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Design Thinking

Luminaire Project

Pro – to – type - *noun*

1. a first, typical or preliminary model of something, an object, machine, or part from which other forms are developed or copied.
2. an assignment for Design Thinking. a lighting fixture which you will design and fabricate.

So, you want to light up the world with your design talent? Well here is your chance! For this assignment you are to visualize, sketch, and construct a prototype of your own custom designed luminaire along with a cut sheet. It can be a table lamp, a floor lamp, a pendant fixture, a sconce, a chandelier – you choose. It can be simple, sleek, gaudy, tacky, trendy, modern or classical; whatever aesthetic suits you.

You can take some clues from some lighting websites (Flos, Artemide, Louis Poulsen, et al. You can look on Etsy or just web search custom lighting or handmade lamps, or some other descriptor which might suit your style.

Think of ways you can represent your design ideas with readily available materials. Decide on where you are headed and sketch some ideas for your fixture. Use whatever you want – wire, screen, mesh, plastic bottles, papers, fabrics, feathers, beads, spray painted macaroni, cereal boxes or whatever gets the point across. It would be fantastic if your lamp used recycled products or could have the word sustainable associated with it! You might want to go shopping and look at lamps and then head over to Home Depot or a hardware store. The main thing is to have a good time and design the coolest lamp ever!

Construct your lamp. Try not to electrocute yourself or anyone else and try not to set anything on fire! If you feel a shock or smell smoke, unplug it!!! You can wire it, tape it, sew it, glue it, paint it, tear it, saw it, cut it, nail it, or wrap it. Hey, it's your light, build it however you want. However, if you use a shade or base from another lamp, make sure you completely disguise, cover, or drastically alter the original form. No store bought base or shade should be visible at all – we want to see YOUR lamp, not someone else's!

Create a cut sheet for your lamp. The cut sheet should be on 8-1/2" x 11" paper – in color – and include the following information: Fixture name, materials used, lamping, dimensions, a description, and a fixture image or rendering. Label particular elements on your rendering or photo and explain their use. Your description should be brief but make it poetic and really "sell it" – your description of your fixture should convince people of your unmatched design prowess. Make us want to buy one!

And again, have fun!