

Exhalations

A Survey of Olfactory Art

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English translation by Émilie McDermott

Series on the History of Art



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Finally, I dedicate these pages to Marie and to my mother, who taught me the pleasure of scents—and to Vincent, always.

There Is Only Art

Author's Note

"There is only art." A studio supervisor to whom I owe a great deal once told me this, with the quiet assurance of someone convinced she had settled the matter. She meant that smell held no meaningful place in the works that structure art history, that it could not constitute a medium in its own right, that olfactory art did not exist as a field, and that there was little point in studying or analyzing it. My encounter with Julie C. Fortier's *La Chasse* in 2015 convinced me otherwise. Composed of thousands of scent strips, the work releases three smells: one of blood, one of cut grass, and one of animal. What you inhale alters what you see: a cellular mass, a meadow, a pelt. Experiencing this piece changed the way I perceived and thought about art. The world is not governed by sight alone. Vision, for all its power, harbors a fundamental flaw: it can be shaped, quietly and decisively, by what remains unseen. From that moment, a gap opened between me and those who doubted what smells, emanating from a Western art governed by the visible, analyzable, and legible, might have to say.

I wrote this book for them. It began as a master's thesis in art history completed at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. When I first suggested the subject, my supervisor responded with the cautious benevolence of a scholar accustomed to stable ground: "Do your research. It is not certain there will be enough material to sustain a full argument." I did. I found hundreds of works meant to be breathed. I am still finding them. I searched by wandering through museums, by immersing myself in catalogs and specialized journals, and by speaking directly with artists themselves. What emerged was a field already dense and vibrant, yet largely ignored by criticism and institutions. I wanted to participate in the broader shift in which an awareness of smell has been gaining ground, in what has been called the sensorial turn, and to find the words for works that breathe, to create a space within institutions for their reception, and to grant them a measure of legitimacy. A first step was to attest to their ubiquity and to draw an academic overview.

This overview is now in your hands. *Exhalations: A Survey of Olfactory Art* was written between 2015, the first year of my master's degree, and 2020. It appeared in French in 2021, published by La Lettre Volée, who trusted me from the outset. This English edition, translated with precision and nuance by artist Émilie McDermott, emerges from a particular moment: that of a young researcher, at the turn of the twenty-first century's third decade, attempting to analyze several decades of olfactory creation, from the early twentieth century

to works contemporary with her own practice. Despite the rigor I sought to maintain, this remains a situated account. It does not claim exhaustiveness, nor neutrality, an ideal in which I do not believe. It speaks from within a French and European art-historical tradition that I continually interrogate, yet cannot entirely shed, just as I cannot shed my own positionality. I grew up in the south of France, in a middle-class family; I came to contemporary art later and moved to the capital to study within Parisian cultural institutions. I acknowledge this standpoint. Its limits are real and will rightly be noted, including the Eurocentrism of the corpus. These gaps stem partly from the geography of available sources at the time of writing, and partly from my longstanding hesitation to speak about traditions other than my own without risking reduction or appropriation. I acknowledge this problem while recognizing the limits of my position in addressing it. I remain deeply indebted to scholars whose work I consider fundamental: among them Hsuan Hsu, whose *The Smell of Risk* confirmed for me how profoundly smell is entangled with political and racial questions that olfactory art has only begun to confront.

Smell is political. This book attempts to articulate that claim, sometimes explicitly, sometimes obliquely. To defend an art that is inhaled is not to add another medium to an already established canon, but to oppose an ocularcentrism that has structured modern art history, to resist a hierarchy of the senses that places sight at its apex and relegates smell to the margins of the bestial, the vulgar, the trivial. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the American critic Clement Greenberg¹ advanced a model of modernity validated by the eye alone, governed by purity, segmentation, and hermeticism. When I was writing this book, it seemed urgent to show that, for at least a century, artists had taken the opposite path: they had turned the ephemeral, the invisible, what lodges close to the heart, what resists preservation and commodification, into a space of creation in its own right, oriented toward an experience of the present and toward an aesthetics of permeability.

Smell proposes other forms of knowledge that are inhaled and absorbed. To breathe is to take in a fragment of matter and trace its history: to sense its origin, who shaped it, through which bodies it has passed. It is, irreducibly, to apprehend multiple representations and to open oneself to what sight does not necessarily convey. From this emerges the possibility of new imaginaries, including those of gender, postcolonial critique, and ecological awareness. To breathe is to absorb the world. There is in this notion something fundamentally at odds with hygienism and modernism, with their impulse to master, to compartmentalize, to purify. This is fundamental in a world increasingly

¹ Caroline A. Jones, *Eyesight Alone: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the Bureaucratization of the Senses*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2005.

polarized, resistant to debate, and entrenched in singular narratives even as falsehood proliferates. Smell imposes relativity. Two people may inhale the same smell and perceive entirely different things, and both may be right. Smell resists univocal truth. It renders truth plural.

The English translation of this book reflects the growing attention that the art world, academia, and those invested in embodied, relational experience are giving to smell. It must be emphasized that olfactory art is not a recent development. Over the past decade, I have too often heard it described as a passing trend. It is not. What is recent is the expansion of awareness. Criticism and institutions are beginning, at last, to attend to what smell does to art. There is no question yet of major gains; we are still at an early stage, and the struggle is far from over. But something has shifted in how it is regarded. Researchers working in English, particularly within sensory studies, have played a decisive role in building a theoretical framework that renders this field more legible and credible to those still skeptical of aesthetic experience through smell. This book seeks to contribute to that effort, not to close the subject, but to offer a point of departure, a tool, a record of a discipline slow to take shape.

Before addressing the major works absent from this study, I wish to acknowledge the art critic Jim Drobnick. This Canadian theorist has made a profound contribution to establishing olfactory art as a critical field, and this book engages his work far less than it should. His research could have strengthened several of my arguments, and I note here, as a limitation I fully acknowledge, its too-rare presence in these pages. I hope these few words will encourage curious readers to turn to his work.

The corpus presented here is predominantly French and largely predates 2020. Some works that would have strengthened it did not yet exist; others I had not yet encountered. I attempt to address this “gap”² by mentioning a few of them here, texts that have shaped my thinking since then, and that deserve to be mentioned in this note. Inevitably, omissions remain, and I welcome future expansions of this bibliography.

The most notable lack is that of Constance Classen, whose work appears too rarely in these pages. *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell*³ (1994, with David

² The terminology of “gap” troubles me. Something is always missing for researchers; without it, they would stop searching. It also seems impossible to be exhaustive, to have read everything, seen everything, and, of course, smelled everything. Yet, unable to find another word to capture both the frustration and the joy of discovering books one has missed and only later encountered, I retain this gap that can never be fully filled.

³ Constance Classen, David Howes, Anthony Synnott, *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell*, Routledge, London, 1994.

Howes and Anthony Synnott), *The Color of Angels*⁴ (1998), and the six volumes of *A Cultural History of the Senses* (2014), which she co-edited. This monumental project constitutes a cornerstone of sensory history in English yet remains insufficiently known in France, and therefore also in this book. Classen's contributions to the theoretical foundations of sensory history are decisive. If this book were written today, her work would play a far more central role.

Hsuan Hsu's *The Smell of Risk: Atmospheric Disparities and the Olfactory Arts*⁵ (NYU Press, 2020) is another text I would have welcomed earlier, though we appear to have been writing simultaneously. Hsuan Hsu offers a rigorous political and racial analysis of smell, showing how it has been mobilized within systems of domination, segregation, and dehumanization. His work extends questions I only begin to address, particularly those concerning the racialization of olfaction, with a clarity and acuity I deeply admire. It is indispensable reading, as is the broader articulation of olfactory art with decolonial thought.

*Olfactory Art and the Political in the Age of Resistance*⁶ (2021), edited by Gwenn-Aël Lynn and Debra Parr, also merits particular attention. I myself contributed a chapter to this volume, on the representation of the feminine through smell in art. Yet this collective work was being written and assembled at the same time as my own. I did not yet have access to the other contributions when I was writing. This simultaneity speaks to a constellation of researchers working in parallel, driven by shared intuitions and urgencies. Our approaches complement rather than overlap, and I recommend this volume as a natural companion to the present book. It also makes clear how profoundly smell is a political medium.

Finally, Larry Shiner's *Art Scents* (Oxford University Press, 2020) should be noted. Following *L'art olfactif contemporain* (2015)⁷, a pioneering volume edited by the philosopher Chantal Jaquet, it has become a key reference on definitional questions concerning the place of smell and perfume in art. Shiner raises fundamental questions about smell as an artistic medium, interrogating its aesthetic legitimacy and criteria. I mention it here, though not without reservation: some of its developments strike me as less convincing, as if the

⁴ Constance Classen, *The Color of Angels: Cosmology, Gender and the Aesthetic Imagination*, Routledge, London, 1998.

⁵ Hsuan L. Hsu, *The Smell of Risk: Atmospheric Disparities and the Olfactory Arts*, NYU Press, New York, 2020.

⁶ Gwenn-Aël Lynn, Debra Parr (eds.), *Olfactory Art and the Political in an Age of Resistance*, Routledge, New York, 2021.

⁷ Chantal Jaquet, ed., *L'art olfactif contemporain*, Classiques Garnier, coll. "Rencontres. Série Études de philosophie", Paris, 2015.

book did not fully deliver on all its promises, particularly regarding perfume as art. Yet it has the merit of existing, of occupying a still under-charted terrain, and of establishing important markers that others may extend or contest, as will, I hope, be the case with *Exhalations: A Survey of Olfactory Art*.

I remain convinced that art is grasped through lived experience, olfactory or otherwise, and that my exhibitions have constituted spaces of research as vital as my readings. In 2021, *Odore. L'art, l'odeur et le sacré* at Galerie PAVEC in Paris, invited by Pauline Pavéc and Quentin Derouet, explored the genesis of olfactory art and its relation to the sacred, from the anointing of Greek statues to contemporary olfactory relics. *Horizons Olfactifs* at the Fondation Espace Écureuil in Toulouse, invited by Sylvie Corrolier, brought together around forty artists and perfumers to imagine a new art history. *Par la fumée* (2024) at POUISH in Aubervilliers, invited by Yvannoe Kruger, in a former site of the house of L.T. Piver, examined memory, heritage, and matrimoine through the residues of scent held by walls and bodies. This curatorial work has drawn my thinking closer to eco-phenomenology. My proximity to artists such as Chloé Jeanne, Alexis Foiny, Roman Moriceau, and Virginie Ittah has confirmed that olfactory experience belongs fully within this framework. Attending to smell contributes to addressing the crisis of the sensibility in modern societies, a conviction I expressed in the introduction and hold even more strongly today.⁸ Smell connects beings, human and nonhuman alike.

It should be noted that this book focuses primarily on artists working with smell, and says little about perfumers: those who create fragrances within industrial, artisanal, or independent contexts. This boundary was insufficiently examined, and my work since 2021 has led me to question it. During my doctoral research, conducted through a CIFRE partnership⁹ with Studio Flair, I entered a creative practice I had previously known only from the outside. What I observed required me to revise certain assumptions. Perfumers construct their compositions molecule by molecule, material by material, through a play of mental associations. Each fragrance begins with an image, an intention, a memory, and a source that may be literary, musical, political, or intimate. They name their compositions before they fully exist, much as one titles a work of art. Perfume is *cosa mentale*, to borrow Leonardo da Vinci's definition of painting. That the result is bottled and sold says little about the creative gesture itself; it concerns only its mode of use. In long conversations with the perfumer

⁸ And many of us make this argument. I am thinking of Hsuan L. Hsu, Christopher Otter, Daniel Press and Steven Minta, Minh-Xuan Truong, Silke Felber, Clara Muller, Lucille Lefrang, and Jessica Mignot, to name only a few.

⁹ A CIFRE doctoral fellowship is a French program that embeds doctoral research within a professional or industrial partner organization.

Mathilde Laurent, she spoke of her desire to “take perfume out of the bottle.” This phrase captures a crucial point: perfume remains constrained by its packaging, commercial codes and modes of narration. It could become something else if other contexts were made possible. As Laurent argues, the distinction between perfume as artistic experience and perfume as consumer product lies neither in its formula nor in the creator’s intention, but in its frame and discourse that surrounds it. The same composition may shift from one to the other depending on how it is presented.

One might feel a certain melancholy at the thought of how many extraordinary creations remain confined within their bottles. Yet if the frame defines the artistic experience, it can also change. It is already shifting slowly, through spaces such as Studio Flair; through perfumers like Mathilde Laurent, Michel Roudnitska, and Francis Kurkdjian, who assert their authorship; through scholars who take perfumery seriously as a mode of thought; and through artists who engage directly with its techniques.

I close with this: this book would not exist without the artists. This overview is, inevitably, a history of encounters, of studios visited, conversations extended, exchanges that do not end. The artists included here have shaped my thinking about smell as much as I hope to have contributed, modestly, to the recognition of their work. Among them, without any claim to completeness: Boris Raux and Julie C. Fortier, whose practices run through several chapters and exhibitions, and whose work reveals both the radical and the delicate dimensions of olfactory art; Roman Moriceau, Roberto Greco, Hratch Arbach, Gwenn-Aël Lynn, Antoine Renard, Morgan Courtois, long-standing presences; and Chloé Jeanne, Florian Mermin, Virginie Ittah, Haonan He, Alix Hugonnier, Giulia Zanvit, Émilie McDermott, who entered my life at the right moment and continue to expand the field of what seems possible.

Working alongside artists has taught me that smell is not only to be analyzed, but to be shared and allowed to breathe. It opens a genuine space for interpretation. It imposes no single truth. Artists understand this; many choose this medium precisely for that reason: to leave others the freedom to breathe.

This book owes them everything.

Preface

Hsuan L. Hsu

Olfactory art—or multimodal art that addresses the sense of smell—has been having a moment. When I began studying scent-based art in the early 2010s, it was often presented as a curiosity—an anomalous practice existing in the shadows of the contemporary art world. Along with Western cultural attitudes towards smell, the challenges that olfactory artworks pose to conventional practices of archiving, exhibiting, collecting, and describing art have made it difficult to incorporate them into traditional museums and art historical narratives.

But all of that has been changing. When MoMA opened its expanded campus in 2019, the *1980s-present* galleries included three works—Haegue Yang's *Sallim* (2009), Mike Kelley's *Deodorized Central Mass with Satellites* (1991-99), and Montien Boonma's *House of Hope* (1996-7)—that present scented materials in domestic, consumerist, and spiritual contexts. In 2016, Anicka Yi's *Life Is Cheap* gassed visitors at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum with scents sourced from Asian American women and ants; in 2021, Yi's *In Love with the World* pumped scents evoking different planetary and historical epochs into the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall. The scents of shea butter and black soap were part of Rashid Johnson's 2025 Guggenheim retrospective, *A Poem for Deep Thinkers*. The 2024 Venice Biennale included both Koo Jeong A's minimalist presentation of smells in an empty white cube setting, *Odorama Cities*, and the Cercle d'Art des Travailleurs de Plantation Congolaise's *International Celebration of Blasphemy and the Sacred*, which channeled the scents of cacao and palm oil into an effort to realize futures that exceed the white cube and the Plantationocene. Other artists who work with scent—like Sissel Tolaas, Peter de Cupere, Candice Lin, Otobong Nkanga, Ima-Abasi Okon, and Maki Ueda—have been featured in major museums and international publications.

This efflorescence of olfactory artworks builds on a much longer history of multimodal experimentation that could be dated to Marcel Duchamp's readymades, or to nineteenth-century olfactory stagecraft, or to ancient religious rituals. And it builds on the work of an international community of practitioners, many of whom are unknown to conventionally trained art historians. While scholars like Jim Drobnick, Larry Shiner, Gwenn-Aël Lynn, Madalina Diaconu, and Debra Parr have published groundbreaking work

focused on specific olfactory artworks and themes, I have had several conversations with artists and curators in which we lamented the lack of a comprehensive overview of olfactory art in the English language. Sandra Barré's monograph *Exhalations*, first published in French by La Lettre Volée in 2021 and translated by the olfactory artist Émilie McDermott, provides just such an overview: an informative and engaging survey of influential movements, themes, and theoretical questions that have shaped the history of olfactory experimentation in twentieth- and twenty-first-century art. The book draws on Barré's extensive experience as a curator and art critic focused on olfactory art, which encompasses numerous catalog essays as well as exhibitions such as *Horizons Olfactifs* (Fondation Espace Écureuil, Toulouse, 2023) and *Odore. L'art, l'odeur et le sacré* (Galerie Pauline Pavec, Paris, 2021) and, more recently, *Par la fumée* (POUSH, Aubervilliers, co-curated with Alix Hugonnier, 2024).

"Through scent," Barré writes, "art history itself can be rediscovered." *Exhalations* reframes the history of twentieth-century art through scent, showing how movements such as Futurism, Dada, *Arte Povera*, post-WWII body art, Fluxus, Viennese Actionism, postmodern performance art, abstraction, Land Art, and hyperrealism explored scent's capacities to evoke visceral feelings, interact with other senses across media, and attune smellers to what's in the air. Along the way, Barré interweaves fascinating examples that range from Warhol's collection of perfume bottles to Sissel Tolaas's olfactory reconstructions of the scents of de-extinct flowers.

One reason that art critics and institutions have been so slow to recognize the richness of olfactory art is that its themes and concepts run against the grain of conventional aesthetic values. Since the Enlightenment, ocularcentrism has been deeply entrenched in Western concepts of form, beauty, knowledge, and reason. In addition to offering a history of olfactory art, *Exhalations* introduces key concepts and themes that have oriented its practitioners: affect, immersivity, spirituality, corporeal emissions, memory, ephemerality, unevenly distributed toxicity, atmospheric materiality, and posthuman communication. This thematic focus enables Barré to draw surprising connections between very recent artworks and earlier movements and writings that provide historical perspective. For example, she takes us from a sixteenth-century commentary on the fleshy scents of menstruating women to Judy Chicago's controversial but inodorate *Menstruation Bathroom* (1972), to the challenging scents of menstrual blood, flesh, and bacteria presented in the works of Paola Daniele, Jana Sterbak, and Anicka Yi.

In addition to tracing influential threads of olfactory art and performance created and exhibited in Europe and the United States, Barré also makes some inroads into postcolonial and other non-Western art: her commentaries on works such as Cildo Meireles's *Volatil* (1980-94), Maki Ueda's olfactory

installation at the Stedelijk Museum's "Geisha" exhibition (2011), Sheela Gowda's *Collateral* (2011), Hratch Arbach's *MAWTINI (Native Land)* (2014), Ernesto Neto's *Flower Crystal Power* (2014), and Otobong Nkanga's *Anamnesis* (2016) elucidate the rich sensory, political, and cosmological interventions presented by postcolonial and minoritarian olfactory projects.

This book doesn't stop at offering an art historical overview and thematic primer for readers interested in olfactory art. It's also filled with new connections that actively weave together far-flung projects, drawing out resonances between artists who, in many cases, were not aware of each other's work. Barré also offers lucid theoretical insights on the fly: for example, writing about how artists make enduring decisions about whether scents should be replenished, how they move through spaces, and for how long, she writes: "The artist becomes, in part, a contemplator who orchestrates, directs, and sets conditions—an arrangement placed in the hands of time, environment, and airborne particles." Thus, the olfactory artist is not just a maker of scents or an orchestrator of their intersensory relations, but a choreographer of their volatile movements across time and space.

With its informative contextualization of smell's distinctive qualities, its insightful explication of influential artworks, and its broad overview of olfactory art history, *Exhalations* makes a compelling case for olfaction as a powerful element of aesthetic experience—one that has often been overlooked by curators, critics, and galleries, even though artists worldwide have created innovative work with scent since at least the early twentieth century.

Foreword

Within the vast classificatory system of the Fine Arts invented by the West and imposed across the globe, olfaction is not recognized as a discipline. Perfumers' creations are rarely placed alongside the canonical arts of painting, music, drawing, architecture, poetry, sculpture, dance, theater, or even cinema. It is worthwhile to wonder why perfumery has not been granted such a classification. Perfumers, much like artists in a historical understanding of the term, assemble an aesthetic product from a set of materials, invoking beauty and intended for sale.¹ However, the focus of this essay lies elsewhere, beyond the discipline of perfumery alone. It examines the phenomenon that led visual artists to claim the codes of scent and incorporate them into their work, and considers the range of artistic propositions made possible through the medium of smell.

Although this phenomenon of olfactory art has been observed since the twentieth century, it has been largely disregarded by critics, who, when they mentioned scent at all, treated it as an ornament, a secondary element beside what was considered the main work (that is, what could be apprehended by sight and, more recently, by hearing).

Yet many works of this kind exist. They release delicate or heady scents that, when given proper attention, reveal far more than a simple like or dislike. Identifying a scent can uncover historical horizons or the aesthetics it evokes in its philosophical dimension. Smells speak: they tell of their origins and of the mystical significance that humans have attributed to them. They also make clear—at a time when art history is being challenged by transdisciplinary questions raised in particular by feminist, queer, and postcolonial studies—that the classical system of representation may not be the only one able to claim artistic legitimacy, and that sight and hearing alone are certainly not enough for the ambitions of creation. Smells assert a different mode of presentation and engage in it, offering a perspective on the contemporary world that is no longer accessible exclusively through the eyes and ears, but through the nose as well.

¹ Perfumers have long taken part in the debate surrounding the figure of the artist-perfumer and continue to do so without reaching consensus. One must note here the contribution of Edmond Roudnitska, whose book *L'Esthétique en question. Introduction à une esthétique de l'odorat* [Questioning Aesthetics: An Introduction to an Aesthetics of Smell] (Paris: PUF, 1977) considerably moved forward the discussion of perfume as an art form.

Everything can be expressed through emanation, or, if not everything, then a range of concepts can be explored through it and an abundance of images revealed. This is what has been undertaken here: to outline and identify the principal lines of thought that smell evokes when treated as a material for artistic expression.

Before proposing a theory of olfactory aesthetics or defining any conceptual framework, it was essential to acknowledge the breadth of the creative fields shaped by scent. Any effort to organize thought around artistic uses of smell requires making choices. Here, the decision has been to gather, in several thematic chapters, a selection of works offering the broadest possible overview, so that the depth and scope of this medium may be appreciated. The works have been examined within their creative context and, whenever possible, through direct discussion with the artists themselves, while fully acknowledging the inevitable subjectivity of interpretation.

This study begins with early twentieth-century creations and extends to the present day. The use of scent in art did not emerge suddenly, nor in a consistently deliberate manner. Rather, it developed through successive gestures, curiosity-driven experiments, and reflection. What is expressed through these uses of scent—now increasingly recognized—is a shift that opens the field of perception beyond the purely intellectual or conceptual, granting the senses the real possibility of taking part in the aesthetic experience. This field has long remained inaccessible within a history shaped by the dualism between body and mind, in which the latter has prevailed.

However, before we can consider what an olfactory aesthetic might be, it is necessary to acknowledge this field of creation. The purpose of this essay is simply to show how revealing these scents are for the works from which they emanate, and that they are just as legitimate a resource as colors, sounds, or materials.²

² The term “material” (like “matter”) can be understood in an olfactory way, as we will see later. Here, however, it refers more broadly to everything that can be mobilized in the creation of a palpable art form.

PAGES MISSING
FROM THIS FREE SAMPLE

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About the Author

Sandra Barré is an art historian, aesthetician, art critic, and independent curator specializing in olfactory art and the non-visual dimensions of modern and contemporary art. Her research focuses on the relationship between smell and the body, embodied aesthetic experience, and the politics of the senses.

She holds a master's degree in art history from Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, where she is currently completing a doctoral thesis on olfactory art under the supervision of Professor Jacinto Lageira, conducted in partnership with Studio Flair through a CIFRE research agreement.

Her essay *L'odeur de l'art, un panorama de l'art olfactif* (La Lettre volée, Brussels, 2021)—of which *Exhalations* is the English translation—was the first book-length academic survey of olfactory art published in French. Her publications also include contributions to *Olfactory Art and the Political in an Age of Resistance* (2021) and *Les dispositifs olfactifs au musée* (2018), as well as the catalog essays *Odore. L'art, l'odeur et le sacré* (Galerie Pauline Pavéc, 2020) and *Horizons Olfactifs* (Fondation Espace Écureuil, Toulouse, 2023), and the collective volume *Worlds of the Senses: A Sensory History of the Total Work of Art* (Faton, Dijon, 2024).

As a curator, she has organized exhibitions including *Odore. L'art, l'odeur et le sacré* (Pauline Pavéc Gallery, Paris, 2021), *Horizons Olfactifs* (Espace Écureuil Foundation, Toulouse, 2023), *Chloé Jeanne, Présence sensible* (Château de Tours, 2024), *Worlds of the Senses* (International Museum of Perfumery, Grasse, 2024–2025), and *Par la fumée* (POUSH, Aubervilliers, 2024).

She is currently developing two new initiatives. FORIA (Fund for Olfactory Research, Institutions and Artistic Archives) aims to establish the first neutral registry of contemporary olfactory artworks, alongside legal frameworks and institutional training to support the conservation, exhibition, and circulation of olfactory art. Éditions Sensibles, co-founded with artist and researcher Émilie McDermott, is a bilingual French-English publishing house dedicated to contemporary writing that explores embodied sensory experience (smell, taste, and touch) as situated forms of knowledge.

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Not only does Sandra Barré unlock an invisible element within art history through compelling examples, but she also demonstrates that we can only practice olfactory art history when we no longer view scents through a visual lens and start practicing an olfactory gaze instead.

Dr. Caro Lisette Verbeek, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands; Embedded researcher in Ifactory heritage (VU, Rijksmuseum, International Flavours & Fragrances); Curator at Kunstmuseum, The Hague, Netherlands

This book provides a much-needed overview of the history of olfactory art, filling a significant gap in the field. It deepens Ashraf Osman's 2013 "Olfactory Art" article, and references many olfactory art projects that have remained in the shadows of mainstream art history. By organizing these works into an interesting set of rubriques, Sandra Barré renders this olfactory art "catalog" (if you will) manageable.

Gwenn-Aël Lynn, Independent transdisciplinary artist

Barré has written an important book: A celebration of olfaction in art, and a foundational text for any further efforts at understanding the medium. Her thorough research repeatedly demonstrates how scent has served as a vital and impactful tool for artists, with thoughtful examples of historical and contemporary work. With "Exhalations", Barré has provided an eloquent defense of a vital creative practice, and has helped cement the importance of smell as a valid mode of art-making.

Saskia Wilson-Brown, Founder and Executive Director of the Institute for Art and Olfaction, Los Angeles

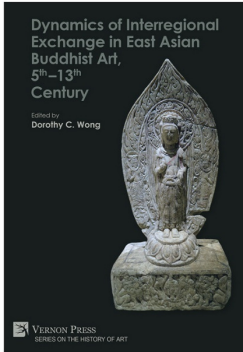
At a time when artistic interventions involving smells are becoming increasingly prevalent, this book provides a timely overview of the diverse avenues and possibilities that olfactory artists have explored since the 1990s. It not only emphasises the diversity of works and artistic approaches that explore the potential of smells, but also the range of issues and challenges that odours raise in art. Offering valuable insights, it promises to be a valuable resource for anyone interested in one of the most exciting emerging fields in contemporary art.

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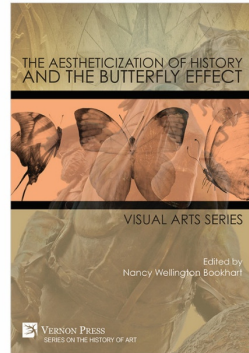
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