PORTFOLIO

olfactory in design

Helen N.N.H. Dang

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Another case study that resides in London, is the Illuminum Fragrance shop designed by Italian architect, Antonio Cardillo. The reason why I chose this store is because of its utterly authentic design: by coating a room inside an old building with volcanic ash, an interior has drawn the extreme line of difference between other perfume shops' interiors.

Cardillo combines scent and texture for this store of fragrance. The architect (2015) has described the twenty-eight-metre room as an "Apollonian and Dionysian grotto" immediately making us imagine ancient legends if that had not come to mind already from the idea of volcanic ashes as a material. He goes on to explain, "This mineral dust was widely used in ancient Rome for building the largest constructions of the late-ancient era." Perhaps he wanted to make a large statement with this piece. The interior design holds a certain old air about it, a powerful atmosphere. He even wrote a poetic text to accompany the project, "Behind a portal on a Georgian street in London, lives a small grey grotto. Its rugged walls, imprinted with gestures of the mason's trowel reveal the eroticism which was conveyed in the act of construction by the ancients." There is indeed something very romantic about the walls that seem to be melting, like the liquid in perfume bottles.

Despite its rough, cave-like walls, the floor is lined with a plush grey carpet. Winston (2015) writes that it "complements the tone of the walls but offering a contrasting soft texture." She reiterates Cardillo's words, describing the neutral backdrops of the interior as bringing out the thirty-seven different scents sold by the company, "Invisible colours revealed only by the nose."

Finally, the project was named Colour As A Narrative. The room's interior is lit by two freestanding metal spotlights. However, because of their naturally black colour the tone is too stark compared to the rest of the room and it reduces some of the authenticity you want to feel about the place. It makes the store seem like an exhibition that, perhaps will positively bring new customers but will also confuse regular perfume buyers. The way Cardillo rips away the normal conventions of purchasing perfume might not be welcoming to regular customers.

On the other hand, Geraghty (2015) claims, "Stripping away learnt associations built around graphics, names, ingredients encourage a more physical and intuitive experience of scent; the components of which (fragrance oils) are originally sourced from the earth." The Illuminum creative director compliments Cardillo's design as one that positively works with neutral materials from nature. In

contrast to the Fragrance Lab in Selfridges, the Illuminum Fragrance shop motivates the customers toward a more physical and intuitive interaction with its prominent textures.

CARDILLO, A. (2015) Antonio Cardillo combines scent and texture for Illuminum Fragrance shop interior. Dezeen. [Online] Available at: https://www.dezeen.com/2015/05/06/antonino-cardillo-scent-texture-illuminum-fragrance-shop-interior-london-england-volcanic-ash [Accessed 15/02/18].

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