The first workshop will be structured around two central themes: the senses in everyday life and the life cycle (e.g. birth, maturation, death); and the senses in religion. Before delving into these themes, we will kickoff the conversation by exploring some general considerations about the study of the senses in different fields.

Here are a few questions to have in mind as you read the material listed below:

- What are the advantages and challenges of studying the senses? Consider with reference to and examples from your own area of research and expertise.
- What are the advantages and challenges of studying the senses through material culture?
- How does the use of the senses in everyday life and their cultural associations condition our values and understanding of different aspects of life?
- How have different religions engaged the senses and used sensory values and symbolism to construct religious meanings?

The day will begin at the Ashmolean at 10am (meet at the main entrance). We will be there until lunch, after which we will go to a college (probably Corpus again) to discuss the themes of the day in greater depth. We will be finished by 4pm.

**Preparatory reading:**

The second workshop will be structured around three themes: synaesthesia and the interaction between the senses; extra-sensory perception and experience; and sensory deprivation. We will begin by recapping some of the broader themes from our first session. In particular, it is important to keep in mind the general methodological question of how we can study the senses through material culture and what are the potential pitfalls.

A few questions to consider as you read and listen to the material listed below:

- What are the advantages and drawbacks of studying the senses in isolation and of studying interactions between different senses?
- To what extent is all experience synaesthetic?
- How have extra-sensory experience and sensory deprivation been valued, represented and understood by different cultures? Consider with reference to your own field and the preparatory material.
- What do deviations from sensory ‘norms’ and expectations—like extra-sensory experience and sensory deprivation—reveal about the senses and their associated values?

The day will begin at the Ashmolean at 10am (meet at the main entrance). We will have a handling session and lunch in the museum, after which we will go to a college (probably Corpus again) to discuss the themes of the day. We will be finished by 5pm.

An important assignment for this workshop is to think about which object(s) on display in the museum you would like to present in your gallery talk. If you are not sure yet, then consider some themes you would like to explore e.g. a general theme—senses and death, senses and the everyday etc.—and/or something more specific—e.g. attitudes to vision in Renaissance painting. In our discussion session, everyone will briefly say which objects and/or themes they are interested in. The talks in Trinity term will be delivered in pairs around a common (if general) theme related to the senses. For this to work effectively, the paired talks will need to be on objects which are not too far apart in the museum; herding your audience from one end of the museum to the other would be like herding cats. Once we know what objects and/or themes people are interested in, then we can talk amongst ourselves about possible pairings.

Preparatory reading and listening:
• Radio 4 The Uncommon Senses: Series 1. Episode: Making Sense of the Senses (15 mins). Link: https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b08j9z4z
• Radio 4 The Uncommon Senses: Series 1. Episode: Interoception (15 mins). Link: https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b08k5zlm
• Radio 4 The Uncommon Senses: Series 1. Episode: Dinnertime: A Multi-Sensory Extravaganza! (15 mins). Link: https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b08k5zqw
Talking Sense
Workshop 3

The third workshop will focus on the theme of the senses in the museum.

A few questions to consider as you read the material listed below:

- how and why do museums privilege certain modes of sensory engagement with artefacts?
- how might such ‘sensory hierarchies’ affect visitors’ understanding and experiences of museums and the values that museums (implicitly and explicitly) promote?
- what stands to be gained from different forms of sensory engagement with artefacts e.g. handling sessions etc.?
- how can we, as public speakers in the museum, encourage visitors to engage closely with our chosen objects in a way that is informative and thought-provoking?

The day will begin at the Ashmolean; meet at the main entrance at 10am. We can use this time in the museum to think through the theme of the day, work out possible pairs for the gallery talks if not already decided, and explore some of the objects people are interested in presenting. We will have an early lunch in museum and then go to Corpus to talk through the readings. Since it is the final workshop, it seems a good occasion to go over the subjects of the previous workshops and voice any general thoughts, concerns, epiphanies about the senses.

We will finish by 4:30pm, at which point we were thinking it would be nice to go to the pub together afterwards and continue the conversation.

Preparatory reading: