

Tabla - Marizon Bilano



Tabla is a **backgammon game set**, consisting of a woven board and 30 porcellain pieces (*checkers*) in two colors. Backgammon is a game, commonly found in Macedonian homes and a traditional game, popular in Balkan countries.

The intention of Tabla's design was to bring together three values: the craftsmanship of weaving and clay pottery (ceramics), the natural core of my impressions by using only form language and the concept of fun that I have come to enjoy when being around the people in Skopje and Matka.

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In my **research**, I was looking for traditional objects that Macedonians claimed to be proud of. Who are the craftsmen behind them? I was also interested in behaviours that would suggest a Macedonian cultural identity. There is a charming way of embracing mistakes.

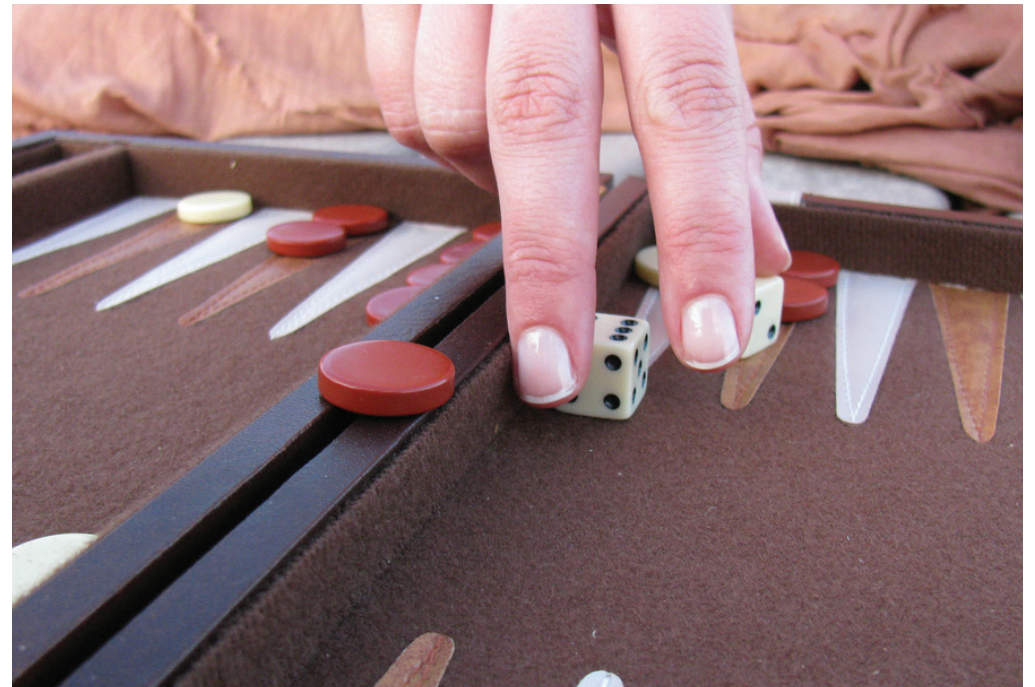
Our Matka **workshop** taught us a traditional way of weaving with bast fibers and how to work with clay ceramics. I wanted to bring these craftsmen together, to keep their tradition alive. The concept of Tabla succeeds in suggesting a product fitting for a collaboration. The



board is a weave with two structures: a standard weave and 12 braids. The checker pieces are one and the same pottery material. They are set apart through their coloring, which was achieved by bricking and baking the light set and by barrel firing the darker pieces. To be able to build the board, I also build my own loom machine.

“We are playing more Tabla than chess.” Irma Popova

“I love to play backgammon on the beach!” Emilija Angelokovik





Prospect to **Tabla**: the board has a complicated braid woven into as pattern. The structure sticks out to the players, however the checkers are wobbling in place. As for the ceramic pieces that serve as checkers: they were kept as plain as possible, to prevent a childish looking design. I would like to find a pattern and a technique to give them a heightened sense of Macedonian's identity. I also would have liked to add dice to the set.