

Workshop – 21.04.2016

Prior to the workshop, the participants are requested to bring along the following -

1. Capture the air of your city or town where you live and bring it along- in any way you can – in a bottle/air-tight bag/text/thoughts/poems/memories/visuals/sketches etc.... and be ready to talk about it.
2. How does Sense of smell contribute in one's everyday life, at home or at work?
3. Do the smells/odors are seen as interference of a personal space?
4. Collect/get some sources of smell. It could be in any form liquid/wax/dry powder/solid mass. It could be any natural source or other.
5. Please bring any material you would need to use for putting smell on- it could be textiles, wood, stone, water, any material that is able to absorb the smell and release it as well.

Title of the workshop

Smell

The material

Workshop format

The workshop is about exploring a new material – smells.

This is a participatory workshop; Involvement, inclusion and invitation to produce and individual engagement to the workshop are essential. For participants of this workshop getting connected to their environment (in that moment) with the smells would be inevitable. For this exploration the sense of smell is heightened and the other senses take a back stage, for doing this perhaps one has to trust one's own nose! As an introduction to your own nose we would start with a round of navigation in space using ones nose. Further workshop would involve incorporating smell in one's (team) own work.

Time allocation

15 min of introduction / 90 min of workshop / 30 min of feedback

Topic

The workshop is about exploring "Smells" as a material. Using the invisible, intangible, highly volatile and randomly moving character of smell to incorporate in your own work or research. It is an interdisciplinary approach of involving smells to your own discipline of profession and work. It is totally fine "to temper" with the smell by modifying the temperature, duration, intensity, frequency, concentration and distance to the source.

Keywords

Smells, Material, Intangible, Invisible, Volatile, Movement

Purpose and relevance

We encounter smells and odours in our daily life without even realizing the effects of the same on our perception of things, people, surrounding environment and thereby our behavioral and decision making changes. Nonetheless these smells in a social context play a very important role in our lives. As quoted by Anthony Synott, Odour is many things: a boundary-marker, a status symbol, a distance-maintainer, an impression management technique, a schoolboy's joke or protest, and a danger-signal – but it is above all a statement of who one is. Odours define the individual and the group, as do sight, sound and the other senses; and smell, like them, mediates social interaction. (1)

The aim of this workshop is to explore Smell as a material. A material that is for the sense of smell, that could enhance our being in an environment; knowingly or unknowingly. How can we use this material in our own discipline? What are the different ways of incorporating this material? To what scales we can work with it? With the challenge that most of us are grown up learning and practicing our professions using visual and auditory senses more than touch, taste and smell. How will we communicate using smell as a medium?

As the introduction to this workshop, we will try to navigate ourselves in the room/space just using the olfactory. The idea is to gain our trust on our sense of smell (which we mostly miss in our day-to-day life). This exploration with the smells would help understand if we do navigate ourselves using olfactory system when eyes are blindfolded and no sounds are heard. How familiar we can be with the smells and that would lead us to orient/place ourselves in a space of a room.

Expected outcomes

Firstly it is important that with this workshop, there is a certain amount of awareness of our olfactory and consciousness of our daily environment with our nose. The expected outcome of this workshop is to create an object/installation/process/game/piece of art/ where smell is the material and takes the leading role.

Workshop structure

The workshop is planned in three parts-

1st part - Introduction and walking into a room blindfolded and ear plugged – participants enter a space/room specially prepared for this workshop - one at a time. They do not carry any mobile phones/devices or any other material with them. Each of the participant (ear plugged + blindfolded) walks into the same room just using the nose to navigate themselves. This would be repeated until all the participants have done this round.

2nd part – there are some sources of smell present for the workshop. Prior to the workshop, the participants get/collect some sources of smell from their daily environment and that they are willing to work with during this workshop. We explore the characters of the smell and how to incorporate these smells to our own work or create something new out of this material.

3rd part – feedback and discussions about the workshop, participants are invited to talk here about their own created expressions using smells

Ideal number of participants:

Would be ideal if this workshop is conducted with about 10 persons or more.

Desired setup of the room:

For the introduction walk, it's best to have a room devoid of any furniture or elements. Railings or any other system on ceiling for fixing/hanging the sources of smell.

Materials required for participants

Ear plugs – if possible please bring your own along

Blind folds – if possible please bring your own along

Smells – few provided during the workshop, but participants are asked to bring along some sources of smells for example from their own kitchen/spice corner/fruits/flowers/perfumes-liquid, wax/essential oils etc. anything that the participants are willing to work with.

IMPORTANT! Please try not to wear any strong perfume, deodorant or any other perfumed/odoured material. Thanks.

Reference

1. *The Aroma of recollection: Olfaction, nostalgia, and the shaping of the Sensuous self*, Dennis D.Waskul, Phillip Vannini, Janelle Wilson, *Senses & Society*, Volume 4, issue 1 pp 5-22

To read /watch works of

- *Sissel Tolaas*
- *Maki Ueda*
- *Peter De Cupere*
- *Ernesto Netto*
- *Victoria Henshaw*