

# PERFECTLY IMPERFECTION

Sometimes errors can bring us closer to art



## Location

University of Massachusetts  
Amherst

## Time

7-10 PM

## We are living in an imperfect world

The exhibit shows that everything around us even beauty is built from imperfection. In our normal life, we want things such as airplanes and automobiles to be perfect and precise but perfection is impossible to produce. However, people are not attracted to a piece of art because it's perfect, instead, people are attracted because it's not. People are attracted to you not because you are perfect, but because you are not.

Nature-nurture issues such as environment and heredity influence our characteristics, thoughts, and behaviors. These three elements create diversity among people on perception of perfection and imperfection. The exhibit includes four categories: installation art, music, poetry, and essence to reflect on imperfection in artworks through human's perception like sight, sound, and smell. In other words, all kinds of art are imperfect no matter how they were made and what they were made of.

**I**

## INSTALLATION

12-15 December at the  
front of Fine Arts  
Center

**M**

## MUSIC

12 December  
9:00-9:30 PM Located  
inside the Japanese  
rock garden

**P**

## POETRY

12 December  
9:40-10:00 PM  
University Museum of  
Contemporary Art

**E**

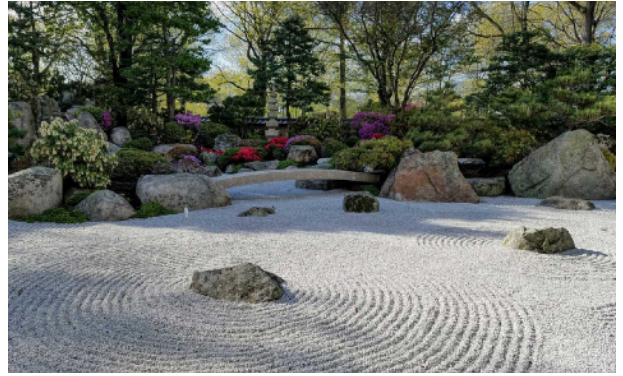
## ESSENCE

12 December 7-10 PM  
University Museum of  
Contemporary Art

# Installation

## A Japanese Rock Garden

If you find yourself like the garden, it means you do not like seeing a perfect art, but seeing an imperfect art perfectly.



Picture from The Humble Fabulist

The piece of Okakura Tenshin's installation titled *Tenshin-en* represents a unique merging of two cultures between Japanese and New England's garden cultures. The traditional Japanese rock garden usually contains only rocks and grass, but *Tenshin-en* is home to more than seventy combined Japanese and American species of plants. The arrangement of the rocks is the most important part of making the garden. *Tenshin-en* was decorated with more than 200 rocks including a dry waterfall (*takiguchi*) and tall stones representing Mount Sumeru. *Tenshin* carefully raked the rock and gravel to create the impression of waves.

*Tenshin-en* is a contemplative Japanese garden that aims to bring magnificent scenes from nature such as waterfalls, mountains, islands and ocean, and project them all in a garden. The major attribute of the garden is its ability to physically interact with viewers. It engages several of the viewer's senses, especially touch and vision. The small rocks or gravels are used instead of water in the garden to represent the ocean. And, the big rocks represent islands. With competitions in real world, the tempo of our lives becomes faster and faster. *Tenshin-en* creates a relaxing atmosphere to "slow down" viewers by letting them explore the order of nature. Moreover, it offers a unique way to experience art. It allows people to walk and chill inside the garden area - a distinctive capability that is not commonly found in traditional forms of art. The shady *Tenshin-en* garden is one of the most engaging gardens. Interestingly, the selection and placement of rocks can trigger your imagination on what kind of shapes or things they look like.

Although, the installation seems perfect: not a blade of grass is out of place, the whole art is just perfectly imperfect. The artist is clever by using imperfect elements such various shapes of rocks to create distinctions and natural attraction. The magnificent scene would not be built if the world is perfect. In a perfect world, the nature should be boring, cold and hard because rocks and plants have the same shape and color.

# Music

## All of Me by John Legend

If you find yourself like the music, it means you do not like listening to the perfect song, but listening to an imperfect sound perfectly.

Today, we can use computers to generate music that sounds virtually indistinguishable from music created by actual musicians. However, people still like the version played by human beings more even it has some tiny errors. Why? People like in imperfect sounds and think perfect sounds are fake and lack of personality. Moreover, it is the same reason why many people like going to a live concert. The question is how we can decide which sound is perfect or imperfect. There are multiple ways how people measure imperfection in a music such as Vibrato (not landing perfectly on the note) and Rubato (not keeping perfectly on the beat). However, it is hard to tell that just imperfection and perfection is enough for someone to like a song.

In the evening of December 12, we are providing a live music performance by John Legend in *Tenshin-en* garden. John is going to perform on a spherical stage in the middle of the garden. Hence, guests can watch the performance all around the garden. On the stage there will be a grand piano and microphone set up. Having the concert in the garden will create contrast in feeling between

'Cause all of me  
Loves all of you  
Love your curves and all your edges  
All your perfect imperfections

peace and excitement. “All of Me” is the song John will be presenting at the event. Why “All of Me”? Because the lyrics are meaningful especially. In the song, John explains that he loves this woman regardless her perfection. He loves her and every piece of her because he accepts her for who she is.

The song is a homo phonic song which composes with one instrument and one voice singing. Thus, the texture of the song is very thin. The slow tempo is continued throughout the entire song. During the chorus, the piano plays faster. The vocals stays slow throughout the song. The sound from the piano’s accompaniment to John’s singing establishes a strong melodic motif. A few instruments might make the song imperfect. Some people may think having more instruments in the chorus would make the song more interesting while others think adding more instrument will create bushy timbre which blocks the meaningful core of the song.

The music is very straightforward by telling us that although you are not always perfect to yourself, someone else might think you are imperfectly perfect. The thought is obvious throughout the whole song especially. You can see in the song that he thinks this woman is perfect, while she disagrees.

We are going to play the song in different versions. For the first version, people will listen to the original version of the song. For the second version, John will lively play the musical piece by himself. However, at the event, guests will not know which one will be played first while John will lip sync for the first version.

For the first version, we will rarely see no error in the performance. It is the same as what you hear for many times from your own computers and smartphones. Guests will not hear the singer humanity. For the second version, of course, the human-created version will have tiny errors which may or may not be noticed by the audience's ears. Moreover, we expect bigger errors to happen during the performance. We believe a professional dealt with the error can bring audiences closer to the musician and create good humor without adding any fantasy stuff. The aim is to tell when a song is performed live, mistakes and imperfection can happen. We want these errors because they will bring us closer to the artist and to the music.

# Poetry

## **I Carry Your Heart With Me by E.E. Cumming**

If you found yourself like the poetry, it means you do not like reading the perfect poetry, but reading an imperfect stanza perfectly.

The most beautiful poetries are not made from perfect sentences and correct grammar. In this regard, poets do not always follow the grammar rules, which is why poetry is attractive and coloring outside the lines. A Writing Forward article exploring the grammar rules in poetry writing addresses this question. In this article, Melissa Donovan believes “grammar rules, particularly spelling and punctuation, are nothing more than a creative tool for poets who choose to dismiss the rules altogether or use the them to decorate and add aesthetic elements to a poem.”

We are pound to present “I Carry Your Heart With Me”, one of all many highly experimental poems by E.E. Cumming. It is the poem you are most likely to hear at weddings or in romantic movies because it is a quintessential love poem. It points toward love. When it has been read and unfolded effortlessly, a rhythm harmonies with feeling.

This poem is the most straightforward and approachable since Cumming has succeeded in using alternatively basic sentence structures. However, Cumming has dismissed capital letters altogether and he placed punctuation seemingly at random. In addition, he is known for his unusual uses of capitalization and punctuation. In this poem, Cumming frequently uses the pronoun “I” in lower case. I believe he wanted to be on the same level with his lover and did not want to elevate himself over his lover. Moreover, Cumming does not capitalize any letter in this poem. Imagine if the poem is written with the proper grammar rules and perfect capitalization and punctuation, you will quickly realize that his way is more effective in this piece.

In the first part of the poem, it seems Cumming tries to tell that whatever he does, he does it for his lover. And, he is always with his lover. In the second stanza, it shows how much he loves his lover and how scared he is to lose his lover. Cumming intentionally depicts the sun and moon to create a greater image of the love. In the third stanza, it is very opposite to the first two. You may notice the important symbolism introduced by Cumming, like the roots and buds represent the problems people have with falling in love. Cumming uses hyperbole in the last line. He claims that love is so scary in the world which keeps the stars apart.

At the event, the poem will be read by Cameron Diaz who read the poem in the movie “In Her Shoes.” In addition, during the event, you will smell the fragrance from the essence’s exhibit. Imagine that you are listening to the romantic poem in a fresh air.

# Essence

## The Art of the Scent

If you found yourself like the scent, it means you do not like smelling the perfect perfume, but smelling an imperfect smell perfectly.

Most of the time we associate beauty with tangible things – a place, a sculpture, a countenance and a painting – but people struggle to describe beauty from scent. The aim is to use scent to describe the imperfect world that pays too much attention on appearance.

“The true beauty of perfume lies in the fact that it cannot be seen. Scent is the one and only beautiful thing that can be felt even with your eyes closed. I believe this intangible beauty will be somewhat of a consolation to those who are sick of this world that only focuses on outer beauty,” credit by My Id is Gangnam Beauty.

In addition, the perfect scent is not attainable. It is why there are so many perfume brands.

i carry your heart with me(i carry it in  
my heart)i am never without it(anywhere  
i go you go, my dear; and whatever is done  
by only me is your doing, my darling)  
i fear  
no fate(for you are my fate, my sweet)i want  
no world(for beautiful you are my world, my true)  
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant  
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows  
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud  
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows  
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)  
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

The first component of this project is the creation a gallery with four gently curved indentations on the wall. Hidden behind each is a scent diffusion machine. When a visitor leans into the curve, the machine will release a burst of fragrance. The exhibition will use 4 simple fragrances such:



## **BABY POWDER**

The beauty is hidden in the smell. We expect the baby powder smell will remind you about the peace and security you felt when you were little. In addition, it will revoke memories of happiness you felt in your childhood. Thus, this smell will create a nostalgic feeling to you.

## **FRESH-CUT GRASS**

Fresh-cut grass can make you feel that you are surrounded by the nature. Sometime it creates bitter taste in your mouth because it recalls your memories when you ate bitter vegetables. Some studies show that fresh-cut grass causes people to become more relaxed and feel great pleasure and happiness.



## **JASMINE**

The beauty is hidden in the soulful smell. Jasmine smells sweet and soft. Some experts suggest that jasmine can be used aromatherapy for relaxation and mood booster.



## **PINE**

The Christmas tree in your home smell sharp, sweet, and refreshing. Thus, when you smell the scent, you will imagine happy time like Christmas. Some researchers show that Pine can reduce depression and anxiety.



The beauty of these four distinct scents cannot be visualized. The scents have an impact on our moods not via our eyes, but our nose. They can trigger emotions and memories more than any other sense. Unfortunately, our sense of smell is somehow overlooked when it comes to arts.