



Project 3: Make Things

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The Thing: Perfume

This bottle of light green perfume named "Palpitate" is a handmade fragrance I created at Dreamlight Studio, tailored for my boyfriend as his "love perfume." Another bottle, a pink perfume named "Limerence," was crafted by my boyfriend for me. Both perfumes were made with a deep understanding of each other during our time together. My perfume, "Palpitate," signifies a throbbing and somewhat rapid emotion, mirroring the anxious, tense, yet reserved feelings my boyfriend had while pursuing me. Its top notes are Green Note and Yuzu, middle notes are fig and Aldehydes, and base notes are rosewood and cedarwood atlas. The overall scent is very fresh and refreshing, perfect for the upcoming summer, making it a crisp fragrance choice. The distribution of these scents is also meaningful. The top notes are a sweet and sunny scent, just like my initial impression of my boyfriend as a clean, polite person with a youthful innocence, making yuzu and green note the best representatives of youthful vigor. The middle notes, fig, and aldehydes, I believe fig has a "distant" scent, cool but with a slight sweetness. My boyfriend is exactly like the fig in character; he maintains a distance from everyone because he doesn't easily trust others, keeping his reservations. However, upon getting closer, I discovered he's actually very sweet and considerate, not as indifferent as imagined, so I added the sweetness of aldehydes to balance the scent of fig. The base notes are mature woody scents, rosewood and cedarwood atlas, with rosewood adding a hint of spicy flavor, and cedarwood giving a fresh wood sensation. After becoming more familiar with my boyfriend and understanding him more, I realized that although he appears youthful, he possesses a mature mindset and strong sense of responsibility. He has his own thoughts and considerations, and this deeper side correlates with the mature essence of the woody fragrance notes.



The Thing: Oil Pastel Painting

Oil pastel is often considered a tool for children's drawing, but mastering oil pastels also requires skill and technique. This time, I used a palette knife for painting with oil pastels, which was my first attempt at using a palette knife for this medium, and it was quite challenging. I followed tutorials from video websites like Bilibili and YouTube, learning and imitating their methods. My first painting was a sunflower against a blue background, which didn't turn out very well as I was still trying to get the hang of it. My second painting depicted a pink and purple starry sky, a color scheme and creation of my own, indicating that I had gradually mastered the technique and improved my painting skills. My third painting was an imitation of the great artist Monet's work, Water Lilies. Monet is my favorite painter, and I adore the Impressionist style and his use of soft, dreamy colors. In this third painting, I had a better grasp of the techniques, including those that add a bit of three-dimensionality to the work.



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

I will lead you how to create a perfume. Now, before we learn how to make a perfume, let's learn about perfume first!

There are five levels of perfume concentration, ranging from the lowest to the highest. The lowest is splash cologne, which only contains 1% concentration and lasts for less than an hour. Next is Eau de Cologne (EDC), with a 2-3% concentration, lasting 1-2 hours. Following that is Eau de Toilette (EDT), with a 2-8% concentration, lasting 3-4 hours. This concentration is commonly found in perfume stores and is very practical. Then comes Eau de Parfum (EDP), with an 8-15% concentration, lasting 4-5 hours. Perfume stores often sell EDP, and we will also be making an EDP perfume this time. The strongest is Parfum Extrait, with a 15-30% concentration, lasting 5-7 hours. Perfumes are divided into top notes, middle notes, and base notes. The top notes often include citrus and herbal scents, the middle notes are mainly floral and aldehydes, and the base notes are primarily woody and spicy.



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

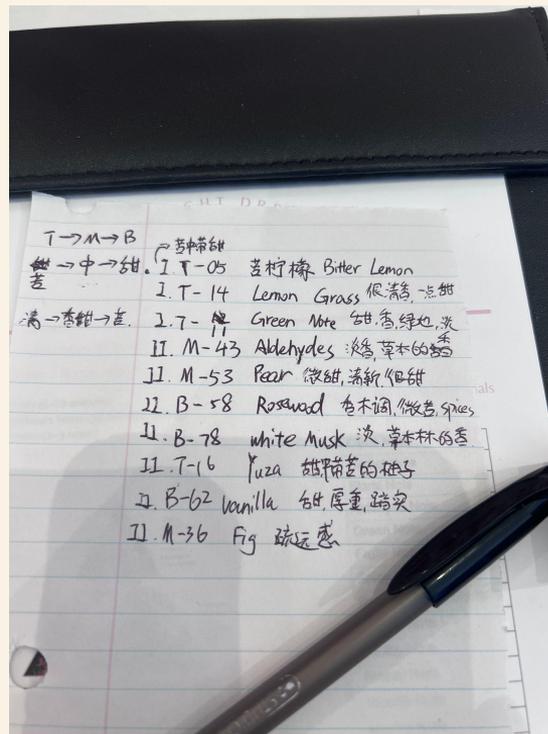
After learning about perfume, please follow me to the **ingredients and raw materials area**, where each scent has its own code and is categorized by note. For example, in the picture, lemongrass is coded as I.T-14, with "T" indicating that this scent is a top note. After choosing your favorite top, middle, and base notes, you can head to the fragrance mixing area and select these ingredients by their codes. Now, take the opportunity to smell the scents you're interested in and record them. This step is very interesting, so let your imagination and interests run wild! Take your time!



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

These notes are my records, all of which are scents I'm very interested in and fond of. I've also documented the characteristics of these scents to help me choose combinations more effectively when mixing fragrances.



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

Now, we've arrived at the perfume mixing station, where all the ingredients we've just smelled are laid out in front of us. After finding the scents you want to blend according to their codes, you can start creating your perfume. The first step is to determine if you like the combination of these ingredients or if any adjustments are needed. So, first, drop these ingredients onto blotter strips and write down the names of the ingredients. Then, layer these scents together and smell them. If any scent stands out too much or you don't like it, remove it and then try the combination again. Experiment a lot!



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

After choosing your perfume formula, you need to consider the distribution of drops. Since we're making an EDP, the total is 50 drops. The distribution of your favorite ingredients, and which scent you want to highlight, depends on your allocation of drops. In my case, since fig has a subtle scent and yuzu has a very sharp fruity smell, I initially allocated 8 drops to yuzu and 8 to fig. However, I found that the scent of yuzu was too overpowering, overshadowing the fig. So, in my second attempt, to highlight the scent of fig, I increased its drops to 16 and reduced yuzu to 3. After distributing the drops, squeeze the corresponding drops into a measuring cup. After stirring for a minute, pour a small amount of the liquid onto your hand to smell it and see if it suits you.

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Perfume Recipe Card

Blender: _____ Date: _____
Perfume Name: _____ Type: _____

	NO.	FRAGRANCE NAME	DROPS	%	WEIGHT (GRAMS)
TOP NOTE	1 T-05	Orange Lemon			
	1 T-14	Lemon Grass			
	T-11	Green Note	6		
MIDDLE NOTE	1 T-76	Yuzu	3		
	T-76	Fig	16		
	1 T-52	Rose			
BASE NOTE	T-11-93	Aldehydes	8		
	1 B-58	Rosewood			
	1 B-58	Rosewood			
TOTAL	1 B-76	White Musk			
	T-12-6	Vanilla			
	T-12-16	Cedarwood Atlas	8		
TOTAL		30mL/25g 50mL/42g 100mL/85g	50		100%

Tips:

- We recommend to wait one week before using the perfume, allowing the perfume to manifest its true olfactory characteristic and perform better.
- If adding any dark perfume color, please do not spray it on light-colored clothes to prevent staining.
- Store your perfume in dark, cool, and dry place.



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

After deciding on the drops, convert these drops into percentages. Once you have the percentages, convert them into grams according to the milliliters you plan to make, choosing between 30ml and 50ml. I chose 50ml because I really like the refreshing scent I've created. After conversion, drop the exact amount in grams into a measuring cup, then stir until evenly mixed.

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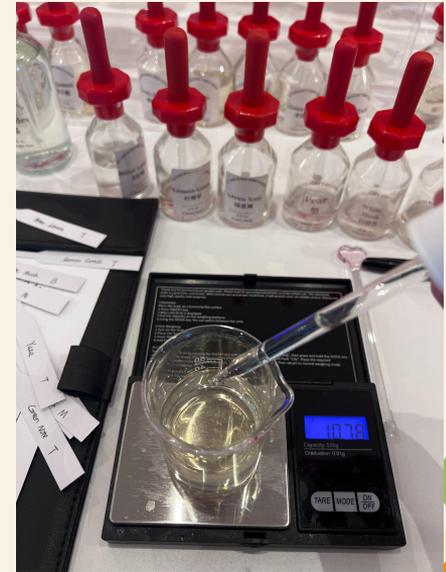
Perfume Recipe Card

Blender: _____ Date: _____
Perfume Name: _____ Type: _____

	NO.	FRAGRANCE NAME	DROPS	%	WEIGHT (GRAMS)
TOP NOTE	17-05	Bitter Lemon			
	17-14	Lemon Grass			
	17-11	Green Apple	3.8	12	5.04
	17-16	Yuzu	3.8	6	2.52
MIDDLE NOTE	21-11-24	Fig	8.16	32	13.44
	17-11-2	Pear			
BASE NOTE	11-11-23	Aldehydes	8	16	6.12
	11-11-23	Rosewood	8.7	14	5.88
	11-11-23	Rosewood			
	11-11-23	White Musk			
	11-11-23	Vanilla	8.8	20	8.4
	11-11-23	Cedarwood Atlas			
TOTAL		30ml/25g 150ml/142g 100ml/85g	50	100%	

Tips:

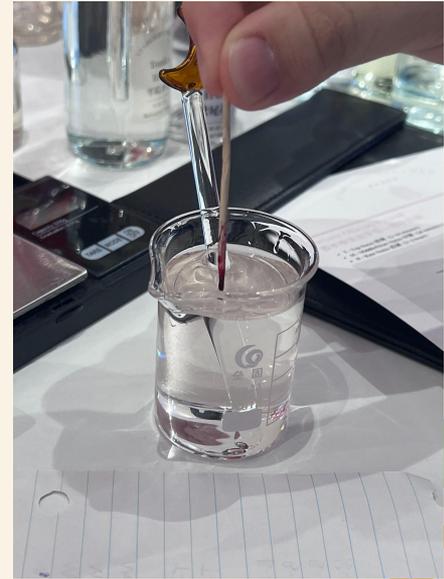
1. We recommend to wait one week before using the perfume, allowing the perfume to manifest its true olfactory characteristic and perform better.
2. If adding any dark perfume color, please do not spray it on light-colored clothes to prevent staining.
3. Store your perfume in dark, cool, and dry place.



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

After the perfume is blended, it's time to choose your favorite bottle and cap. I selected a cubic black cap and a rectangular glass bottle for my perfume. If you want to add some color to your perfume, you can start to mix in the dye next. Pay attention to the proportion of the pigment. I wanted a light color, so I added a bit of mint green. After stirring it evenly, it's all set.



Let's Make Perfume!

Process

Finally, give your perfume a name and stick the printed label on the perfume bottle. Your homemade perfume is now complete! It's best to let it sit for a week before use. Enjoy it !



Use Palette Knife to Draw Oil Pastel

Process

Material Set Up!

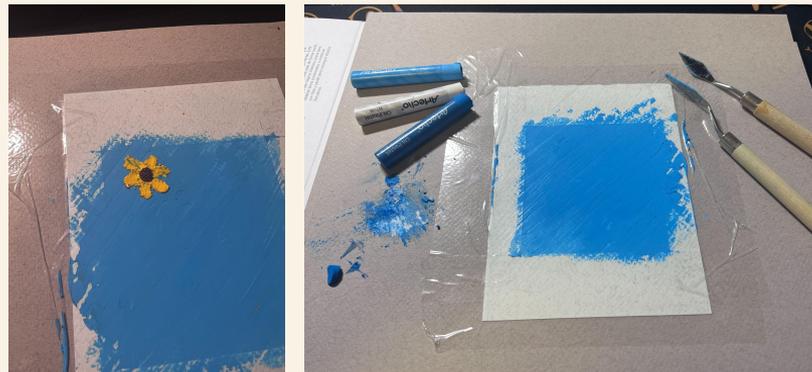
First, oil pastels can easily dirty your desk and clothes, so find a tablecloth or some old newspapers to place on the table to prevent messes. The most important material is the oil pastels themselves. I recommend buying softer oil pastels because if they are too hard, it will be difficult to create a textured effect with the palette knife. If the oil pastels are too hard, you can also soften them with a hair dryer. Then, you'll need a set of palette knives in different sizes. Each size has its own use, but I use the small palette knife the most, especially for painting things like petals. You'll also need tape and a sketchbook, and I chose one specifically for oil pastel drawing.



Use Palette Knife to Draw Oil Pastel Process

First Drawing

This is my first painting, which I followed along with an online tutorial. My oil pastels were a bit hard, so it was somewhat difficult to use the palette knife, and my petals ended up with many cracks. It doesn't look very appealing.



Use Palette Knife to Draw Oil Pastel Process

Second Drawing

After practicing with my first painting, I feel I've gradually gotten the hang of it and can now create and choose my own colors. I really like pink and purple skies, so I decided to paint a gradient night sky with nebulas. For the background, I applied oil pastels directly without using the palette knife, but for the clouds, the moon, and the stars, I used the palette knife to add them. Up close, they look very layered and three-dimensional. This process was very interesting and enjoyable, and I really relished it.



Use Palette Knife to Draw Oil Pastel Process

Third Drawing

After practicing with two paintings, I've mastered some techniques, so I wanted to challenge myself with a more difficult piece. I once visited MOMA in New York and saw Monet's work; I've always admired Monet's paintings, especially his water lilies. I really appreciate his impressionist style and the ethereal color palette. So, this time, I decided to use oil pastels to imitate his water lilies. While painting, I mixed many colors on my own, as the oil pastel set I bought didn't have a wide variety of colors. I created some colors myself, such as olive green, etc. The lotus leaves and flowers were all painted with a palette knife, giving them a very three-dimensional look. This process was incredibly fun, and I look forward to learning more about oil pastels.



The Struggle

Firstly, deciding what to focus on for my project was my initial struggle. I was overly concerned with time, money costs, and what could earn me higher grades. Moreover, with a heavy workload this semester, I found it challenging to settle on a direction. However, after some thought, I realized that instead of focusing on what could get me high grades or save time, I should engage in something I truly enjoy and find interesting. Doing so would not only make the project more meaningful but also happier for me. Instead of feeling burdened by school assignments, I should embrace simple joys, which I believe is the true purpose of this task.

Hence, I decided to create perfume and draw with oil pastels, both of which interest me greatly. I have a hobby of collecting perfumes, so I'm intrigued by scents. I also love drawing, and oil pastel is a medium I've always wanted to try but never had the chance. This project offered me the opportunity to explore this art form.

The biggest struggle in making perfume was choosing raw materials and ingredients due to my lack of experience in perfume-making. I wasn't sure which scents would blend well, so I spent a lot of time on this phase. To match the underlying meanings of my perfume, I documented the characteristics of each scent I liked, which helped me recall and select the most suitable ones. When it came to allocating the drops of these ingredients, I was quite conflicted. The studio wouldn't allow more than two opportunities for re-testing, so I had to finalize all the combinations within two attempts. This made me very anxious about my choices and allocations. I spent a long time contemplating and continuously adjusting my drops and ingredients. However, I was very satisfied with the final product!

For oil pastel drawing, mastering the palette knife technique was challenging. Being new to this type of art, I struggled with controlling the knife, leading to somewhat fragmented petals. It takes practice to master this skill, and with more attempts, my drawings improved. Additionally, oil pastels are really messy, affecting my desk, hands, and clothes, and cleanup was time-consuming. This experience taught me to use a mat or old newspapers next time to keep my workspace clean.



My Perfume Collection!

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Perfume Recipe Card

Blender: _____ Date: _____
Perfume Name: _____ Type: _____

	NO	FRAGRANCE NAME	DROPS	%	WIKIAT (GRAM)
TOP NOTE	1-1	Blue Lemon			
	1-2	Green Apple	3	12	3.04
	1-3	Fig	32	32	13.94
MIDDLE NOTE	2-1	Apple	8	16	6.72
	2-2	Rosewood	4	4	1.58
BASE NOTE	3-1	Vanilla	20	20	8.4
	3-2	Ylang Ylang	50	50	100%
TOTAL					

Tip:
1. We recommend to wait one week before using the perfume, allowing the perfume to mature in one collective characteristic and perform better.
2. If adding any dark perfume color, please do not spray it on light-colored clothes to prevent staining.
3. Store your perfume in dark, cool, and dry place.



This is the first flower I drew, and it really didn't turn out well.

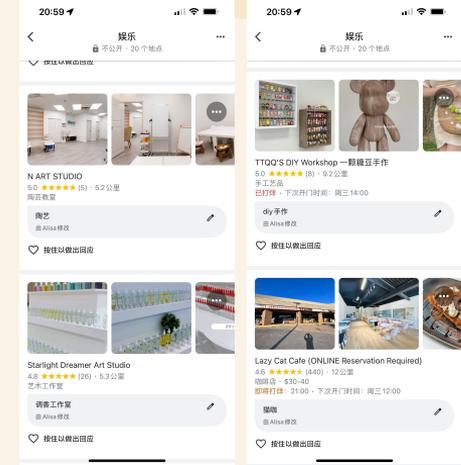
There were many traces of revisions. I kept fretting over it, haha.

The Lessons

Through this project, what struck me the most was the simple joy and pleasure of doing what I love during such a busy semester. In every school project, my focus was always on the course and grades. But with this project, I realized that a school project could be so fun and joyful, allowing me to calm down during the finals and spend hours drawing my favorite paintings, and half a day experiencing things I've always been interested in. I found this very meaningful, offering me happiness brought by life beyond just studying.

Besides the fun aspect of this project, another profound impact was the opportunity it provided for me to do something meaningful. I created a perfume for my boyfriend, which is also a memento of our relationship. It was our first time taking such care to make perfume for each other, with every combination coming from our truest feelings and love. A small bottle of perfume hides the wonderful story of a year and a half together, adding another cherished memory to our relationship through this project. It also made me realize how many craft studios there are in Toronto, all so interesting. I hope to experience more of the happiness and memories these crafts bring with my partner, friends, and family.

While striving to survive and adapt to this busy, fast-paced life, don't forget to stop and appreciate the beautiful scenery around you. This reminds me of the movie "Soul," which I didn't fully understand when I first watched it. But through this project, I finally grasped that existence is inherently meaningless; it's the beauty and interests in life that create meaning. I hope everyone can earnestly experience life and feel its true beauty.



I realized through this experience that there are so many interesting studios around that offer hands-on crafting! I'll definitely participate in more DIY activities in the future.



My realization from this experience aligns with the theme of this movie. Don't forget to "live" your life.

Next Steps

What is one insight making your thing(s) gave you about the design process?

The most important revelation in creating my work is that the key to making truly good creations lies in putting your heart into it. As long as you try sincerely, you can succeed. The perfume I made was loved by many people and friends, and this was my first time making perfume. I don't think my small success was due to my knowledge of perfumes, but because I invested my heart and effort into this experience, leading to a fragrance that people enjoyed. Every design, text, and painting is filled with emotion; what's more important is letting people feel the abundant emotions and sincerity in the work. Sincerity is the ultimate secret weapon.



Why are you a better designer now than before you made your thing(s)?

Before working on and designing this project, my approach was largely focused on just completing the assignment. However, during the creation process, I experienced many different feelings and insights. I realized that putting effort and heart into something can lead to greater success. I discovered that people need various adjustments in life, which can inspire more creativity and design ideas. After this experience, I feel much happier than before, and my efficiency in work and study has also improved. This class and assignment taught me that becoming a better designer isn't just about learning design knowledge but about thinking from different perspectives, adjusting my mindset, and infusing my work with emotion, rather than working tirelessly like a robot. Mentally, I've become a better designer.

**"Very little is needed to make a happy life; it is all within yourself, in your way of thinking."
—Marcus Aurelius Antoninus**

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