

Workshop: Malodours as Cultural Heritage?

Date: December 15-16, 2021

Location and host: Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin at the Humboldt Forum; Berlin, Germany
Organizers: EU-research network Odeuropa & Berlin Center for Cold War Studies (BKCC) of Leibniz-Institute for Contemporary History (IfZ)

Format: Nose-on Workshop sessions with malodours; live and pre-recorded lectures

Participants: open for virtual participation

Scents provided by: International Flavours and Fragrances (IFF) and AromaPrime



Caption: Strawberries by Klaus Pichler- Sort: Strawberries 'Elsanta' / Place of production: San Giovanni Lupatoto, Verona, Italy / Cultivation method: Foil greenhouse / Time of harvest: June - October / Transporting distance: 741 km / Means of transportation: Truck Carbon footprint (total) per kg: 0,35 kg / Water requirement (total) per kg: 348 l / Price: 7,96 € / kg; photo courtesy of Klaus Pichler.

Description

Sensorial perception is as much a cultural phenomenon as a physical and biological function. Fragrances, aromas, and the mouth-watering smells of foods are defining elements of our social perception, building memories, and situating us into particular cultural contexts. But, what about the **unpleasant or foul odours**? Heritage and museum initiatives tend to shy away from malodours, focusing on pleasant fragrances from the past, warping ideas about olfactory history. In this *Odeuropa Workshop: Malodours as Cultural Heritage?*, an interdisciplinary group of scholars and museum professionals will explore and challenge the topic of stench, dealing with the specifics of historicising malodours. The border between the malodorous and the pleasant is not only individually, but also collectively, culturally and historically defined. What do malodours tell us about transitions and advancements within urban, social, cultural, and environmental contexts? How can

the sense of smell act as a measurement of analysis for histories of the past and present? How can we locate malodours, intangible by definition, within the cultural heritage sector and how can they be used as a storytelling technique?

Programme:

DAY 1: December 15, 2021. 9:45-17:00 (all times in CEST)

Welcome and Introductory Session: 9:45 - 10:15

- **Paul Spies** (Stadtmuseum Berlin/ Humboldt Forum) " Welcome note on behalf of the Humboldt Forum"
- **Bodo Mrozek** (BKKK/IfZ) "Welcome note on behalf of BKKK"
- **Sofia Ehrich** (Odeuropa, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences) "Welcome note on behalf of Odeuropa"

Session 1: Malodours as Cultural Heritage?

10:15-11:15

Moderator: **Lizzie Marx** (Odeuropa, University of Cambridge)

What is a malodour? Who defines this? Why would we consider malodours as heritage? How can we identify and document malodours through AI? How can we make use of digital heritage collections to find historical narratives and sensitivities of malodours? How can we use malodours as a storytelling technique within heritage institutions?

- **Inger Leemans** (Odeuropa, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) "Malodours as Cultural Heritage?: A Short Introduction."
- **Cecilia Bembibre** (Odeuropa, University College London) "Fluffy Growth and the Threat of Decay: An Exploration of the Smell of Mould". It will follow a discussion with Cecilia and Tomasz Sawoszczuk
- **Victoria-Anne Michel** (Odeuropa, Anglia Ruskin University) "Smellscapes of Museums, Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Heritage Sites"

Q&A/Discussion

11:15-11:30 Break

Session 1 continued: Malodours as Cultural Heritage?

11:30-12:30

Moderator: **Lizzie Marx** (Odeuropa, University of Cambridge)

- **Raphael Troncy** (Odeuropa, EURECOM) "Modeling and Classifying Scents in Knowledge Graphs"
- **Bernardo Fleming** (International Flavours and Fragrances) "On Briefing Perfumers to Create Malodourous Heritage Scents for Museums"

Q&A/Discussion

Lunch Break: 12:30-14:30

Session 2: Smell Cabinets

Inspired by the Cabinets of Curiosities which aimed at categorising objects belonging to natural history, these two breakout rooms will attend to the following smells/objects: **Leather/Sewers (1A)** (streaming from the Stadtmuseum) and **Body Odours/War (1B)** (streaming from the Berlin Center for Cold War Studies)

LOCATION: Stadtmuseum and online stream

14:30-16:00

Smell Cabinet 1A: Smells from 'Hidden' Infrastructures - Sewers

Moderator: **Inger Leemans** (Odeuropa, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

- **Rebeca Ibáñez Martín** (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences) "Urban Sewers and Innovation"
- **Lizzie Marx** (Odeuropa, University of Cambridge) "Exhibiting a Foul Canal at the Mauritshuis, The Hague"
- **Aude Hendrick** (Museums of the City of Brussels) "How to Play with Odors Associated with Sewers?"

Q&A/Discussion

Break (10 minutes)

Smell Cabinet 2A: Smells of War

Moderator: **William Tullett** (Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge)

- **Bodo Mrozek** (Berlin Center for Cold War Studies) "Smells like Cat Scat: Border Crossing Stenches in Times of Political Partition"
- **Caro Verbeek** (Kunstmuseum The Hague, Vrije Universiteit) "When Foul Becomes Fragrant - Reconstructing the Olfactory Universe of the Futurists"
- **Josely Carvalho** (Independent artist) "Within the Smells of History"

Q&A/Discussion

LOCATION: Berlin Center for Cold War Studies and online stream

14:00-16:00

Smell Cabinet 1A: Smells of Leather

Moderator: **Raphael Troncy** (Odeuropa, EURECOM)

- **Sofia Ehrich** (Odeuropa, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences) "Storytelling with Malodours in Guided Tours: Early Results from the Scents Created for the Museum Ulm"
- **Shivani Kapoor** (O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat, India) - "Smelling Caste: Politics of Odours in a Leather Tannery"

Q&A/Discussion

Smell Cabinet 1B: Body Fluids and Smells (Berlin Center for Cold War Studies)

Moderator: **Raphael Troncy** (Odeuropa, EURECOM)

- **Mathias Zinnen** (Odeuropa, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg) "Searching for Smell Gestures in Historical Paintings"
- **Helene Loos** (Odeuropa, Chair of Aroma and Smell Research, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Erlangen, Germany, and Fraunhofer Institute for Process

Engineering and Packaging, Freising, Germany) "Body Odours - Chemical Composition and Function in Human Social Communication"

- **Ruben Verwaal** (Institute for Medical Humanities, Durham) "How Physicians Grew Sniffy About Sweat"

Q&A/Discussion

16:30-17:00: Concluding Remarks

Day 2: December 16, 2021.9:45-16:00 (CEST)

9.45-10.00 Welcome and Reflection on Day 1

10:00- 11:45

Session 3: Malodours and Environmental Relations: Past and Present

How has the presence, perception and impact of malodours changed in the face of industrialization? To what effects and in what institutional and social contexts? What role does smell play in environmental annoyance and toxicity? How could we use malodours in heritage spaces to help enhance environmental awareness? What are the dominant historical narratives and sensitivities around malodours? How can we make use of digital heritage collections to find these?

Moderator: **Rebeca Ibáñez Martín** (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences)

- **Clara Muller** (Nez, The Olfactory Magazine) "Experiencing the Foul Breath of the Capitalocene. The Potency of Olfactory Art"
- **Tina Asmussen** (German Mining Museum Bochum, Ruhr University of Bochum) "The Smell of Early Modern Silver Refining"
- **Emily Cockayne** (University of East Anglia) "The Stench of Coal Tar"

Q&A/Discussion

Break (10 minutes)

Session 3 continued: Malodours and Environmental Relations: Past and Present

Moderator: **Rebeca Ibáñez Martín** (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences)

- **Anton Philip van Harreveld** (Guest Researcher at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences) "The Impact of Malodour on Environmental Aesthetics and Public Health"
- **William Tullett** (Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge) "That New (and old) Car Smell: Automotive Odours"

Q&A/Discussion

11:45-13:00

Session 4: Shaping 'Otherness' Through Smell

How are gender, class, race, and sexuality constructed not only through social and cultural institutions but also carried out through definitions of sensorial 'otherness'? Who gets to define what is and what is not a malodour? What are the effects of such dichotomies for social and cultural relations? How has the definition of malodours historically created sensorial communities through the construction of 'otherness'?"

Moderator: **Bodo Mrozek** (Berlin Center for Cold War Studies)

- **Ally Louks** (University of Cambridge) "Witches, Demons and Nymphs: The Seduction and Subversion of the Olfactory Occult"
- **Stephanie Weismann** (University of Vienna) "Onion & Garlic - Giving a Sniff at the Jewish 'Other'"
- **Jean-Thomas Tremblay** (New Mexico State University) "The Character of Smog"

Q&A/Discussion

Lunch Break: 13.00-14.00

14.00-15.30 Session 5: How to Incorporate Malodours in Heritage Institutions?

Can we regard malodours as heritage objects? How can we preserve heritage malodours (and should we)? What are the different methods and practices we can apply to the uses of malodours within heritage institutes? How can we work with the different sensitivities and difficulties which come with malodours? How can heritage institutes use malodours as a form of storytelling and provide a new understanding of past communities? How should these institutes confront issues about accuracy vs representation of heritage scents?

Moderator: **Victoria-Anne Michel** (Odeuropa, Anglia Ruskin University)

- **Liam Findlay** (AromaPrime) "The Benefits and Challenges of Using Malodours in Educational Venues"
- **Nadjib Achaibou** (Symrise Mexico) "The Aesthetic Experience of a Terrible Smell"
- **Michael Philipp** (Museum Barberini, Potsdam) "Unpleasant Odours in Dutch Art of the 17th Century"

Q&A/Discussion

Session 5 continued: How to Incorporate Malodours into Heritage Institutions?

Moderator: **Victoria-Anne Michel** (Odeuropa, Anglia Ruskin University)

- **Artists Regina Mamou and Lara Salmon with Joes Segal** (The Wende Museum of the Cold War, Los Angeles, California) "Common Fantasy: Tincturing Relics from the GDR"
- **Tasha Marks** (Independent Artist) and **Claire Dobbin** (Freelance Museum Curator) "Port City: Olfactory Creation and Curation"

Q&A/Discussion

15:30-16:00 Conclusion and Goodbyes

Concluding statements: **Inger Leemans** (Odeuropa, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) and **Sofia Ehrich** (Odeuropa, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences)

OPPORTUNITY 2 (16:15-17:15): "Exhibition Tour Berlin Global" with Daniel Morat (for speakers only)