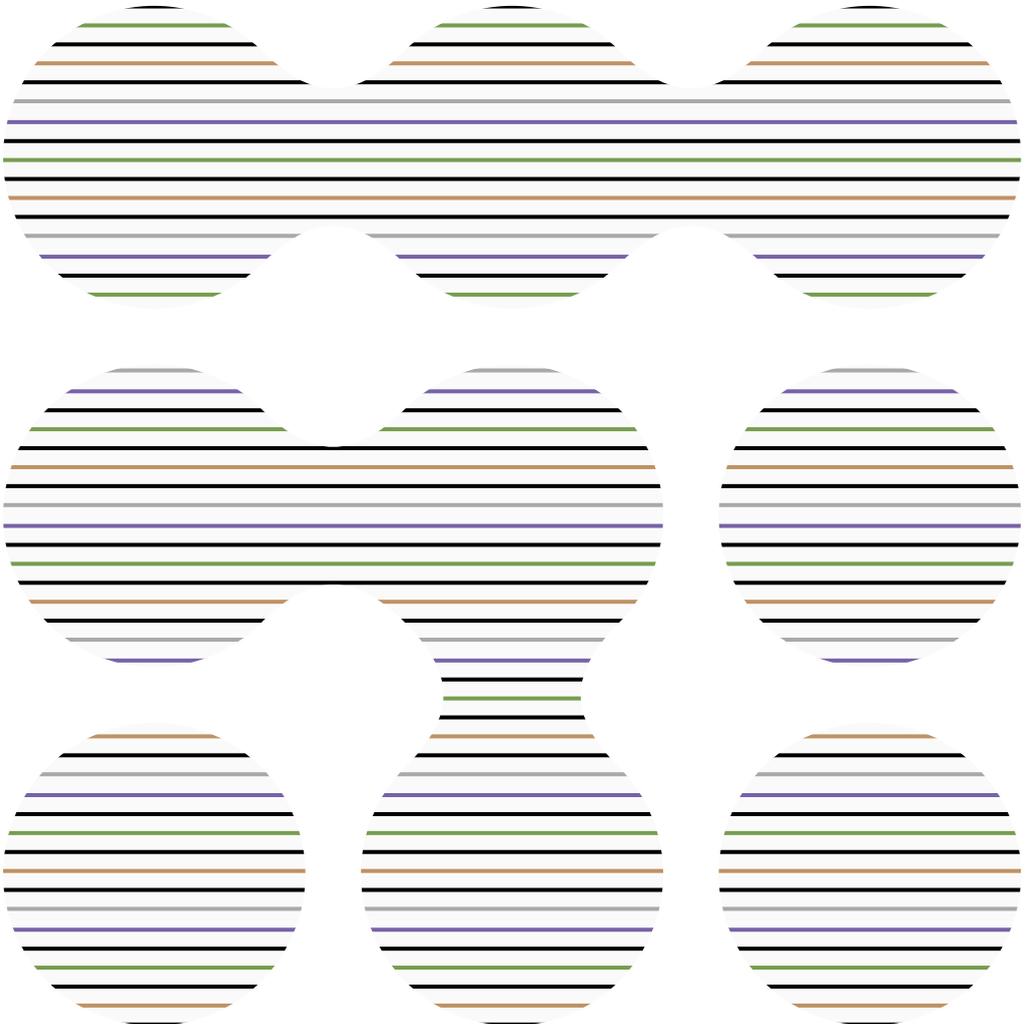




OLFACTORY STORYTELLING GUIDELINES

Guidelines for Conducting Olfactory Guided Tours



GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING OLFACTORY GUIDED TOURS

This document is a methodology and instructional guide for conducting olfactory guided tours in heritage institutions. Heritage professionals can use this guide to train themselves and each other to prepare for and conduct olfactory tours.

Contents of this document include:

1. Tips for training tour guides
2. Instructions for preparing for and conducting olfactory guided tours
3. Tips for using olfactory storytelling during olfactory guided tours
4. The do's and don'ts of olfactory guided tours

1. TIPS FOR TRAINING TOUR GUIDES

It is important that the institution's staff is well informed throughout the development and preparation of an olfactory guided tour. However, it is also crucial that with any olfactory event, tour guides (and other staff members) are trained and prepared for situations that could arise during the tour.

We highly recommend that tour guides are allowed time to conduct test tours. This not only offers them the opportunity to learn how to prepare and use supplies but it also allows time to experiment with how they will communicate the olfactory narratives and navigate through the space.

2. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING SUPPLIES

Three distribution methods are helpful for the purpose of Olfactory Guided Tours: hand fans, blotters, and handheld dry diffusers. Below we provide instructions on how to prepare these methods for the use of an olfactory guided tour.

A. HAND FAN METHOD:

Supply Checklist:

- alcohol-diluted scent(s)
- hand fan
- thick plastic bags
- permanent marker or label maker
- disposable gloves
- tote bag or basket (optional)

Steps:

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Open the fan. Spray six spritzes of diluted smell over the open fan.
3. Close the fan and place it in a plastic bag for storage.
4. Use a permanent marker or label maker to label the plastic bag with the name of the artwork/smell that the fan belongs to.
5. Repeat for each intended smell on the tour.
6. Place the bags of hand fans in a tote bag or basket for carrying during the tour. (optional)
7. While on the guided tour and in front of the chosen artwork, take the corresponding fan out of the plastic bag and unfold it.
8. Ask the group to stand in a semicircle around you (about 1.5 metres away) and waive the fan in the direction of the participants. Occasionally make sure that everyone was able to perceive the smell.
9. The hand fan can be used for more than one tour throughout one day but must be reapplied at the start of a new day of tours.
10. Repeat this for each artwork on the tour.

Considerations:

- * When leading a large group (10+), the tour guide should have two scented fans and ask a tour participant to assist them.
- * When guiding a larger group, make sure to waft the fan in each section of participants.
- * It is crucial that a fragranced fan always has its own plastic bag and is never put in the bag of or with another scented fan. If this happens, fans are cross-contaminated and can no longer be used properly.
- * Hand fans and their storage bags can be used until they are damaged.

B. BLOTTER METHOD

Blotter checklist:

- alcohol-diluted scents
- blotters
- thick plastic bags
- permanent marker or label maker
- disposable gloves
- small trash bag (paper or plastic)
- tote bag or basket (optional)
- glassine bags (optional)

Directions:

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Dip N (the number of participants) blotters into the bottle of diluted scent. Dip carefully but quickly (about 1 second).
3. Place the blotters (of the same smell) in a plastic bag. If using glassine bags, place one blotter in one glassine bag and then into the plastic bag.
4. Use a permanent marker or label maker to label the plastic bag with the name of the artwork/smell that the blotters belong to.
5. Repeat for each intended smell on the tour.
6. Place the bags of blotters in a tote bag or basket for carrying during the tour. (optional)
7. While on the guided tour and in front of the chosen artwork, hand each participant one blotter.
8. Briefly show participants how to use a blotter and always instruct participants to smell with both nostrils.
9. After everyone is finished smelling, participants can keep their blotters. For those who do not wish to keep their blotter, offer to collect it with the trash bag.
10. Repeat this for each artwork on the tour.

Considerations:

- * Prepare blotters close to the tour itself (within 3 hours).
- * Always prepare blotters outside of the galleries.
- * Dip only clean blotters into a bottle.
- * Multiple blotters can be dipped at once.

- * To avoid cross contamination, do not reuse glassine bags.
- * To avoid cross contamination, use one storage bag per set of blotters.
- * For hygienic purposes, it is recommended to use blotters for only one tour.

C. HANDHELD DRY DIFFUSER

Handheld Dry diffuser supply checklist:

- undiluted smells (pure oil)
- hand held dry diffuser
- thick plastic bags
- permanent marker or label maker
- disposable gloves
- pipettes
- tote bag or basket (optional)

Directions for preparing handheld dry diffusers:

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Flip the top of the handheld dry diffuser open to expose the scent cell.
3. Add 3 drops (.15ml) of pure oil with a clean pipette into the centre of the scent cell.
4. As each participant receives their own handheld dry diffuser, repeat previous steps for N (number of participants).
5. Close the top and close the piston.
6. Let stand vertically overnight (at least 8 hours). Do not use the handheld dry diffuser during this time.

Directions for using the dry diffuser:

1. While on the guided tour and in front of the chosen artwork, hand each participant one handheld dry diffuser.
2. Briefly show participants how to use the handheld dry diffuser. (see steps 3-6)
3. Hold the handheld dry diffuser in both hands, with the piston upwards.
4. With the piston in your right hand, rounded side facing you, turn the piston to the right.
5. When the piston is aligned with the raised dot on the body of the handheld dry diffuser, you can let go and the piston will pop up.
6. Put the rounded end close to your nose and pump the piston up and down with your finger to release scented air to your face.

7. After everyone is finished smelling, collect the handheld dry diffusers.
8. Disinfect diffusers with an alcohol wipe and store for the next tour.

Considerations:

- * While preparing the diffusers, add only 3 drops to the scent cell to avoid mechanical problems.
- * Use only clean pipettes when applying scented oil and do not reuse pipettes.
- * Use diffusers for one smell only.

3. TIPS FOR OLFACTORY STORYTELLING DURING GUIDED TOURS

A. TIMING

- Tours should not exceed one hour.
- Typically a tour visiting 5-6 artworks/locations suits.
- Make sure the route of the tour is well known by the tour guide and account for walking time between each artwork.
- It is up to the tour guide how and when they present the smell to participants. We have noticed that once smells are presented, groups often focus more on the smells and converse with each other rather than pay attention to the guide.

B. GROUP SIZE

- Olfactory guided tours can be bigger or smaller but should not exceed 15 participants.
- The group size informs the best distribution method. For smaller groups (less than 10), the blotter method can be used. For larger groups (10+), the hand fan method is more efficient.

C. TYPES OF SMELLS

- We recommend using both fragrant and malodorous smells.
- When the tour guide chooses the smells that they will use during the tour, they should balance fragrant and malodorous smells (ex. 3 fragrances, 2 malodours).
- We recommend not to start or end the tour with a malodorous smell.

D. NOSE FATIGUE

Nose fatigue is when it is difficult to smell due to sniffing multiple smells one after the other. There are two options to help this:

- *Coffee beans* are often used to neutralise the nose in perfume practice.
- *Yourself*, roll up your sleeve and sniff the inside of your elbow. Tour guides can mention this in advance or throughout the tour.

4. OLFACTORY TOUR GUIDE DO'S AND DON'TS

DO:

- Before launching the official olfactory tours, do conduct test tours with various audiences or target groups. This helps to better understand the number of smells and which smells work best on your audiences.
- When presenting a smell to participants, do ask the group to keep reactions to themselves to encourage individual smelling.
- After a few moments of individual smelling, do ask participants to respond freely. Below are a few helpful conversation starters:
 - Is the smell new or have you smelled it before?
 - Does the smell evoke memories, associations, or feelings?
 - Would this smell be indoors or outdoors?
 - What season does the smell go with?
 - Is it something edible?
 - Do you associate a place or person with the smell?
- It can be difficult to put smells into words as we lack olfactory vocabularies.

Do help your participants with this process through multisensory vocabularies.

You can start from the questions below:

- Is this a cool or a warm smell?
- Do you associate the smell with a colour?
- Do you associate the smell with a texture (smooth or rough, sharp or soft)?
- Can you hear the smell? Is it a soloist or an entire orchestra?
- Can you eat this smell? Would it be sweet, sour, bitter, spicy, umami?

DON'T:

- Do not wear perfume or scented lotion.
- Do not ask participants questions like, '*can you name this smell?*', '*what do you smell?*' or '*what is the smell?*'. It can be difficult to pinpoint olfactory vocabularies meaning that these questions can cause insecurities.
- Handing out/incorporating smells into storytelling can cause participants to start conversations amongst themselves. If full attention is necessary, do not disburse smells and wait for an opportunity when you can give participants time and space to converse and reflect on what they are smelling.