

Etude I: Stranger Things

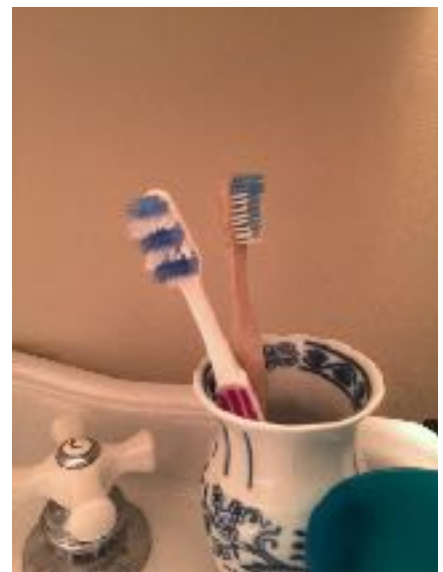
CART 360

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As I am currently on an exchange program picking my own objects that provide an “enchanted experience” was quite challenging: I didn’t bring many objects that I believe have either sentimental value or provide much of an enchanting experience. Consequently I have selected three objects that I have brought with me to Montreal which procure me with an enchanting experience.

Toothbrush

The first object I have chosen for my etude is my toothbrush. This object is used twice daily (which some use thrice) and therefore I heavily rely on it. I need it both whilst travelling or at home, and am significantly disappointed if I realise I have forgotten it and have to purchase a new one. The reason why I rely on it so heavily, is mainly it because it makes us feel cleaner, more put together and inherently more confident than if we hadn’t made use of it. It acts as a tool that allows me to execute a task most of us have been taught since we were small children and has therefore been built in our routine. Consequently it is a large part of my daily routine that both introduces and concludes my day. Despite the usual differences in bristle type, disposable toothbrushes tend to always retain a same structure a plastic handle with a gripping area for your hand to hold on to whilst brushing. I brush quite vigorously thereby applying a lot of pressure on this object in the process. Because of this I highly appreciate its structural integrity in the process, as I know unconsciously in a usually half awake state, that it will not give up on me (other than the gradual decaying of the bristles). Despite it being made of flexible plastic and disposable, I still see it as strong and easily thrown about during any possible travels. I personally side with the disposable toothbrush rather than electric one purely because it allows me to have a more hands on experience when brushing. As it is plastic, it doesn’t hold much conductive potential and therefore acts as an insulator. And the nylon fibres used for the brush also have low conducting potential. Although I don’t know how safe it would be for either of those materials to be conductive considering they are both in contact with water and our mouths.

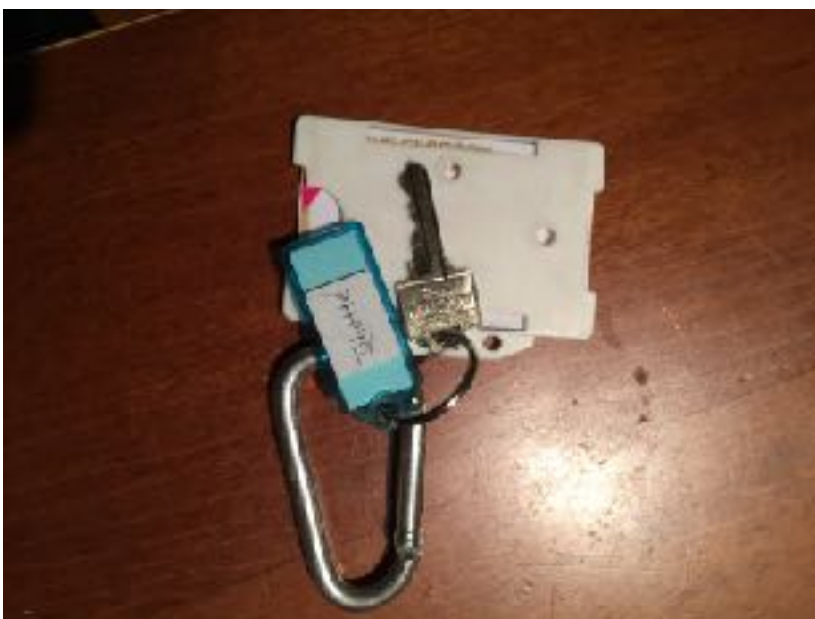


Additionally the process is extremely sensual, as it appeals directly or indirectly to all five senses:

1. Touch by holding on the tooth brush and also by brushing in and around our mouths
2. Taste acts a toothpaste “applicator” to our teeth which we then taste
3. Sound:By producing the brushing sounds, we are reminded of the brushing action’s effectiveness, thereby giving us satisfaction and relief that we did a good job
4. Sight: we see the object throughout the experience (in different ways as the head of the toothbrush disappears out of our vision whilst we brush)
5. Smell is the most indirect as it doesn’t produce smell itself, but allows the usually flavoured toothpaste to create a more powerful smell.

Carabiner

The second object i have selected is my carabiner which i use as a key chain to hold my keys, door badges and student ID. It is made of an unidentifiable metal that now has many scratches from wear and because of its cheap quality (it comes from a novelty item store called Flying Tiger Copenhagen). My friend recommended using one as a key chain because its convenience: is is used to attach keys on or other objects (both quickly and easily), as one doesn’t need to dig their finger nail under a key chain loop and also servers as a latching device. The fact that its process if extremely efficient, and even fun, to either attach or detach various items from it has become quite useful for me living between France and Scotland, as I hate to carry unnecessary keys. One which can be either attached to a bag, belt, hook, etc. Because of the latch and asymmetric form, it is quite entertaining to clip and unclip or even swing around my finger when not having anything to do with my hands. One should note however the all caps annotation on the outer side of it “NOT FOR CLIMBING” thereby indicating that despite its sturdy appearance it won’t or shouldn’t be used to sustain one’s entire weight in suspension. I still perceive it as a “sturdy” object, regardless of the text, because I still unconsciously associate its visual identity to climbing and therefore its ability to support an entire human’s weight. It’s not only amusing to play with but also pleasant to the touch as it is smooth and cool with mostly rounded and curved surfaces that create the familiar almost letter - D shape. The clicking sound it also makes provides a certain feeling of security, as it suggests to me that I won’t forget or lose or my keys in whatever journey awaits me. This object on the other hand is conductive due to its body being entirely of metal.



Wooden Bracelet

My last object is a wooden bracelet or bangle that I wear mid way on my arm. This one is slightly different in that it holds sentimental value unlike the two others (and most objects that I brought to Montreal). It is made of a dark and solid wood, and is rounded on the outside and flat on the inside allowing it hold up on my arm. It feels solid and reliable as an object, but also smooth and organic on the outside. I recently found it lying around at home, as previously it used to be owned by my mother who wore it around her wrist when she was in her mid twenties. As we are very close, and by being so often far away as a student “abroad:”, it comforting to have something that reminds me of her thereby evoking nostalgia within me. This is quite unusual for me as I have never been one to be emotionally attached to objects, and will easily throw something away if it doesn’t have a value add, and is of encumbrance in some way to my life. This therefore makes it even more meaningful to me. Like the carabiner, it is also an object I tend to fiddle with: its smooth surface invites me to rotate it around my arm or wrist. As I often rely on simple and go-to accessories for personal style, I have found myself wearing it more and more as it an easy way for me to give a more organic, harmonious side to my often monochrome outfits. This is another insulator, as it is entirely made of wood.



NEW INTERACTIONS

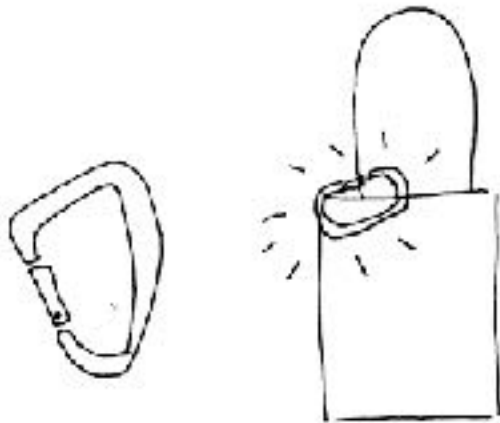
I have selected the carabiner as my favourite object for creating new interactions due to the combination of its playful and functional nature.



temperature sensing
carabiner



it heats up your
cold hands



glows in the
dark



will glow a different
color depending on
what material it comes
in contact with



neutral state



identifies objects
attached to it



makes loudest
buzz sounds
when all useful
objects are attached