The conference “The Salon and the Senses in the Long Eighteenth Century: Interdisciplinary Perspectives,” seeks to join the intellectual heritage of the salons with their multidisciplinary, multisensory natures. We will explore the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile aspects of the salon, considering the arts and sensory pleasures of the salon alongside the verbal arts—the poetry, literature, theater, and conversation—that were cultivated there.

Salons of the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries knew no disciplinary boundaries. More than other institutions of the age, salons offered their habitués opportunities to engage with a wide range of social, cultural, artistic, literary, and verbal practices. A multidisciplinary approach requires that we—like salon hostesses and guests before us—open our minds across modern intellectual boundaries and reanimate the embodied practices of the institution. By bringing together scholars from numerous fields, we hope to shed new light on salons in all of their complexity. Above all, we seek to understand the multi-sensory nature of the salon: its sights, sounds, tastes, and smells; its conversations, texts, and subtexts.

We welcome proposals for conference presentations, performances, or interactive sessions. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Senses and sensory experience
- Material culture, furniture, and fashion
- Emotions and expressive culture
- Gender, sexuality, and the body
- Salons as sites of global or local cultural exchange
- Aesthetics and philosophy
- Natural philosophy, collecting, and experimentation
- Letters and other texts
- Music and visual art
- Poetry, theater, and the novel
- Games, food, and sociability

Abstracts of up to 350 words, as well as a one-page curriculum vitae, should be sent by September 15, 2019 to jemjones@sas.rutgers.edu. Graduate students and early-career scholars are encouraged to apply. Selected participants will be notified by the end of October. The conference will be hosted by the Center for Cultural Analysis (CCA) at Rutgers University and is convened by the CCA’s “Experiencing the Salon” working group, led by Jennifer Jones (Department of History, jemjones@sas.rutgers.edu) and Rebecca Cypess (Department of Music, rebecca.cypess@rutgers.edu). For more information, contact Jennifer or Rebecca.