

Virginia Commonwealth University VCU Scholars Compass

Theses and Dissertations

Graduate School

2019

Beauty in Imperfection: Post-hyperreal Cosmetic Containers

Se Hee Jang Virginia Commonwealth University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd

Part of the Interdisciplinary Arts and Media Commons, and the Sculpture Commons

© The Author

Downloaded from

https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd/5830

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at VCU Scholars Compass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of VCU Scholars Compass. For more information, please contact libcompass@vcu.edu.

BEAUTY IN IMPERFECTION Post-hyperreal Cosmetic Containers

Se Hee Jang

Approval Certificate for **Se Hee Jang** for the thesis project entitled Beauty in Imperfection: Post-hyperreal Cosmetic Containers. Submitted to the faculty of the Master of Fine Arts in Design of Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar in partial fulfillment for the degree, Master of Fine Arts in Design.

Se Hee Jang, MFA in Design Studies, Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Doha Qatar, May 2019.

Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Doha Qatar, May 2019.

Rab McClure, Main Advisor Director, Graduate Studies

Byrad Yyelland, Reader Interim Director, Liberal Arts & Sciences

Michael Perrone, Associate Advisor Assistant Professor, Undergraduate Studies

Dr. Donald Baker, Dean VCUarts Qatar

Dr. F Douglas Boudinot, Dean Virginia Commonwealth University

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God Almighty for his everlasting support and guidance throughout my studies.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my committee members—Rab McClure for his endless support in the development of the conceptual framework and generous guidance throughout, Byrad Yyelland for all his dedication and assistance to strengthen the writing to get my ideas across, and Michael Perrone for his consistent kindness and willingness to help at all times.

I want to express my gratitude to all remaining MFA faculty members— Thomas Modeen, Diane Derr, and Marco Bruno—for the continuous support and thoughtful feedback throughout my time in the MFA program.

I dedicate this thesis to my family who continuously supports me to pursue my career. This thesis would have never been possible without the support of my family, my loved ones.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	[12]
INTRODUCTION	[14]
BACKGROUND Literature Review Hypperrealism Wabi-Sabi The Haptic Sense Precedent Studies Wabi-Sabi Doll Process Plug-Ins Fabric Formula Sento Tactile Cookware Wrinkles	[25] [29] [33] [41] [43] [47] [51] [55]
INVESTIGATION Reflection of Humanness in Physical Form The Nonexistent-Tools Wabi-Sabi Cups	[61] [69] [79]
OUTCOMES The Ritual: Making of Facial Masks Milk-like Skin Containers Imperfect Bowls Impermanence in the Form of Grains	[86] [88] [96] [104]
CONCLUSION Reflections Future Directions	[111] [113]
EXHIBITION	[114]
BIBLIOGRAPHY	[130]
LIST OF FIGURES	[132]



BEAUTY IN IMPERFECTION Post-hyperreal Cosmetic Containers

impermanent, and incomplete.

ABSTRACT

An unhealthy reliance on vision alone, fed by pervasive, doctored, hyperreal imagery in the mass media, suppresses a more balanced use of other senses, reinforcing superficial beauty standards. Trapped by an uncritical preference for the visually "perfect" and harmonious, people increasingly seek to remove physical attributes they consider "imperfect," without first considering how these "imperfections" benefit and distinguish them as unique individuals.

This thesis addresses superficial beauty standards by shifting focus from singularly visual experience to a more nuanced sensory aesthetic that also considers haptic qualities. Through a combination of research writing and targeted making, my work examines society's understanding of flaws and imperfections by strategically embedding natural qualities of texture and randomness—blemishes—into ceramics, a medium treated as analogous to human skin.

The resulting tools and objects, designed to support a healthy, ritualized daily skincare routine, examine beauty through the lens of wabi-sabi-the philosophy of things imperfect,

INTRODUCTION

We live in a vision-dominated society, where physical appearance is used by people to interpret—and be interpreted by—one another. These interpretations can be confusing because many of the images we see are not realistic, but rather, they are fictional and idealized. Confronted with idealized images every day, we live under a form of self-surveillance within which we constantly compare ourselves with the unrealistic images surrounding us. As we try to fit into—or even go beyond—societal expectations, we continue to remove what we perceive as imperfections and upgrade our physical selves.



Figure 1.0

The act of perfecting our body image for the idealized standard is practiced daily through the use of language and images. The cosmetic industry uses language (e.g. newspaper advertisements, commercials, word of mouth) and images (e.g. magazine and television advertisements, images of celebrities) in strategic marketing to lower our self-esteem and satisfaction in order to create and maintain a perceived *need* for their products.¹ The mass media has been used as a tool to transmit specific messages about what is "good" and what is "bad"—which, in turn, has led to a narrowed perception of beauty. With the fear of these imperfections (such as physical signs of aging), we attempt to hide and delay evidence of the natural aging process by demolishing and disregarding the beauty that is found in the natural qualities of our physical selves. To free ourselves from these societal pressures, it is important to understand the core components that affect our perceptions of physical attractiveness, learn to appreciate our natural appearance, and embrace qualities that are often categorized as imperfections.

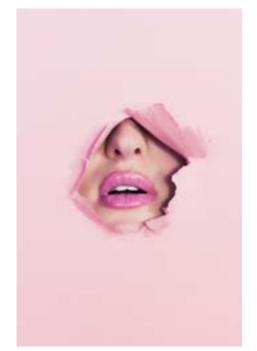




Figure 3.0

Figure 2.0

 2 "Why Is Plastic Surgery so Popular in South Korea?" 3 Ibid 4 Ibid

Plastic surgery is integrated into daily life in my home country, South Korea.² My own experience in subway stations, buses, and public streets in urban Korea, is that cosmetic advertisements are so pervasive they are impossible to escape. Korean standards for physical attractiveness are heavily influenced by the constant promotion of romanticized images of women, presented as unreachable standards of acceptable beauty by the mass media. This portrayal of idealized beauty is a strategic marketing method used to promote cosmetic products by raising our desire to purchase items promising a better life. Korea is a society where it has become normal to offer plastic surgery as a graduation gift and where plastic surgery is commonly performed before applying for a job.³ According to the Korean national tax service, there were 1414 registered plastic surgery clinics in 2017—a number that continues to increase.⁴ Trends promoted by the beauty industry change rapidly to keep people off balance and unhappy, increasing the desire to purchase new products and continuously seek new services.

¹"The Dubious Enhancement: Making South Korea a Plastic Surgery Nation"

Western culture has a huge influence on Asian beauty standards. For instance, white skin has become an important beauty goal, leading to a dramatic increase in demand for skin brightening and lightening products and fuller, cherryshaped lips.⁵ Living under such pressures, it is exceedingly difficult for someone to be satisfied with her or his physical appearance, thereby driving increasing numbers of individuals to seek the newest and most popular cosmetic procedures in order to attain the most current definitions of physical perfection. The widespread use of cosmetic surgery has resulted in an interesting and unsettling social side effect—it is increasingly difficult to distinguish one person from another. For instance, women undergoing surgery from the same clinic will receive similar results-evidence that people are losing uniqueness/patent identity. This pattern traps people into a superficial, consumerist society within which individuals attempt to buy satisfaction and even happiness through cosmetic products and procedures. Today, people live under a dilemma where one chooses to either be an insider or an outsider-those who continuously try hard to maintain social acceptance by matching society's definitions of what is perceived acceptable for both women and men, or those who reject these societal norms, and—in turn—are disadvantaged by society.



Figure 4.0

Figure 5.0

The prevalence of plastic surgery and the surging growth of the cosmetic industry in Korea reflect an obsession with physical appearance and the dominant role it plays in defining what we consider beautiful. This thesis is informed by what happens in contemporary Korea but takes a broader look to investigate the industrialized definition of beauty. More specifically, this research is aimed at investigating our fixed notions of beauty standards and exploring physical attractiveness in different forms and shapes. As I shift to my work as a designer dealing with these issues, I intended to explore ways of emphasizing tactile experiences through daily-used objects to explicate the nuances of physical beauty and explore the imperfect. I argue that by shifting our focus from visual to haptic experiences, we begin to understand beauty through tactile as well as visual cues, rather than letting our vision monopolize our aesthetic experience. For the purpose of this thesis, the operational definition of the term beauty will encompass women, men, and inanimate objects. Although this thesis research explores and critiques the problem of industrialized beauty standards, it is not meant to bring another standard by going against the existing framework,

⁵ "Skin Lightening and Beauty in Four Asian Cultures,"

but rather, to broaden our definitions and perspectives of beauty. Many groups of people—especially ones aligned with a feminist viewpoint—have initiated campaigns to argue and rebel against societal expectations applied to women. This thesis is not meant to argue that point but instead, it is aimed at opening a broader conversation about the notion of beauty. Furthermore, outcomes of this research do not directly relate to the aesthetics of humanness. Rather, this research underlines a general understanding of physical aesthetics, inspired by the human world.



Figure 6.0



LITERATURE REVIEW





HYPERREALISM: REFLECTION OF HUMANNESS THROUGH PHYSICAL OBJECTS

French sociologist Jean Baudrillard's theory of hyperrealism provides one explanation for the images we see in the media. Baudrillard asserts that, "... the use of abundance of media, signs, and symbols has so bombarded our culture that reality itself as something separable from signs of it... vanished in the information-saturated, media-dominated, contemporary world,"⁶ and further, that each "...image conveys a message that the product enables one to overcome the natural aging process and attain a paradise beyond reality."⁷ In other words, we interact with and observe unachievable aesthetics that block reality.

⁶ "JeanBaudrillard_on_hyperrealism.Pdf" ⁷ Ibid





Figure 7.0

Mass media send out these messages to manipulate our sense of self-worth, pressuring us to seek an unattainable perfection. Under this continual onslaught of imagery and messaging, we—as consumers of both cultural norms and physical products—practice daily routines of skin care as a way of removing visible signs of aging and improving visible skin defects, despite the fact that aging and imperfections are intrinsic in the human condition. Indeed, removal of these physical signs has almost become a daily ritual for many individuals and these rituals are typically taught to us through socialization from the media and/or family and friends.

The visual language of perfectness is repeated in factoryproduced objects designed for these rituals. Symmetrically formed physical objects echo the idealized perfect human beauty myth, producing cold, immaterial, inorganic forms and aesthetics, with the factory-driven goal of flawless perfection. We desire to somehow never age—like objects made of plastic or glass. Bombarded with images of symmetrical, flawless, and perfect forms in our daily surroundings, we have become conscious that these are normal and acceptable, and the significance of perfection is strengthened. As with the media, physical objects shape human ideologies in a reflection of the contemporary world. The world is not as perfect as it appears, yet we continue to aspire toward these idealized images that go beyond reality.



Figure 8.0



WABI-SABI: BEAUTY OF THE IMPERFECT, IMPERMANENT, AND INCOMPLETE

Awash in mass media and mass marketing, we have been socialized to strive for perfection as defined by marketers. This drive for perfection is consistent with Baudrillard's hyperrealism but lies in stark contrast with the concept of *wabi-sabi*, the quintessential Japanese aesthetic principle emphasizing the, "...beauty of things imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. It is a beauty of things modest and humble. It is a beauty of things unconventional."⁸ The absence of wabi-sabi, when understanding human beauty, will continue to grow our superficial and unachievable expectations, and make us miss out on different levels of beauty so readily available.



Figure 9.0

⁸ Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers, 7.

This research accepts the premise that wabi-sabi offers a more realistic understanding and appreciation of our world than we see through hyperrealism. Wabi-sabi offers the most honest reflection of the world we live in-imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. Rather than trying to control the aging process and eliminate imperfections, wabi-sabi accepts uncontrollability and imperfections in nature and emphasizes inherent beauty. The intimate qualities of wabi-sabi also facilitate an appreciation for subtle sensory information. When wabi-sabi is translated into a physical object, it can be visualized as something dark and dim, contradicting the bright, shiny aspect of the hyperreal world. The intimacy of objects—small and compact, quiet and inward-oriented—reduces the distance between humans and inorganic physical things. As a metaphorical comparison—if modernism is a box (rectilinear, precise, contained), wabi-sabi is a bowl (free shape, open on top).⁹ By practicing wabi-sabi, we can start to understand and appreciate reality over fiction.



Figure 10.0

⁹ Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers, 28.

THE HAPTIC SENSE: NUANCED BEAUTY THROUGH TACTILE EXPERIENCE

Standardized physical beauty is problematic because beauty is subjective. Moreover, focusing only on unattainable, ocular-based notions of perfection blinds us to alternative ways of experiencing beauty through senses other than vision. The dominance of vision not only undermines uniqueness, focusing on surface-level aspects of beauty, it also leaves us isolated in many ways from the physical world.¹⁰ In The Eyes of the Skin, Juhani Pallasmaa writes: "...while our experience of the world is formulated by a combination of five senses, much architecture is produced under consideration of only one—sight."¹¹ True vision comes not only from our eyes, it is a combination of sight, plus our tactile sense.

¹⁰ The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses
¹¹ The Eyes of the Skin, Abstract.



Figure11.0

According to Pallasmaa, "...hands are the sculptor's eyes" and, "...skin can read texture, weight, density, and temperature of matter."¹² Similarly, our eyes have the ability to see depth, texture, contour, and edge.¹³ However, the industrialized creation of cosmetic products generates an aesthetic that is cold, unnaturally smooth, and relies more on industrialized, hyperreal human forms. These are qualities similar to that of superficial beauty standards, which lack the organic naturalness of human physicality. When things are made to be identical, each individual item loses value because it can easily be substituted by an identical replacement.

Without noticing imperfections that might be acknowledged as special or unique, it is easy to overlook these mundane objects with no personal connection/interaction. In contrast, extending beyond the visual sense could bring people a personalized/intimate interaction with the physical world. When an object is designed to consider a person's touch, a mundane object is imbued with value and a personalized story.



Figure 12.0

¹² The Eyes of the Skin, 56. ¹³ Ibid



Figure 13.0

In urbanized society, our fast-paced lifestyles prevent us from digesting and enjoying the nuances of beauty present in the natural world. We seldom slow down enough to engage all of our senses and truly see the world around us. As a result, our interactions with regularly-used physical objects become detached and undervalued. This creates a distance between us as human citizens of the world and the physical world in which we exist. In contrast, this thesis argues that the nuances of beauty we tend to overlook can and should be re-emphasized in the design of daily-used objects, as a means to restore our awareness of nature's intrinsically beautiful imperfections. Understanding and appreciating nature's beautiful imperfections is, perhaps, a first step closer to the real natural world, rather than the fictional hyperreality transmitted to us through the media. By shifting our focus from visual experience toward a richer haptic experience, we can open up possibilities for experiencing the world through different senses.



PRECEDENT STUDIES







WABI SABI DOLL by Perach Rafian

Israeli artist, Perach Rafian, made a series of tiny wooden dolls. Inspired by Japanese Kokeshi—simple handmade wooden dolls—and the concept of wabi-sabi, these dolls challenge us to accept the unattractive, and focus our attention on details that might not otherwise have been noticed. Recall that the concept of wabi-sabi comes from a Japanese philosophy of finding beauty in imperfections, impermanence, and transience. Wabi-sabi can be seen in Rafian's use of the natural grain and defects in the wood to represent expressions, making each figure unique.¹⁴

¹⁴ "Wabi Sabi Dolls"



Figure 14.0

This practice of embracing inherent qualities of materials and objects is a powerful method for portraying and highlighting different kinds of beauty because synergy between materiality and philosophy has great impact and can turn an idea or theory into physical form. Rafian accomplishes this by exploring the properties of materials and working with the defects in wood to give a purposeful function and use. The method of working with the natural "flaws" (grains and defects) of wood offers a potential approach to dealing with the myth of uniform beauty. One potential benefit of this form of art is that objects created with this approach could generate conversations and provoke debates about contemporary concepts of beauty.

PROCESS PLUG-INS by Philipp Schenk-Mischke

The aim of the project, Process Plug-Ins, by Philipp Schenk-Mischike, was to "...create iterations of classic domestic objects by introducing plug-ins that distort the unusual outcome, sometimes forcefully."¹⁵ Schenk-Mischike's goal was to look at traditional processes, "... such as modes of manufacture, assembly or use—and spoil them of straightforwardness and predictability."¹⁶



Figure 15.0

His approach was to mold simple vases with clay in perfect geometric forms. Then, while the clay was still wet, he placed them on a fitness vibration plate. This experimental process caused the vase to distort in a random, organic manner, resulting in vases with unpredictable bends and imperfections. The artist added an unconventional step to the process to challenge traditional modes of manufacture by introducing overt randomness.¹⁷ The use of clay—a malleable material—allowed for accidental qualities to emerge, guided by controlled disruption.

¹⁵ "Philipp Schenk-Mischke Creates Ceramics and Furniture That Are Partly Accidental in Design." ¹⁶ Ibid ¹⁷ Ibid



Figure 15.1



FABRIC FORMULA by Zhekai Zheng

The Fabric Formula collection features a series of whiteglazed teapots, jugs, and cups. A piece of fabric, inserted into the mold, gives each piece its distinctive character. After adding the fabric, the clay slip was poured into the mold, resulting in an unevenly cast surface. Each outcome was unique due to the unpredictability of the fabric's folds and wrinkles.¹⁸ The resulting ceramic productions appear smooth on the inside, just like other ceramic products, but are crumpled on the outside, impacted by the fabric



Figure 16.0

folds. The designer, Zhekai Zhang juxtaposed two contrasting ideas of machine-made and human-made, where a method of mass production was used to create imperfect outcomes that appear human-made.¹⁹ Zhang had said: "I used the fabric as the catalyst for the purpose of showing the unique and imperfect beauty brought by textile in mass production."²⁰ The beauty of imperfect ceramics comes from unique one-ofa-kind individuality. Fabric, added inside the mold, brings a visual tactile illusion to the work and challenges the viewer's expectations by giving the ceramic medium new properties.

 ¹⁸ "Zhekai Zhang's Creates 'Imperfect' Ceramics Using Fabric Moulds."
¹⁹ Ibid
²⁰ Ibid



Figure 16.1





Figure 16.3

SENTO TACTILE COOKWARE by Neora Zingler

Sento Tactile Cookware is a set of cooking utensils designed by industrial designer Neora Zingler for the blind and sight impaired.²¹ These cooking utensils, "... encourage a cooking experience that takes advantage of all the senses and answers the practical needs of the blind and sight impaired."²² The two main considerations of Zingler's work were user safety and intensifying the sensual cooking experience. These items protect users from heat



Figure 17

hazards, lead to more accurate measurements, and help improve cleanliness and organization, targeting a broader audience.²³ Sento Tactile Cookware also provides a tactile solution to quotidian problems by facilitating the human senses for a practical use. Targeting a broader audience beyond the blind and sight impaired—the items create harmony using color and shape, in addition to texture. Giving a higher degree of functionality and providing users with a novel user experience in the course of daily tasks, the project is powerful and original.

 ²¹ "Neora Zigler: Sento Tactile Cookware."
²² Ibid
²³ Ibid



Figure 17.1



WRINKLES by Noa Zilberman

Wrinkles, by jewelry designer Noa Zilberman, studies the aging process of the human face. Zilberman says, "I investigate the parameters of the aging process creating a unique wrinkles map in which my future wrinkles are represented, filled-in and repaired using a gilded metal thread."²⁴ Guided by this rationale, she designed a series of wrinkle jewelry pieces for the face and neck. Gold wires create lines across the forehead, creating an illusion of wrinkles. By contrasting young facial skin with the unavoidable wrinkles awaiting it, the design blurs lines between old and youthful, and between ugliness and

²⁴ "Wrinkles Jewelry."
²⁵ Ibid



Figure 18.0

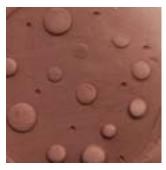
beauty. By juxtaposing wrinkles and youthful skin, the designer abolishes the timeline of aging and gives a structural transformation using a wearable device.²⁵ This project is analogous with the *Wabi Sabi Doll* by Perach Rafian (mentioned in the earlier section of the precedent studies) in that both projects develop from the goal of embracing what is defined or learned as imperfections/defects. By applying one of the symbolic meanings of jewelry—building an identity and making a statement—the designer is bringing attention and value to the very natural and inevitable signs of aging. Rather than trying to disguise the natural traces of life, she designed this jewelry to emphasize the under-appreciated aging qualities of natural beauty.



Figure 18.1







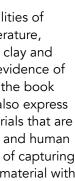
INVESTIGATION





REFLECTION OF HUMANNESS IN PHYSICAL FORM: SKIN TEXTURE EXPLORATION

The qualities of clay are analogous to the qualities of human skin; clay is malleable, insulates temperature, scars, peels, dents, cracks, and stains. In both clay and human skin, surface qualities provide patent evidence of the history of use and abuse. As described in the book Wabi-Sabi, objects demonstrating wabi-sabi also express the passage of time. "They are made of materials that are visibly vulnerable to the effects of weathering and human treatment."²⁶ My thesis project explores ways of capturing the imperfect qualities of human skin using a material with wabi-sabi qualities—clay.



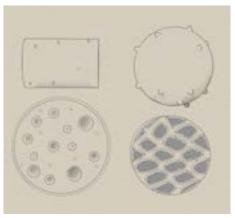
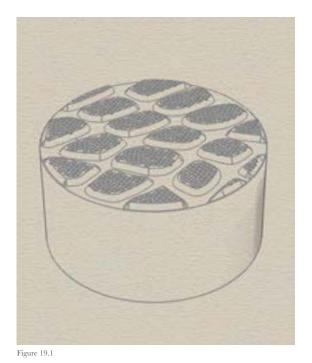


Figure 19.0

²⁶ Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers, 62.



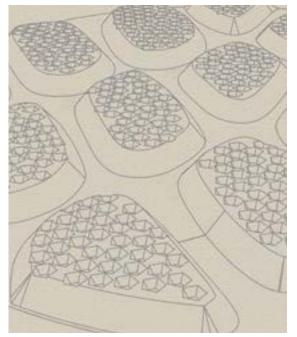
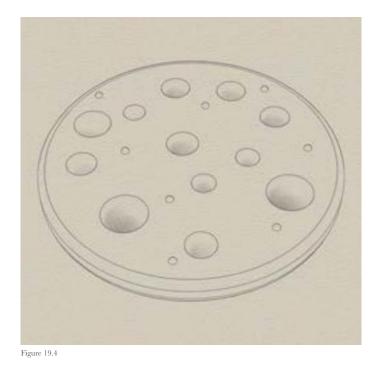


Figure 19.2



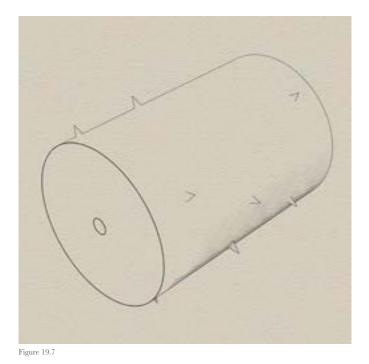


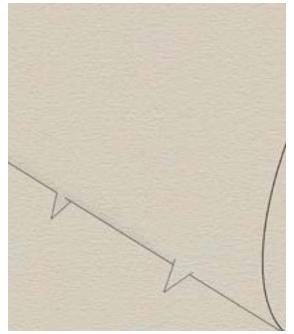


















THE NONEXISTENT-TOOLS: ENHANCEMENT OF IMPERFECTIONS

Aesthetic judgments change over time due to "...the availability of tools, the development and availability of materials, and production techniques."²⁷ The existence of beauty tools in the market implies the need for a specific aesthetic. For instance, there are no beauty tools to enhance our flaws such as skin impurities, asymmetrical shapes, and so on. Beauty tools in the industrialized market only exist to support the need for a change toward hyperrealism. In contrary, the existence of these tools designed (fig. 20.0 - 20.5) to produce outcomes that are not ideal irregular shapes and rough patterns—supports the diversification of categories for beauty standards. This project examines the steps of pottery making and finding ways to interfere with the standardized process of creation using tools (fig. 21.0 - 21.4).



Figure 20.0

²⁷ "Beauty and the Brain: Culture, History and Individual Differences in Aesthetic Appreciation."

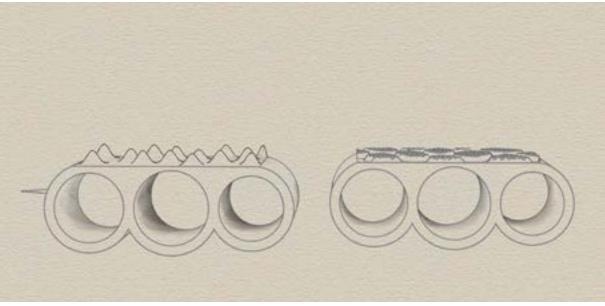
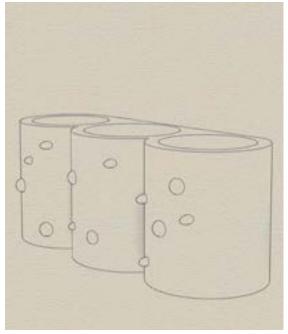


Figure 20.1

Figure 20.2





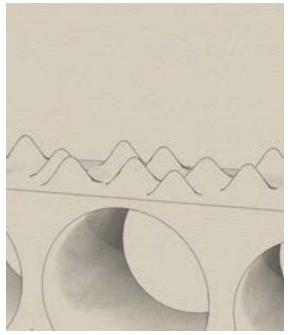


Figure 20.3

Figure 20.4



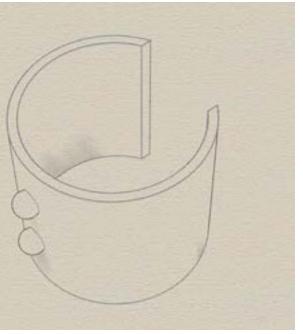




Figure 21.0



Figure 21.1



Figure 21.2





Figure 21.4

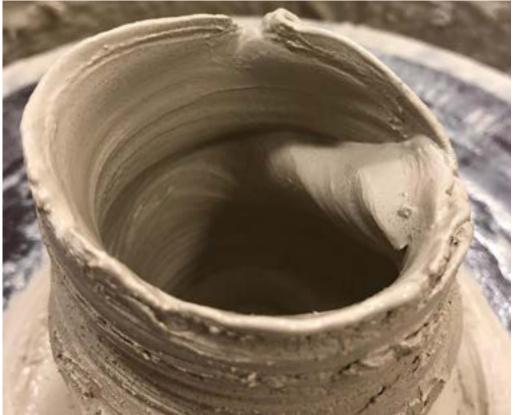


Figure 21.5



WABI-SABI CUPS: PLANNED RANDOMNESS

Natural grains, added to clay prior to firing, give each finished piece a unique character. In the process of fabrication, the amount of grains used, and the application technique are pre-planned. However, the reaction between grain and clay during firing cannot be controlled. The process of creating planned randomness highlights the uncontrollability of the material and embrace natural impurities.



Figure 22.0







Figure 22.2



Figure 22.3





Figure 22.4

OUTCOMES

Returning to the subject of perceptions and definitions of human beauty, I established an argument earlier that beauty standards stem from an over-reliance on visual experience, lacking the otherness of beauty found by engaging the nonvisual haptic experiences. As humans robotically absorb what we see without experiencing it through other senses, I wanted to provide a more intimate and haptic interaction with objects used on a daily basis as a way of shifting our perceptual focus from visual to tactile awareness. To tie the outcomes back in with the beauty industry, I have used the forms of cosmetic containers—reflecting the hyperreal aesthetics of manufactured beauty—as a design model.

THE RITUAL: MAKING OF FACIAL MASKS

The design of these artifacts is inspired by my daily skin care ritual, where I make my own facial masks. Although the ritual of mixing and applying the facial mask invites a relaxation of senses, in and of itself, it lacks the ability to bring me closer to the physical objects in my life. Underserved by the mundane bowls and tools I can find commercially available, I wanted to design objects to intentionally include the qualities of wabi-sabi—the beauty of things imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete.

This set is comprised of the minimum ingredients and tools needed to make a face-moisturizing mask: milk, a milk container, natural grains, a grain container, a mixing bowl, and a spatula. To bring controlled randomness to the outcomes, milk containers and mixing bowls were completed using 3D printed tools (fig. 21.1 & fig. 25.1). Inspired by the aesthetics of beauty tools, such as a face roller, the two bronze tools were used to affect the texture and appearance of the mixing bowls and milk containers—analogous to how humans use beauty tools to manipulate their physical appearance. The metallic aesthetic recalls surgical tools to link back to the topics of human beauty and plastic surgery. The tools and outcomes produced through using those tools provide a metaphor for clay as human skin, with similar texture, blemishes and all.



MILK-LIKE SKIN CONTAINERS

In Korea, skin that is smooth and pale is sometimes referred to as "milk-like skin." There is a preference for soft and flawless skin, as it is associated with pure beauty. My set of designed containers highlights the contrast between the qualities of the inner and outer surfaces. As a reflection of the beauty industry, I designed a tool, shaped like a face roller, to create irregular, harsh surface textures on the outside, in contrast to the creamy-smooth milk contained on the inside (fig. 24.2). Furthermore, I glazed only the insides of the containers, to enhance the contrast between smooth insides and rough exteriors.

Although these milk containers look alike at first glance similar to people who have sacrificed uniqueness by overindulging in cosmetic surgery—different colors were added to create subtle distinction (fig. 24.4). The subtle difference in color of the containers result from the different temperature used to fire the pieces (fig. 24.0). The outcomes show the uncontrollable factor that is brought by the difference in temperature and further highlights the malleability of clay same type of clay resulting in different colors. Each object is fully functional because it is glazed from the inside. The form recalls modern-day cosmetic containers, but the wabi-sabi nature of the textured exterior makes each container distinct and unique. The aim is to provide a truer-to-life, authentic quality, and to give users a more engaging tactile experience.









Figure 24.3









IMPERFECT BOWLS

Designed specifically for mixing facial masks, these intentionally imperfect clay bowls were made on a pottery wheel. Afterward, I applied grains to the interior surfaces of each bowl using a custom rolling tool, designed to press the grains into the clay (fig. 25.1). Although it may seem like a controlled process, the outcome relies on intentionallyplanned randomness. Having selected natural grains with different patterns and textures, subtle differences become evident after the bowls are fired in the kiln. During firing, the grains burn away, leaving random patterns in the clay surface. (fig. 25.3-4)

When the bowl is used later to dissolve the charcoal jar (fig. 26.0), breaking it apart and stirring it with milk, residue from the mixture lodges in dents embedded in the patterned texture of the interior surface (fig. 25.5-7). The goal is for the residue to leave a unique, authentic, imperfect trace, developing a deepening patina over time. A custom spatula (fig. 25.6), designed for mixing the paste inside the bowl, is also made from clay, further enriching the haptic experience of this carefully designed skincare ritual.



Figure 25.0



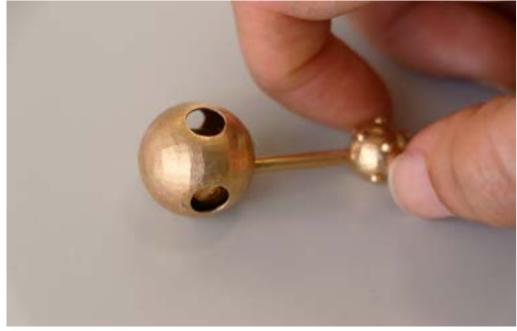


Figure 25.1





Figure 25.3





Figure 25.7

IMPERMANENCE IN THE FORM OF GRAINS

These custom jars, made of charcoal powder, contain oat grains (fig. 26.3). The soluble charcoal jars dissolve when mixed with milk, and the resulting mixture of charcoal, milk, and oats, makes a creamy paste that is applied to the face, where it penetrates and nourishes the skin (fig. 26.5). The process of dissolving both container and contents into a creamy paste activates aspects of wabi-sabi—the beauty of impermanence.

The form of the jars recalls modern-day plastic containers used for storing cosmetic powder. While they retain the look of commercial plastic containers, symmetric and sharp, the charcoal jars are made of organic, biodegradable materials. Mixing the charcoal in an unglazed ceramic bowl yields another aspect of the wabi-sabi aesthetic. Dark stains from the charcoal remain visible, recording the history of use on the object itself—leaving a trace that would not exist with polished industrial materials like glass or plastic (fig. 25.7).

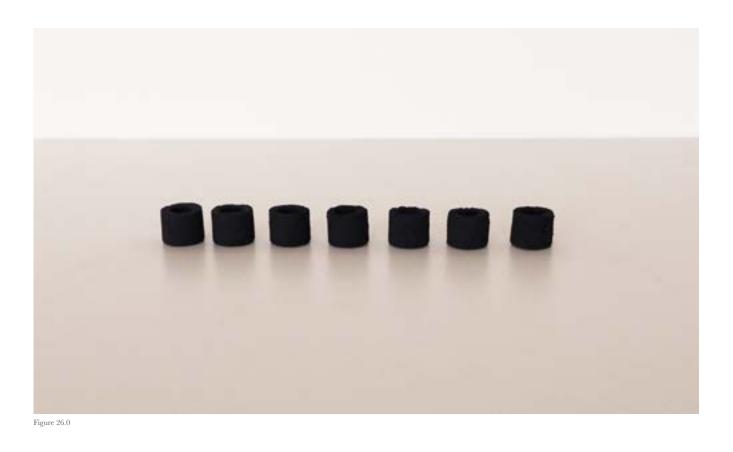




Figure 26.1









Figure 26.5

Figure 26.4

CONCLUSION

REFLECTIONS

Contemporary industrialized society is fast-paced. Impermanence is the norm in our single-use consumable culture, and products are continually introduced, updated, and replaced. Ideas are also temporary and the way we define beauty changes constantly. We are targeted, and highly influenced, by industries that work to actively expand their market impact by commercializing short-lived, hyperreal images to manufacture desire for the latest trend. To counter this type of cynical manipulation, with an intention to initiate a broader view of what constitutes beauty, I have undertaken the design of daily-use objects that support a personal beauty ritual, designing them to communicate the beauty of imperfection, transience, and diversity.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Another consequence of impermanence is the risk of looking at things only briefly and superficially, with little intimate interaction or chance for thoughtful reflection. We accept definitions given to us without question. As a result, we miss out on the beauty of nuance, and underappreciate life's natural diversity. In this thesis the term beauty has been applied to both humans and inanimate objects. The beauty of working with clay is that time can be slowed down. Clay, a material that is malleable and organic, can easily be manipulated and designed to capture residue. Trace elements then create a history of use and in so doing, fight back against the impermanence of hyperreal ideas and commodities.

Through this research, I have realized that consumers are in a dialectical relationship with objects we use, and images we see every day. Those objects and images seek to teach us beauty is found in flawless perfection. This thesis argues otherwise, using design to not only solve issues, but to bring the topic forward and initiate conversation. The aim of this thesis is to raise awareness of our perceptions and challenge the aesthetics of "unwanted flaws" by broadening the notion of beauty. In the near-future, I imagine a more open-minded perspective and definition of what is beautiful. My thesis exploration helped me find value in incorporating a higher degree of tactility in my daily life, and helped me appreciate the significance of sensory diversity, motivating me to increase my ritual contact with natural materials.

Society constantly generates new trends that impact Another future direction to emerge during this thesis is to our lives. This research offers a pathway to beauty explore this material from a psychophysiological perspective. through tactility and greater appreciation for nuance In the process of this research, I have gained an appreciation and imperfectly authentic features. These post-hyperreal for our powerful ability to read signals using the sense of cosmetic containers seek beauty in imperfection through touch. Human skin is able to distinguish minute differences tactile and visual qualities that express natural forms in temperature, material, humidity, density, and more. There of humanness, previously considered undesirable and is room to continue exploring ways to leverage the sense of "imperfect." The aim is to question the way we understand touch, to find new ways to communicate and share ideas, and beauty, by modifying objects used by women and to free our unhealthy reliance upon vision alone. men every day. This thesis project is a first step toward initiating conversations about definitions of beauty, and it anticipates potential for designing industrialized cosmetic products capable of promoting a wider understanding of beauty. The aim will no longer be to market products by decreasing the self-worth of consumers, but to change the dialog between consumer and industry into something more nuanced, open-minded, and healthy. I hope people will see these products as tools for enhancing their natural features, rather than looking for ways to remove "flaws" in the pursuit of false perfection.

EXHIBITION



Se Hee Jang

Beauty in Imperfection: Post-hyperneal Cosmetic Containers

An enhancing relation to entern had by framework recepts in main Peoks transition superframeworks standards. Trappet by a preference for visually "perfect," and functioned testance. Bitgle Indexemps, while physical attributes they consume "type field," without first Unreadening time frees. "Appendictions," Bitting-bitt them of unread individuals.

They drawn addresses many hear bear bearing managements or protong The fitting from a singularly visual opportunity. Supervise humanital semicirly association that after converting fragme quantum, it Manimest a Marine Tang at a second of a part of second and Manimest and the second and the second and the second and the Manipusky attention of the second and the second and the Manipusky attention of the second at a second and the Manipusk at Newson attention.

The resulting injusts, manywell to transmit a transition dely intercer matters, express basedy transpit the area of automation the presentation of transpit reported. Implementation and transmitters.

Ann Appendix

ADDRESS ADDRESS

Statute Laborat





























BIBLIOGRAPHY

29, Kushan says:Jul, and 2011. "Neora Zigler: Sento Tactile Cookware." designboom l architecture & design magazine, July 29, 2011. https://www.designboom.com/design/ neora-zigler-sento-tactile-cookware/.

Jacobsen, Thomas. "Beauty and the Brain: Culture, History and Individual Differences in Aesthetic Appreciation." Journal of Anatomy 216, no. 2 (February 2010): 184–91. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7580.2009.01164.x.

"JeanBaudrillard_on_hyperrealism.Pdf." Accessed December 7, 2018. https:// s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/15300984/JeanBaudrillard_on_ hyperrealism.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=154419 1530&Signature=ULNVsRL%2BB%2B8kMZhADwkrAr8sctw%3D&response-contentdisposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DJeanBaudrillard_on_hyperrealism.pdf.

Juhani. Pallasmaa. The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses. Chichester : Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Academy ; John Wiley & Sons, 2005.

Koren, Leonard. Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers. Berkeley, Calif: Stone Bridge Press., 1994.

Leem, So Yeon. "The Dubious Enhancement: Making South Korea a Plastic Surgery Nation." East Asian Science, Technology and Society 10, no. 1 (March 1, 2016): 51–71. https://doi.org/10.1215/18752160-3325203.

Li, Eric P H, Hyun Jeong Min, Russell W Belk, Junko Kimura, and Shalini Bahl. "Skin Lightening and Beauty in Four Asian Cultures," n.d., 7.

"Noa Zilberman I Wrinkles Jewelry." noa zilberman. Accessed October 24, 2018. https:// www.noazilberman.com/the-wrinkles-project. "Philipp Schenk-Mischke Creates Ceramics and Furniture That Are Partly Accidental in Design." Dezeen, July 31, 2018. https://www.dezeen.com/2018/07/31/philipp-schenk-mischke-rca-graduate-process-plug-ins/.

"Wabi Sabi Dolls | Designboom.Com." designboom | architecture & design magazine. Accessed October 17, 2018. https://www.designboom.com/project/wabi-sabi-dolls/.

"Why Is Plastic Surgery so Popular in South Korea? | KOREA 101." KOREA EXPOSÉ (blog), January 9, 2018. https://www.koreaexpose.com/plastic-surgery-popular-south-korea-history/.

"Zhekai Zhang's Creates 'Imperfect' Ceramics Using Fabric Moulds." Dezeen, June 22, 2018. https://www.dezeen.com/2018/06/22/fabric-ceramic-tea-set-zhekai-zhangs-design/.

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.0. Bonaveri. Schlappi 2000/3200. https://bonaveri.com/collections/schlappi-2000-3200/

Fig. 2.0. Dooley, lan. https://unsplash.com/photos/k8OCHhEymME

Fig. 3.0. Kim, Manki. https://unsplash.com/photos/XC_A_mg1ASc

Fig. 4.0. Miss USA 2009. https://www.guora.com/Why-do-all-these-Korean-women-look-so-eerily-similar-Irealize-theres-some-sort-of-plastic-surgery-tomfoolery-going-on-but-why

Fig. 5.0. Arias, Carson. https://unsplash.com/photos/7Z03R1wOdmI

Fig. 6.0. Nordwood Themes. https://unsplash.com/photos/nDd3dlkkOLo

Fig. 7.0. MAC Hyperreal Foundation. 2018. https://www.you.co.uk/mac-hyper-real-foundation/

Fig. 8.0. Shaver, Kerri. https://unsplash.com/photos/xepikEyPgml

Fig. 9.0. Mkkele, Yolisa. Supplied 2017. https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/home-and-gardening/2017-08-31-wabi-sabi-the-latest-buzzword-to-hit-the-design-world/

Fig. 10.0. Harvey, Steve. https://unsplash.com/photos/U4wcrDteZ2Y

Fig. 11.0. Heightened Tactility. 2010 https://inprogress.designacademy.nl/projects/articletype/a articleid/252/in-search-of-a-new-tactility

Fig. 12.0. Chng, Jonathan. https://unsplash.com/photos/OTDyDgPoJ_0

Fig. 13.0. Studler, Timon. https://unsplash.com/photos/ABGaVhJxwDQ

Fig. 14.0. Rafian, Perach. Wabi Sabi Doll. 2009. https://www.designboom.com/project/wabi-sabi-dolls/

Fig. 15.0-15.3. Schenk-Mischke, Philipp. Process Plug-Ins. https://www.dezeen.com/2018/07/31/philipp-schenk-misc graduate-process-plug-ins/.

Fig. 16.0-16.3. Zhang, Zhekai. Fabric Formula. 2018. https://www.dezeen.com/2018/06/22/fabric-ceramic-tea-set-zhekaizhangs-design/.

Fig. 17.0-17.2. Zigler, Neora. Sento Tactile Cookware. 2011. https://www.designboom.com/design/neora-zigler-sento-tactilecookware/

	Fig. 18.0-18.2. Zilberman, Noa. <i>Wrinkles</i> . 2016. https://www.noazilberman.com/the-wrinkles-project
articleview/	Fig. 19.0-19.9. Jang, Sehee. Reflection of Humanness in Physical Form. 2018.
	Fig. 20.0-21.6. Jang, Sehee. The Non-existent Tools. 2018.
	Fig. 22.0-22.4. Jang, Sehee. Wabi-sabi Cups. 2018.
	Fig. 23.0. Jang, Sehee. The Ritual: Making of Facial Masks. 2019.
	Fig. 24.0-24.6. Jang, Sehee. Milk-like Skin Containers. 2019.
	Fig. 25.0-25.7. Jang, Sehee. Imperfect Bowls. 2019.
2018 :hke-rca-	Fig. 26.0-26.5. Jang, Sehee. Impermanence in the Form of Grains. 2019.

seheejang.com