

INEXPLICABLE ODEUR

English

In a reality in which the relationship between a natural world and its attributes has been lost, the discourse which claims that things do not have the smell they ought to have, that nothing tastes of what it should, strikes me as empty rhetoric at a moment in time when these properties have gone adrift, when we have only a vague memory of what they used to be.

The loss of this 'naturalness' — itself a much devalued term — in interpersonal relationships seems to have become a contemporary commonplace. The transmutation of a natural state in dialogue into a dislocated and excessively primped form in affective exchange has prompted me to develop a project which — on the basis of a reflection from a social, even anthropological, perspective on the culture of smells and the increasingly distant link to the referents that are natural to it — represents in metaphorical form this human condition that is so much in vogue.

Inexplicable Odeur emerges from this prior reflection and is projected as a work which attempts to activate subsequent reflections in the recipient. This is the framework within which *Inexplicable Odeur* suggests new appearances that do indeed 'deceive'; but we have already accepted this fact of late, and I now propose to reflect on it. *Inexplicable Odeur* is a work that by means of a minimalist formalization, smart in appearance but also poetic, engenders a sense of the absurd and unease with scientific rigour.

Certain plants which are not in principle characterized by their natural scent are endowed in this project with attributes of smell that transport us to other realities. This brings about a re-discovery of the already inherently subjective concept of 'the exotic', a *megamix* of artificially assigned olfactory attributes.

In version 1.0 of the project *Inexplicable Odeur* establishes a reflection on the perceptual *dérive* in which we find ourselves in relation to certain attributes of our natural environment. This is a work that sets out to sensitize us by means of an invented universe of smells, critically raising our awareness as receptors.

Phase 2.0 of the project will put together a collection of plants, chosen because they have no smell of their own, which will be modified using nanotechnology to 'implant' in them the smell of a perfume, generating a new format in perfumery close to that of sculpture. Ours is an age in which we are no longer surprised by the application of natural attributes to artificial products designed by humans (soap smells like lemon, like kiwi, or like some completely unknown fruit), in which genetic modification has led us to realities that we now take for granted, entirely forgetting the natural source, the origins of that red rose. At this point of perceptual delirium *Inexplicable Odeur* puts forward a proposal that seeks to make us think.

It would have been absurd for a primitive human to mask his olfactive identity with a smell that was not his own: animals and peers alike would have been bewildered. On this assumption of the artificialization of what is natural, the project I am proposing invites us to reflect on the course of natural events and how we have been altering these and recognizing them in new perceptual realities.