

Using Smells in Museums
An International Themed Smell Day Event

Saturday July 25th, 2026

New York: 12:00pm-3:30pm EDT

California: 9:00am-12:30pm PDT

UK: 5:00pm-8:30pm BST

Amsterdam: 6:00pm-9:30pm CEST

Using Smells in Museums: An International Themed Smell Day Online Event Description

This international online speaker series brings together curators, educators, and museum practitioners who are working with scent as an interpretive tool in museums, cultural attractions, and heritage institutions. The program focuses specifically on scent as museum interpretation and cultural education, rather than perfumery or olfactory art practice.

This is a program about discovery, connecting practitioners, and learning, bringing forward work that is innovative, grounded, and sometimes lesser known. A central intention of this event is to shine a light on work that deserves wider recognition in the field, with some of it not yet widely visible in mainstream conversations. The speakers were selected to represent a range of geographies, institution types, and approaches; their individual insights prove invaluable.

Each speaker will share how their own project was developed, the practical and institutional realities of working with scent in public spaces, the challenges, and what they learned along the way. There will be dedicated periods for live Q&A, giving attendees the opportunity to ask questions and engage directly with the speakers.

Whether you are new to olfactory interpretation or already working in the field, this event is designed to expand your understanding of what scent-based museum practice looks like across different contexts, collections, and communities.

Co-organized by Sofia Collette Ehrich ([The Olfactory Contractor](#)) and Liam R. Findlay ([International Themed Smell Day](#)). Hosted by the Fragrance Alliance Network.

This event is part of [International Themed Smell Day \(July 11\)](#) - a global, non-commercial celebration of olfactory storytelling. Participants are encouraged to share their own projects and themed smell memories using #InternationalThemedSmellDay.

The event will be recorded and shared with all registered attendees and speakers. Registration is \$25 and all proceeds will go to support the educational efforts of the Fragrance Alliance Network.

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Using Smells in Museums Program

An *International Themed Smell Day* Event

Introduction by the Organizers

12:00 PM - 12:20 PM EDT

Speakers:

[Gus Romero \(Fragrance Alliance Network, New York, USA\)](#): Gus Romero is the founder of the Fragrance Alliance Network, an educational platform dedicated to fragrance education and public programming. He is also a perfumer and co-founder of Team of Two Perfumers, where he designs fine fragrances for multiple independent brands, as well as scent experiences for museums, hospitality projects, and special events. His work explores how scent can create atmosphere, evoke memory, and deepen connections to people and places.

[Liam R. Findlay \(AromaPrime, UK\)](#): Liam is a themed scenting consultant, providing scent-focused guidance and equipment to museums and educational attractions. He is currently manager of AromaPrime.

[Sofia Collette Ehrich \(The Olfactory Contractor, California, USA\)](#): Sofia Collette Ehrich is a scent-based storytelling consultant and founder of The Olfactory Contractor. She works with museums to bring history to life through immersive scent experiences.

Topic 1: How do we design with scent?

12:20 PM - 1:15 PM EDT

This explores how scent can be thoughtfully integrated into cultural heritage spaces. It examines approaches to olfactory distribution and exhibition design, highlighting practical strategies for creating meaningful and engaging sensory experiences for visitors.

1. **12:20-12:30 PM EDT: [Lauren Henning \(The Tall Ship, Glenlee, Glasgow, UK\)](#)**

- a. **[Lauren Henning](#)** is the Learning and Museum Manager at the **[Tall Ship Glenlee](#)**, a historic Clyde-built vessel now operating as a museum ship on Glasgow's River Clyde.

Henning's talk will explore how the *Tall Ship Glenlee* integrated ambient scenting into a major reinterpretation project focused on accessibility, immersive storytelling, and presenting the ship's multi-layered history through text, film, sound, and scent. It will discuss the development of an innovative scent delivery system using AromaPrime Vortex machines and Arduino-controlled interactive buttons, designed to balance visitor agency with environmental and financial sustainability, alongside reflections on scent selection, practical implementation, and audience response.

2. **12:30 - 12:40 PM EDT: [Natalia Kucirkova \(University of Stavanger, Norway\)](#)**

- a. **[Professor Natalia Ingebretsen Kucirkova](#)** is a researcher in early childhood education, affiliated with the University of Stavanger in Norway and The Open University in the UK.

Prof. Kucirkova's talk will share insights from a study in which she led the installation of a museum exhibition based on the popular story *The Three Little Pigs*. The exhibition was designed for children and integrated scent alongside physical movement and audio elements. The experience offered unique insights into how children engage with stories through embodied, multisensory interaction.

3. **12:40 - 12:50 PM EDT: [Nezka Pfeifer \(Stephen and Peter Sachs Museum, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, Missouri, USA\)](#)**

- a. **[Nezka Pfeifer](#)** is an interdisciplinary museum curator who develops botanically-themed exhibitions at the Stephen and Peter Sachs Museum at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, a world-renowned research and horticultural organization. She focuses on projects where botany,

culture, and art are intertwined through exhibition narratives and multicultural experiences.

Pfeifer's talk is about developing the SMELLING THE BOUQUET: PLANTS & SCENTS IN THE GARDEN exhibition that she curated in 2025 at the Sachs Museum that explored the spectrum of scents plants create, inspired by the diverse live and scientific collections at the Missouri Botanical Garden. She'll dive into the process, challenges, and collaborations that brought the exhibition and event series into fruition.

4. 12:50 - 1:10 PM EDT: Q&A discussion led by Gus Romero of The Fragrance Alliance Network

Topic 2: How does olfactory storytelling move from concept to experience?

1:10 - 2:00 PM EDT

This section focuses on how wild ideas become memorable olfactory experiences. It explores the playful ways scent (pleasant and putrid) can immerse for theatrical engagement, how a project develops from concept to reality, and how technological innovation can transform how scent is experienced.

1. 1:10 - 1:20 PM EDT: Ailsa Easton (UK)

- a. **Ailsa Easton** is a Creative Director and consultant, specialising in the creation, design and production of immersive visitor experiences. She's worked in the global themed attraction industry for over 25 years. Her projects span heritage sites, theme parks, city center attractions, municipal parks, retail, F&B, accommodation, brand development and live shows.

Easton's talk, *Plague Pits to Brad Pitt!* features anecdotes and learnings from recreating the smells from the darkest parts of history. The foul and the funny, how aroma used in public attractions can go surprisingly wrong and how nasty niffs can help to shock and delight.

2. 1:20 - 1:30 PM EDT: [Margot Kopera \(Maryland Center for History & Culture, Maryland, USA\)](#)

- a. [Margot Kopera](#) is the Director of Learning & Interpretation at the Maryland Center for History and Culture, one of Maryland's leading history museums.

Kopera will discuss how the exhibition, [WayFinders: Making Sense of Our World](#) uses the five traditional senses: sight, sound, smell, touch, taste and a sixth sense, thinking, to create a multisensory storytelling experience that helps visitors connect more deeply with history. She will explore how scent plays a powerful role in storytelling because sensory experiences are closely tied to memory, emotion, and belonging, helping visitors experience the past as something lived and felt rather than distant. By using the senses as a framework, the exhibition creates an experience that feels familiar, accessible, and deeply human across time.

3. 1:30 - 1:40 PM EDT: [Charlotte Mikkelsen \(Picture This Productions, UK\)](#)

- a. [Charlotte Mikkelsen](#) is an award-winning director working in film and immersive entertainment since 2015. Her recent projects include *Coldplay: Music of the Spheres World Tour: An Immersive Experience* for Meta and the live-action series *Adventure* for Apple Vision Pro and Apple TV Originals. She also created the groundbreaking multisensory augmented reality game *Time Detectives* for Portsmouth's Mary Rose Museum, which won the SXSW Innovation Award for Convergent Gaming in 2023.

Mikkelsen's talk, *Creating the World's First Multi-sensory Augmented Reality Game*, will elaborate on the inspiration behind making the world's first multi-sensory AR game, [Time Detectives](#). She will discuss how she and the team created the experience and the learnings from both production and distribution at the Mary Rose Museum.

4. 1:40 - 2:00 PM EDT: Q&A discussion led by Liam Findlay

2:00PM - 2:15 EDT BREAK

Topic 3: What are the challenges of using scent in museums?

2:15 - 3:00 PM EDT

This section focuses on conservation, accessibility, risk management, and visitor comfort in the development of olfactory projects. Presented as a 40 minute panel discussion, it brings together interdisciplinary perspectives to share experiences, challenges, and best practices for implementing scent in cultural heritage spaces. This panel is hosted by [Sofia Collette Ehrich](#) (The Olfactory Contractor, California, USA).

Marie Clapot (New York, USA) is a museum educator, sensory museologist, and disability inclusion advocate dedicated to building an accessible and inclusive world.

[Liam R. Findlay \(AromaPrime, UK\)](#) is a themed scenting consultant. His experiences with a vast array of museum projects around the world provides him with insight into the topics of diffusion methods, challenges with malodors, sensory signage, and more.

[Andreas Keller \(Olfactory Art Keller, New York, USA\)](#) is an academic interested in scent and the author of “Philosophy of Olfactory Perception.” He ran Olfactory Art Keller, a gallery focused on scent art, in New York from 2020 to 2025.

[Antje Kiewell \(Artphilia, The Netherlands\)](#) is trained in the world of luxury fragrance creation. She has evolved from developing fine fragrance brands for iconic houses including Hugo Boss and Laura Biagiotti to pioneering a new form of multisensory curation—one in which scent is used not to replicate what art depicts, but to illuminate the hidden narratives and artistic intentions within art.

[Jessica Murphy \(Independent Researcher, New York, US\)](#) is a museum professional and fragrance historian. She holds a PhD in art history and has worked at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as the Brooklyn Museum, where she created scented gallery tours from 2019 to 2025. She has also lectured on fragrance and art through cultural venues including the Corning Museum of Glass, the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, the Timken Museum of Art, and the Institute for Art and Olfaction.

Conclusion and Last Remarks:

3:00 - 3:30 PM EDT

[Gus Romero \(Fragrance Alliance Network, New York, USA\)](#)

[Liam R. Findlay \(AromaPrime, UK\)](#): Liam is a themed scenting consultant, providing scent-focussed guidance and equipment to museums and educational attractions. He is currently manager of AromaPrime.

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