



Title of Work: **Design as Art: Packing the Box to Unpack Sensory Design**

Type of Work: **Creative Scholarship**

Event: **Interior Design Educator's Council South Regional Conference**

Location: **Auburn, AL**

Date: **October 10, 2019**

Abstract:

How does an interior design educator make applicable and exciting theories, models, and perspectives of environmental psychology for interior design students? In reviewing a Human Environments of Interior Design lecture-based course at a land-grant institution, the instructor of record attempted to revitalize a residential mapping project to engage upper-level interior design students in the principles of basic sensory design. While the basic elements and principles of design heavily include sensory design information and are instructed in many lower-division courses, it is observed that upper-division students lose interest in these basic elements as they progress to more complicated design studios. In this project, students are forced to unpack and reevaluate design decisions made in a previous design studio project into theories, models, and perspectives of environmental psychology - specifically Stimulation Theory, Pleasure-arousal-dominance hypothesis, and Behavior-setting theory, basic sensory representation.

Call to Arms (Project Announcement): Students were given the below prompt as one of four instructions to complete the project: Create a sensory box that provides the feeling, mood, texture, etc. of your space WITHOUT any actual FF&E items. This box should represent your design concept without you having to describe or explain your concept. A successful box will take into consideration all five senses when you are gathering your materials; what reactions they have to the body, mind, and sense of home and place?

The Winning Box (Project Results): In having to represent their entire design solution through sight, touch, smell, taste and sound, students learn at the Blooms Evaluating *Taxonomy level though:* accessing the value or importance of each senses' representation in their box; prioritizing which sense is most dominate in their design; deducing what elements can represent their furniture, fixture, and equipment (FF&E) choices; and judging their final product against their original studio project.

The resulting boxes, however, moved beyond a vessel for student learning and into contained pieces of art that engaged all the senses and prompted various student reactions. This installation combines imagery from several successful boxes along with student's reflections.