

PRESS RELEASE
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12 June – 15 August 2021

To Smell with the Eyes: Images of Scent since the Renaissance

Curator: Mara-Lisa Kinne

In the course of *Smell it!*, a cooperation between ten Bremen art institutions on smell in contemporary art, the Kunsthalle Bremen presents historic depictions of smells and scents since the sixteenth century and brings them into a dialogue with a new work by contemporary Columbian artist Oswaldo Maciá (b. 1960).



f.l.t.r.: Oswaldo Maciá, *New Cartographies of Smell Migration*, 2021, Installation view Kunsthalle Bremen, © Oswaldo Maciá, photo: Franziska von den Driesch | Honoré Daumier, *L'odorat*, 1839 | Aline von Kapff, *Vegetable Seller (Still Life)*, c. 1887/88 | Both works on the right: Kunsthalle Bremen – Der Kunstverein in Bremen

How can one depict smell? Smells are a part of everyday life and special moments in life, but these invisible, fleeting phenomena are challenging subjects to represent in works of art. The exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bremen invites visitors to smell with their eyes: Which forms and shapes do odours take? How do we use our sense of smell to perceive the world around us? How are scents staged in human interactions? The exhibition brings together paintings, works on paper, photographs and sculptures from different centuries. These include detailed prints by Hans Weiditz and Albrecht Altdorfer that recount the use of fragrances in the Renaissance, brilliantly coloured paintings by artists such as Paula Modersohn-Becker and Aline von Kapff, humorous folios by William Hogarth and Honoré Daumier, the JOB poster by Alphonse Mucha as well as more recent objects, drawings, and photographs by such artists as Andreas Slominski, Günter Grass and Tom Wood.

The Columbian olfactory artist Oswaldo Maciá (b. 1960) is creating a new, large-scale contemporary work especially for the Bremen show: “New Cartographies of Smell Migration”. It cites Central American olfactory traditions and identifies global connections through the use of smell. Sounds and scents are Maciá’s primary artistic materials. By using them, he questions the traditional idea of art as a visual experience and of the museum as a place for viewing.

The exhibition is part of a joint project titled *Smell it! The Fragrance of Art*. On the occasion of this collaboration between ten Bremen art institutions, the Kunsthalle Bremen is focusing on the history of smelling, reeking and fragrant scents in the visual arts. The exhibition thus examines the role played by our sense of smell, as well as the loss of smell and olfactory disorders, which have gained in significance in these times of distancing and disinfectants. In addition, a giant model of a nose, kindly provided by the kek Kindermuseum, encourages to explore one’s own olfactory experiences.

Smell Geruch
it! in der
Kunst



KUNST HALLE BREMEN

Smell it! The Fragrance of Art is a collaborative project on smell in contemporary art by: GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Gerhard-Marcks-Haus, kek Kindermuseum, Künstlerhaus Bremen, Kunsthalle Bremen, Kunstverein Bremerhaven, Paula Modersohn-Becker Museum, Städtische Galerie Bremen, Weserburg Museum für moderne Kunst and Zentrum für Künstlerpublikationen. At the core of the project are ten individual exhibitions, a series of lectures and a joint education programme which will run from May to July 2021.

Catalogue:

A catalogue with detailed texts and colour images documenting all participating exhibitions will be published for the collaborative project *Smell it! The Fragrance of Art*. Softcover, 224 pages, German/English.

The exhibition in the Kunsthalle Bremen is supported by:

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Karin und Uwe Hollweg Stiftung
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Art Hertz. From Kollwitz to Miró, until 11 July 2021

SOMA. Luisa Eugeni and Mattia Bonafini, until 30 May 2021

To Smell with the Eyes: Images of Scent since the Renaissance, 12 June until 15 August 2021

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