



CARDS TO DESIGN OLFACTORY NARRATIVES

From Proust's madeleine dipped in tea to the smell of petrol, and all the myriad odours in between, scents link us to places, times, and memories. In an olfactory narrative smell is the 'narrative glue' that holds different types of items together. Within Odeuropa we created digital [Storylines](#) in a 'choose your own adventure' format using the open-source tool [Twine](#), which allows you to create story-boards composed of cards that are linked together into narratives. You can use a similar principle in thinking about how to choose olfactory narratives in your own collection. In this worksheet, which is designed for printing, cutting, and playing, we offer a series of pro-forma cards that can be filled in. You can use these to think about the ways that smells link your collection items together.

WHAT IS ON THE CARDS?

We have split the cards into six types: items, smells, noses, places, practices, and feelings. Each of these cards have pre-set questions that you can scribble answers into based on the information that you have acquired from your collections, from reading research on smell and the past (for a growing bibliography of work see the [Past Scent bibliography](#)), and from further research using tools such as the [Odeuropa Smell Explorer](#) or [Encyclopaedia of Smell History and Heritage](#). Each of the questions on the cards are opportunities to think which smells, noses, places, practices, or feelings that card might link to. They offer some ways of providing olfactory context to your collections.

HOW DO YOU USE THE CARDS?

The goal of these cards is to explore potential connections between items in your collections through smell and arrange them into a narrative or story across time and space. We recommend starting with an 'Item' card for any item in your collections (a painting, sculpture, artefact, book, etc.). Fill this out by answering the questions. Based on the smells you describe, you should then have several options to answer multiple 'Smell' cards. For example, you might fill out an 'Item' card for a pomander from your collection, which is a common item of fragrant jewellery. You researched this item further and found out that these often contained materials such as rosemary, musk, or clove, so you fill out 'Smell' cards for each of those material scents. Based on your answers, this will lead you on to other items, or to 'Practice', 'Space', 'Nose', and 'Feeling' cards. In turn you might use these to find and fill in other 'Item' cards based on your collection, which can again link to your already completed cards. Each card might link to several others and so slowly you will build up a map of olfactory connections across your collections.

OK, SHOW ME THE CARDS!

On the next pages you can find a set of printable cards. These are the dimensions of regular tarot cards (in case you want to stick them onto a card for more rigidity). There are 2 item cards, 2 smell cards, 1 nose card, 1 place card, 1 practice card, and 1 feeling card.

| ITEM | SMELL |
|--|---|
| Name: | Name: |
| Catalogue ref: | What is/are the source(s) of the scent? |
| What does the item smell like now? | How is/has the smell been described? |
| What has it smelled like in the past? | Where is/was the scent found? |
| Odorous materials or production methods? | Who would have smelled this scent? |
| Visually or textually referenced scents? | Source(s): |

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|--|---|
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| PRACTICE | NOSE |
|--|---|
| <p>-----</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Who performed and/or smelled this practice?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Did the practice produce smells? Which smells?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Did the practice get rid of/interact with/cover up smells? Which ones?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Where did this practice take place?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Source(s):</p> | <p>-----</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Describe the biographical aspects of the nose.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>What odours might the nose be familiar with?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Where might the nose encounter these odours?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Did this nose change over time?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Source(s):</p> |
| PLACE | FEELING |
| <p>-----</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>-----</p> <p>What smells could be found in this place?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Did the smells in this place change over time (day, week, season, year, decades, centuries?)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Who experienced the smells of this place and how did they describe them?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Source(s):</p> | <p>-----</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>-----</p> <p>What smells produced this feeling?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Who experienced this feeling in reaction to a smell?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Did these feelings connect smells to particular identities?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Source(s):</p> |