

DESIGN BRIEF

COLOURED OILS

Flavoured oils are often used as dressing or garnish when preparing meals to enhance flavours or scents. A secondary objective with the use of oil as a garnish is for presentation purposes. Coloured oils enhance the visual appeal of the plate. The consideration to aspects of taste, scent and appearance establish oil as an inherently sensuous medium.

Oil itself is also a destructive medium, as infusion is the process of extracting the sensual qualities of a subject through fat.

The focus here will be on flavoured oil infusions produced by concentrating foremostly on appearance. Colour will be regarded as the primary priority over flavour or scent, which are the more traditional precedents for this medium of garnishing

and dressing. An aim of this exploration will be on the replication of 'famous' colours from the fields of design and fashion. For example hues trademarked by Pantone, Rem Koolhaas, Mies van der Rohe or Christian Lacroix would all be pursuable aims.

The reverence to colour over taste reflects a jarring of priorities. Just like those priorities that favour convenience over experience and appearance and shelf life over taste. Such skewed hierarchies dominate a commoditized food culture. The reprioritization here appropriates a gourmet item that is the subject of tasting experiences into an outlandishly flavoured object of fashion.

The manipulation of priorities that place the appearance of the oil above its scent or taste in conjunction with the pursuit of dramatic, fashionable colours will result in outlandish tastes to provoke perceptions in a tasting or dining situation.

The practice of oil tasting is a ritualized one amongst gourmets with its own prescribed methods of tasting to ensure that the taster's contemplative faculty is fully engaged. The temperature of the oil, modes of breathing and tasting notes is all suggested by the tasting ritual to effectively capture the attention of the taster. Tastings may be conducted with a group and can therefore be a socializing experience.

The object itself will serve as a commentary on the misaligned priorities of a commoditized food culture. The resulting oil product's ability to serve as a dressing or garnish applied from a purely visual perspective can lead to the creation of images and dishes that further articulate the misalignment. Establishing trademark colours as a source of inspiration enables the end product to conceivably become a themed seasonal item that could be a repeatable commercial release through the specific selection of the next theme. The outlandish flavours occurring through the pursuit of fashionable hues serve as a subversion of a gourmet sub-cultural product and further underpin the commentary on commoditization.

PRODUCIBLES

- Oils imitating 'famous' examples of colour
- Recipes for these oils
- Images showing the use of oils as garnish or dressings in a context where colour and appearance are most valuable
- A scripted tasting experience
- Instruments to facilitate the tasting experience – eg. Tasting cups and score cards