with a transparent desk. Elegant yet fresh, the combination does not intrude on any alcove where a writing table or dressing table is needed, be it small space or large.



Countless acrylic fabricators were unable to make the bowed and curved desk, so I took the drawings to Mark Paul, who can work miracles in any material, and the task began. He shaped wiggle wood into moulds, cut acrylic into shapes, then heated and pressed them in the moulds to set their serpentine curves.

To safely support heavy glass or marble tops we devised a third layer of plastic, a simplified acanthus leaf shape above a rib, both typical period motifs, to strengthen the legs. It sandwiched between the two legs that extended all of a piece from front and side apron like a classic Louis XV desk.

All issues resolved, we had the Love Letter Desk in clear acrylic with a Calacata marble top. It is shown with an Italian carved chair with paint and silver leaf finish and satin upholstery. They are all available at 98 Avenue Road.

