

REGISTRATION OPEN

SENSORY DECAY SYMPOSIUM

02-03 NOVEMBER 2023 | ONLINE

Sensing decay in a constructed environment is a multisensory experience. The stages of decay can be transitory and ever-changing. The sensory complexity of decay may be added to or confused by concurrent processes of remaking, rebuilding, and renewal. The symposium aims to consider how we can isolate and record the sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of decay within the continuum of deterioration. In tandem, we seek to recognize how particular sensory aspects of decay may prompt cultural responses and actions – this could include the aestheticization of architectural ruins, for instance. Our senses also provide tools to analyse the presence of decay and its temporal stages, for example, in material heritage conservation. A particular methodological challenge is how we, as multi-disciplinary sensory analysts, can record our own numerous but fast decaying experiences as avenues to questioning and interpreting the past.

Register by November 1st
uva.nl/sensory-decay

SESSIONS

INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE AND SENSORY DECAY

CHAIR: JANE LAWRENCE, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

As in modern life, our ancestors experienced sensations in all aspects of everyday living. However, sensory experience is fleeting and decays very rapidly. This session presents papers on practices that challenge the ephemeral and individual nature of these sensations.

ENGAGING THE SENSES IN EVOLVING CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

CHAIR: GRETCHEN HILYARD BOYCE,
GROUNDWORK PLANNING AND PRESERVATION

The cultural landscape approach examines historic places as complex living systems whose components grow, change, and die. This session presents papers on the decay of both tangible physical fabric and intangible characteristics that form a sense of place across generations.

SNIFFING OUT DECAY

CHAIR: SUE HAMILTON,
UCL INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

The odours of decay are under-explored in archaeology and heritage. This session presents papers on the smells associated with decomposition; variously regarded as malodorous, distinctive, or acceptable/positive.

OPEN SESSION

CHAIRS: PAM JORDAN, UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM
AND SARA MURA, KIEL UNIVERSITY

Presentations span topics that do not fit into one of the structured sessions.

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