

Hail Perret

the art of shaving

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2011-05-26, Gothenburg
Degree Project 30 HECs, Fine Arts Master's Programme in Design 120 HECs

Abstract

Hail Perret is a celebration to the act of manual labor and the art of craftsmanship. The purpose of the project is to create the will to slow down one specific situation in our everyday life, the act of shaving, and create a space for the user to take some time for him, both mentally and physically. By working with a cohesive solution for all the parts involved in a traditional shave and presenting it in a practical case, the goal was to enhance the act of shaving into the art of shaving.

I have created a contemplating moment for the user as well as a sense of pride in mastering the art of a traditional shave. This project is not about having the money to get a traditional shave, it's about having the will to learn and master it.

Hail Perret är en hyllning till det manuella arbetet och konsten att bemästra ett hantverk. Syftet med projektet är att skapa en vilja att sakta ner en särskild situation i vår vardag, rakningen, och skapa möjligheten för användaren att ta tid för sig själv, både mentalt och fysiskt. Genom att arbeta med en sammanhängande lösning för alla delar som ingår i en traditionell rakning och presentera den i en praktisk förpackning var målet att förhöja sysslan att raka sig till konsten att raka sig.

Jag har skapat ett utrymme för kontemplation hos användaren samt en känsla av stolthet i att bemästra konsten av en traditionell rakning. Detta projekt handlar inte om att ha ekonomin för att få en traditionell rakning, det handlar om att ha viljan att lära sig och behärska den.

Keywords: Time, Self-caring, Contemplation, Senses, Shaving

Thanks to

*David Qvick
Erik Åleby
James Thompson
Jenny Jernström
Jesper Jonsson
Maria Bergström*

*Ian Grout
Staffan Weigel
Thomas Laurien
Ulf Sjöstrand*

*and
Black Badger Advanced Composites*

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Introduction

Since the introduction of Industrialism the answer to our question has been efficiency, both in production but also in our daily life. This strive after a more and more effective way of getting things done has made us develop machines and technology that can work in the tempo we demand. This way of working has become so effective that the human now is the weak link in production. We don't have the tempo or the precision as our computerized friends.

Even in our daily life we have made these kinds of efficiency raids and our kitchens today have a whole army of machines to make the act of cooking as easy and effortless as possible. But somewhere in this hunt for systems that solves our everyday duties I believe that we have lost our place and our pride in the small processes in our everyday life.

How do we value craftsmanship and the process of creating something yourself? I believe that the process of crating something gives more pleasure and brings more peace to the user. Products in which the user is involved in the process, in a basic or advanced level, entails a greater interest in craftsmanship and creativity.

This project is a celebration to the act of manual labor and the art of craftsmanship. I wanted to highlight one specific duty in our life and turn it from duty into pleasure. The situation I have been working with is the act of shaving.

Looking at shaving commercials today, they all talk about speed and getting things out of the way. The commercial shows Tiger Woods and Roger Federer running around sporting and razors comes flying in. They speak about three, five or seven blades that follow your face without you even having to think about that it is razorblades you have in your face. Everything speaks of speed, getting the duty done and not needing to be careful while doing it.

The purpose of the project is to create the will to slow down one specific situation in our everyday life, the act of shaving, and create a space for the user to take some time for himself, both mentally and physically. By working with a cohesive solution for all the parts involved in a traditional shave and presenting it in a practical and easy to use case, the goal was to enhance the act of shaving into the art of shaving.

What I want to achieve trough this slowing-down-process is a contemplating moment for the user as well as a sense of pride in mastering the art of a traditional shave. This project is not about having the money to get a traditional shave, it's about having the time to learn and master it. Time is the only thing everyone has the same amount of and is the only thing measure the same all over the world, still it's the thing we always seem to be lacking.

The goal is to create a set that gives the user everything he needs to get started off with traditional shaving and with this set also give the user the trust and comfort that is needed to dare to engage in this kind of shaving. To this set I wanted to present a cohesive packaging that facilitates the act of shaving and that is adapted to the attributes of the area where the shave will take place.

Implementation

To be able to create this space for the user to take time for himself, the goal was to consider the objects as more than just tools. The most important here is not the objects itself, it's the interaction and the feelings that come with it as you are performing the shave. The research phase was a study of smell, sound, weight, balance, temperature among others.

To be able to create this research I used myself as a test person and I went through the process, piece by piece, again and again. By filming whole process and by making notes of everything I experienced I got a base that I could create my project from. This process was then repeated on test persons followed by interviews. (see appendix 1)

To be able to work with the act of shaving effectively the process was divided into seven steps.
The different steps of shaving.

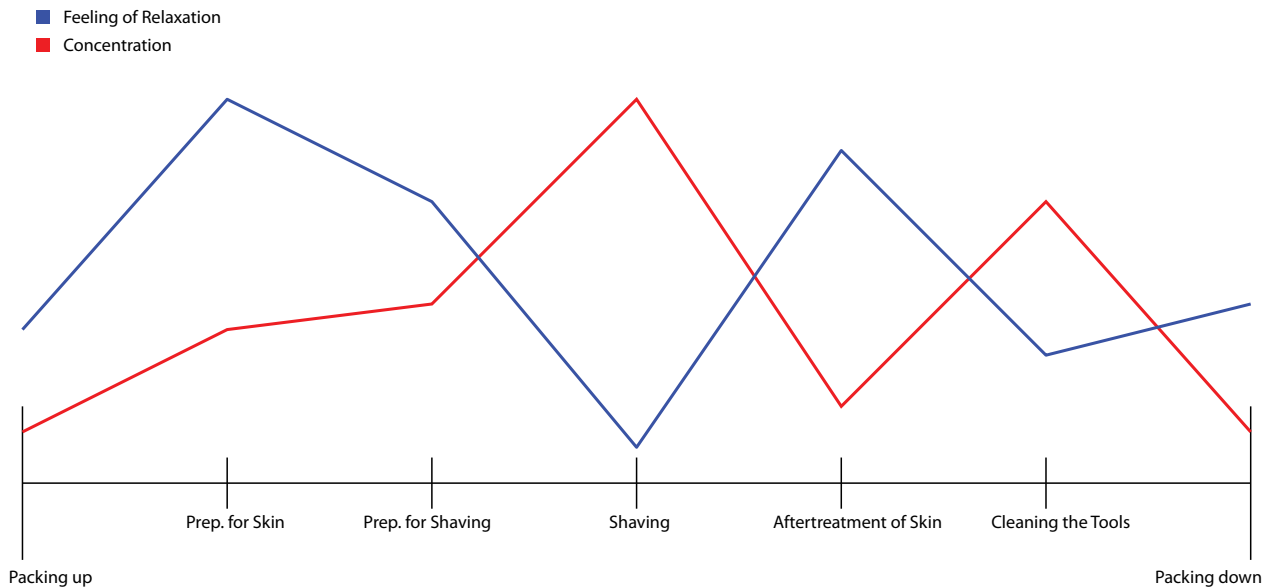
- 1- Unpacking
Placing the objects upon the sink.
- 2- Preparations for the skin
Building up shaving foam from the shaving crème with the bowl and the brush. Applying a layer of the foam to the face and the putting a wet, warm towel against the face and then holding it there for about 3 minutes to let the beard soften and open the pores.
- 3- Preparations for shaving
Removing the excess foam from step 2 and then putting on a rich layer of new foam to prepare the actual shave.
- 4- Shaving
Shaving in small strokes in a straight motion. Add foam if needed during the process.
- 5- Aftertreatment of the skin
Washing the face clean from excess foam and the applying an after shave, or shave balm to close the skin and eventual small cuts.
- 6- Cleaning the tools
It's important to look after the tools and keep them in an as good condition as possible. Wash and dry all tools separately.
- 7- Packing up
Putting the objects back into the package.

A storyboard was constructed, a timeline, for the different parts of the shaving where information was added of what was experienced during the act. By mapping out the different parts of the shave it was possible to create the outlines and see the connections between the different objects. It gave the possibility to identify intensity of the different steps, object-relations, temperature, smell, time, weight, balance, size.



Intensity

The study concerning intensity was divided it up into two categories, relaxation and concentration. This is a general picture of how these two relate to each other during the process.



These two categories can be enhanced or subdued to fit the user's demands better through smell, balance of the objects, weight of the objects and more. The goal here was to find a balance between these to parameters and to make the user feel focused, but never feel scared.

Object relations

The objects was divided into two categories. The tools (razor and brush) and the complements (bowl, towel, shaving crème and shaving balm.). The objects have a natural red thread through the process, which is like following.

1. The shaving crème is added inside the bowl.
2. The bowl is held with one hand and the brush with another to build up the shaving foam.
3. The Foam is added to the face to prepare for the shave.
4. The razor is used to shave and the brush is used some times to add more foam if needed.
5. The shaving is done and the razor is put away and the shaving balm is added.

In short: Shaving crème -> inside of bowl, outside of bowl -> brush, brush -> razor, razor -> shaving balm.

This red thread was something that could be enhance in the end result to make the user feel confident in what way the process would be executed, and to never second guess himself.

Temperature

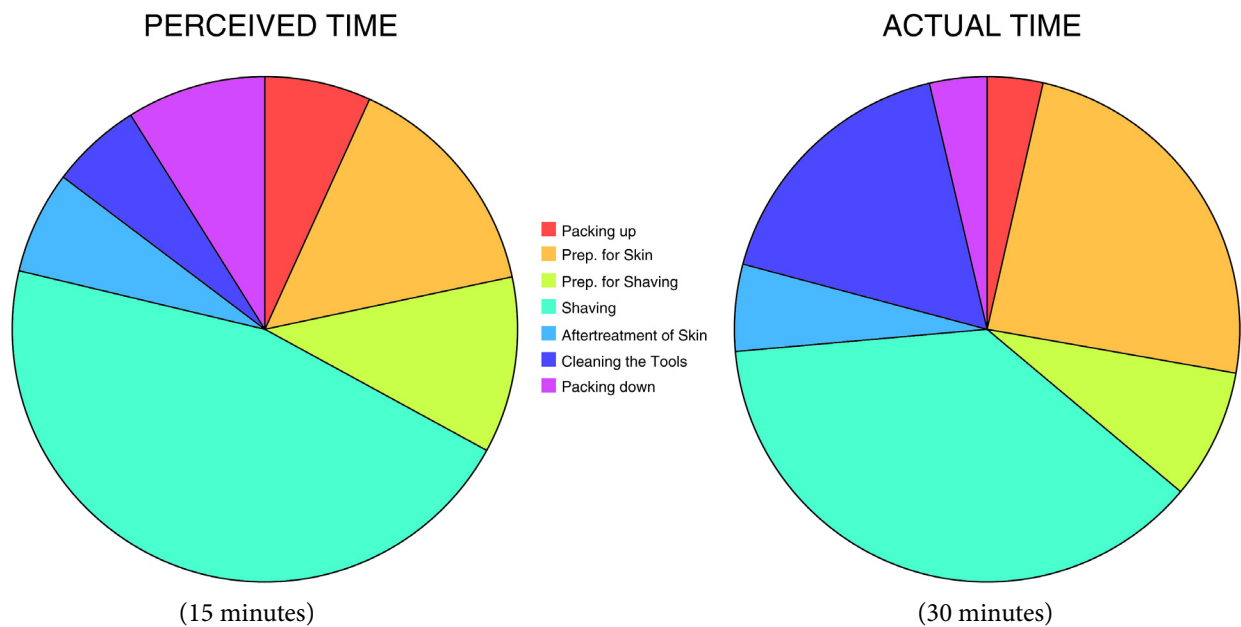
The different steps had quite different temperatures throughout the process. Like the preparation of the skin had a warm and wet presence in the beginning which becomes a more lukewarm feel towards the end of the step. The actual shave has an accelerating temperature as the razor becomes hotter and hotter during the process as you wash it of under the faucet. The danger here was that the increasing temperature made the user feel that he lost precision-control as he was shaving. As you clean your skin afterward people prefer to use colder water as a contrast to the overall hotter process, as an indication of the end of the shaving act.

Smell

As you use the shaving crème you have a strong presence of its smell throughout step two, three and four. As the smell really could effect the calmness and the concentration of the user it was of great importance to find ways to make the smell work with the process and not against it. The smell should be distinct and alerts you a bit, but also adds calmness to the user. Concentrated but relaxed. The after shave, or shaving balm, should have an uplifting smell that feels fresh.

Time

How we perceive time is an important factor when it comes to creating time for our self. By making a diagram from how the person perceived the time he spent in the different areas of the shave and also estimate how long time it took, I could cross-reference that with the film to see how they differ and why and where the differed.



Weight, Balance and Size

Something that had a big influence on the calmness in the process was the weight and the balance of the razor, the brush and the bowl. The test-razor was a Edwin Jagger Safetyrazor and the brush was a Men-u Barbieri.



The razor, which was a solid steel razor, had a comforting weight without making it too heavy which made you feel that you had control over the situation. It was well balanced and felt sterling. The thing that was a little bit off was the diameter of the handle. It was a bit too narrow to get the optimal feel of control. By using small changes in the size great improvements in confidence and precision-control would be possible.

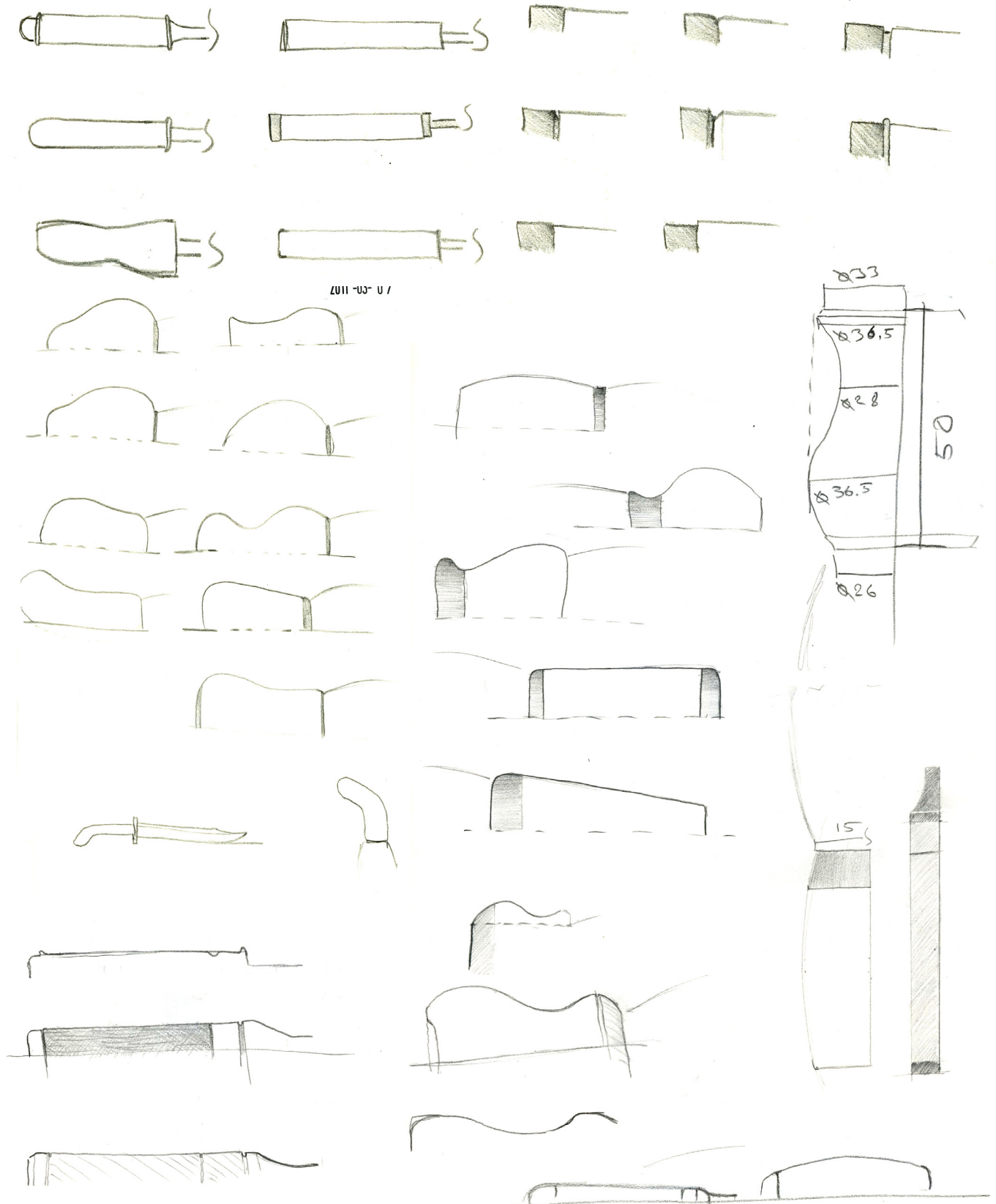
The brush used during the tests was made out of hollow plastic which was a too light material for the handle part. The brush got nose-heavy as it got wet and you didn't feel that you had control over the brush as you applied foam to the skin.

The bowl needed to feel steady in your hand as well as on the sink. It also needed a frame so that the foam didn't end up outside the bowl. The size should be small enough to fit in your palm.

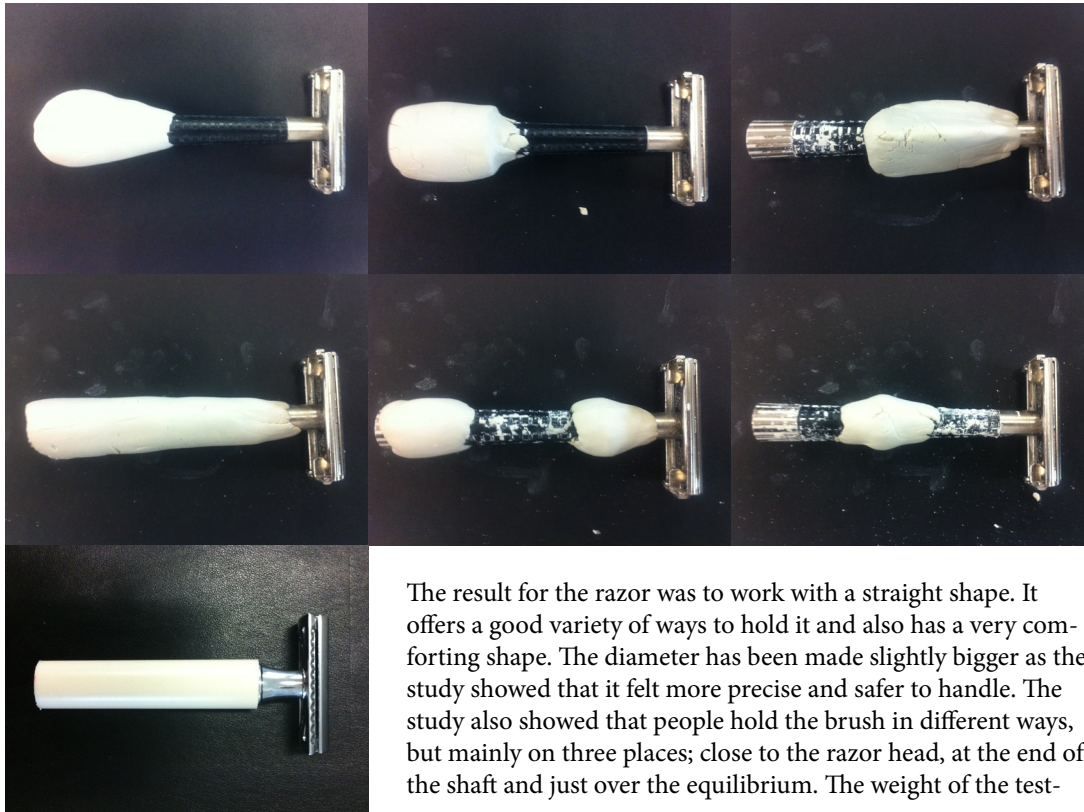
As a result of this research the goal was to incorporate as much of this study in the project as possible and make the objects to come to life through the usage of them and not just through a visual experience. The aim was to focus on the feelings of the user as he was using the objects, so to interpret all of these parameters in a correct way was critical. The user need to feel safe and confident in all of the steps in the act of shaving to have the will and courage to learn the technique.

Researching the handles

From the research made about the process of shaving the first sketch phase started with different handles and meetings of materials. Both known and unknown shapes on brush- and razor-handles was tested.



From that sketch phase a few ideas was chosen and tested in the shape of clay mock-ups. The goal here was to test sizes of the handle for the razor and the brush. The aim was to try out different shapes that both are usual but also new ways of handling the different tools.

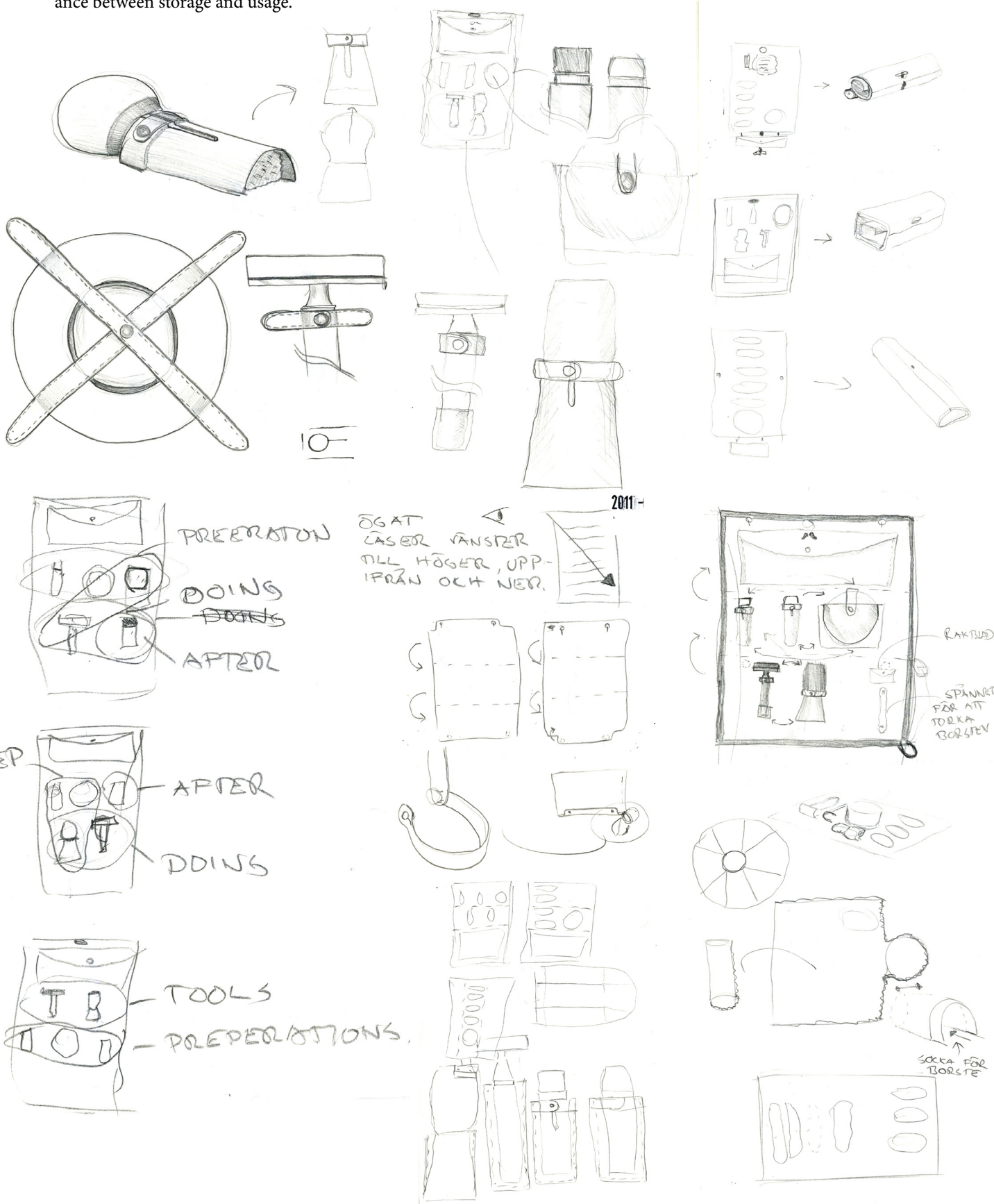


The result for the razor was to work with a straight shape. It offers a good variety of ways to hold it and also has a very comforting shape. The diameter has been made slightly bigger as the study showed that it felt more precise and safer to handle. The study also showed that people hold the brush in different ways, but mainly on three places; close to the razor head, at the end of the shaft and just over the equilibrium. The weight of the test-razor was approved by all participants.

The brush handle ended up in a few different models that felt soothing and appropriate for the task. By trying the handles on a test group, the result was to work with a cylindrical shape with a slightly swollen profile. The handle length was enhanced and the importance of weight and balance was yet again pointed out as the weakest point.



By studying how the objects would appear and relate to each other the goal was to find a composition that would feel natural for the user. A few different solutions was tested with the objects categorized in different ways in order to find the most soothing solution. Different ways of keeping the objects in place was also tested to find a good balance between storage and usage.



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PREPARATION

BOINS

BOINS

AFTER

AFTER

BOINS

TOOLS

PREPARATIONS.

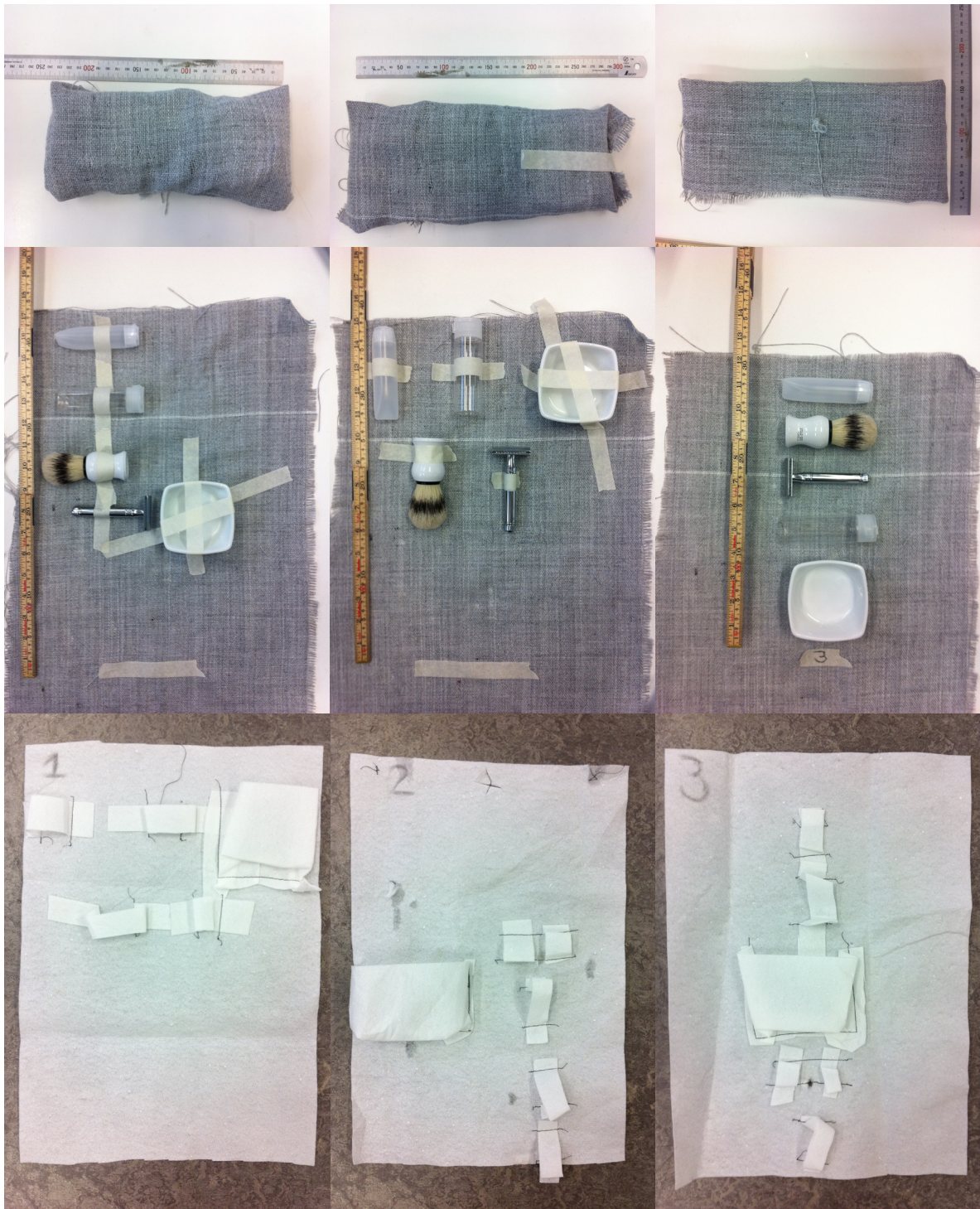
RÄKBLAD

SPÄNNET
 FÖR ATT
 TORKA
 BORSTEN

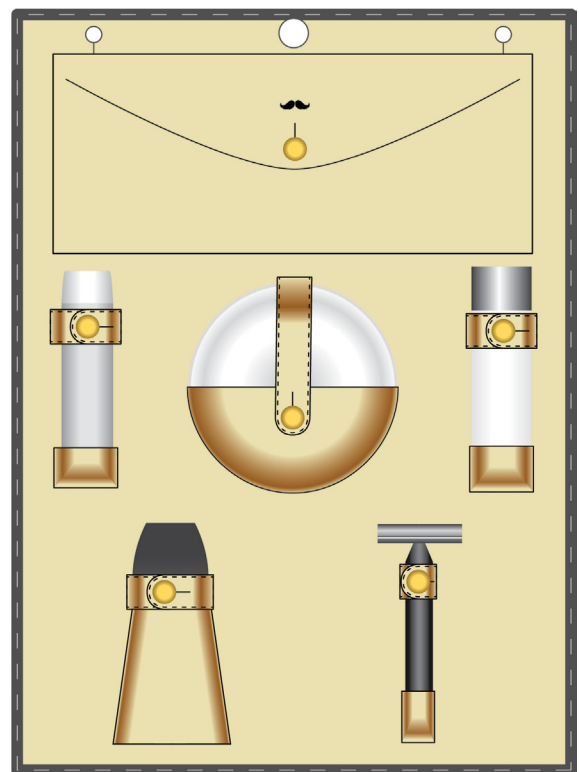
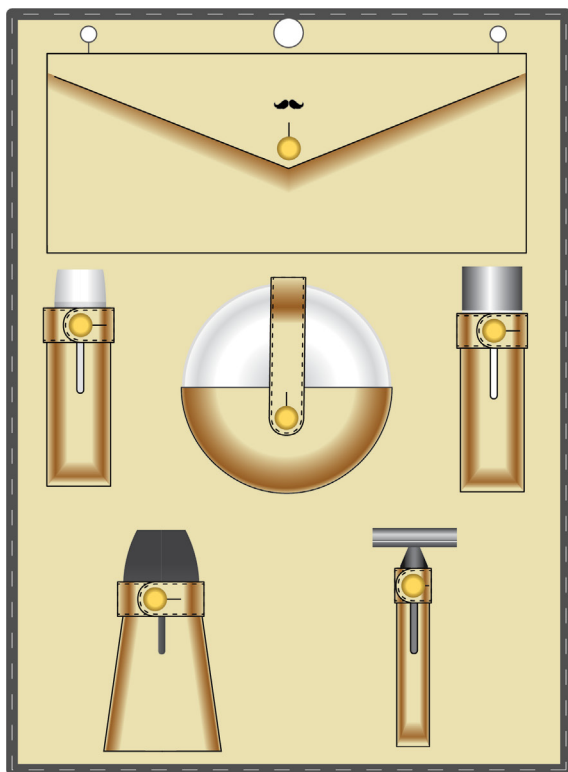
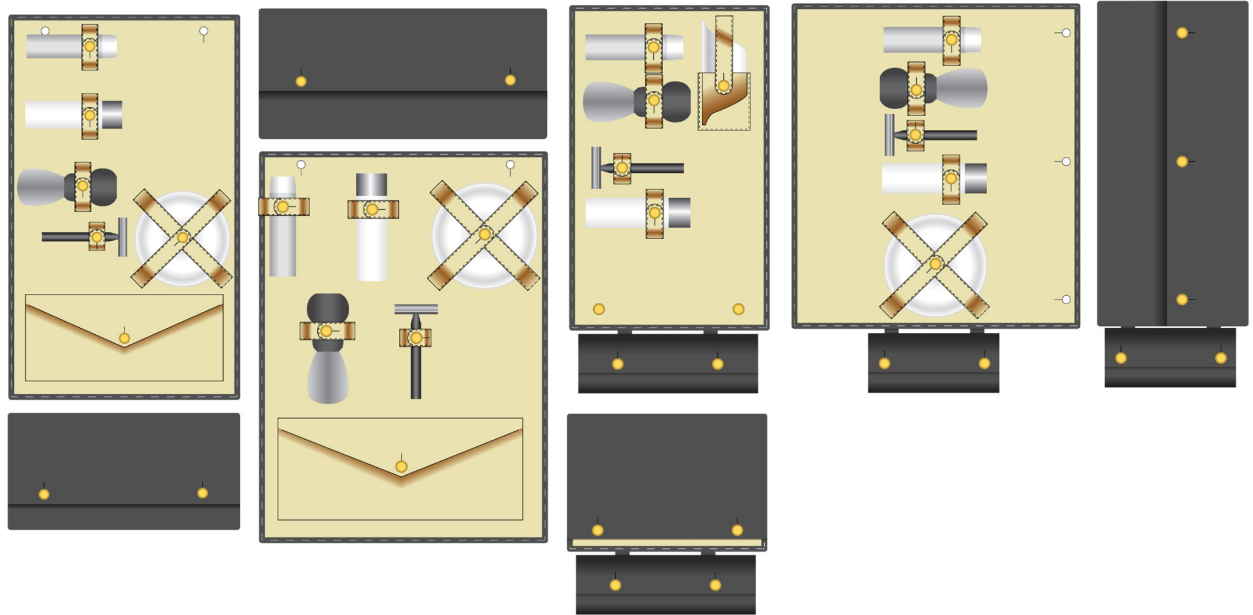
SÖKA FÖR
 BORSTEN

The soft package should be able to be hanging from the hook and unpacked onto the sink before usage. It should present the different objects of the set in an honorable way and have a great sense of quality and tradition to it.

By making mock-ups and sketches of how the objects could be presented and how the package would look folded and unfolded a good variety of solutions was created that could be possible for the project. The objects was handled in the categories created earlier; tools (razor and brush) and complements (shaving balm, shaving crème, towel and bowl). Different ways of presenting the objects and there relation to each other was investigated.



To make this picture even clearer illustrations of the different solutions was made to see how they could be perceived. From the mock-ups measurements the models was translated into illustrative pictures to get a feel for how the appearance could come to look. Below are different models of packaging, placing orders and folding techniques.

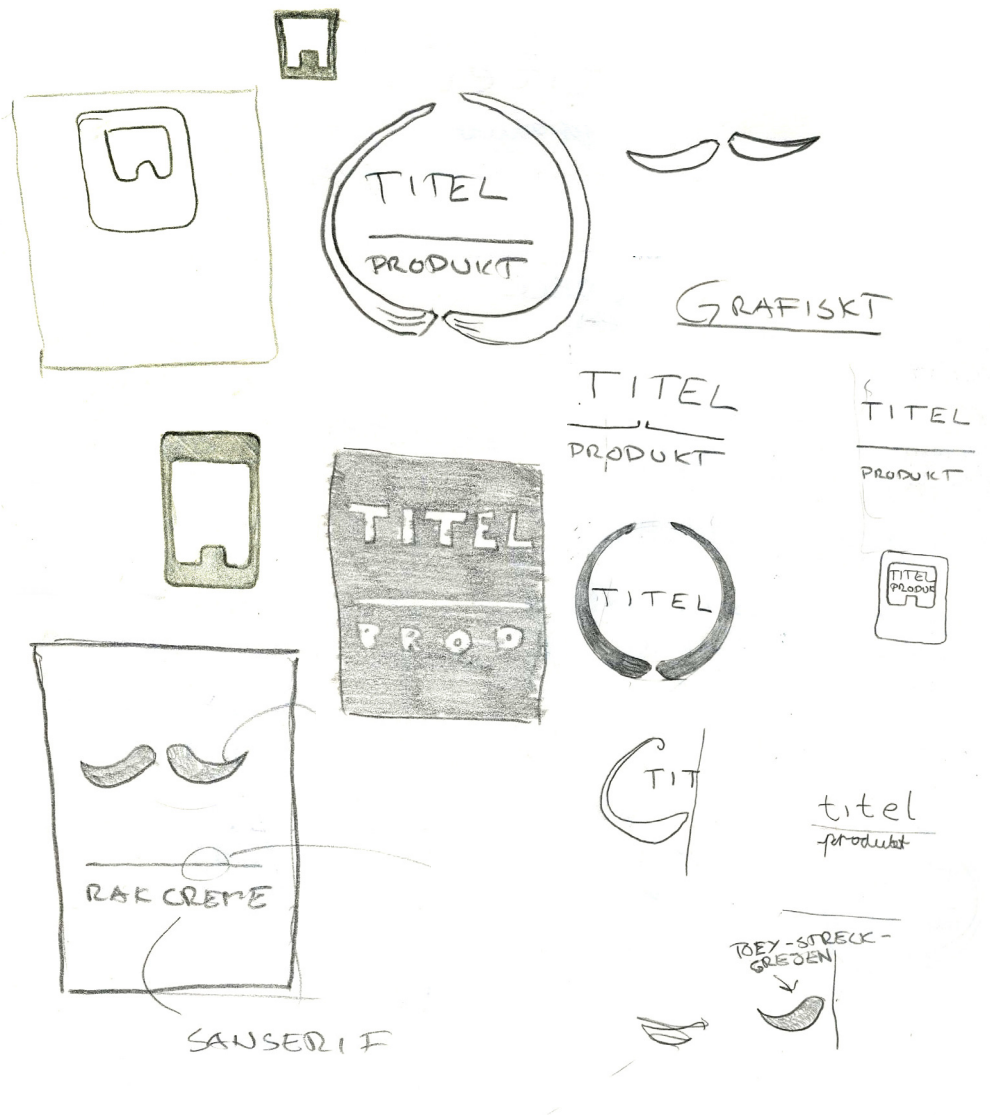


Target group

To get a clearer view of the target group a moodboard was made to represent the essence of the prospective customer (see appendix 3). The target group doesn't have a specific age as much as a set of mind. As the objects and the art of traditional shaving demands some training and caring this is not a project directed to the big masses more than to a group that values the pride of mastering the art of craftsmanship and traditional references. The target group doesn't have a specific occupation or a specific economical standard. It is not a question of economic exclusivity as much as a question of time exclusivity.

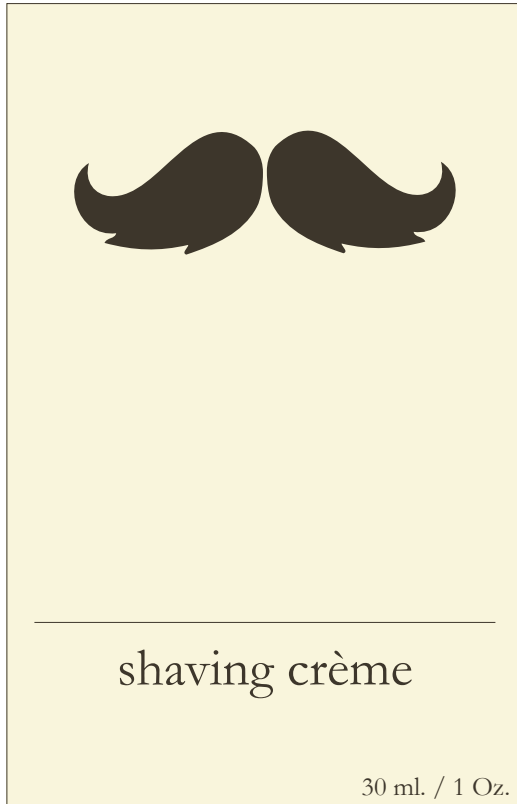
Researching the Graphic Profile

From the target group study the goal was to create a graphic profile for the two bottles that will be included in the package; the shaving crème and the shaving balm. The aim was to create a monogram that could be used on the different parts of the set and also symbolize the branding of the product. The goal with the graphic profile was to find a good combination of simplicity and clarity.



Result for the Graphic Profile

The monogram is a mustache that has a good combination of the controlled and refined mustache as well as the more rough side to it. The labels for the bottles are very simplified, just the monogram and the name of the content plus the volume.



Result for the Packaging

The packaging is a soft bodied, fold-able, package made from different water resistant textiles. The outside of the package is made from Barbour coat fabric (oil coat fabric). The Barbour coat is traditionally associated with fishermen and other rough blue-collar jobs, and is traditionally men-oriented work.

The inside of the package is a 100% wool that is used by the British military in their uniforms. The military is traditionally associated to very elegant uniforms and has a history of being a man-dominated occupation.

The straps that hold all the parts in place are made out of brown leather and have brass pressure-buttons attached to them to keep the objects in place. The object has been placed into the categories mentioned earlier; the tools and the compliments. As you hang the package on the bathroom hook and start unfolding the package, you are first met with the envelope that holds the towel. As you unfold the next layer of object you see the rest of the complements; the shaving crème, the bowl and the shaving balm, and as you unfold the last part you are introduced to the tools of which you will be performing the shave with. The products are organized in a pattern that allows the package to become quite small and easy to handle.



Result for the Objects

The objects included in the package are the razor, the brush, the bowl, a towel, the shaving crème and the shaving balm. As a result of the packaging being moveable I have excluded all fragile materials in the kit, to minimize the risk of breaking anything of the user were to drop the object.

As mentioned before there is a red thread throughout the objects and the goal was to emphasize that in the final product. As an underlying reminder for the user in what order the objects were to be used, the materials lead him through the steps. By doing this the user never has to second-guess in what order he is to be handling the objects.



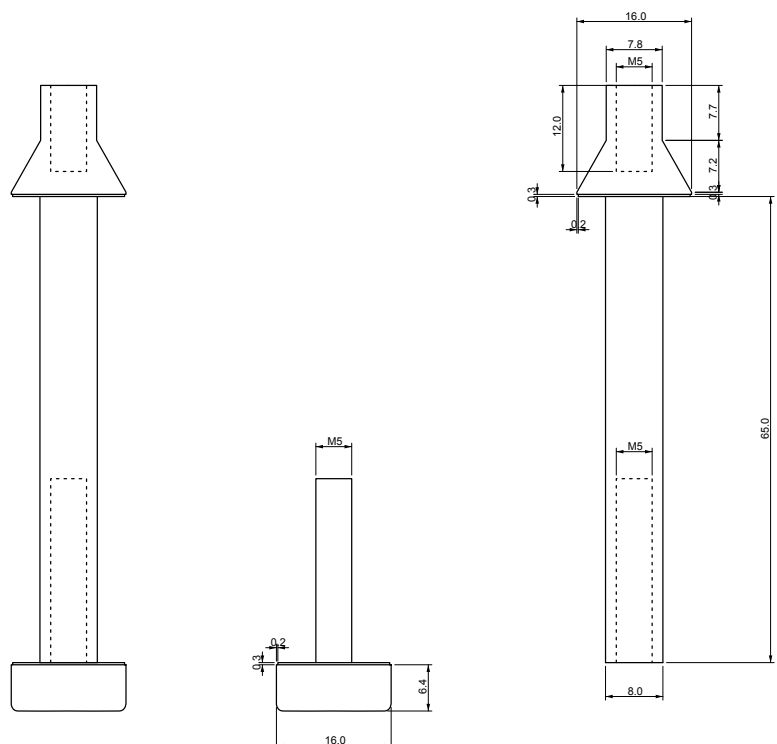
The cork of the shaving crème and the inside of the bowl is the same material, polished white Corian®. It has a similar appearance as porcelain, but unlike porcelain the Corian® wouldn't break if you were to drop it. The outside of the bowl and the bigger part of the brush-handle is a stone-like Corian® which is sandblasted. As you sandblast the material you get a more correct feeling of it being real stone, and you get a very good grip, both when its dry and wet. The top of the brush and the handle of the razor is hard waxed ash-wood. The natural feel of the wood gives a comforting safety in the process of shaving. The metal parts of the razor and the cork of the shaving balm is painted matte gray. The contrast between the matte gray razor and the razor blade gives a clear awareness if there is a blade in the razor or no, which a lot of people have a hard time seeing. It also gives a good awareness of where the blade is as you are about to use it.

Result for the Razor

The razor has a straight body with made out of powder coated matte gray metal and ash wood. The inspiration for this combination is sprung from Scandinavian forests and has a relatively new approach to razors seen today. Material and color is meant to give a soothing and clam contrast to the relatively dangerous act of shaving. I wanted to inaugurate a peaceful feeling to the most challenging task in the shaving process. As you wash the blade under the faucet the razor heats up, but the wooden handle eliminates the most of the heat which still makes it into an easy controlled action and you don't doubt your precision.



The whole handle has a diameter of 16 mm and has three small indications; one where the wood part starts, one where it ends and one at the equilibrium. These adjustments ads a lot to the confidence and precision of the user as they are new in the act of traditional shaving.

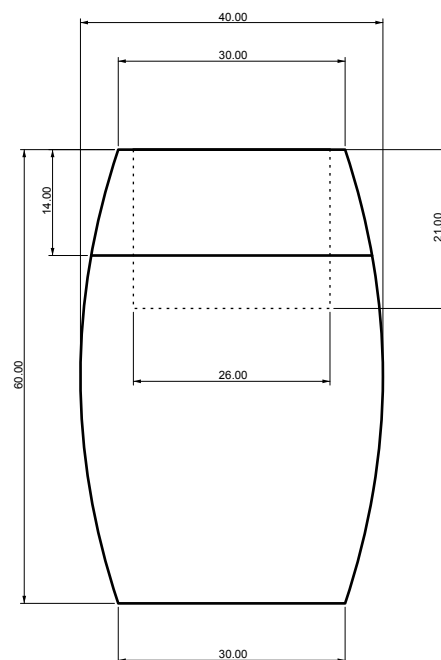


Result for the Brush

The brush has a cylindrical shape with a slightly swollen profile. The handle has a Corian Mount Blanc® body that is sandblasted and a 14 millimeter ash-wood border at the top. The Corian® has been sandblasted to create a more genuine stone-feeling and the ash has been waxed to resist moist better. The sandblasted grip offers a great grip in both dry and wet conditions and has a distinct weight that gives it a trustworthy impression.

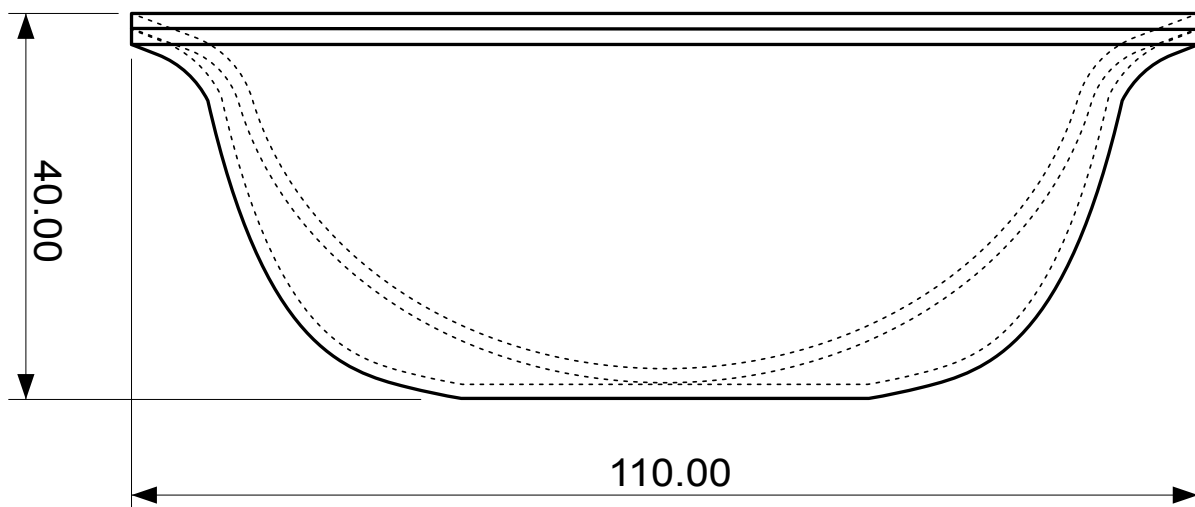


The brush handle is slightly longer than regular brushes and reaches the whole way from the fingertips to the palm of your hand which creates a good, controllable grip and doesn't dance around in your hand.



Result for the Bowl

The bowl contains of two different kinds of Corian®. The inside of the bowl has a polished, white Corian® and the outside of the bowl has the same sandblasted Mount Blanc Corian® as the brush handle. To make the bowl suitable for its purpose the bowls inside and outside has two different shapes. The outside of the bowl has a steady bottom that allows it to sit firm on the sink as well as the palm of your hand. The inside has a smooth rounded bottom that allows you to whisk the foam in a good manner. The bowl has a boarder to prevent the foam from dropping out of the bowl.

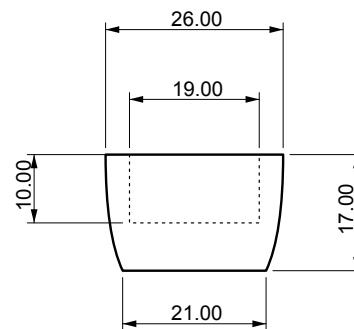
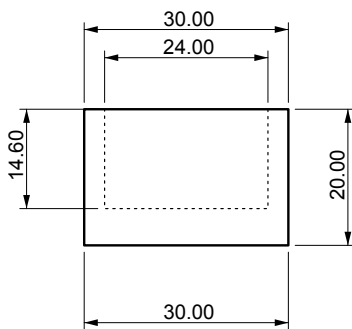


Result for the Bottles

The bottles represent the start and the end of the process of shaving. The shaving crème that starts of the shaving has a soft plastic body and a screw-on polished white Corian© cork. The bottle is a squeeze-able bottle with a content that has a rich smell of pine and lavender. The intense smell gives a calm impression as you apply it to your skin and in the same time good boost to your focus as you are about to start your shave.



The shaving balm that ends the process has a semi-soft plastic body and a screw-on powder coated metal cork. The content is an oil-like liquid that has the smell of birch and citrus. The smell is distinct and gives a fresh feel to a newly shaved face and gives you that kick after a good shave.



Reflections

The vision

This project started with thoughts of time and how we use time. I have for a long time felt that we need to slow down our way of dealing with everyday situations and how we always strive for a quicker solution. A few trends have been spotted already, like sourdough bread-baking, making your own sausage and an up-going trend of using the bike instead of cars.

The goal the whole time was to create a space in our everyday life where we today often stress and just want to get done with. A space and an excuse for the user to take time for himself, both physically and mentally. By using the shaving as an incarnation of these thoughts I wanted to reach the target group through the usage of the object rather than an obvious statement. The traditional shave was the way I chose to express my thoughts about this subject, but it could easily be embodied in several different ways.

With that said I still saw the traditional shave as a very good way of getting my thoughts across and think it really can create a will and urge to start shaving in this way, and by doing that getting time for yourself. The response so far, during examination and public presentation, has been exclusively positive. People has shown a big encouragement in the project and expressed the will to start shaving in this kind of way, and through that expressed the will to set some time off for themselves. I believe that through the well thought out process and the analysis of the act of shaving has given me the possibility to focus the project on the key points that the target group is looking for. Therefore I see this project as a successful one, because the will to take time for yourself can never be forced upon you, it has to be a will coming from yourself. I can not force the target group to use this, but I can study what they strive for and meet their demands to make them want to be a part of this movement.

At these two moments where I have been able to present my project I have not kept focus on the result but on the attributes that the objects offers, and how I was able to identify them. That meant that the spectators were given a thorough insight to the process and the parameters I have been working with in the project. The question is how this project will be received by people that wont be able to get the story behind the objects. Will the result still be viewed upon as something people would like to use and by its appearance? Or will it just look like a set of shaving objects, like any other? I hope that by its cohesiveness and its subtle red thread that the viewer still will see it as something more than just "another shaving kit". This is yet to be seen as the objects will be shown at Röhsska Museum during the summer of 2011.

The Process

As this project has had a very special research phase with the purpose to analyze feelings and senses I often found myself in situations where I didn't really know how to handle the information I got which, from time to time, was very stressful. By analyzing my own behavior and using myself as the first test-group I needed to have a good ability to zoom in and zoom out from the process, which I now in a retrospect think that I managed well. From the beginning I had a hard time imagining how the end result would look, and it demanded a great deal of patience in myself before the pieces started to fall in place. My wish would have been to have the possibility to broaden the second test-group to a bigger one and get even more feedback, but with the time-restraints in this kind of project I had to settle for a smaller group.

The objects

I might think that I let the research and the analyzed feelings get the overhand over the object themselves. I really focused to make the red thread work all through the objects and it might have been a smarter move to take a step back and just work with this red thread in just the bowl, the brush and the razor. The bottles themselves communicate their purpose quite well anyways by having the labels and names. It would have been smarter maybe to work with the materials in the bottles in a pure functional way. As they look today, the caps weigh quite a lot so as the shaving balm starts to get empty it will feel unstable and top-heavy.

Another issue with the bottles that I struggled a bit was the quality of the plastic bottles, and the question of using glass instead of plastic. The decision of using plastic was in first hand the function of not break so easily. A glass bottle felt out of its place in a kit that would have a focus on being moveable, but the question then is the quality of

a plastic bottle. If I were to put this kit into production then it would become a question of quality equivalent to the cost. A side-goal with the project has been to try to not make it too expensive but still make it feel like it has good quality. The pricing has been hard to evaluate but the goal has been somewhere between 1000 and 2000 kronor (approximately 165 to 330 dollar). Is it then possible to use plastic bottles in this price-frame? If so, what quality of plastic should be demanded? In this prototype I have been forced to use standard bottles from retailers. In a production situation it would be possible to invest in a wholesale solution and in that way have a bigger range of bottle qualities and options.

The packaging has also been something I have been struggling with as the goal has been very practically-oriented. Of course it is a good thing that the package is easy to use, but if the user has taken the decision in starting to shave in the traditional way, is the practical sense the most important, or is it more attractive for the customer with a etui or other hard-case solution? I would still think a soft-case, fold-able, solution could have the same standard and quality to it as a hard-case if it is executed in a professional way, and the thought of the materials and their heritage makes the packaging even more interesting than a hard case in a traditional material, like a exclusive wood och metal.

The monogram used in this project can be looked upon as a contemporary piece and it may attract a special, and a bit younger, kind of target group. The moodboard I have been working with for my target group didn't symbolize an age, but subconsciously I think I have had a more clearer view of the user. I think this project, and this monogram, may be looked upon as what could be called a "hipster"-object. I hope though that it won't fall into a category of trendy objects that will be discarded in a short amount of time, but to be something that will survive these fast trend-changes.

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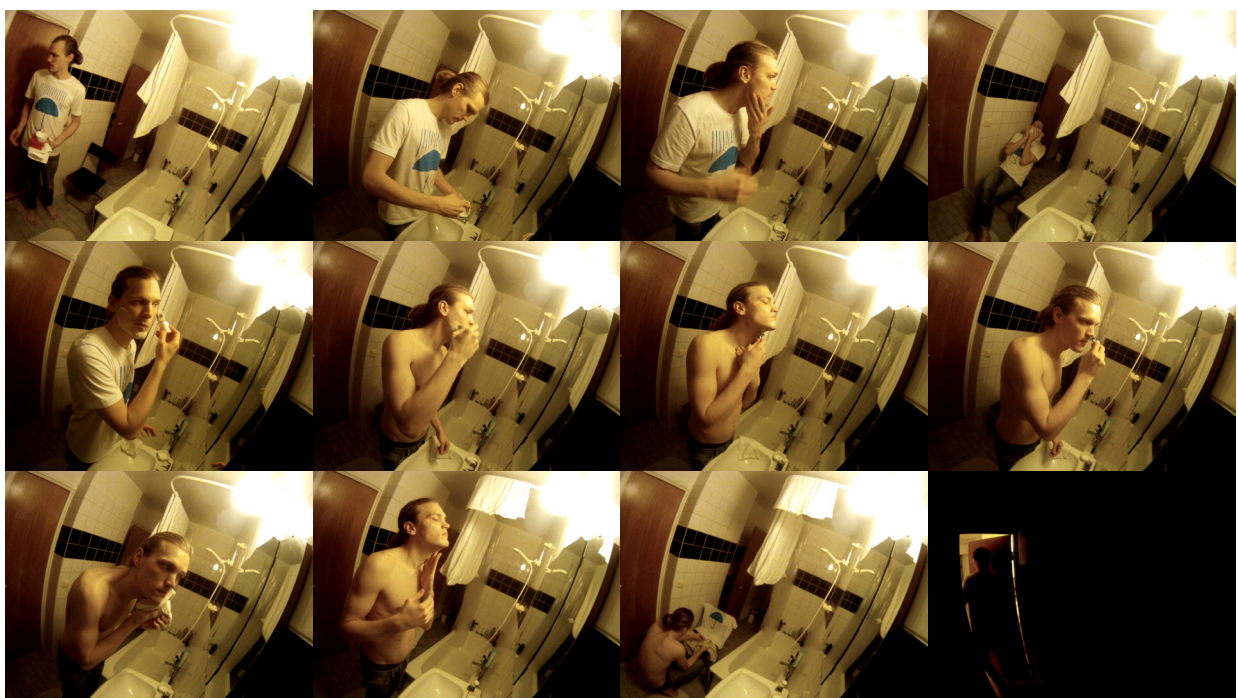
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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Research documentation

By using a GoPro Hero HD video-camera and mounting it on the bathroom wall I could study the test group without being present. In this way I wouldn't affect the test person with my presence. The study was followed by a brief interview about what the person just had experienced and how the different steps felt.



Appendix 2 - Packaging Inspiration



Appendix 3 - Target group

