

# Book Cradles for Exhibition— Access, Aesthetics and Preservation

## Maria Fredericks

*Morgan Library & Museum*

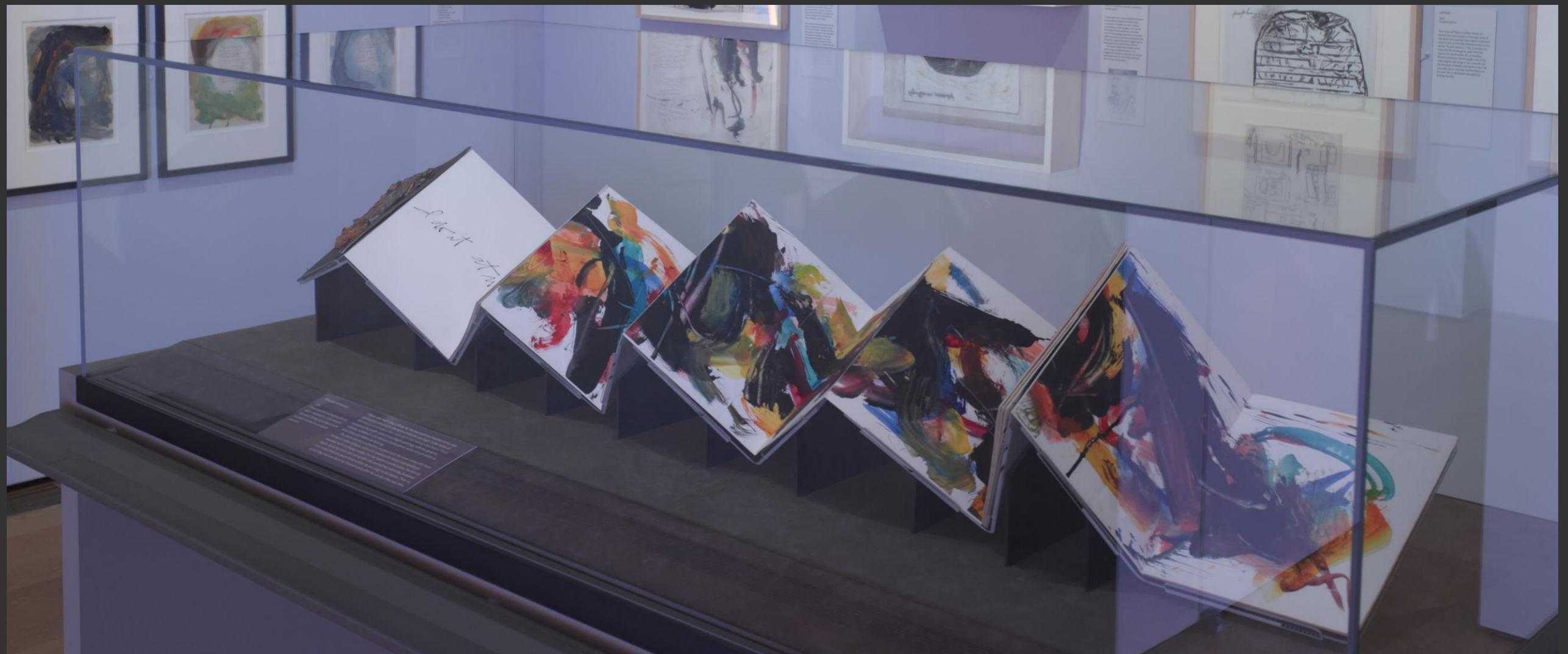
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An active program of exhibitions and loans is the primary point of contact between the Morgan's holdings and the public. Each year, several hundred printed books, bound manuscripts, and artists' sketchbooks are displayed in five different in-house galleries, and many more are shown at external venues. The need to present bound materials in an intellectually stimulating, visually appealing, and fully accessible way sometimes challenges the preservation imperative. While all aspects of exhibition development address these combined mandates, it is the humble and often unnoticed book cradle that shoulders much of the load, both metaphorically and physically. This presentation will provide an overview of the Morgan's exhibition preparation and design process, and the conservator's role as part of the exhibition team. The interdependency of cradle costs, production time, space needs and design requirements will be discussed in the context of safe and sustainable exhibition practice.

*Maria Fredericks is Drue Heinz Book Conservator in the Thaw Conservation Center, Morgan Library & Museum, New York, where she is responsible for examination, treatment, and safe exhibition of a wide range of rare books and bound manuscripts. She was Head of Conservation at Columbia University Libraries from 1998-2005; her prior experience includes positions at the Huntington Library, the Winterthur Library, the Newberry Library and the Library of Congress. She currently supervises book conservation graduate students from NYU's Institute of Fine Arts, as well as interns and post-graduate fellows, and is a member of the Visiting Committee for the Mellon Library & Archive Conservation Training initiative. She has taught and lectured on a variety of topics related to library conservation and historical binding structures.*



# *Book Mounts at the Morgan Library & Museum: Preservation, Access, and Aesthetics*



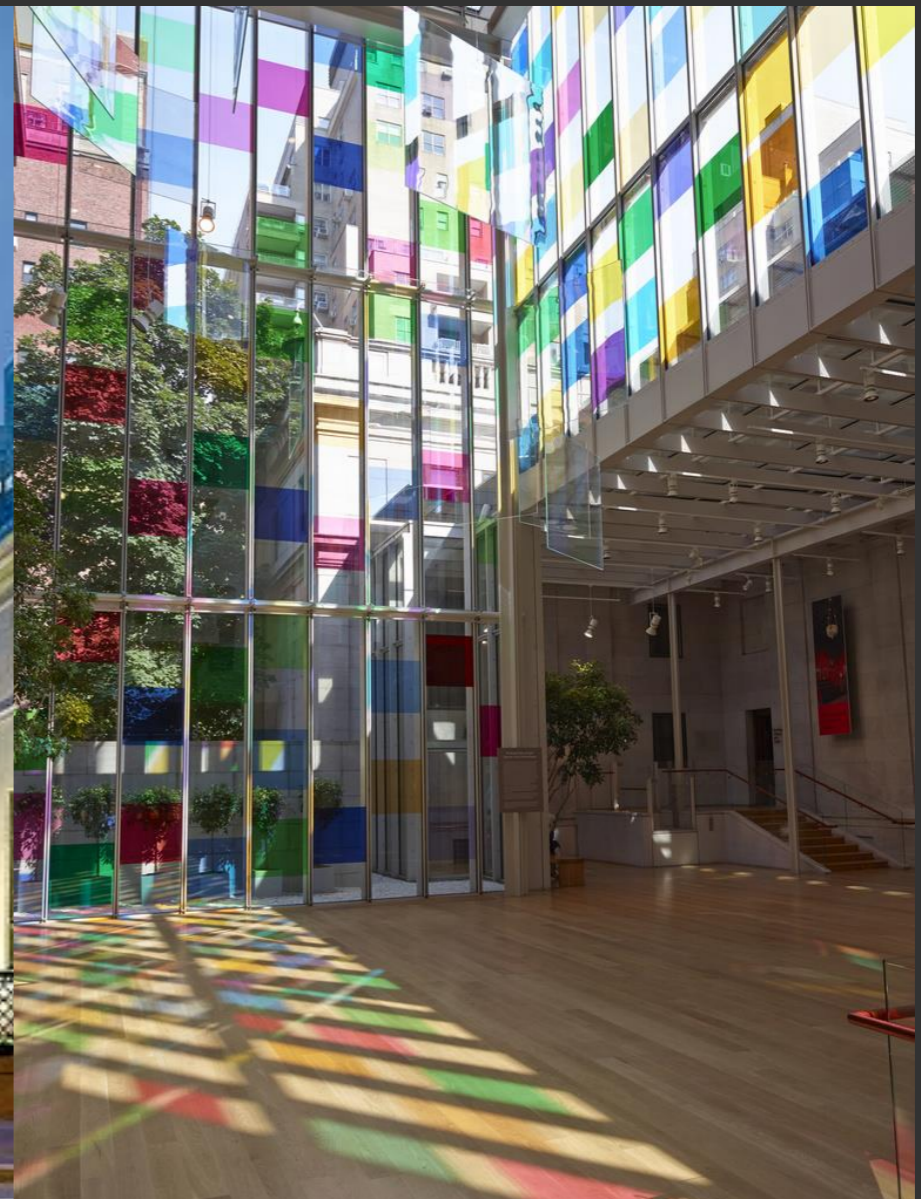
Maria Fredericks  
Drue Heinz Book Conservator  
Thaw Conservation Center  
Morgan Library & Museum, New York

*Don't Rock the Cradle Symposium*, Folger Shakespeare Library, April 1-3, 2015

# The Morgan Library & Museum



Façade and front entrance, 225 Madison Ave  
Renzo Piano addition



Gilbert Court interior, with  
*A Certain Slant of Light*, installation by  
Spencer Finch



*Treasures of Islamic Manuscript Painting*  
December 9, 2011- February 5, 2012  
Engelhard Gallery



Rotunda of the 1908 McKim Building  
Rotating Americana, books and manuscripts



*Treasures from the Vault* (highlights rotations)  
East Room of the McKim Building, Mr. Morgan's Library



*Hebrew Illumination for Our Time: The Art of Barbara Wolff*  
February 6 - May 3, 2015



Mounted books for *Beatrix Potter: The Picture Letters*, 2012 - viewed from back and front

# Miracles in Miniature

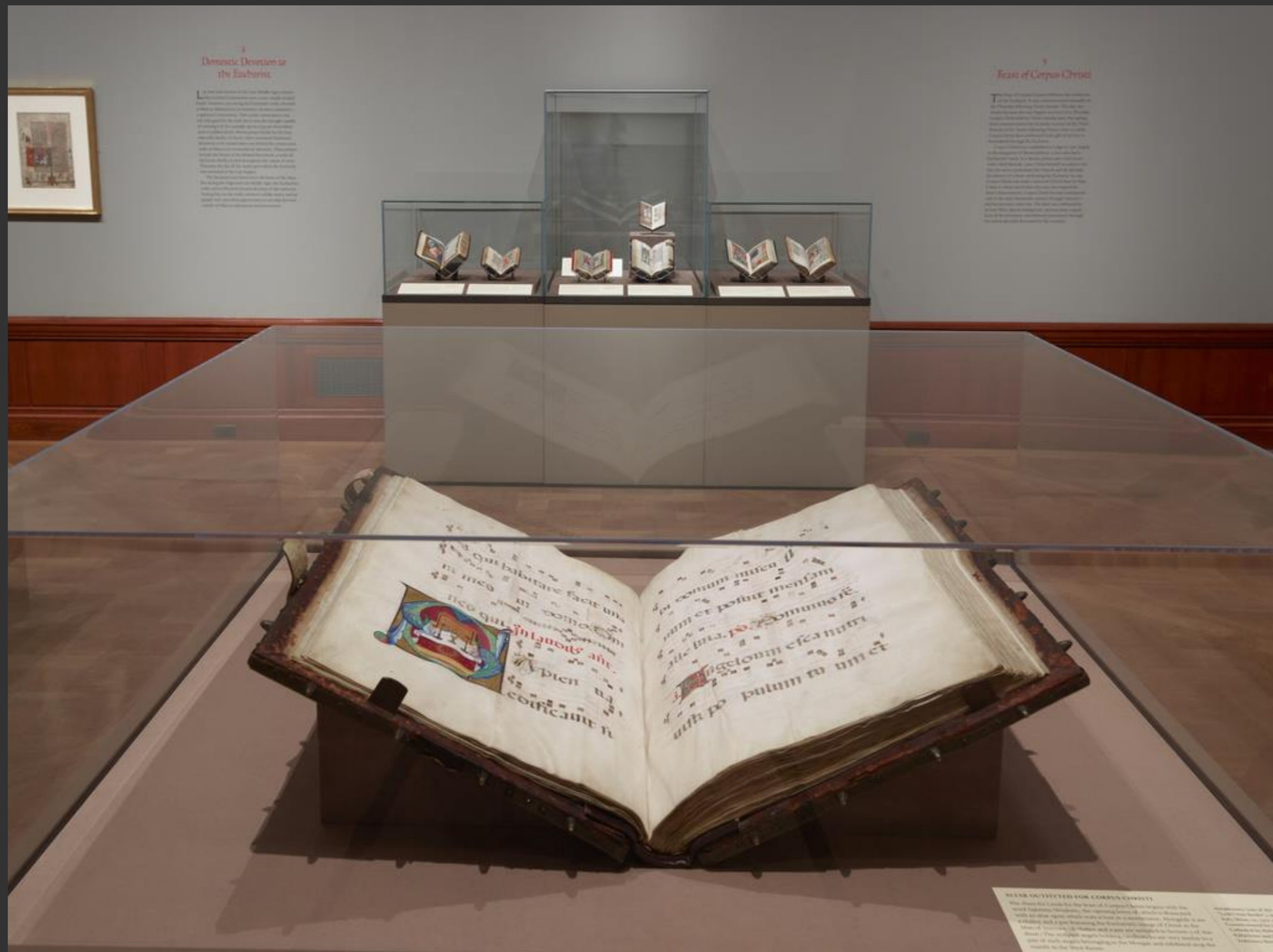
THE ART OF THE MASTER OF CLAUDE DE FRANCE



*Miracles in Miniature: The Art of the Master of Claude de France*  
May 30 - September 14, 2014



Brass cradles for miniature books – open armature mount to show jeweled cover



*Illuminating Faith: The Eucharist in Medieval Life and Art*  
May 17 - September 15, 2013



Foam-core board cradle with recesses for binding hardware



Vertical mount with brass rods at each end



Three-piece acrylic cradle, 30-degree tilt

*Dan Flavin: Drawing*  
February 17 - July 1, 2012



Small diaries mounted vertically with padded brass tabs

*The Diary: Three Centuries of Private Lives*  
January 21 - May 22, 2011

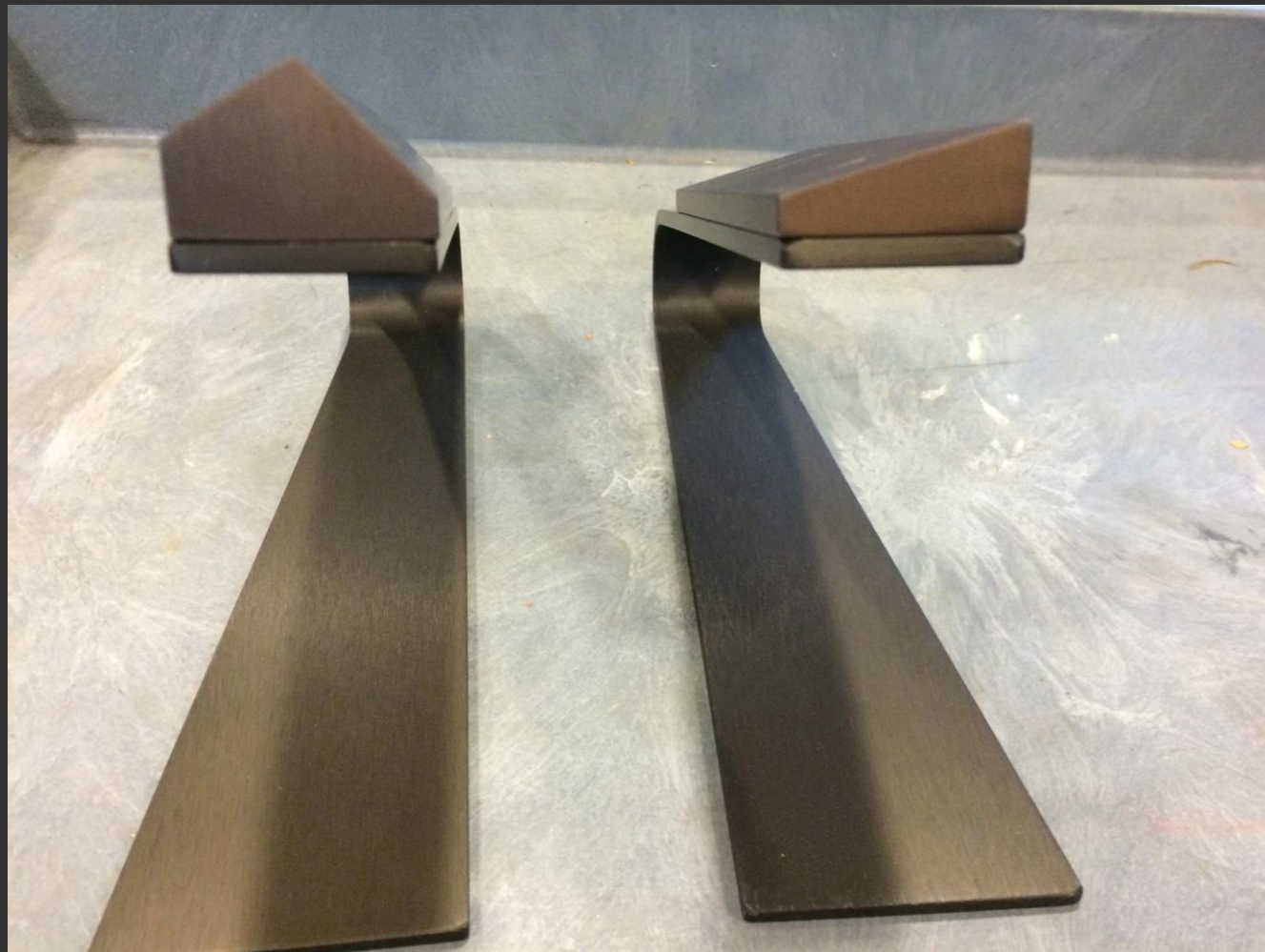


Modular aluminum hardware in standard sizes and angles; finished cradle with hardware attached



Brackets and cleats: Small, medium, large  
Four possible angles for tilt; combine angled cleats under book for safe opening

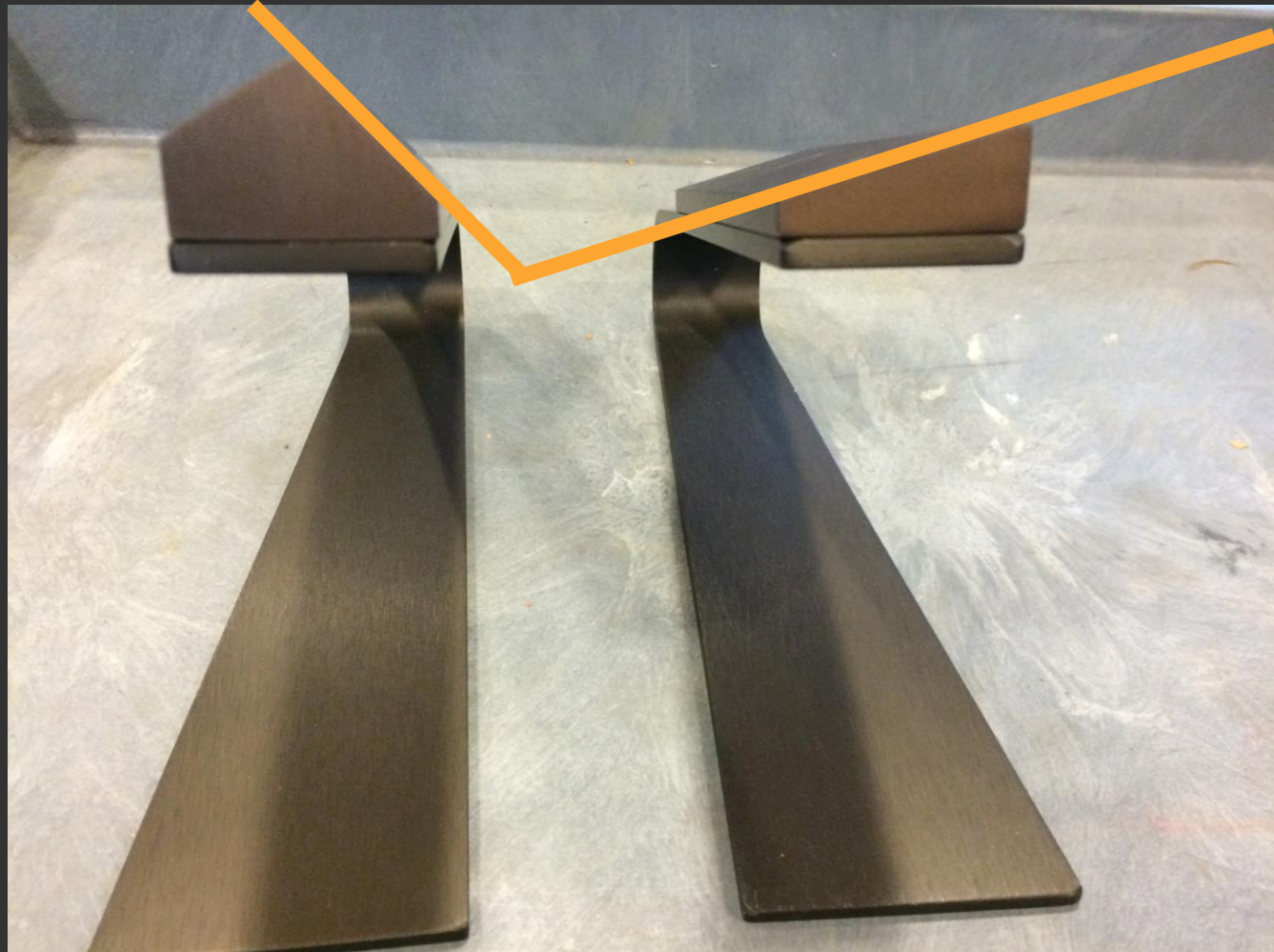




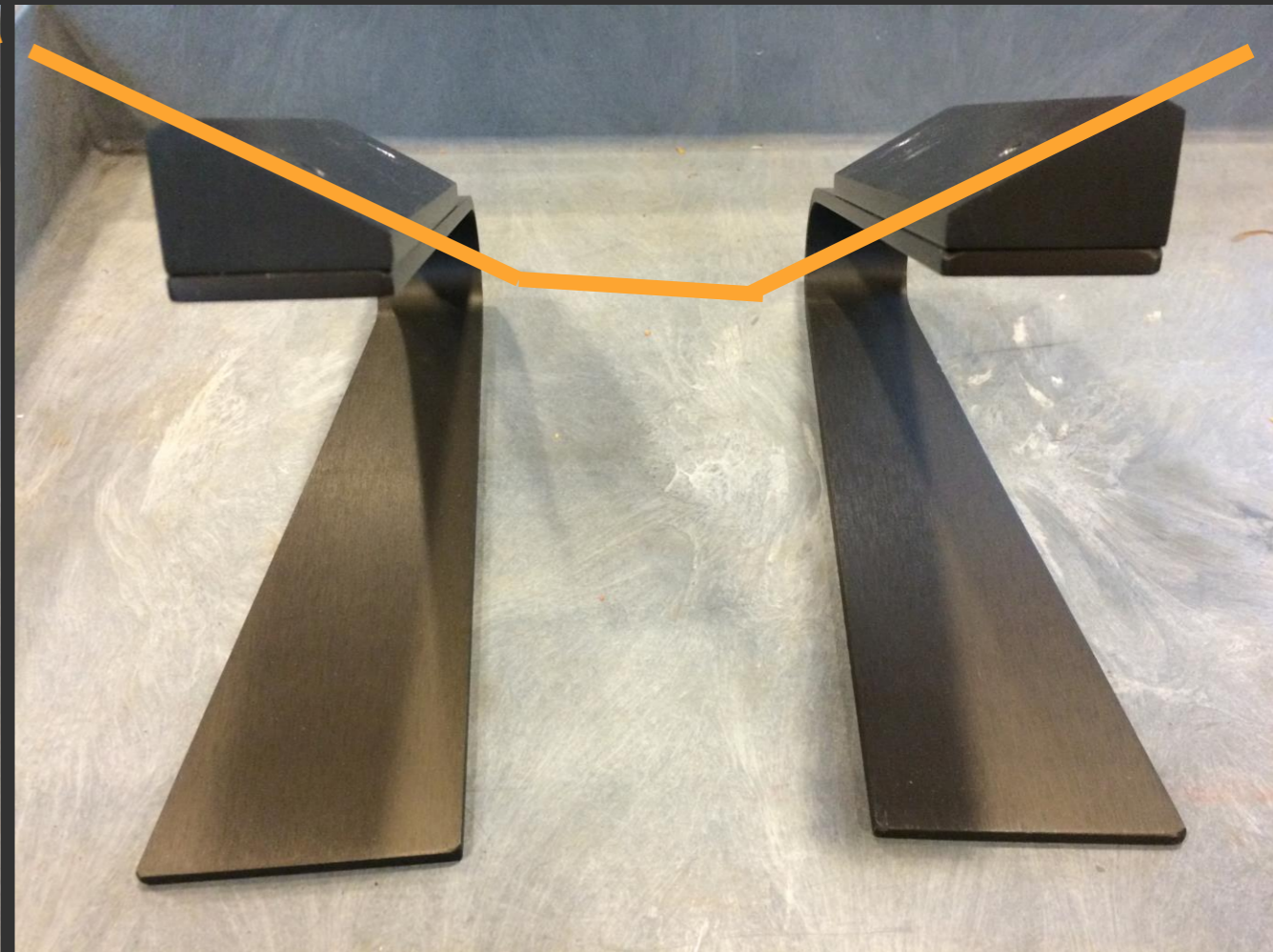
Angles under book boards: 45 - 15



Angles under book boards: 30 - 30



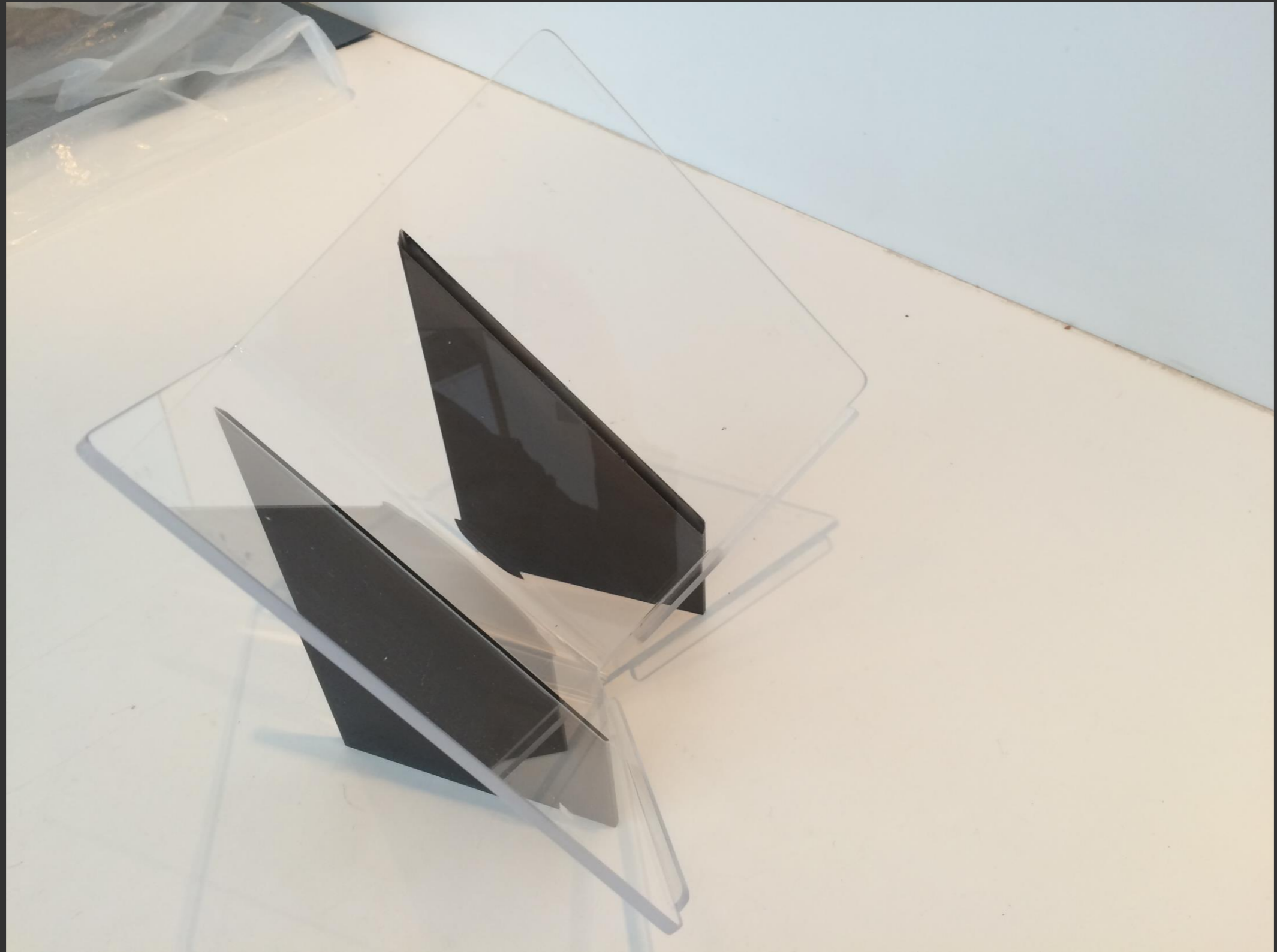
Angles under book boards: 45 - 15



Angles under book boards: 30 - 30



Cradle with anodized aluminum support; dark, recessed legs designed to disappear into shadow below book



All-acrylic cradle with sanded, bronze-colored legs



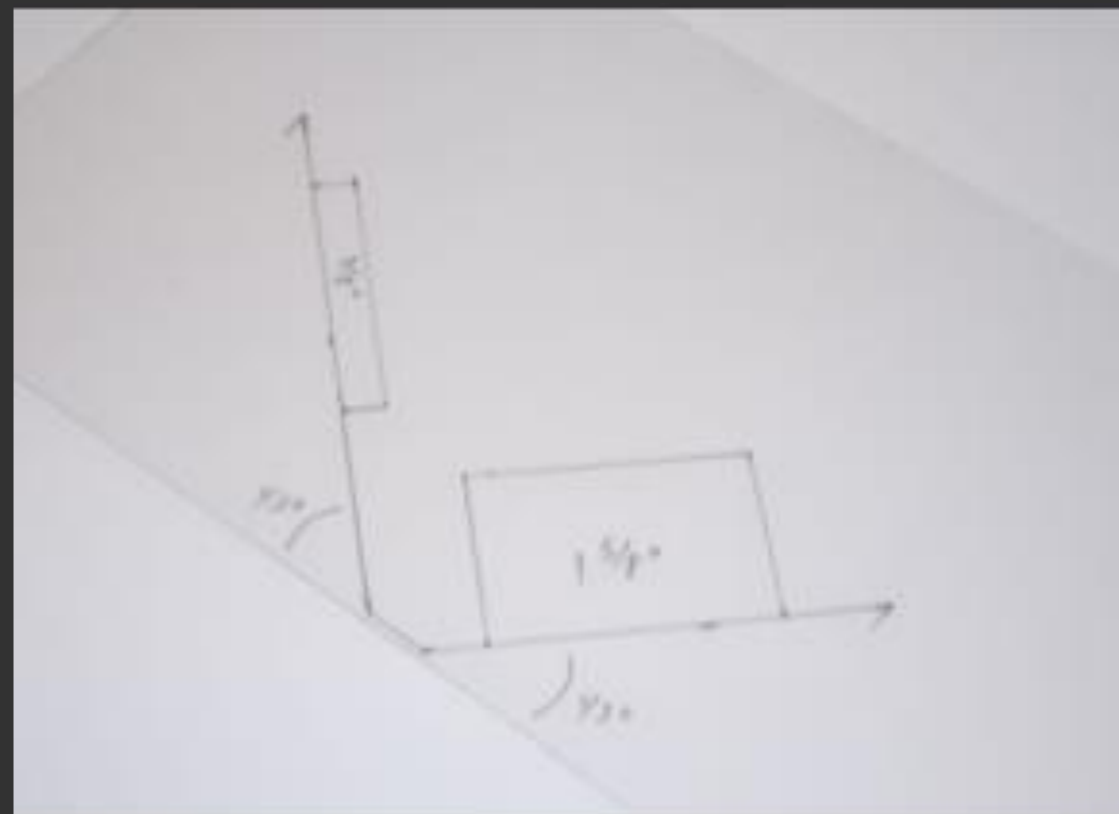
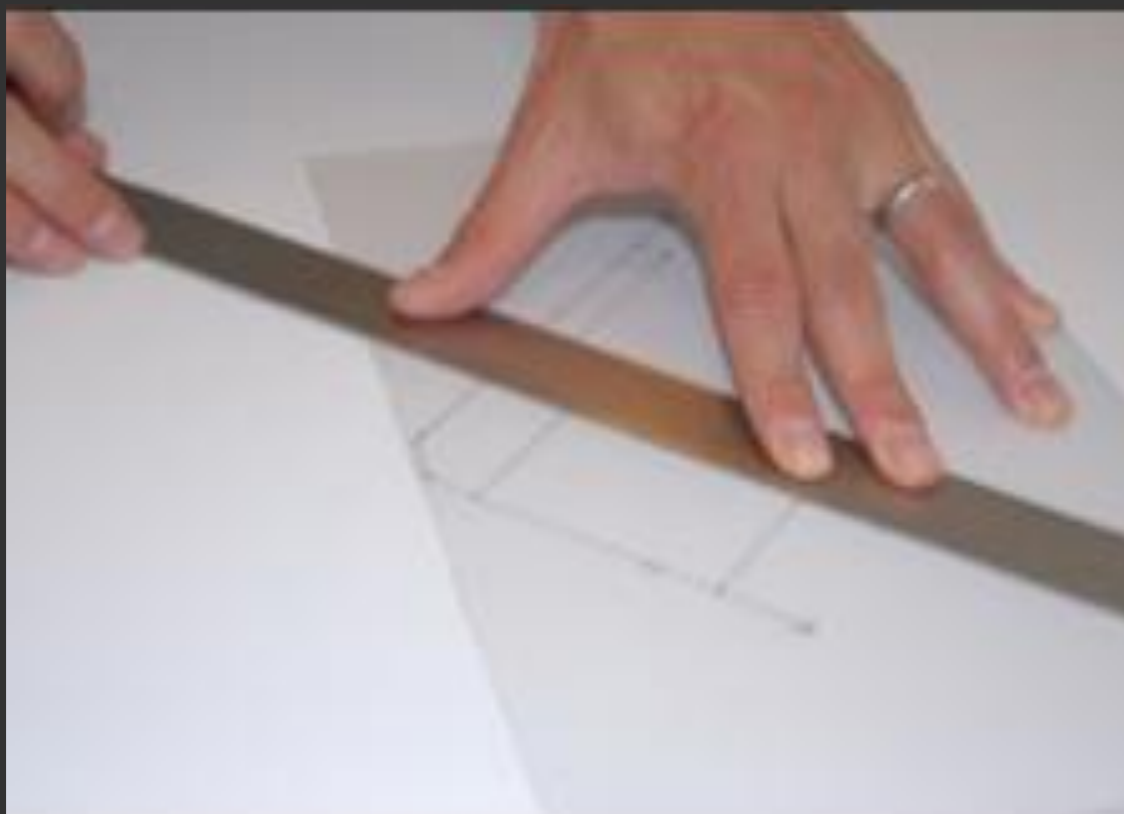
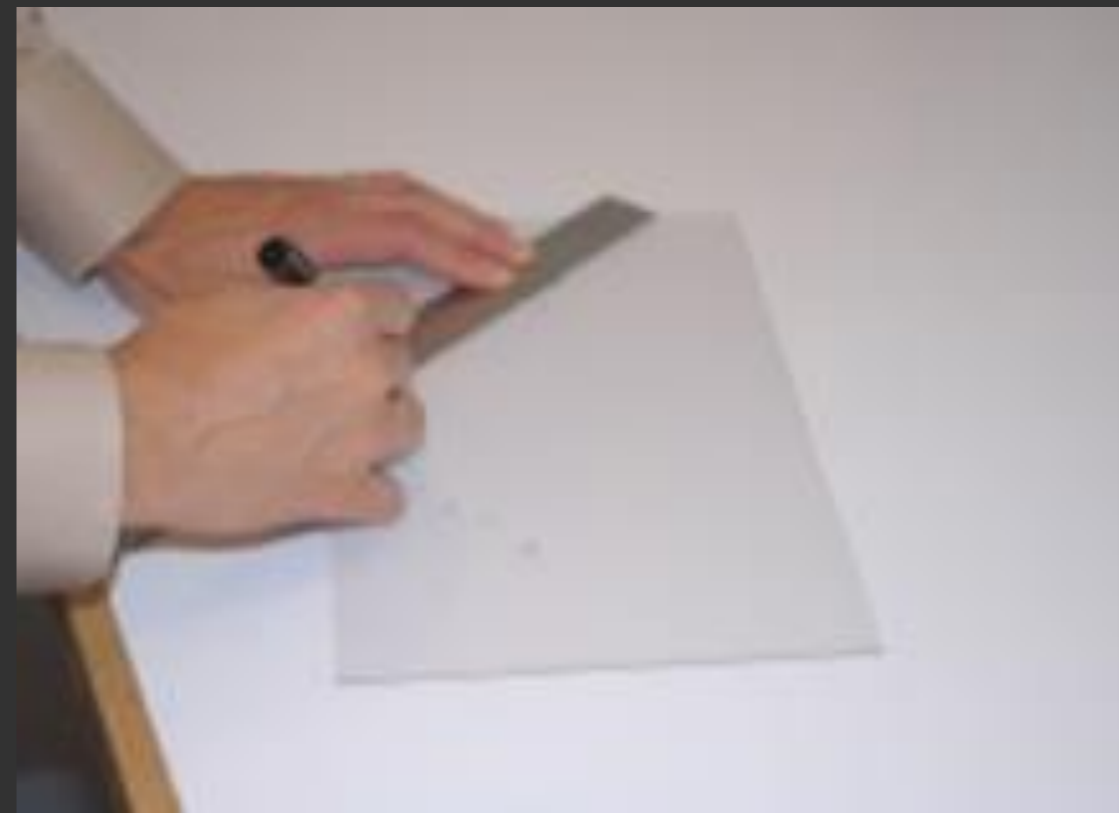
Dark acrylic legs also disappearing into shadow



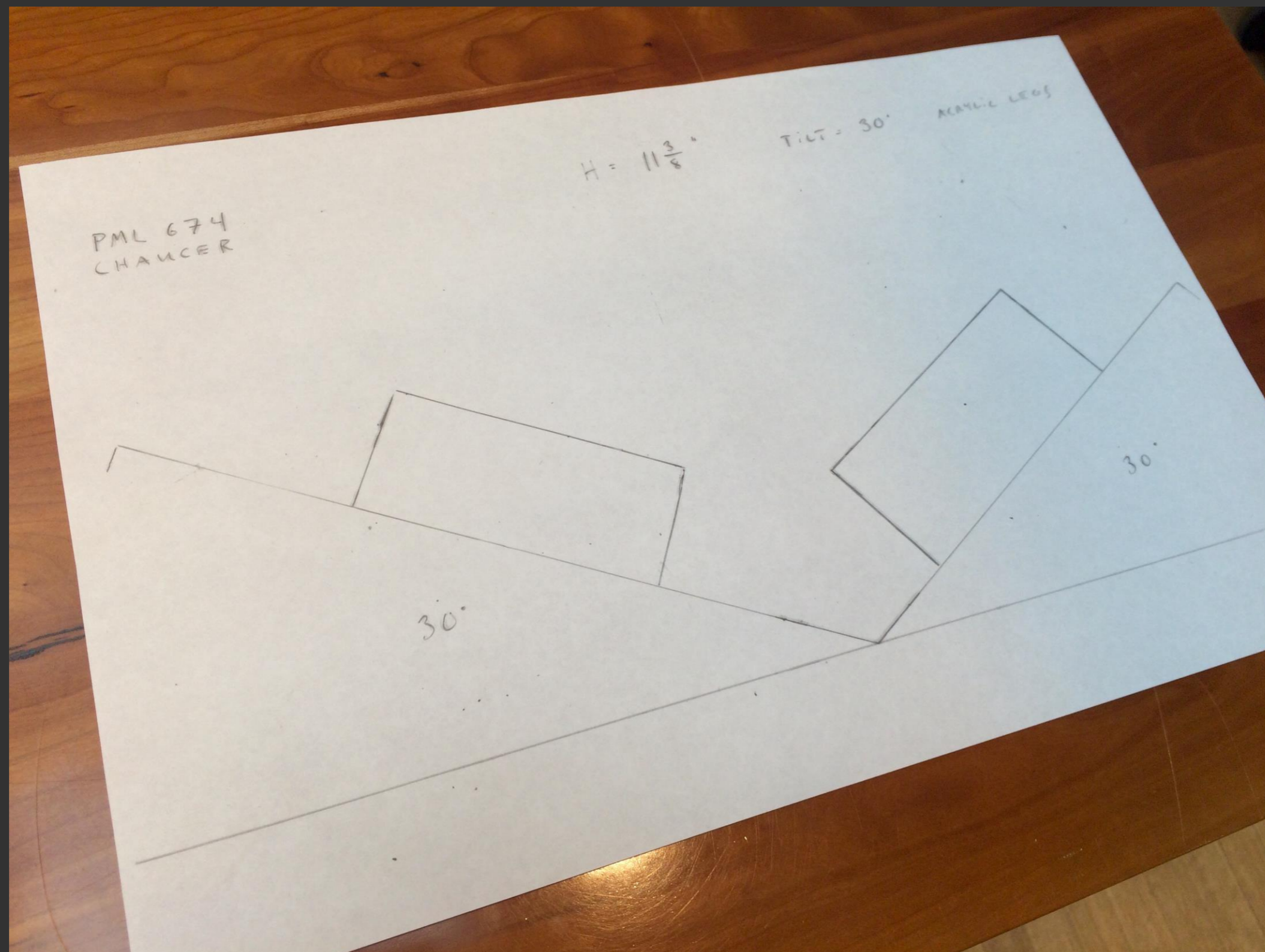
Foam-core wedges at 15, 30, 45 and 60 degrees; angles match metal cradle hardware



Book set up between wedges for measuring



Book measured for cradle using standard angles; trace foot of book through rigid sheet of thin plastic (Vivak®)



Cradle profile prepared for fabricator

Casework Design:  
**IMREY CULBERT**

**ATELIER**

191 CHRYSTIE STREET SUITE 4F  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10039  
PH: 212 674 8010 • 212 673 6783

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Project Director:  
**PARATUS GROUP**

Design Architect and Casework Co-designer:  
**RENZO PIANO  
BUILDING WORKSHOP**

**KEY PLAN**

ISSUED/REVISED		
No.	Date	Description
10.26.04		Submission
11.09.04		Submission
12.28.04		Submission
1.29.05		Submission
3.3.05		Submission
4.4.05		BD SET
10.26.05		

**DRAWING TITLE**

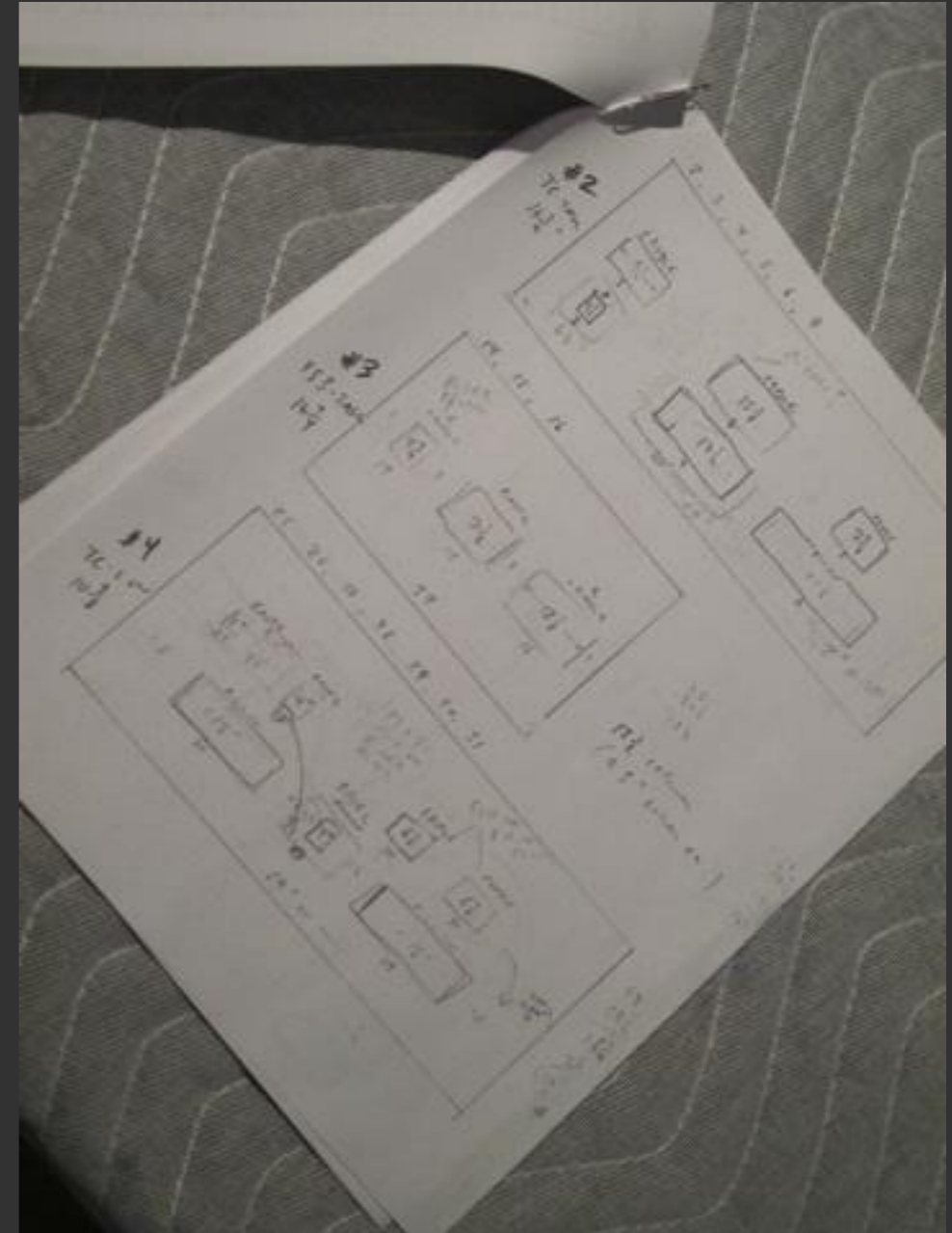
**CASEWORK HEIGHTS**

Issue Date	10.26.05	Scale	1/4" = 1'-0"
Project No.		Phase	
File Name			

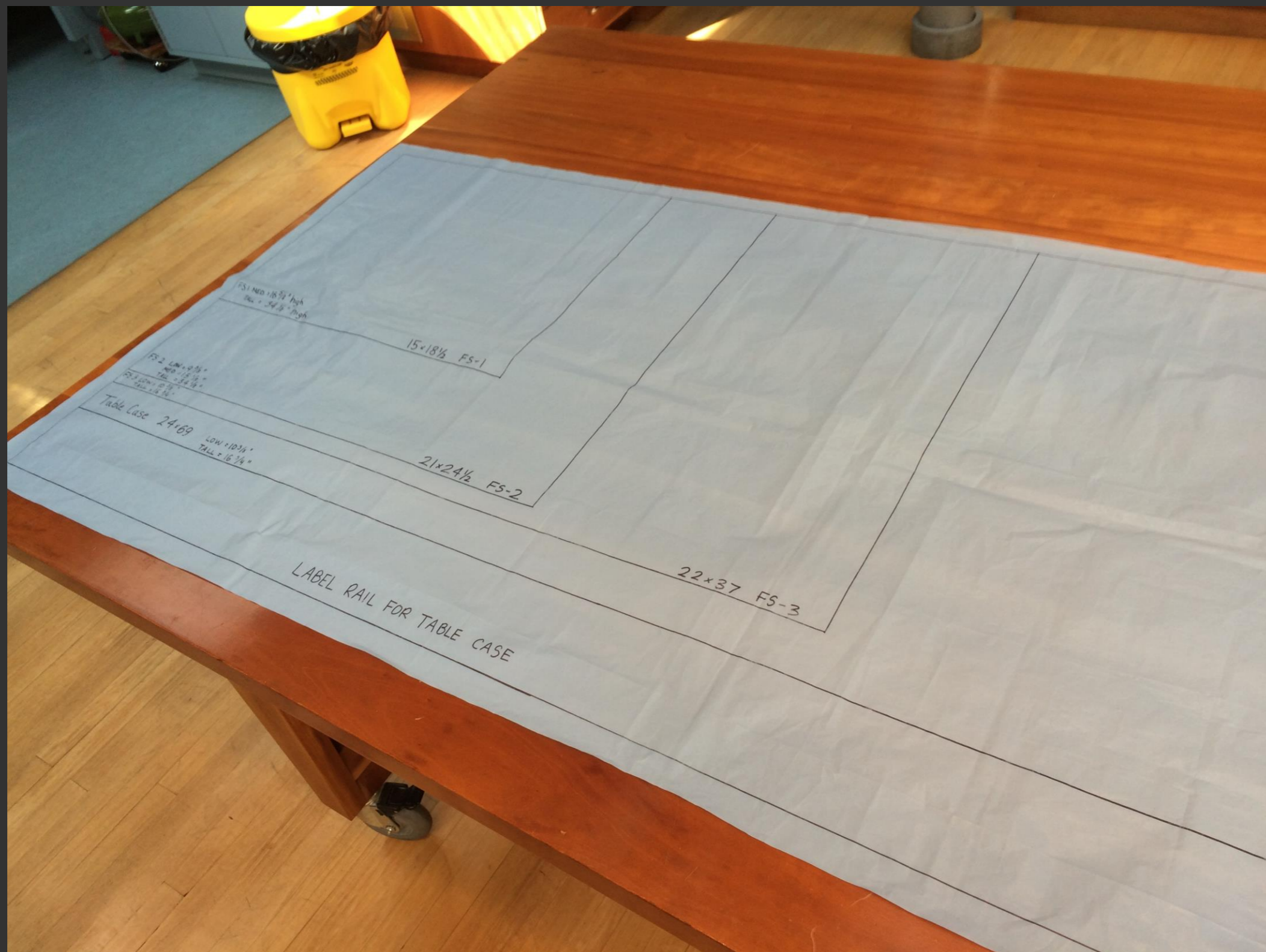
DRAWING No.

**SK-005**

Standard case sizes and heights



Case layouts and floor plans



Templates for case layout

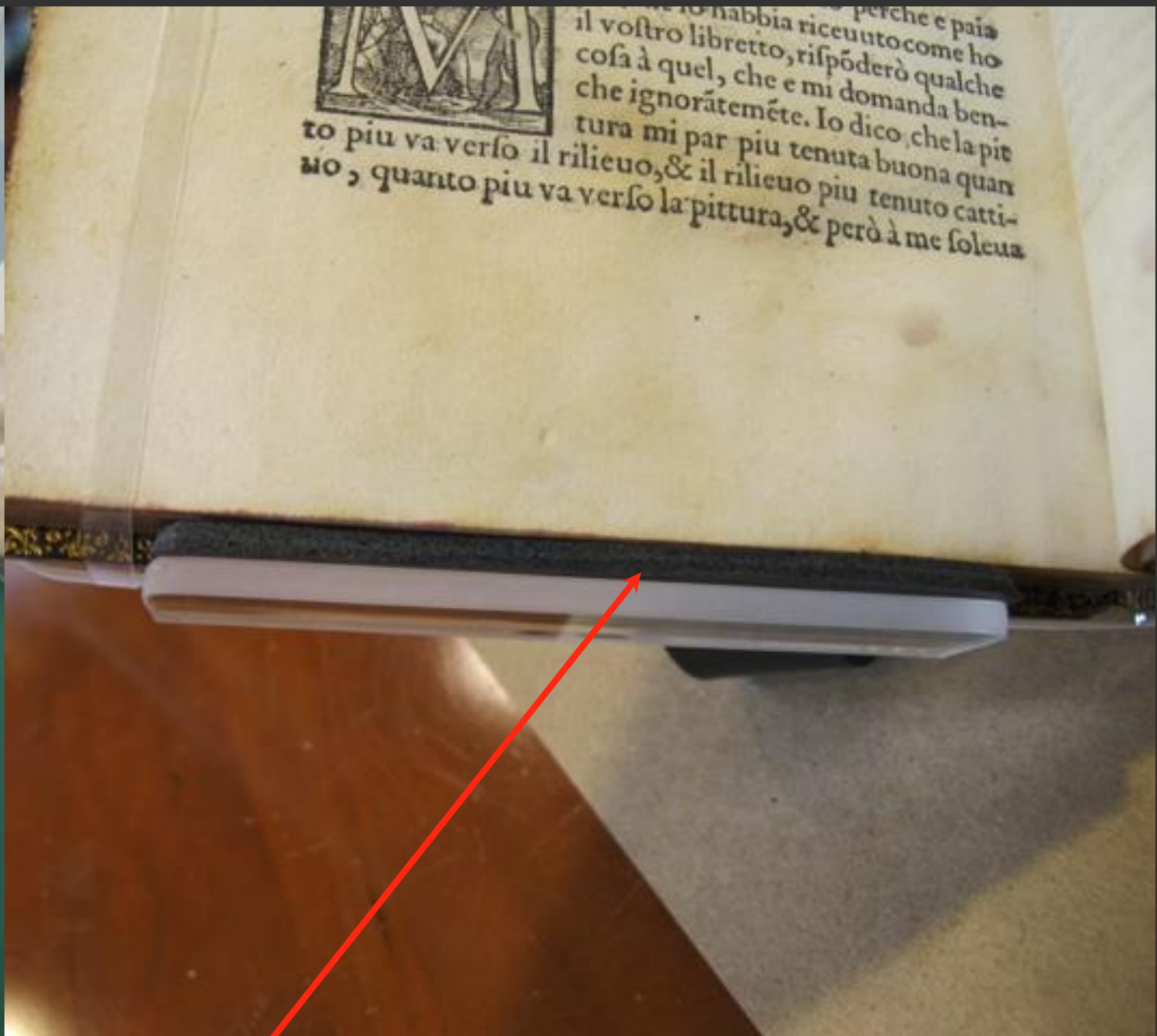


Curator's working case layout

OBJ. DISPLAY W	H OF BOOK (OBJ. D )	OBJ. DISPLAY H FLAT (LIP DIMENSION FOR EASELS)	TILT	OBJ. DISPLAY H TILTED	OBJ. DISPLAY D TILTED	CASE H
13 1/4	13 1/8	6 1/4	15	9.43	14.30	10 3/8

OBJ. DISPLAY W	H OF BOOK (OBJ. D )	OBJ. DISPLAY H FLAT (LIP DIMENSION FOR EASELS)	TILT	OBJ. DISPLAY H TILTED	OBJ. DISPLAY D TILTED	CASE H
13 1/4	13 1/8	6 1/4	30	11.98	14.49	10 3/8

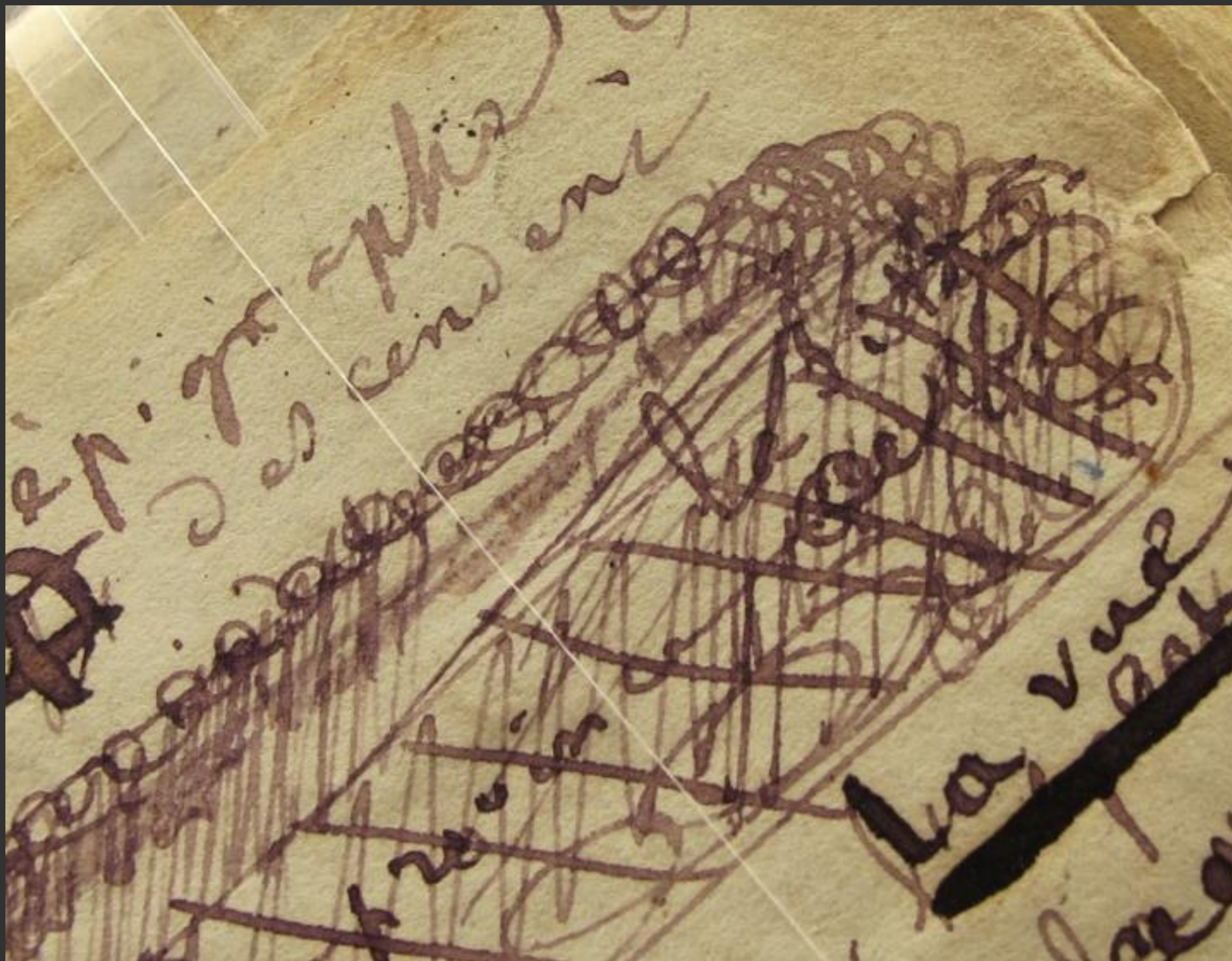
Spreadsheet with calculating fields to determine height and depth of mounted object at specified tilt



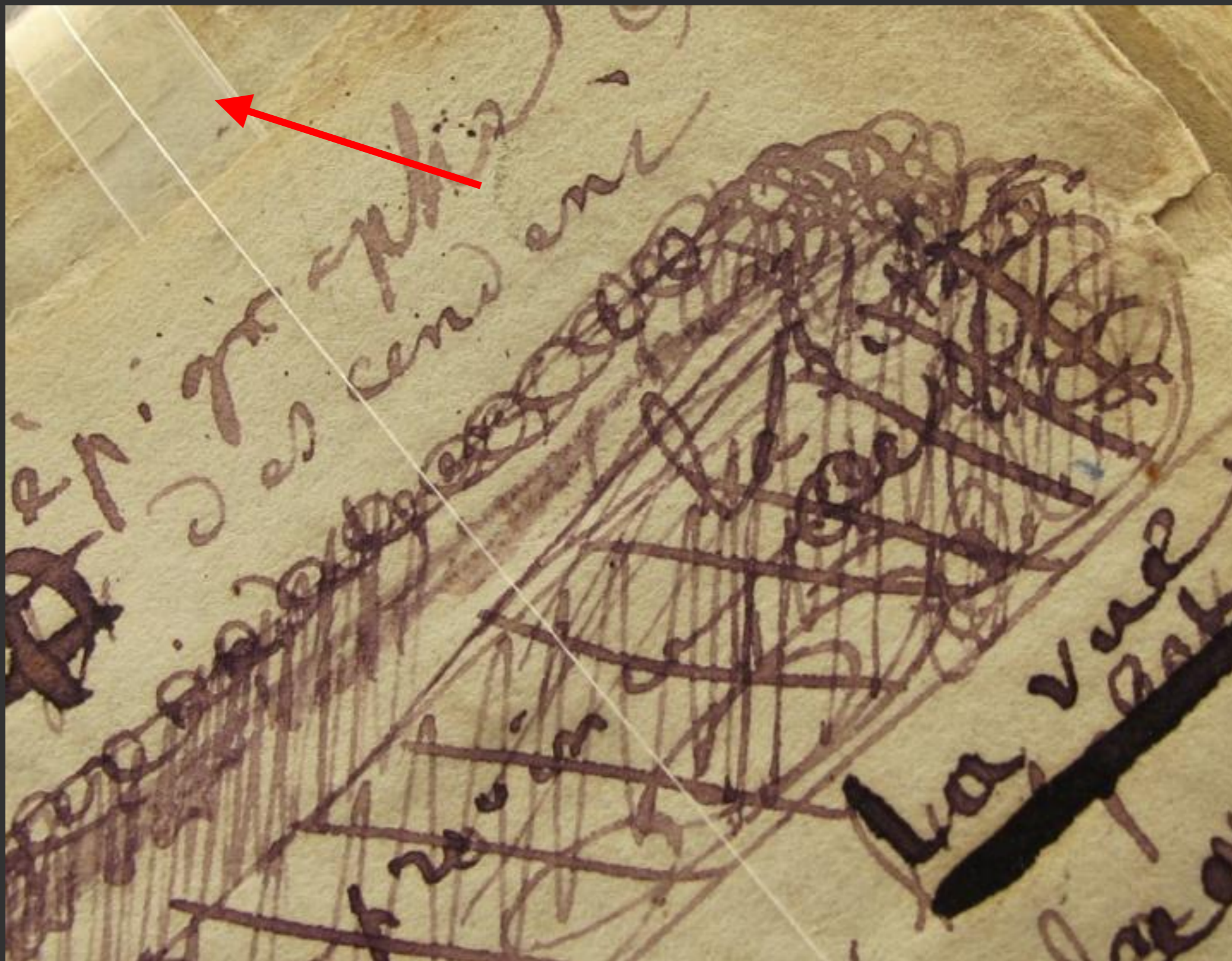
Text block supported from below with soft polyethylene foam (Volara®)



Wider polyethylene behind display opening, narrower band holds display leaf only



Display page strapped with 'hair silk' and polyethylene



Display page strapped with 'hair silk' and polyethylene

	ENTER DIMENSIONS OF BOOK ON CRADLE WITH SPINE FLAT TO DECK			ENTER DESIRED TILT	CALCULATING FIELDS - DO NOT ENTER DATA HERE (TO ENLARGE SPREAD SHEET, COPY AND PASTE THE FORMULA IN EACH CELL INTO ADDITIONAL ROWS)	
ITEM NO.	WIDTH (WIDEST POINT SIDE TO SIDE)	DEPTH (FRONT TO BACK)	HEIGHT (HIGHEST POINT FROM DECK SURFACE)	TILT		
					TILTED HEIGHT	TILTED DEPTH
1	18	9	4	0	4.00	9.00
2	18	9	4	15	6.19	9.73
3	18	9	4	30	7.96	9.79
4	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
5	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
6	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
7	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
8	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
9	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
10	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00