



## **Odeuropa project by Dr. Caro Verbeek**

Friedrich Nietzsche complained that history reeked of mould. Indeed, many artefacts in the 19th century exuded a musty air, which became the olfactory emblem of the past and museums in particular. In the 20th century, the museum was dramatically reformed: heritage institutions became (supposedly) inodorate places, embracing the sense of sight and downgrading the senses of smell, taste and touch.

Avant-garde artists such as the Symbolists, Futurists and Surrealists rebelled against this 'scopic regime' and re-introduced scents such as eau de cologne, ozone, coffee and erotic perfumes in established galleries, shocking and astonishing their visitors. Currently, we see an 'olfactory renaissance' in GLAM institutions. Scents can be presented as autonomous (invisible) objects that represent the past, or even as a medium between visitor and artefact. Besides evoking 'historical sensations' and illustrating the function of objects, smell is an excellent means to enhance inclusivity for blind and low-sighted people even in museums of visual art.