

NOS-HS Exploratory Workshops in

Olfactory Cultural Studies

Workshop 3, 12–14 February 2025, Helsinki, Finland

Call for papers and participation

With support from NordForsk, we are happy to announce a call for papers and participation in an exploratory three-day workshop in “olfactory cultural studies”. This is the final workshop in a series of three independent yet related workshops across different Nordic countries, with a general objective to develop and investigate methodologies to explore how olfactory phenomena are conceptualised and contribute to meaning-making. The workshops centre on the significance of odours and the meanings ascribed to them, both in different physical environments and in media representations, thus complementing multisensory, multimodal cultural studies. Emphasis is laid on the role of olfactory phenomena in the construction of social and cultural identities. To address the olfactory cultural dynamics at stake, the workshops are guided by three main research questions:

- a) How are different environmental odours made meaningful?
- b) How are olfactory phenomena conceptualised and represented in art and the media?
- c) How do olfactory phenomena participate in the construction of social and cultural identities?

Workshop

The workshops are designed to combine ethnographic, experimental, and textual research. Given the collaboration with the Hotel and Restaurant Museum as well as the overlap with Valentine’s Day during the workshop in Finland, the theme of textual research to be presented in seminar sessions is “lunch, love and laughter.” Alongside papers addressing the meanings and cultural politics of food, affect or humour and ridicule when it comes to smell and smelling, also other topics related to olfaction and meaning-making will be considered.

The workshop is tentatively structured as follows:

Day 1: Welcome and seminar session with participant paper presentations. Experimental exercise in collaboration with the Hotel and Restaurant Museum. Olfactowalk co-creation exercise.

Day 2: Seminar sessions with participant paper presentations. Ethnographic exercises, or, “olfactowalks in the dark” based on participants’ co-creation ideas.

Day 3: A seminar session with participant paper presentations. Methodological and theoretical reflection of the experimental and ethnographic exercises. Closing remarks.

Submissions

We hereby cordially ask all interested individuals to submit a paper proposal of 2000–3000 words (not including references) no later than **15 September 2024**, via email to olfactory.cultures@gmail.com. The proposals form the basis for the seminar sessions and therefore should preferably address its theme (“lunch, love and laughter”). The proposals should

be in PDF format, appended with a one-page CV of all authors. While both single- and multi-author papers are welcome, only one presenting author can register for the workshop (a second presenting author is allowed on a case-by-case basis, if the authors can justify added value to the presentation).

Notifications of acceptance will be sent by 15 November 2024. There is a limited number of seats in the workshop, and all participants are required to take part in all exercises and sessions. Given the limitations, priority will be given to those who i) reside in the Nordic region as defined by NordForsk, and ii) address the theme of the workshop. Participation in the workshop is limited to those presenting papers.

Travel and accommodation

The physical location of the workshop is in central Helsinki. The organisers cover two nights of accommodation (12 and 13 February), local transportation and comestibles.

While there is no cost to register for the workshop, participants are expected to cover their own travel to Helsinki plus possible extra nights of accommodation. We hope to be able to offer travel bursaries for a limited number of participants, with priority given to early career researchers who do not have access to institutional support.

For further information, please do not hesitate to contact the organisers at olfactory.cultures@gmail.com.

Organisers

PI Professor Antti-Ville Villén, University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland

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