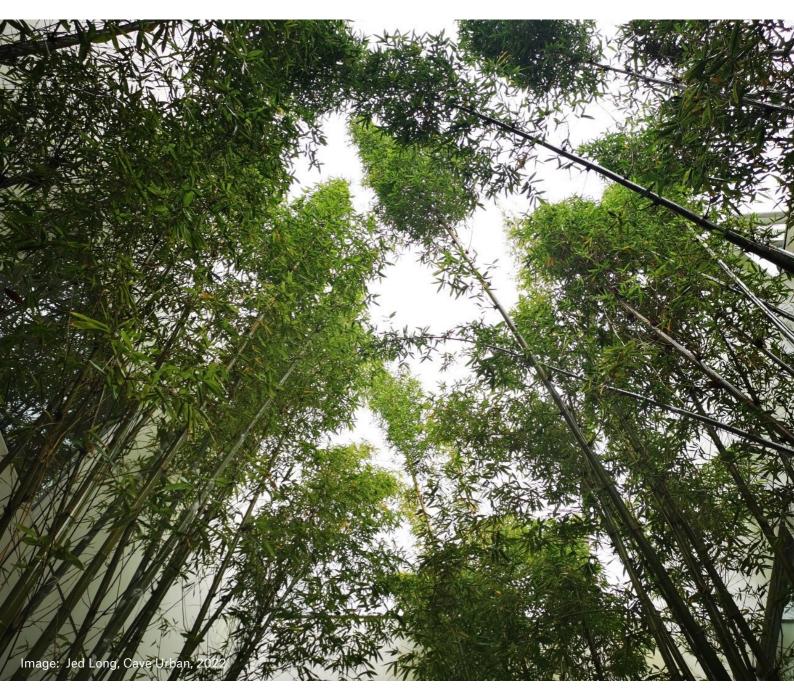
Cave Urban

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As you walk past the stand of bamboo, pause for a moment.

Our interest in bamboo derives from its material qualities and fast growth.

Within many cultures bamboo is an integral component of life, often sourced from a stand adjacent to one's home.

In our practice we are no different, we look for the stands of bamboo scattered around Sydney and use them as a resource for making.

For this, we need bamboo that is at least three years old.

Bamboo will come out of the ground like a telescope and grow to its full height over several months.

Identifying the difference between a young pole and one that is ready for harvest requires a close study of the physical qualities of each pole.

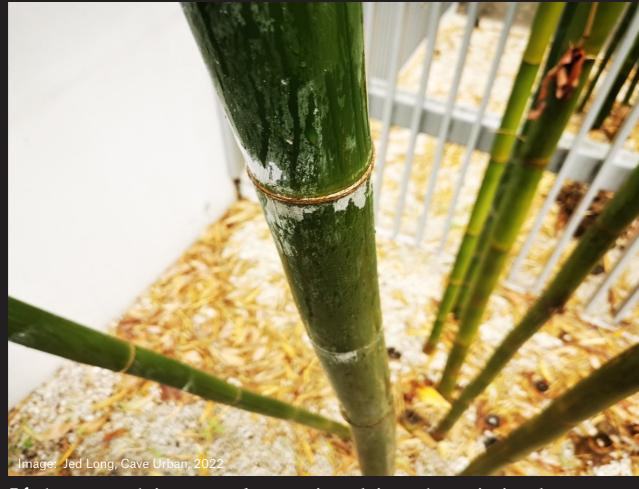
The texture of the skin, the growth of its leaves, the colour of each node all helps to identify the species and age of each bamboo.

First look at the base of the pole...



If you can see the sheaths of the bamboo, then it is less than a year old. In its second year the sheaths will fall away, and a mature pole will have none left at its base.

Draw your eyes up and look at the skin of the pole...



If there's white powder on its skin, then it is also young.

As the culm ages the skin will begin to change colour and you may see scratches and wear...



The bands around each pole are called nodes and as the bamboo ages these will darken.

Finally, look up! Watch the poles sway...



As the bamboo ages its leaves will fall away, and the pole will die. By harvesting the bamboo, new growth will take its place. It is a form of symbiosis where both plan and person benefit.