

FLORIOGRAPH

Bachelor Project
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AB- STRACT

Floriograph is a wallpaper collection inspired by the language of flowers with each pattern conveying a subtle hidden message based on the intricate botanical imagery used to construct it.

This thesis gives insight into my work and thought process during the development of the collection.

"We plant, we nurture, we grow and we give, different flowers for different moments in time, but all for the same purpose: to say that which cannot be said, and to say it with beauty and with grace."
- (Kirkby, 2011, p. 07)

I N T R O

What is the language of flowers?

Nowadays if we like someone we swipe right or send our crush an emoji with a kissy face to get their attention.

Thinking back to the Victorian era, a time when romance was very restricted, you had to get creative if you wanted to tell someone about your feelings. Thus the Victorians created their own version of texting through what we call "the language of flowers" or "floriography", in which different flowers were given meaning.

This meant that secret messages could be conveyed by giving someone a bouquet of flowers and whole language of flowers dictionaries were published. For example red roses were a symbol of true love, daffodils were a symbol of hope and basil signified hate.

The language of flowers has a long history in Persia and the Middle East but it was during the Victorian era that it was popularized in Europe. Learning the special symbolism of flowers became a popular pastime for young ladies during the 1800s.

Even today flowers still have an incredible range of meaning to us. We give flowers as greetings, to say "happy birthday" or simply giving a single red rose to our significant other is understood without uttering a single word.



How is the language of flowers important in my collection?

"From popular culture to high art, poets, painters, novelists, writers of children's books, magazine journalists, composers and lyricists all played with the idea in their work. Some took the language of flowers seriously, some poked fun at it, but there is no doubt that it was a major phenomenon."

- (Diffenbaugh, 2011, p. 06)

The language of flowers is the inspiration for my selection of motifs for this collection but it is not important to me that the viewer or customer recognizes the meaning of the flower in the finished wallpaper designs.

I used the language of flowers as a guide during the development of the designs. To have a common thread - a meaning behind the motifs

and not just an aimless assemblage of pretty flowers put next to each other.

From the first design I developed until now nature and florals have always brought me the greatest joy when creating patterns. I had heard about the language of flowers before I started this project but I never gave it much thought or let alone bought a book about it.

Just like many ladies of the 1800's I don't take the language of flowers too seriously but it is a lovely thought that the flowers we admire and look at for their appearance have so much more to say viewing them through the filter of one of these dictionaries.

PRO - JECT

An Overview _____

Why am I designing a wallpaper collection?

Over the course of the last year I have started to develop more and more interest in interior design and especially wallcoverings and interior accessories. I really enjoy the ways a well-placed pattern can transform a room and make it more inviting, more colourful or make it stand out.

The space we live in and the things we surround us with influence us more than we think. Just like a certain colour can make a room seem bigger and more open the same way a pattern can bring details to a room and transform the feel of it. This intrigues me.

This project is a chance for me to take my first steps into the world of interior design and to test my ability to work and design appropriately to fit the specific needs that go into designing for wallpaper.

From choosing the right repeat sizes to the colours and the material the designs will be printed on. It is a chance for me to develop an actual product that I plan to make available for purchase online.

And hopefully a product that somebody wants to use to transform their living space.

What is my aim for this project?

In the end my aim is to design a wallpaper collection that is versatile and works well when put to use whether it is as a design for an accent wall or as a backdrop for a bedroom .

Going through the whole design process from motif selection and painting all the way to repeat development and to choosing the colours and materials the collection will be printed on.

How do I develop my patterns and repeats?

I can spend hours on hours browsing through botanical images on the internet or in books already imagining what types of patterns I would create from the images.

Sometimes I get inspired by the colours of the plants and sometimes it is simply the shape of a specific petal that makes me want to paint the flowers.

Whenever I am choosing an image for my inspiration to draw the flow of the plant and the way it comes together with the delicate silhouettes is especially important to me. I choose the plants I paint based on their ability to create a certain movement in

the way the stalks or leaves are placed or in the way the flowers intertwine with each other.

I start painting with an image already in my mind how I want the general feel of the pattern to be like and I paint the flowers according to that image trying to already work in repeat but nevertheless embracing the happy little accidents that happen when unexpectedly a part of the plant turns in a way that was not intended but gives the plant a more natural feel.

My preferred working materials are some type of thicker coloured paper, which makes it easier for the digital editing afterwards, and a combination of watercolour, acrylics and coloured pencils.

For this collection I generally started out with a sheet of black paper and laying down the rough shape of the flowers in watered down white acrylic paint. Gradually adding more layers of paint as I went on to achieve more depth and details.

After painting I scan my images at a high resolution and work on them in Adobe Photoshop to create my repeats and then I experiment with different colourways and layering effects to finish the designs.

FLOWERS

The selection of motifs and their meanings.

The motifs for this collection are all inspired by the flowers mentioned in A Victorian Flower Dictionary by Mandy Kirkby which contains a collection of flowers and their meanings during the Victorian era.

I ended up with a list of 24 flowers whose meanings I associated with a home or living space. Using this list as the source I chose the flowers and plants I thought would work well in a repeat pattern and began painting and developing the designs for the collection.

The 5 flowers used in the finished collection are Larkspur, Corn, Iris, Coreopsis and Wisteria.

Abundance	Grapevine
Always cheerful	Coreopsis
Comfort	Pear blossom
Good health & long life	Sage
Good luck	Bells of Ireland
Gratitude	Agrimony
Gratitude	Bellflower
Humble love	Fuchsia
Inspiration	Angelica
Joy in love and life	Cosmos
Joy	Oregano
Joys to come	Celandine
Lightness	Larkspur
Message	Iris
Peace	Olive
Prosperity	Allium
Prosperity	Wheat
Riches	Corn
Strength and health	Coneflower
Warmth of feeling	Peppermint
Warmth	Feverfew
Welcome	Starwort
Welcome	Wisteria
Your presence soothes me	Petunia

COLOUR

"Patterns don't need to match. A colour palate that is repeated through the room, contrasting designs that enhance one another, or patterns that blend together will create a flow that gives consistency."
- (Edwards, 2018, p. 107)

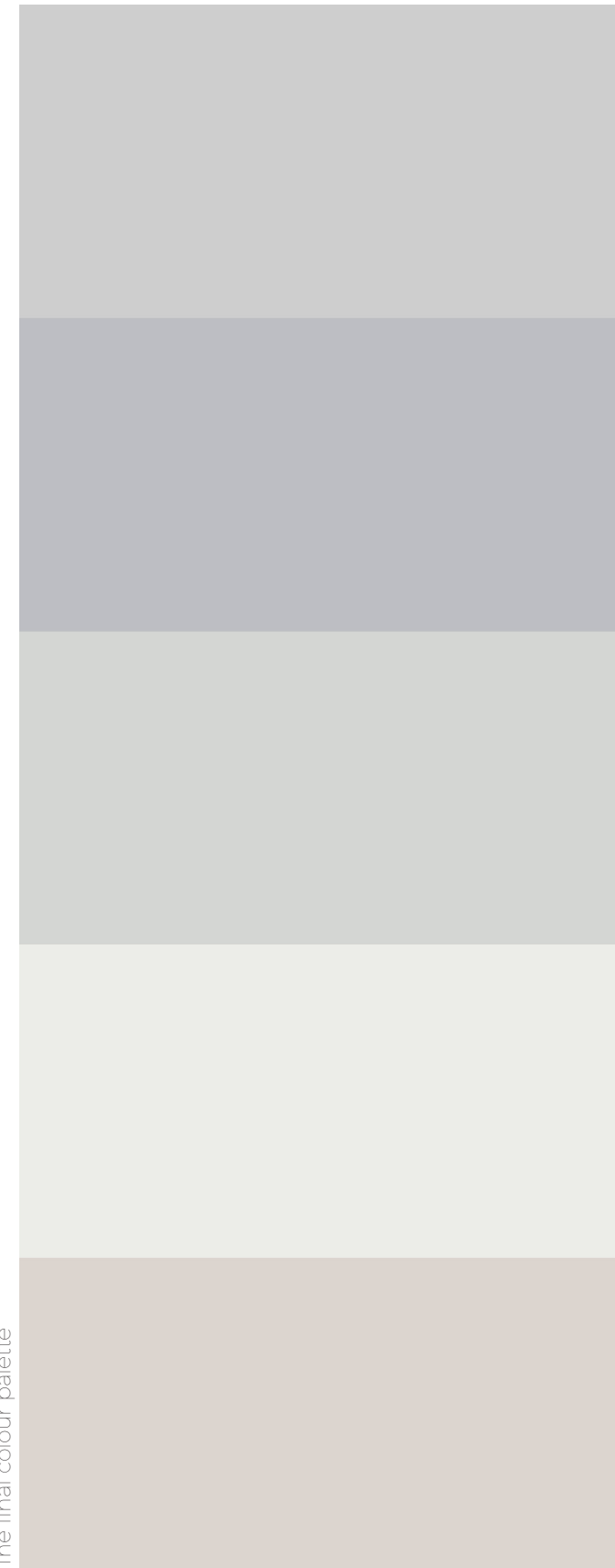
I had a general idea of wanting to keep my colour palette quite neutral and calm as I imagined my patterns to be used in living spaces where they would be seen on a daily basis. This meant that I stayed away from rich and saturated colours and chose neutral tones instead.

At first my colour palette had quite a number of earthy almost pinkish tones in addition to dusty blue and grey tones which I felt were too prominent throughout the collection at that point.

Through brief research on colour psychology for interiors I knew I wanted to mainly work in shades of blue as they have a calming and relaxing effect on the mind as well as incorporating a lot of white to give the collection a common thread.

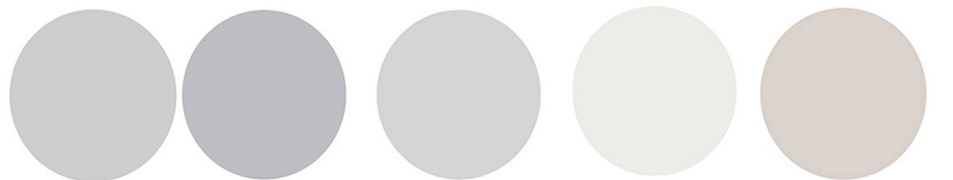
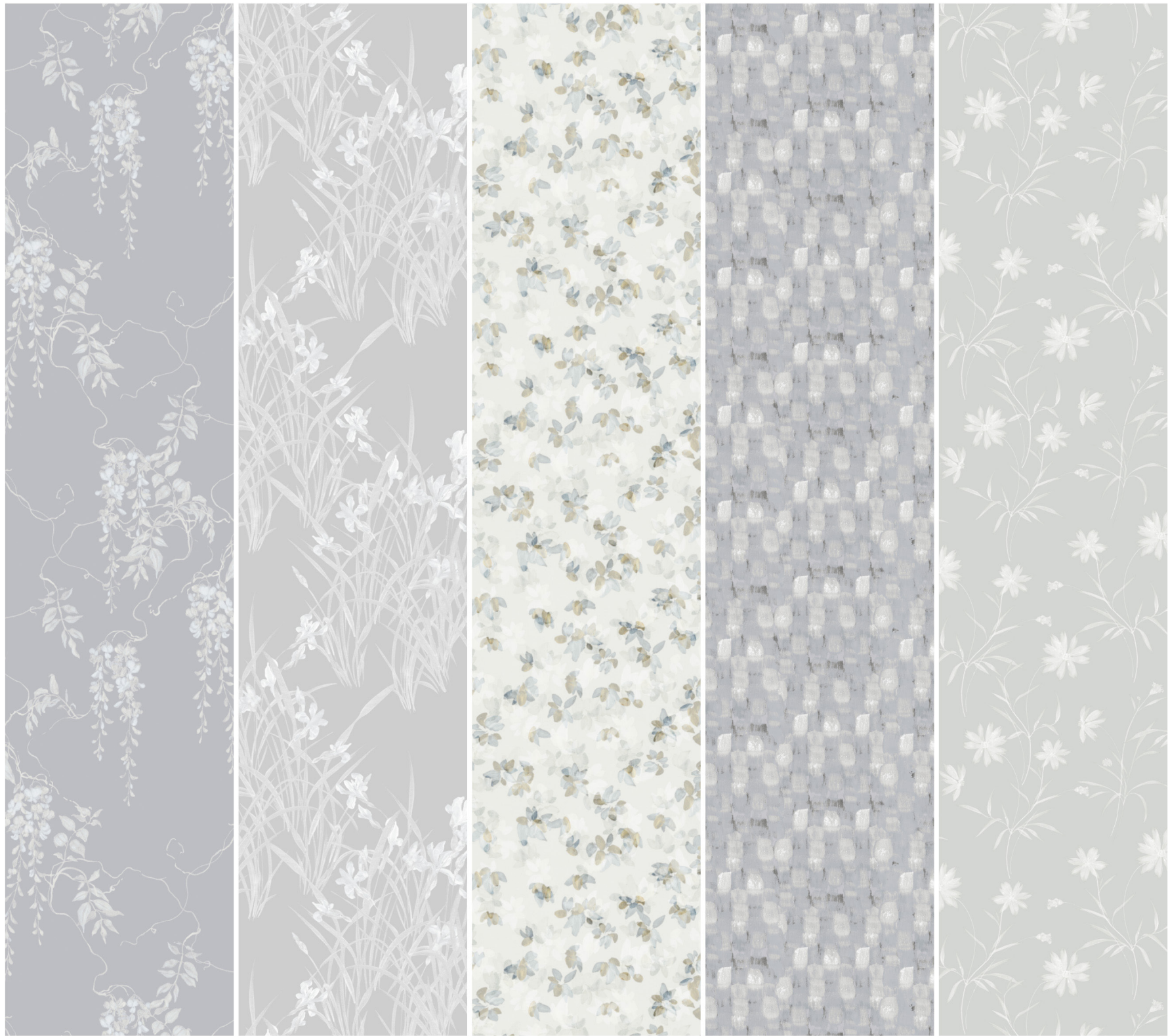
In the end I decided against the pinkish tones for this collection and ended up with the final colour choices of dusty blue, cool greys, off-whites and a few warmer neutrals to balance out the amount of cool tones.

The final colour palette



T H E

C O L L E C T I O N



01

Larkspur
Lightness

Lightness was the first pattern that I designed for this collection. It was developed by loosely and randomly drawing the petals of the larkspur flower on a piece of paper. I liked the scattered pattern of the petals without the other parts of the flower even though the original inspiration cannot be identified anymore in the final design.



02

Corn
Riches

The idea behind Riches was the feeling that I wanted to bring some contrast to the floral designs of my collection focusing on the geometric elements formed by the corn kernels painted in a loose pattern with a wide flat brush and by layering different colours on top and next to each other creating depth and colour variations.



03

Iris Message

The Iris design is one of my personal favourites as I really enjoy painting this type of flower with the long and elegant leaves and oddly shaped yet bold flowers. The repeat arrangement almost shapes a diamond pattern when viewed from afar adding another detail to the design.



04

Coreopsis
Always Cheerful

This simplistic design fits beautifully into many spaces and sends a positive message through the meaning of the coreopsis flower.



05

Wisteria
Welcome

I was really happy when I learned that the wisteria flower signifies welcome and that I was able to incorporate it into my collection as it is one of my favourite flowers. I am really happy with the flow of the design as the intricate vines of the flower allow for interesting upward and downward movements.

I was able to develop the full repeat of the design on two sheets of A3 paper during my painting process without changing too much during digital editing.



DISCUSSION CONCLUSION

What worked out and what did not?

The biggest problem I usually encounter when working on a project is that I jump right into it without having a clear objective or without sticking to my concept. For this project I wanted to make sure that I stick to my concept and actively keep myself in check as to whether the decisions I make are bringing me closer to my aim.

This helped me a lot as soon as I started working on my paintings for the patterns. I had already narrowed down my list of flowers to a clear amount I would draw inspiration from. This ensured that I would only stick to motifs that fit my concept.

Initially I thought about using multiple flowers in a design to combine their meanings but after thinking about it I decided I wanted to keep the designs simple and

straightforward with each wallpaper representing a single flower and signifying a clear message.

I also thought about designating a specific room for each design to be placed in but after giving it more thought this was too restricting so I stayed away from that idea.

I struggled a lot with deciding on the painting style I wanted to go for, whether I wanted more realistic florals or just keep them in simple silhouettes. I felt like I had to match the wallpaper designs that were already out there on the market and I failed to trust my abilities and just work in my own style at first. So I was not very confident in the work I had produced in the beginning.

The validation for my designs came when I had the courage to show them to a dear family

friend who gave me honest and very uplifting constructive feedback. From there on the design process went smoothly and I was able to stick to my own style without constantly comparing my work.

I had also played with the thought of printing some of my designs on fabric and using them for upholstery as an addition during my presentation. But I quickly had to remind myself that even though the designs are partially suitable for interior accessories this was not the aim of my project which was to design a wallpaper collection.

For the printing of my collection I decided on the company Spoonflower.com as they have a great selection of materials to be printed on and I am able to make my designs available for purchase via their website. They also

AND

have an environmentally conscious work ethic and use organic and earth-friendly fabrics which is very important to me.

I ordered my designs to be printed onto two different materials – a water-activated, easily-removable, and PVC-free wallpaper as well as one design on an easily-removable and PVC-free peel-and-stick textile.

As I was not sure how long the printing and shipping process would take I ordered the designs in full length for my presentation without first ordering samples, which was a deliberate risk. It took approximately 17 days for my designs to be printed and shipped until I received them. Upon receiving my prints I immediately noticed that the quality was exactly as I had imagined. As for the colours - the designs printed on the smooth wallpaper came

out just the way I imagined however the design I had had printed on the peel-and-stick textile was more saturated than I would have liked for this collection, which I suppose is due to the textile material.

For future projects I will definitely order sample prints before ordering the full length of the rolls to ensure the colours match according to my designs.

Overall I am very pleased with the way the wallpapers turned out and it was a very rewarding feeling to actually hold my own designs printed on a commercial product for the first time.

Did I achieve my aim for the project?

Personally I feel like I have achieved what I wanted for this project. My aim was to design a wallpaper collection from start to finish that I would be able to realize into an actual product to be sold which I will do by making the designs available for purchase online. I had to make decisions and not everything worked out perfectly but I have learned a lot from this project and I would like to continue designing for interior products in the future.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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Images

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MORE INFO

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