



## **Chloroform Scopolamine**

Lucy Chinen and Sean Raspet

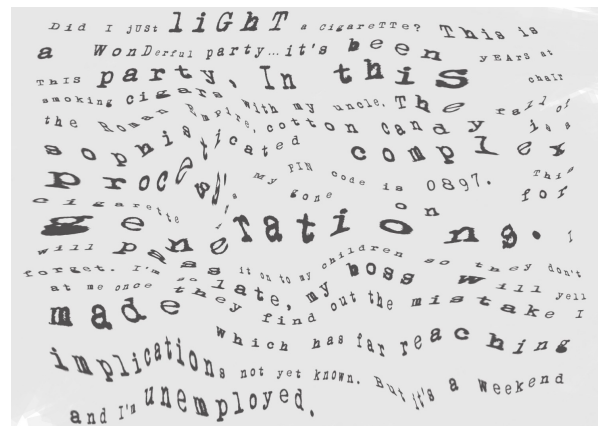
**Exhibition Dates:** March 22 – April 20, 2025

**Opening:** Saturday, March 22, 6-8pm

The Institute for Art and Olfaction Gallery is pleased to host Chloroform Scopolamine, an exhibition by artists Lucy Chinen and Sean Raspet that showcases their new perfume by the same name.

Chloroform Scopolamine is inspired by the Angel's Trumpet— or Brugmansia, which scopolamine is derived from, and the cinematic trope of immobilizing a person via a chloroform soaked rag. The opening night will feature a series of performed actions to diffuse the fragrance. The actions are a blend of those performed by criminals or scammers intending to intoxicate their victims though inhalation, and if those criminals themselves, were stuck in a scopolamine trance, dispensing the vapors on loop.

The opening night will feature a series of performed actions to diffuse the fragrance by actors Liesel Hanson and Lee Tyler Thompson.



*Did I just light a cigarette? This is a wonderful party... It's been years at this party, in this chair smoking cigars with my uncle. The fall of the roman empire, cotton candy is a sophisticated, complex process. My pin code is 0897. This cigarette has gone on for generations. I will pass it on to my children so they don't forget. I'm so late, my boss will be mad at me once they find out the mistake I made which has far reaching implications not yet known. But it's a weekend, and I'm unemployed.*



After a haunted bar tour around Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco, we ended up sharing a drink with the tour guide who was part of a ghost hunting society. He told us there was a difference between ghost sightings where the ghost approaches you, or acknowledges your presence, versus seeing a ghost do something without acknowledging you, like a child playing with their toys, as if a scene on a loop. He said sometimes when a ghost performs an action repeatedly in their lives, the image is electro-magnetically etched into space. Kind of like tv static, the ghost isn't actually there, it's just a reverberation of their repeated actions being played on forever.

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The act of intoxicating a person by covering their mouth with a chloroform soaked rag, to facilitate a kidnapping, is a common trope of some old-timey era, repeated throughout cinema history—first for dramatic effect, then comedic. In reality, inhaling chloroform vapours would not actually make someone lose consciousness for any substantial amount of time. Some believe the action lives on as a trope to prevent anyone from getting hurt should a criminal copy something they saw in a movie.

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Resurrectine is a fluid invented by protagonist Martial Canterel, a wealthy scientist and inventor in Raymond Roussel's *Locus Solus*, that has the ability to reanimate dead bodies. While guiding visitors through his estate, Canterel introduces his bio-mechanical inventions, the last of which is eight tableaux vivants inside a glass cage whom he has reanimated with resurrectine. When injected into the skull of a fresh corpse, it causes the body to continually enact the most important movements of its past life, plodding through its own one-act play.

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In *Reality Switch Technologies*, Andrew R. Gallimore describes common experiences after consuming scopolamine and other tropane-type molecules:

"Phantom smoking", for example, is a curiously common effect reported after consumption of tropane-containing plants [in the nightshade family Solanaceae, such as brugmansia, belladonna, mandrake, or datura]. Trippers will not only smoke an imaginary cigarette for extended periods of time but then, finally noting its absence, scramble around on the floor searching the 'dropped cigarette' before it should set the house alight. When consumed orally, the effects are often delayed and can sneak up on the user, who might assume the plant to be inactive, only to realise some time later that



they spent the preceding two hours entertaining guests at a party that never happened.”

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A lightly nefarious, nuanced scent opening with fresh notes of hosting an engaging party that never happened, followed by a touch of phantom cigarette, before settling into a lingering base of a nervous criminal who has spilled chemicals, for a sharp green but noxious synthetic finish. Chloroform Scopolamine is the day after being scammed into willingly withdrawing money out of an ATM.

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

LUCY CHINEN is an artist, writer, and, together with Sean Raspet and Dennis Oliver Schroer, a co-founder of nonfood, an algae-based food company that has featured at conferences and events like SynbioBeta, San Jose (2024); the Wall Street Journal's Future of Everything, New York (2019); CURRENT:LA Public Art Triennial, Los Angeles (2019); and New Harvest, Boston (2018). Her art exhibitions include Sean's Room, Los Angeles (2023); the United Nations System Staff College, Turin (2023); and was a contributor to The Synthetic Ecologies Lab, a programme by the Serpentine Galleries' Research and Development Platform.

SEAN RASPET is an artist who has been working with scent and molecular structure for over 10 years. His work has been exhibited at the Okayama Art Summit (directed by Pierre Huyghe), Tai Kwun Contemporary Art Centre in Hong Kong, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, de Young Museum, San Francisco, M Woods Museum, Beijing, the 9th Berlin Biennale, Bridget Donahue, New York, Société, Berlin, Various Small Fires, Los Angeles, Empty Gallery, Hong Kong, Sculpture Center, New York, and The Kitchen, New York, among others.



## ABOUT IAO GALLERY

The Institute for Art and Olfaction gallery plays host to visual art, performative, and installation-based exhibitions from artists working at the intersection of scent and art. We welcome artists from around the world in collaborative exhibitions that showcase visual art, performance, installation and – of course – scent.

The IAO gallery form has changed over the years in response to the space that the IAO has occupied. Since 2016, the IAO Gallery occupies a 154 square foot room located within the Institute for Art and Olfaction in Chinatown, as well as two window display spaces facing Chung King Road.

Learn more at [artandolfaction.com/exhibitions](http://artandolfaction.com/exhibitions)

## OPEN HOURS

Wednesdays: 1 to 5pm

Thursdays: 1. To 5pm

And by appointment

The IAO Gallery is accessible by wheelchair. However, please note that there is a one-inch cement lip at the entry to the IAO.