Odorama: Reading Scents & Capturing Aromatic Culture

19.01.2018 20:00-22:30

MEDIAMATIC

With: Peter de Cupere, Kate McLean, Klara Ravat, Laura Speed, Cecilia Bembibre,Han van der Vegt

This Odorama is co-curated by Caro Verbeek, Saskia Wilson-Brown and Klara Ravat.

Even when we are not always aware of it mentally, most of us heavily rely on our sense of smell. Often, scents silently determine how we feel, set moods and atmospheres, and shape our invisible identity and culture. Despite this, it turns out difficult to describe their influence. How can we capture something that is fleeting, invisible and hardly controllable? The past few years, artists and scholars have worked on new vocabularies to describe aromatic culture. With the most impressive line up in the history of Mediamatic's odorama series, this evening looks into experimental approaches to describing aromatic heritage.
https://www.mediamatic.net/nl/page/369495/odorama-reading-scents-capturing-aromatic-culture

Capturing Aromatic Culture Through Art and Science

Since smell is such a strong bodily sense, it is not always easy to describe it through rational means. What structures do we adopt when we classify scents? And when we speak about scents, what language do we use? This edition of Odorama looks into experimental approaches to preserving and describing aromatic heritage. Artist Peter de Cupere, and researchers Kate McLean, Laura Speed and Cecilia Bembibre will present the work they have done with language and olfaction. The talks will be supplemented by a performance by Han van der Vegt and Klara Ravat.

Peter de Cupere

By exploiting the subjective, associative impact of smells in combination with visual images, Peter De Cupere generates a kind of meta-sensory experience that goes beyond purely seeing or smelling. He paints with scents, produces olfactory objects, soap paintings and sculptures, creates video and live performances, makes three-dimensional drawings and builds poetic smell installations.

Laura Speed

According to cognitive scientist Laura Speed, it is difficult to talk about smell because we have very few words for smells. In this talk, Laura Speed explores how words about the other senses can help us describe smells. Can a smell be *sharp*, *sweet,* or *green*?

Cecilia Bembibre

Smells influence how we engage with history, yet they are under researched in heritage studies. Scientific research of historic smells recognizes the significant information they carry and the value they add to our cultural heritage. During this Odorama, Cecilia Bembibre sketches a framework to identify, analyse and document smells with cultural value with examples in practice, including the smell of old books and a historic pot-pourri.

Kate McLean

“Dinosaur”, “shattered dreams” and “fresh, leafy rain” are examples of verbatim descriptors for smells encountered on smellwalks from Singapore to New York and Amsterdam. This talk explores smell terminology; from the urban smellscape wheel of prosaic, expected whiffs to the individual and idiosyncratic aromas of human-centred sniffing.

Han van der Vegt

Han van der Vegt is a poet and author of children's books. Van der Vegt writes long narrative poems. His most known poem is 'Exorbitans', a science fiction poem. A unique interdisciplinary collaboration will take place: Olfactory artist Klara Ravat composed a scent especially for the event, which Han van der Vegt translated into a poem. Klara will aromatize an existing poem by Han by creating an olfactory narrative.

Saskia Wilson-Brown and Klara Ravat

In a previous edition of Odorama 2017 Saskia Wilson Brown, director of the Institute for Art and Olfaction in Los Angeles, met Klara Ravat. This special edition in the same series with many renowned international smell-experts is the result of their enthusiasm to team up and invite colleagues from all over the world.

Special thanks to sponsors: IAO , IFF and WOW .

Information

Odorama: Reading Scents & Capturing Aromatic Culture
Friday 19 January
Program starts at 20:00
Mediamatic Biotoop, Dijksgracht 6, Amsterdam
Tickets: €15 pre-sale | Students €10 | €18 at the door (incl. Administration fee) http://bit.ly/2AmnJk6