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An Exhibition Explores the Intersection of Scent and Design

After years of research into the design of the five senses, Elisabetta Pisu and Clara Muller have curated *Living with Scents* at San Francisco's Museum of Craft and Design.

By: **Jaxson Leilah Stone**

“Through the olfactory sense, we can interpret and learn about the world, fixing in our memory places [we’ve been] and the emotions we’ve lived,” says Elisabetta Pisu, design curator, founder, and project manager of EP Studio. While ephemeral, scents can dramatically shape the way humans live in and experience the built environment. “For this reason, ambient scent has become very important and constitutes an integral part of the research planning for many designers.”

After years of research into the “design of the five senses,” Pisu and olfaction scholar Clara Muller have curated *Living with Scents*, a new exhibition at San Francisco’s Museum of Craft and Design. Featuring the work of more than 40 international artists and designers, the exhibition examines the neurobiological, historical, social, and aesthetic implications of smell through objects. Works on view include a coffeepot 3D-printed from coffee grounds, a clock that releases a different essence every hour, and jewelry that provides a solution for those allergic to perfume.



TEMPLE ROOM DIFFUSER In 2018, Italian designer Sara Ricciardi created a collection of room diffusers inspired by the architecture of Greek and Roman temples for the fragrance brand CULTI Milano. Designed to resemble a Doric column, each device features borosilicate glass tubes that contain the fragrance and curved rattan sticks that diffuse the liquids. Ricciardi is one of more than 40 designers whose olfactory objects are on view in the exhibition Living with Scents, at San Francisco's Museum of Craft and Design. COURTESY SARA RICCIARDI



In 2013, Antwerp, Belgium-based product design studio Unfold developed The Peddler for perfumer Barnab Fillion (above). The series of three 3D-printed ceramic diffusers and receptacles were designed to resemble alchemical tools and utensils. Tokyo-based studio Nendo designed Scent, a series of glass vases (top) in 2020, crafted to exude the aroma of flowers or fruit. COURTESY MARIE TAILLEFER