The other main type of petal is shown above. Cut a long piece of parchment which will form one petal when it's folded into shape. Wrap and tie off in the same manner as rose petals.

Lilies were rather difficult to figure out because the ones I was modeling after had two wires running down the center of them. I found that if I took one 28 or 30 gauge wire four times the usual length and folded it in half and then wrapped as usual, I could then fold the other half of the wire onto the top of the petals and anchor it in place. Then when I folded the petal, if I was very careful everything would stay where it belonged.

I did the lilies out of several different kinds of silk and, in the case of spun silk floss, both twisted and untwisted to see what the final appearances of different silks would be. Centers are silk covered wire.

This flower I refer to as "little guys" and they are made on a teardrop shaped parchment with a slit cut in the middle. A small wire with a loop in the end is stitched into each petal and they are sewn in a radius. There are several roses that look similar but with the vellum cut in the shape of a heart rather than a teardrop. The leaves are cut fabric and modeled after the cut fabric leaves in the Kalkar shrines. The Kalkar leaves looked almost modern in some of the pictures I have and unfortunately I don't have a good picture.

Carnations caused me some difficultly as well but when I saw the originals I really needed to try my hand at making one. I first had to silk-cover some wire to make the spirals and then line the coiled wire up with the end of the parchment to wrap that as well. After a few petal failures I determined that the coil should stretch across the top of a "Y" shaped wire and the whole Y wire would get wrapped in with the parchment. This lead to much neater petals and far fewer wires for the stem.

This flower is modeled after the flowers in the Herentals shrine and cannot be seen in any of the other shrines. It is made with a detached buttonhole stitch for the center petals which are then stitched together. The under-petals only go halfway in to save on silk use and I left off some of the other decorative wires. Little charms were found on a number of the folded parchment petals so I put loops in the support wire so charms could be added later.

Final Thoughts on the Shrine:

I've been wanting to do this project for quite some time and it just happened to be feasible to do it this past winter. I don't see the shrine as being complete in its current state so there is room for me to add additional flowers and charms and artifacts as time goes by.

When I was in Europe last November I just happened to check the Mechelen museum's website to find they had just started conserving several of their shrines. I sent an email to see if I could interview the curator. The curator, Dr. Joke, was out of the country but she arranged for me to visit the workroom while I was still in the area. While visiting I met several other curators on the conservation team and a grad student doing her doctoral thesis on the shrines. To my surprise the student knew exactly who I was based solely on my website! The energy I received from that one visit fueled this project and saw it through to its current state. I continue to exchange information with the conservation team.

I have done detailed studies on types of parchment and how each works with the silk, types of silk and how each one works on different petal shapes, ways to silk-wrap wire and just about anything else I associate with the flowers and shrines. There is still much that I want to do and that includes making lots of silk birds and animals for the shrine. I ran out of time to do them before this competition.

I tried to keep my shrine as authentic as possible but I got frustrated and pulled out a spool of quilting thread to mount the flowers in the shrine. I figure the original shrines all probably had their flowers nailed to the wall or wired them in. I didn't like either option.

Thank you for taking the time to read this!