

***Inkroot* - Cooke-Sasseville**
Imagination Center at Reindahl Park
City of Madison

January 2026

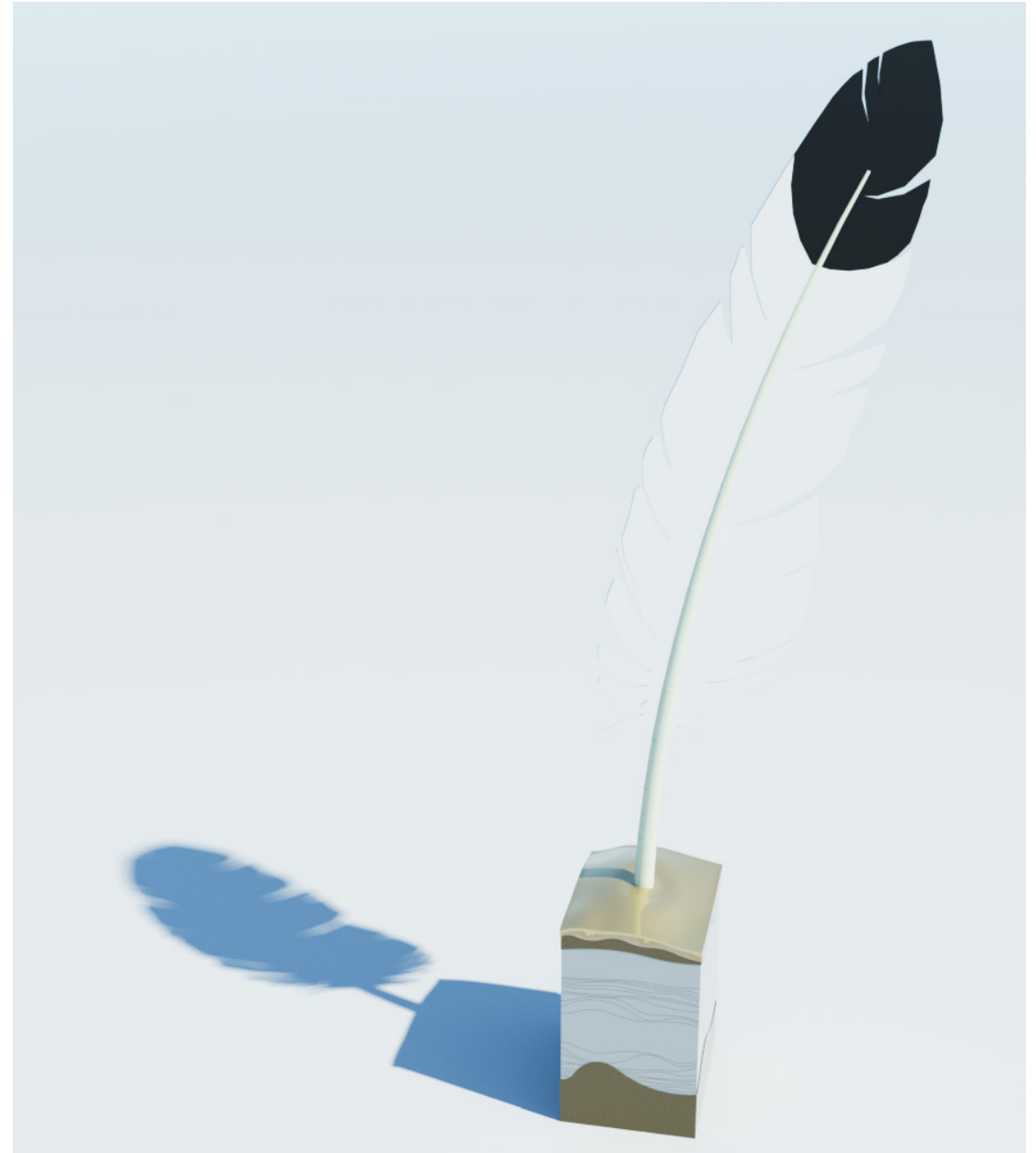


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1. Narrative description of the project

The public artwork we have developed for the area near the new Imagination Center at Reindahl Park takes the form of a vertical presence: a monumental feather set upright and planted in an inkwell that is both organic and stratified.

The feather carries a symbolism that is both simple and universal. It first refers to writing, as it long served as one of the primary tools for setting thought down, and thus becomes a sign of literature, authorship, intellectual work, and the transmission of ideas. By extension, it also evokes the notion of voice, in the sense that writing often means speaking in another way, bearing witness, telling a story, and shaping a point of view. Its apparent lightness and slender form also suggest the precision of the gesture and the ability of a minimal movement to produce a lasting mark that can endure over time. In this sense, the feather is also tied to memory and legacy, since texts preserve, share, and extend what we have lived, thought, or imagined, from one person to another and from one generation to the next.

The surfaces of the inkwell that support the feather evoke far more than a simple reservoir of ink. The horizontal surface, conceived as a skin, suggests the human envelope, sensitive and alive, while the vertical faces recall strata, like successive layers formed through slow accumulation, in the manner of sedimentary deposits. The inkwell thus becomes a block of memory and territory, a support where time leaves traces. At the precise point where the feather anchors into it, it seems to emerge from the material like a shoot: it rises from a follicle, as if writing were literally born from the body.

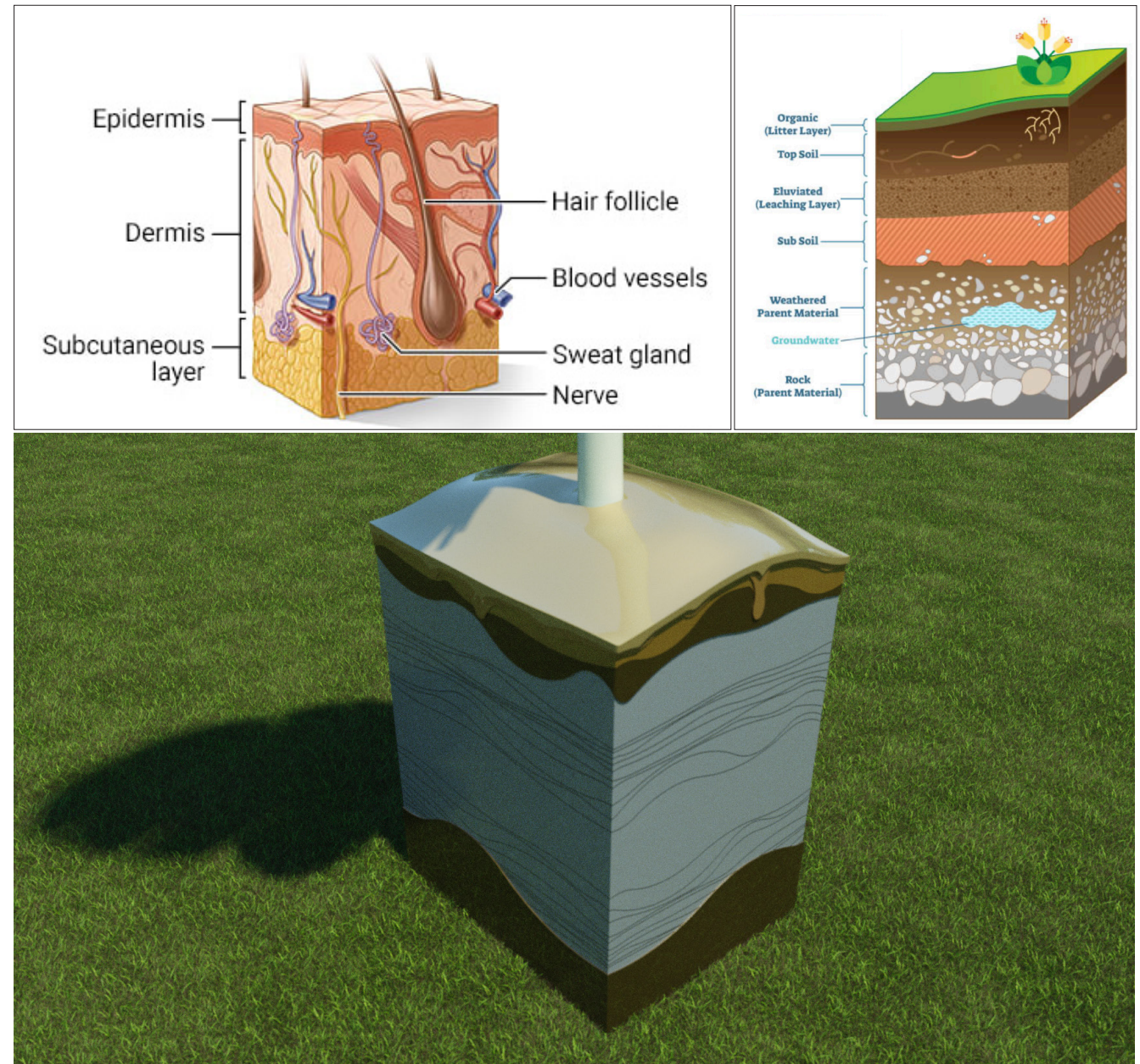
Writing is often associated with culture, knowledge, learning, and literature. Here, it is brought back to its simplest origin: an impulse, a need to speak, to leave a trace. The feather becomes a presence reaching toward the sky, affirming that every story begins somewhere, in an experience, a memory, a voice. Stories do not arise from nowhere: they emerge from us.



As one approaches, it becomes clear that the inkwell, in addition to supporting the feather, functions like a sectional view. Beneath the surface, the sculpted underlayers evoke cutaneous strata as well as layers of soil, like a geological reading of the world: successive deposits, sediments, accumulated matter, time stacked up. This analogy connects the book to the human, and the library to the territory. It suggests that stories are inscribed in matter, that they carry traces, and that they accumulate like a shared ground made of languages, knowledge, and collective memories. The feather then becomes a direct metaphor: to write is to dig and bring things back to the surface. As one draws out a buried layer, one brings forth a sentence, a memory, a fiction, a testimony. The artwork speaks of literature as a process of stratification: each text rests upon other texts, each story is born from a depth, from a “before,” from an unseen underlying layer.

Visible from afar as a landmark in the public space, and readable up close as a material to interpret, the sculpture presents a simple idea: what matters in a library is not only what is preserved, but also what can be born there. Where people come to read, the work reminds us that we can also write. Where people come to receive stories, it affirms that we can also produce them.

Through this vertical presence, the artwork creates a dialogue between the intimate and the territory. It links the act of writing to a logic of inscription and accumulation and positions the library as the space where these traces are preserved and passed on, suggesting that the history of a place and the stories of those who inhabit it are layered over time and can be read, gathered, and carried forward.



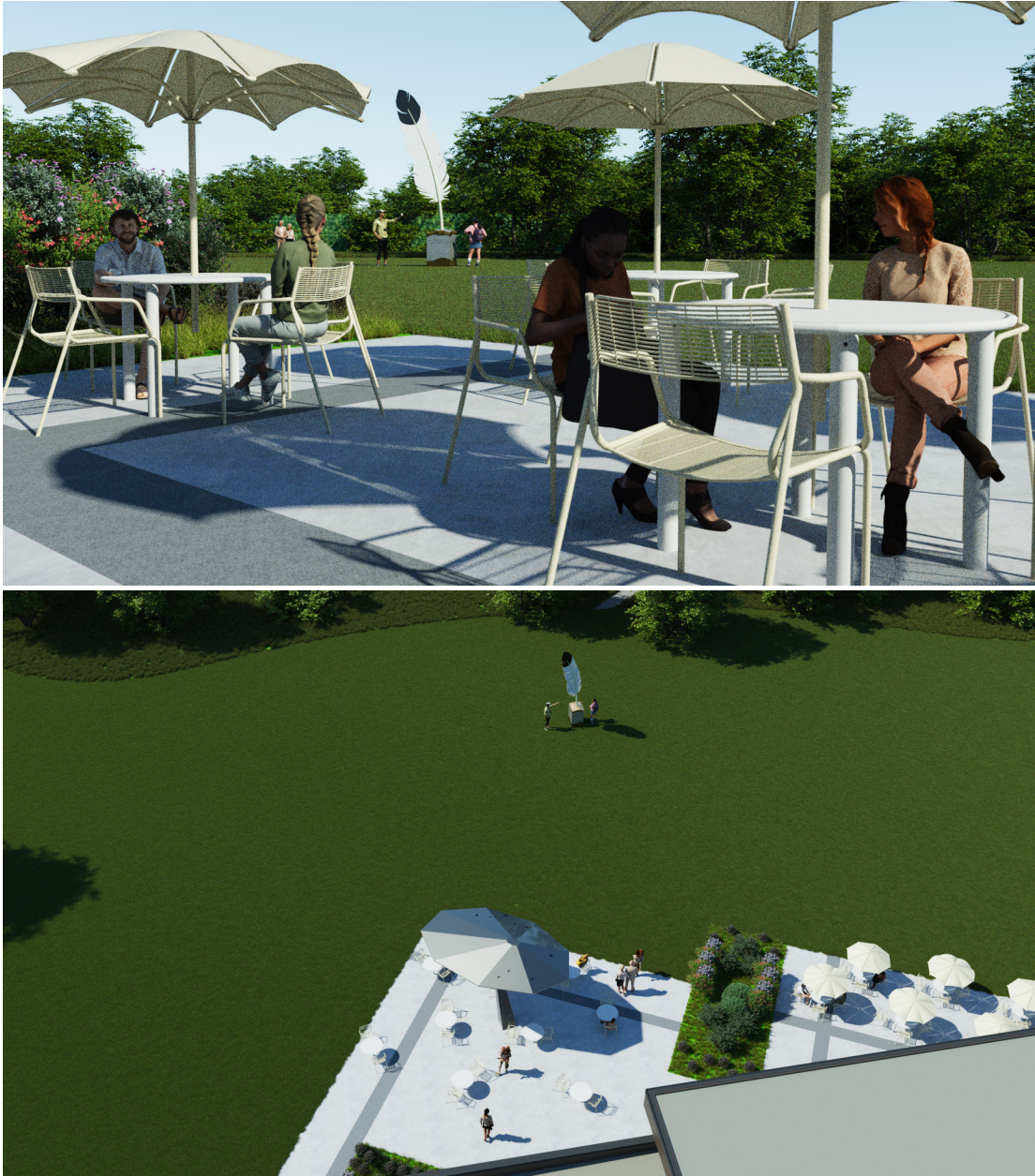




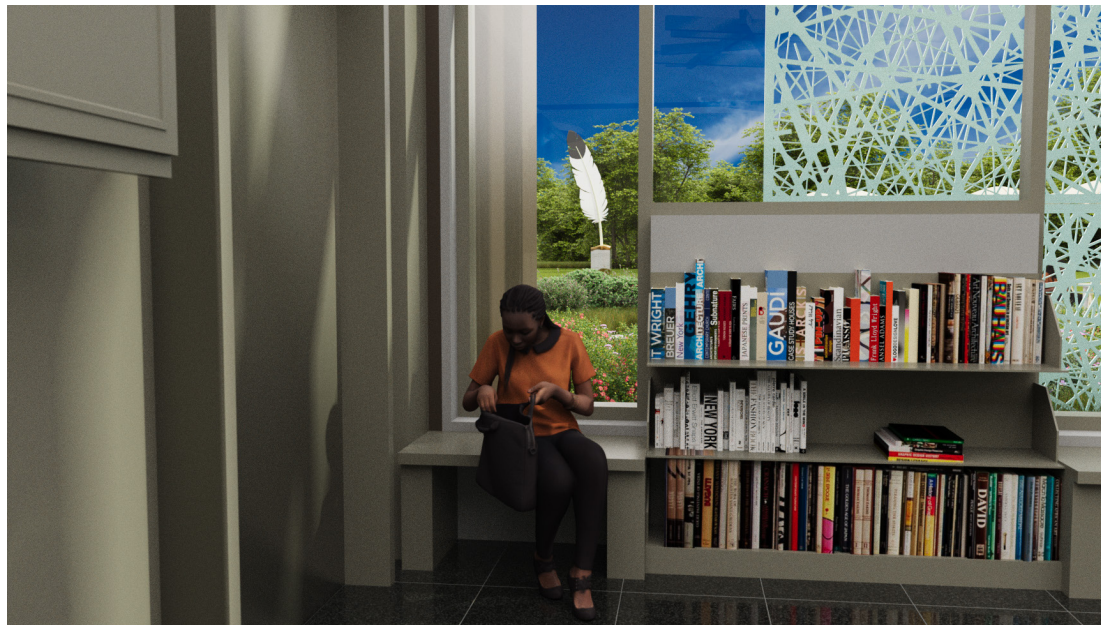
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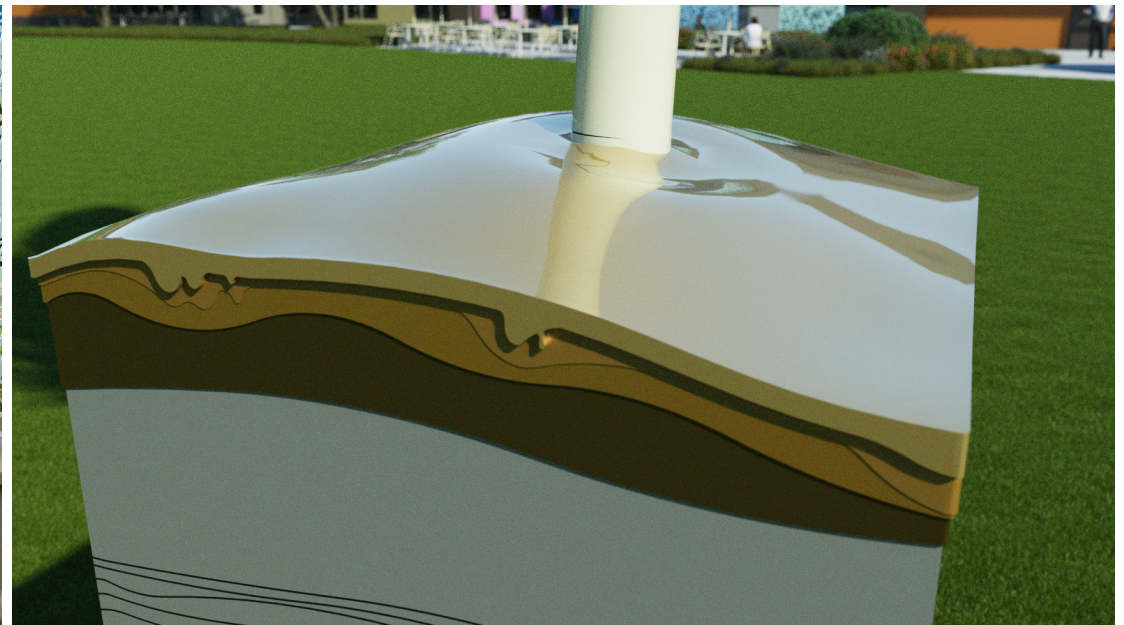
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3. Proposed material list & fabrication process

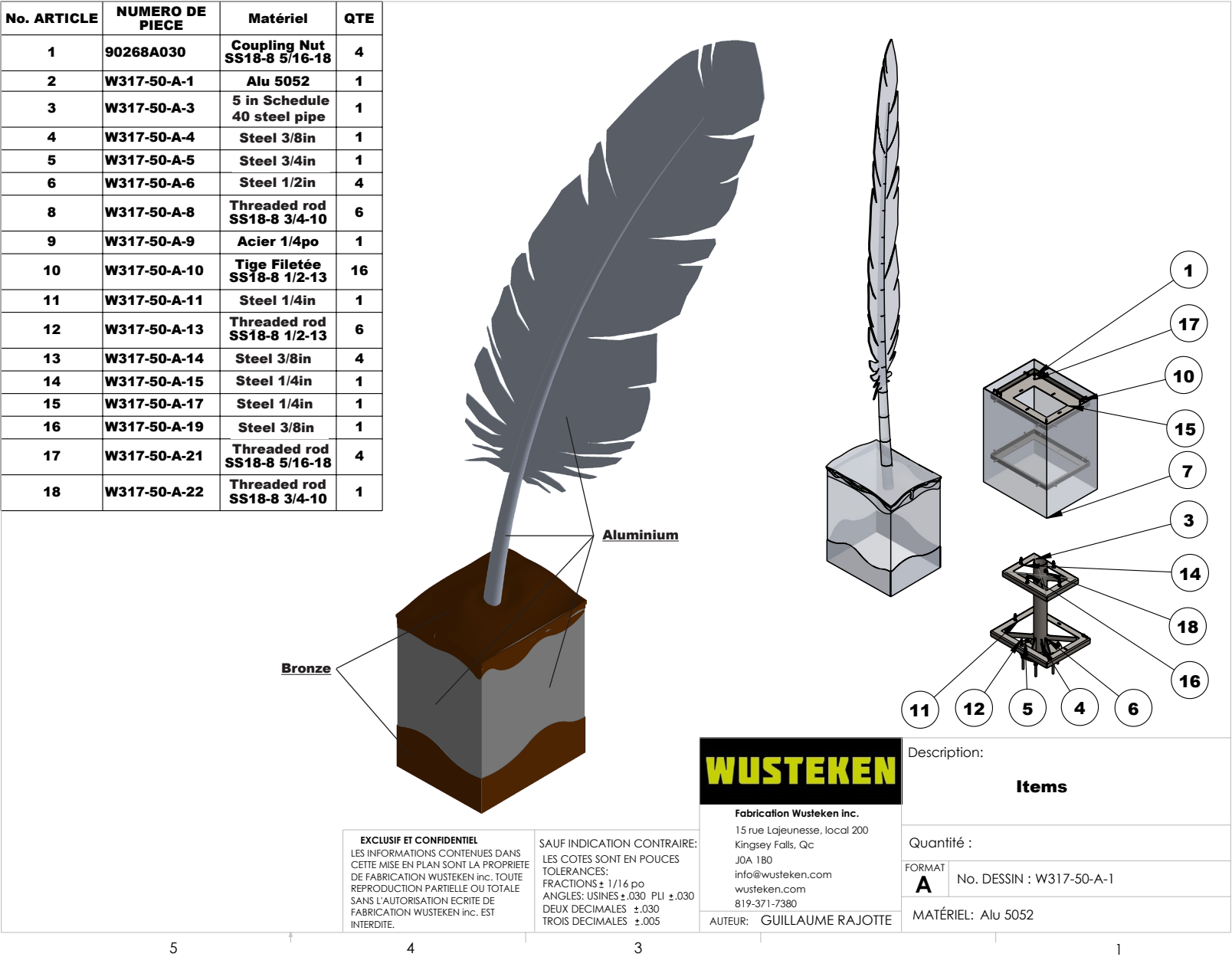
The materials we intend to use for this project are compatible with one another and offer excellent durability. The proposal has been reviewed by Mr. Gabriel Savard-Gaumont, P.Eng., with LARO Experts-Conseils, who has verbally confirmed its feasibility and will oversee all design and fabrication stages. At the final design stage, we will have the technical design reviewed and sealed by an engineer licensed to practice in the State of Wisconsin. Please note that certain technical details may be subject to minor adjustments once the engineer’s analysis and calculations are complete. The artwork is located at the center of the designated installation area.

3.1 Materials used

- Feather: laser cut aluminum 5052, painted
- Inkwell: assembly of various aluminum and bronze components
- Inkwell internal structure: galvanized steel
- All hardware used is stainless steel

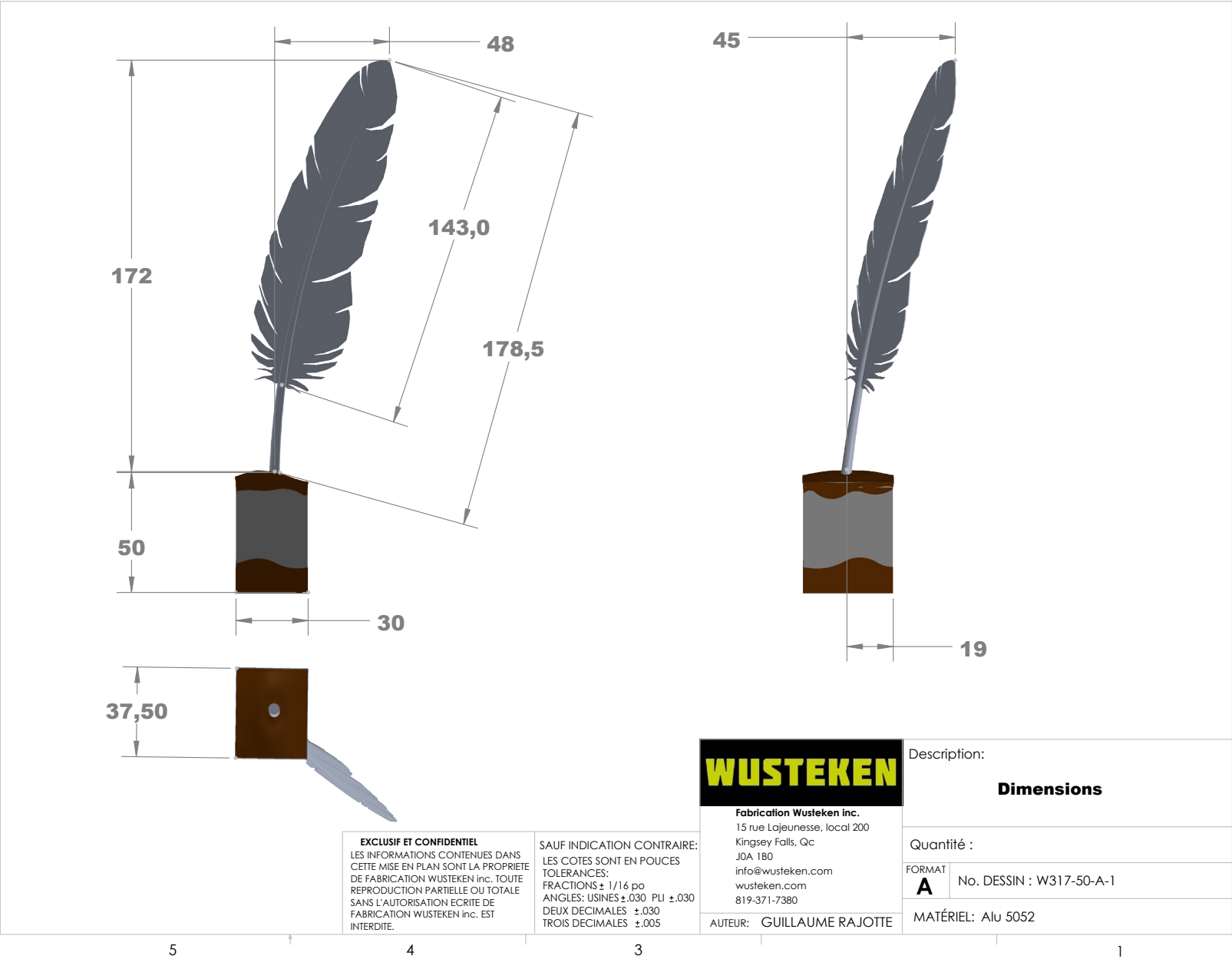
As shown in the adjacent fabrication drawing, the sculpture consists of a vertical feather secured to an internal structural assembly and anchored into an inkwell type block. The assembly combines an aluminum 5052 outer shell with an internal steel structure, including a 5 inch schedule 40 steel pipe, steel plates and stiffeners (thicknesses 1 quarter, 3 eighths, 1 half, and 3 quarters of an inch depending on the parts), and a mechanical anchoring system using threaded rods and 18 8 stainless steel hardware (threaded rods 1 half 13, 3 quarters 10, 5 sixteenths 18, and matching coupling nuts). The overall system is designed for disassemblable installation, with anchoring and retention of the feather ensured by the threaded rods, clamping plates, and hardware, allowing shop assembly followed by on site installation using bolted connections.

No. ARTICLE	NUMERO DE PIECE	Matériel	QTE
1	90268A030	Coupling Nut SS18-8 5/16-18	4
2	W317-50-A-1	Alu 5052	1
3	W317-50-A-3	5 in Schedule 40 steel pipe	1
4	W317-50-A-4	Steel 3/8in	1
5	W317-50-A-5	Steel 3/4in	1
6	W317-50-A-6	Steel 1/2in	4
8	W317-50-A-8	Threaded rod SS18-8 3/4-10	6
9	W317-50-A-9	Acier 1/4po	1
10	W317-50-A-10	Tige Filetée SS18-8 1/2-13	16
11	W317-50-A-11	Steel 1/4in	1
12	W317-50-A-13	Threaded rod SS18-8 1/2-13	6
13	W317-50-A-14	Steel 3/8in	4
14	W317-50-A-15	Steel 1/4in	1
15	W317-50-A-17	Steel 1/4in	1
16	W317-50-A-19	Steel 3/8in	1
17	W317-50-A-21	Threaded rod SS18-8 5/16-18	4
18	W317-50-A-22	Threaded rod SS18-8 3/4-10	1



3.2 Artwork dimensions

As illustrated, the feather outline will be laser cut from a 5052 aluminum sheet with a thickness of three eighths of an inch. Overall dimensions are indicated in inches. The visible height of the feather is 172 inches, and the inkwell height is 50 inches, so the artwork rises above the site to an overall height of 222 inches, that is 18 feet 6 inches. The inkwell block has a footprint of 30 inches by 37.5 inches. The feather reaches a maximum width of 48 inches. Fabrication tolerances are as noted in the title block, including a one sixteenth inch tolerance for fractional dimensions.



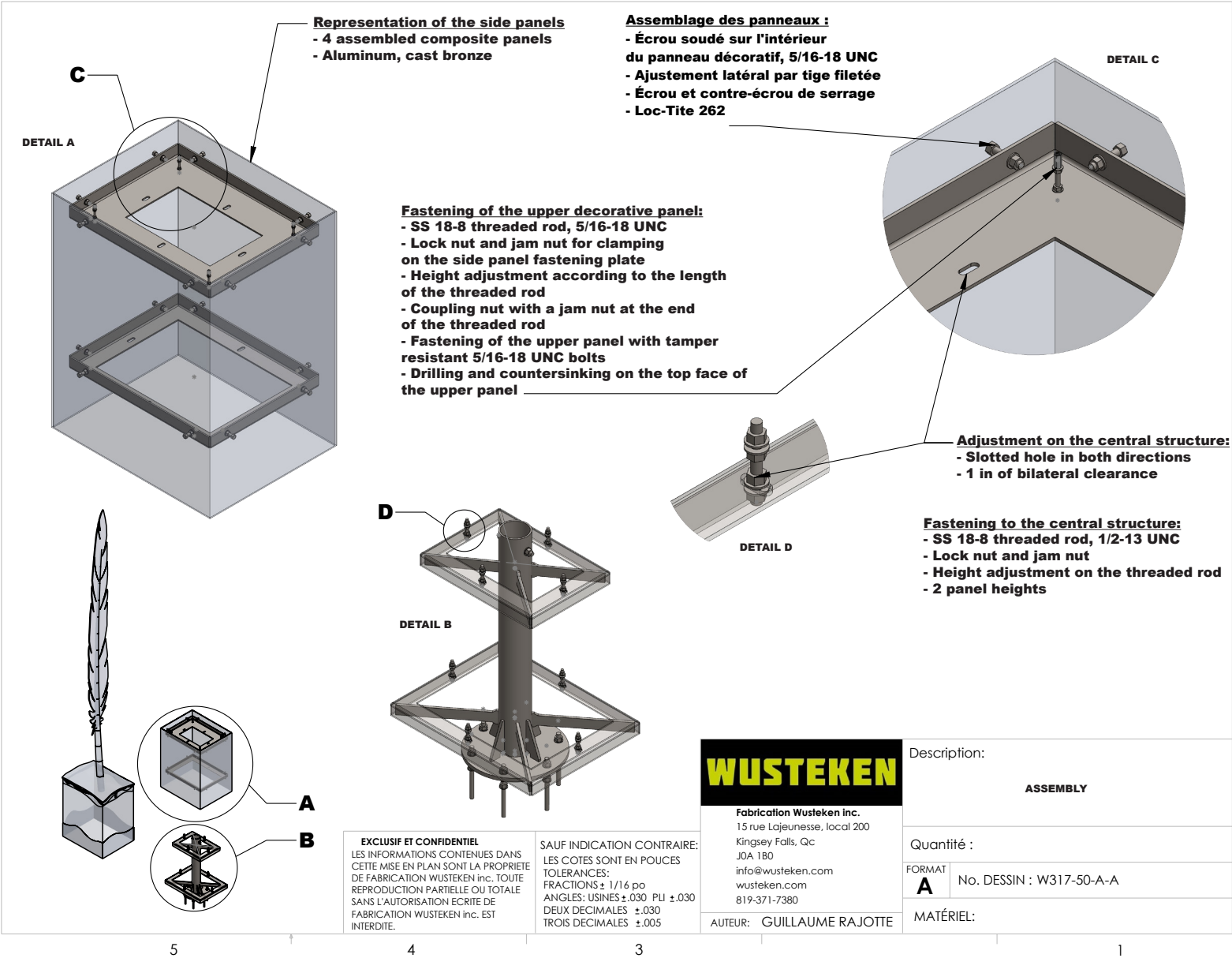
3.3 Assembly

The inkwell is clad with four aluminum side panels, with a cast bronze element forming the horizontal top surface. Panel assembly includes a welded nut inside each decorative panel, 5/16–18 UNC thread, allowing lateral adjustment by means of a threaded rod with a lock nut and jam nut, and the application of Loctite 262 threadlocker, with four adjustment points per panel.

Alignment to the central steel structure is achieved through slotted holes in both directions, providing a bilateral clearance of one inch. Attachment to the central structure is carried out using 18–8 stainless steel threaded rods, 1/2–13 UNC thread, with a lock nut and jam nut, and height adjustment on the threaded rod, with two panel heights.

The upper decorative bronze panel is fastened with 18–8 stainless steel threaded rods, 5/16–18 UNC thread, with a lock nut and jam nut, height adjustment based on rod length, and a coupling nut with a jam nut at the end. The upper panel is then secured with tamper resistant 5/16–18 UNC bolts, with drilling and countersinking on the top of the panel.

Components from Section B will serve both as the inkwell’s internal structure and as elements that attach to the concrete foundation.

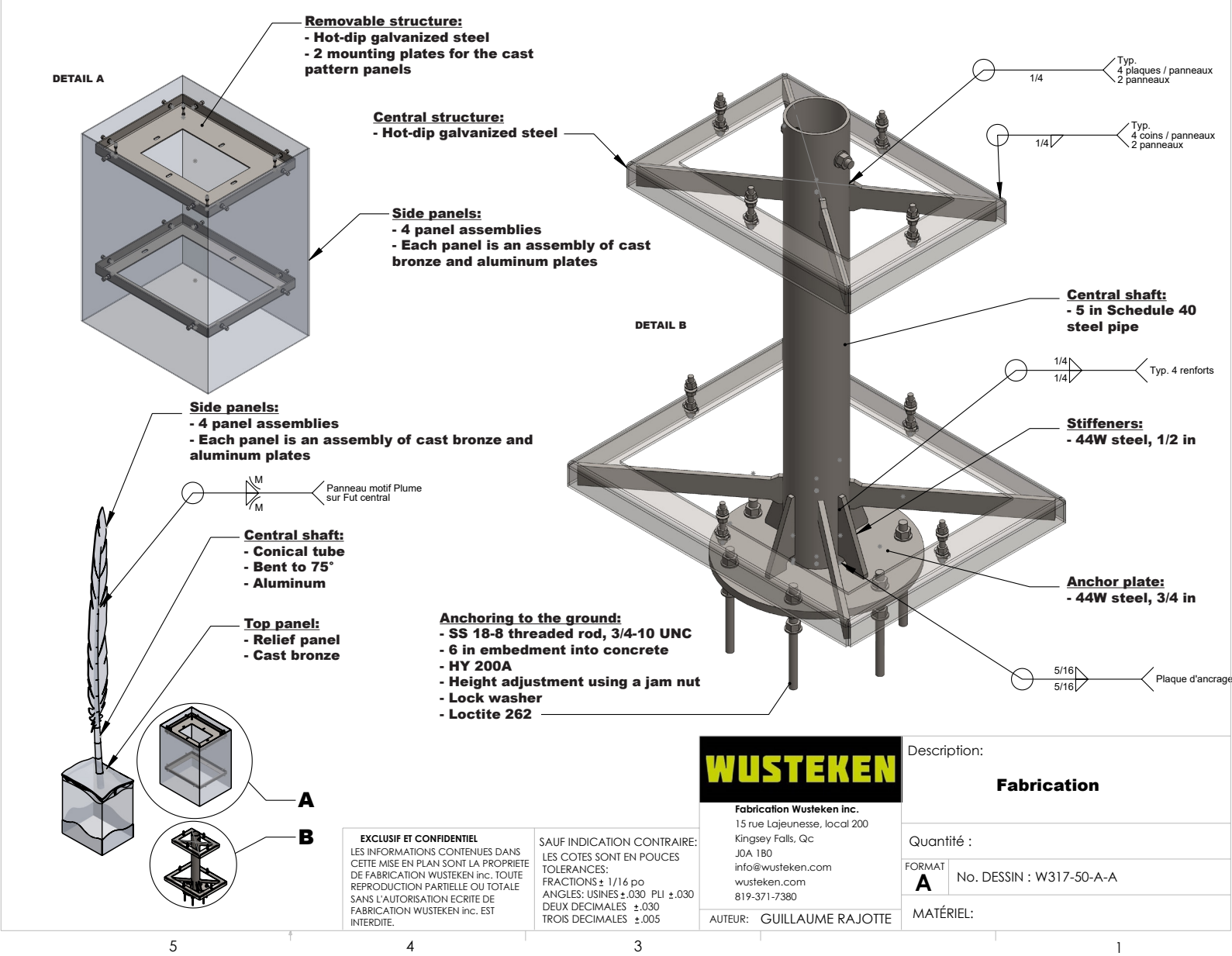


3.4 Internal structure

The interior of the inkwell consists of a central structure and a removable hot dip galvanized steel structure that supports the side panels and the cast bronze relief top panel. A central 5 inch schedule 40 steel pipe provides load transfer, with 1/2 inch 44W steel stiffeners and a 3/4 inch 44W steel anchor plate. Anchoring to the concrete foundation is achieved using 18-8 stainless steel threaded rods, 3/4-10 UNC, with a 6 inch embedment into the concrete, Hilti HY 200A type chemical anchoring, lock washers, height adjustment using a jam nut, and the application of Loctite 262 threadlocker.

3.5 Foundation

The preferred foundation option for the artwork is a below grade concrete floating slab. Our engineer recommends a slab measuring approximately 9 ft x 9 ft x 12 in thick (3.0 m x 3.0 m x 0.30 m). The foundation design will be developed during the final design phase in collaboration with the Owner.



4. Maintenance

If the project is selected, a comprehensive maintenance manual, including a list of all materials used as well as fabrication and restoration methods, will be provided upon delivery of the artwork to the Owner. The project has been designed to allow for reversibility of operations.

Required maintenance: Visual inspection of the overall artwork, dusting, and cleaning as needed. Unpainted aluminum surfaces protected with an Infralac type clear lacquer (brand or equivalent), followed by a finishing wax, to be maintained in the same manner as bronze surfaces, namely gentle cleaning and re waxing as needed to preserve protection and finish uniformity. Painted surfaces protected with a clear coat, light washing to remove dust and deposits, followed by rinsing with clean water and immediate drying.

Maintenance frequency: Inspection and cleaning, once per year or as needed. Waxed surfaces (bronze and unpainted aluminum protected with an Infralac type lacquer, brand or equivalent, and wax), re waxing every two years or as needed, depending on exposure and finish evolution.

Points to monitor: Overall condition, condition of fasteners, and condition of finishes, including surface uniformity, the appearance of deposits, stains, areas of wear, or fine scratches.

Tools and products to use: Clean dedicated microfiber cloths. Lukewarm water and a mild pH neutral soap. Rinse with clean water and dry immediately. Access at height as required (ladder or lift), with no direct pressure on the artwork, and with all contact areas protected.

Products or procedures to avoid: Abrasives, aggressive pads, steel wool, strong products (acids or bases), solvents, industrial degreasers, high pressure washing, and any previously used or contaminated microfiber cloths.

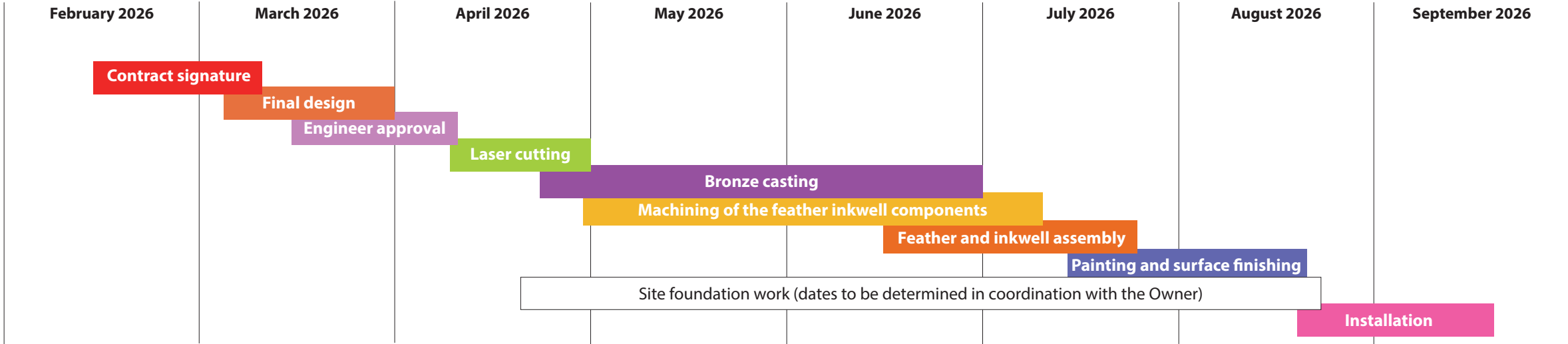
Precautions for maintenance personnel and required qualifications: Use the required safety equipment for work at height. Protect the artwork during access and handling operations to avoid abrasion, rubbing, or impacts. No specific qualifications are required, other than any certification or license applicable to the use of an aerial lift, if applicable.

Estimated related costs: Routine maintenance costs are negligible. As needed, one time costs may be associated with renting lifting equipment for cleaning and maintenance. In the event of restoration work, costs must be evaluated based on the scope of work required.

Assembly or disassembly plan: The required documentation will be provided with the final report following installation of the artwork.



5. Timeline for fabrication and installation



6. Opportunities for community involvement

We wish to involve the community in two phases. First, throughout the design and fabrication process, we will use social media to stay connected with library users and local residents, and to share the key stages of the artwork’s development, from detailing to production. In parallel, we will organize a call for messages in advance of the unveiling. Participants will be invited to write a reflection, a wish, or a few words addressed to their community, as a trace placed in the present. At the unveiling, these contributions will then be gathered, encapsulated, and discreetly integrated into the inkwell of the sculpture. The time capsule will be preserved within the artwork and reopened for the library’s twentieth anniversary (or another date to be confirmed), extending the project’s meaning and symbolically anchoring writing in time, in place, and in collective memory.



7. Budget

Fabrication		\$34,000.00	49%
Engineer	\$2,000.00		
Insurance	\$1,200.00		
Cast bronze relief panel	\$6,000.00		
Aluminum side panels	\$4,500.00		
Machining and assembly	\$17,800.00		
- Shop drawings			
- 5052 aluminum and laser cutting			
- 13 ft lamp post shaft			
- Coupling sleeve assembly			
- Inkwell internal structure			
- Hot-dip galvanizing			
- Circular sanded finish, 120 grit			
- Chemical anchoring into concrete base			
- Assembly hardware			
Industrial paint finish	\$2,500.00		
Installation		\$18,400.00	26%
Transportation	\$5,900.00		
Travel and accommodation	\$4,500.00		
Equipment and labor	\$8,000.00		
Artist Fee		\$10,600.00	15%
Contingency		\$7,000.00	10%
Total		\$70,000.00	

