

QUINTESENTIALLY

PERFUME

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# QUINTESENTIALLY PERFUME

I'm very proud to introduce you to Quintessentially Publishing's first fragrance title, Quintessentially Perfume. This book will take you on a journey of discovery revealing the stories, details and inspiration behind a selection of world class perfumers, their brands and the creations they offer us.

My fascination with perfume started very young and quickly evolved into a full blown and life-long love affair. I have been fortunate to work with a wide variety of perfumers and creators over the last decade and to gain understanding and knowledge that has inspired me in my consulting work and the creation of this book.

Quintessentially Publishing's dedication to luxurious services and products continues today with the perfume brands and houses featured within these pages. Quintessentially Perfume presents a rich and varied cross section of collections that cover different styles and approaches; brands whose appeal has gained mainstream recognition, as well as those who have deliberately sought to retain their niche identity. They hail from all corners of the world: France – whose southern town of Grasse has long been considered the world capital of perfume – Italy, Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Austria, the United States and of course the UK, which boasts some of the world's most respected and influential perfume creators.

These featured perfume brands share an exceptional quality and beauty in their fragrances; a sense of innovation, a desire to honour the most precious raw materials and a ceaseless quest to captivate their followers at all times. Their works are inspired by emotions and tell moving, heartfelt stories. These pages showcase and applaud their merits and achievements; highlight their enduring relevance and reveal the role they play in the future of the perfume business.

In an age when instant response is the order of the day; when technology is omnipresent and we have witnessed the demise of face to face interaction, it seems vital to re-introduce some fundamental human feeling into our everyday lives. Since the beginning of time our sense of smell has been key to our existence – warning us of danger and leading us to food. In the past perfume has been used to hide less pleasant smells by evoking thoughts of freshness and cleanliness. But fragrance also has the ability to play with our emotions, to stir up thoughts of love and romance, to revive distant memories and significant moments. It seems apt to cherish this sense which has direct access to what makes us special: our heart and our brain. And who better to turn to than the world's renowned experts and creators documented right here? I hope you enjoy this celebration as much as I have.

# NATHALIE GRAINGER

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*Photo by Paul Raesi*

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By Nathalie Grainger

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By Roja Dove

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DIRECTORY

Fragrance is the perfect example of the whole being greater than the sum of the parts. Hopefully this book will create a chink in a door that encourages you to step further in to explore the breadth of its creativity, the groundbreaking scents, the beauty of the bottles, the incredible artwork, the erudite penmanship, the raw materials, the places where the materials are sourced. Each aspect of perfumery is vast; each hope and dream huge.

I was utterly delighted when Quintessentially asked me to be Creative Advisor for this book. We drew up a list of some of the houses which represent the diversity of perfumery, and in their own ways have shaped the olfactory universe. We gathered together journalists who have distinctive voices, a point of view and a thorough understanding of what makes us, the brand and a scent tick. The result is a fantastic, eclectic melting pot of modern perfumery. Each of the houses represented has a very specific story to tell; the one constant – passion.

We wanted to create a book which looked at perfumery from different perspectives – that of the perfumer, the house, the owner, and the journalist. We wanted to create a book which looked at the old and the new, the large and the small. In doing so we hoped to create a book like no other; that is as eclectic as the industry itself.

As the great perfumer Edmond Roudnitska said, “The more we penetrate odours, the more they end up possessing us. They live within us and become an integral part of us....”

We hope you like the book we have created.

Roja Dove – Perfumery





# PERFUME THROUGH THE YEARS

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## PASSIONATE PERFECTION

Classic: Definition – Having lasting significance or worth; enduring.

There are two things which fundamentally determine whether a scent is likely to endure – quality of creativity and quality of materials.

Many people presume synthetics are somehow inferior and cheap. This is wrong. They can be. In the same way natural materials can be too. Natural jasmine can cost as little as £150 per kilo whereas the finest comes from the town of Grasse in the south of France and costs over £30,000 per kilo. It requires more than five million flowers picked at dawn before the sun touches them to obtain the precious oil. This pales into insignificance when you look at orris, the dried rhizome of the iris plant which takes six years to process and costs some three and a half times the price of gold. A natural occurring synthetic in the form of an isolate within is called orrisone and costs an additional 50%. Whereas natural ambergris comes in at a whopping ten times the price of gold. With each new creation a blend of natural materials are sublimated with newly discovered synthetics. They give the perfumer new possibilities, often costing fortunes to develop and produce, before being offered to the very best to work with. If the perfumer lives up to expectation a new scent will be created which will redefine perfumery and set a new trend. Others will try to follow the style but unless they use equal fine ingredients what they produce will be mediocre by comparison. So with the finest materials in hand the perfumer then has to set about the creative process.

Close your eyes and try to imagine a colour you have never seen before; if that is too difficult, try to imagine a sound you have never heard before; or, for the would be perfumer in you, try to imagine a smell you have never smelt before. Difficult isn't it? But that is exactly what a great perfumer has to do when working on a truly new creation. Drawing on a palette of thousands of materials they have to discern, divide, and harness a myriad of ingredients – a process which will often take many years. Without question this is one of the aspects that makes the story of scent such a fascinating and ever changing one.



The great classic fragrances have broken moulds, set trends and re-written the rules. Importantly they endure. They give rise to variations and imitations, but as in many fields, it is the originals that discerning people seek out while the imitators fall slowly by the wayside. Since commercial perfumery began at the very end of the 19th century, an average of 250 fragrances have been launched globally each year, which equates to some 30,000 fragrances in total. Of these less than 0.2% have achieved the status of being classed a true classic. In most instances it is the discovery of a new synthetic material which allows the perfumer to create an original harmony; sometimes due to an accident – an inadvertent overdose. As these new raw materials are developed, the perfumer will use their skill to harness the odours and hopefully shape a brand new olfactory signature. This can often take many years, in the case of the petrochemical derivatives known as aldehydes, nearly a quarter of a century. This indeed is the story of Chanel No5.

In 1903 many perfumers were trying to harness the newly discovered family of aldehydes, but it was Ernest Beaux who in 1921 with the creation of Chanel No5 defined a radically new floral style. He presented Gabrielle Chanel a selection of ten fragrances, each of which contained the very finest raw materials, each of them containing differing amounts of aldehydes. She chose the fifth trial, the bottle marked No5, where he had overdosed the aldehyde creating a shimmering new style unlike anything before. It was as radically modern as both Chanel and her views, and has become the most famous perfume in the world. As for its name, she was wildly superstitious and five was her lucky number. She also considered most fragrance names of the time ‘sickly’ and ‘sappy’ in their overt romanticism – this was as modern as Chanel herself.

Six years later in 1927 André Fraysse, who had also been working on the aldehydic theme, went off in a totally different direction. Using the effervescent olfactory effect of the aldehyde to make the ingredients cascade, he created another interpretation which was to become Lanvin’s great classic.

Arpège. Here the aldehyde is buried deeply within the structure where it works alongside some (other ingredients; it is the conductor which releases the notes at just the right moment creating perfectly harmonious arpeggio. The subtlety of this magnificent creation has allowed many variations and so makes it one of the most influential fragrances ever to have been produced. But none will compare – Jeanne Lanvin was adamant no material was too good for this scent which she gave to her daughter as a gift (as can be seen on the Paul Iribe leitmotif on the bottle).

Even as the world descended into the gloom of the Great Depression, Jean Patou was driven by his quest for ultimate luxury. “Wonderful,” exclaimed Jean Patou, “this is it.” He was smelling what was to become Joy. The perfumer Henri Alméras said, “You cannot use it commercially.” “Why not?” Patou demanded. “It’s too expensive, the price is too prohibitive,” answered Alméras. “Nonsense,” Patou said, “and I have got the perfect name for it, Joy. Wherever perfume is sold, Joy will be the standard of excellence; like Rolls Royce is to cars.” Never had a scent used such enormous quantities of such high grade, high cost, high concentration, natural raw materials, and to this day its formula is untouched. The finest jasmine mingles with the other legendary note from Grasse: rose de Mai, which requires over 300,000 blooms to create a kilo of oil. Joy is an unusual fragrance in that it uses the same notes to amplify and sublimate its luxurious central theme and in doing so it has fulfilled Patou’s dream.



By 1948 the mood had shifted and Nina Ricci's L'Air du Temps perfectly captured the air of the times. This elegant creation fulfilled Nina Ricci's son Robert's belief about perfume; that perfume is not merchandise, but rather "its creation is an act of love." This beautiful scent was made even more desirable by the iconic Lalique flacon which houses it: two doves flying free which, when a woman caresses herself with them, as she applies fragrance, is reminded of the beautiful gentleness of the revolutionary scent. L'Air du Temps must be regarded as one of the most important perfumes ever to have been created. Launched after the turmoil of the Second World War, it is a masterpiece of simplicity. But its simplicity gives it its complexity, as it relies so heavily on fine quality natural raw materials which imbue it with a myriad of different olfactory facets. This effect shows the genius of its creator, Francis Fabron, who used a newly discovered material to amplify the warm spicy note of carnation in L'Air du Temps' heart.

Christian Dior's Diorissimo created by Edmond Roudnitska in 1956 is one of the only single floral creations to have survived. Why? To simplify is one thing, to stylise is something totally different. What Roudnitska managed to conjure up in this remarkable example of creativity is the freshness of nature reborn in spring. He was determined to pare down the formula, to move away from the big production numbers of many other fragrances of this time, to create something fresh and new. The result is in fact very complex, recreating the image of woodland: the floor alive with spring's new mantle and at its heart a delicate elusive blossom, a symbol of love, a highly stylised lily of the valley. A flower he believed would bring his creations luck and one which ultimately covered his coffin; the blooms spilling to the ground exuding their gentle, inimitable sweetness. This is Dior's Diorissimo.

By the mid 1960s men were beginning to place more importance on scent. Christian Dior's Eau Sauvage, created in 1966, is in my opinion one of the most important creations of the second half of the last century. Created, like Diorissimo, by Edmond Roudnitska, it was the first fragrance to contain the newly discovered Hedione, or Di-hydro Jasmonate. This is a perfumer's dream material. It is one of the 900 or so molecular components found in jasmine and when isolated it has a pronounced citrus odour. It is far less volatile than a true citrus note and therefore has the advantage of lasting. Its slight floral aspect makes it an ideal 'connector', taking our nose smoothly from the fresh, citrus top notes to the sweeter more floral harmonies found in the heart. With its new, costly, lasting freshness, Eau Sauvage transformed both the chypre accord – in which woody, mossy notes are counter-pointed with brisk, fresh citrus notes – and the entire concept of masculine and feminine perfumery.

Some 20 years after Diorissimo, in 1977, the world was addicted to perfumer Jean-Louis Sieuzac's creation for Yves Saint Laurent – Opium. Sieuzac pushed the oriental notes of vanilla, resins and coumarin in a totally new direction; the small amounts it contains (only around 10%) give it enormous volume and presence suggesting a concentration some five times greater. These harmonies are given lift for the first time in the oriental accord by the inclusion of aldehydes around a central theme of rose and carnation. It was the first French fragrance to raise the concentration of 'juice' to unprecedented levels and the resulting, almost narcotic effect, was to fundamentally change the way future fragrances would be created. Also inspired by the orient was Jean-Jacques Diener's creation of 1981, which was surprisingly Cartier's first fragrance; they had designed a bottle in 1939 for a fragrance project but the war put a stop to it. What they eventually created was a contemporary oriental – Must de Cartier. Seventy years had passed since the first orientals were produced and although most of the structure of the classic oriental accord remains intact; Cartier used many new raw materials ingeniously grafted onto the rich soft base, imbuing Must de Cartier's oriental facets with a crisp freshness which had never been smelt before. Using their reputation as a luxury French jeweller as a starting point, their fragrance reflected their heritage, combining opulence with refinement; using only the world's finest raw materials they redefined the oriental accord.

Davidoff's Cool Water, created in 1988, was a further revolution in masculine perfumery. With its Adonis-like naked male imagery and its use of a dynamically fresh new wonder molecule, it became one of the most influential and successful masculine fragrances of all time and quickly became the blueprint for many imitations and still is to this day.

In 1992 Thierry Mugler launched his first fragrance, Angel. Created by Olivier Cresp and Yves de Chiris, this unprecedented scent shook the world and really did push fragrance in a whole new direction. Its secret is the paradoxical use of sugary sweet edible notes like candyfloss and toffee apples on a deep, earthy, ultra complex base around patchouli – which itself has an almost bitter chocolate note to it. The gum resins often associated with the oriental accord have been removed and the result has become the classical reference for a whole generation of oriental style fragrances. It was launched almost as a whisper campaign, each woman who smelt it fell under its spell, casting aside more traditional styles of oriental fragrances which, in comparison, seemed thick, old-fashioned and somewhat bourgeois. Both the fragrance and the bottle were almost impossible to perfect and it is only through the belief and determination of the former president of Parfums Thierry Mugler, Vera Strübing that Angel became a stellar success – a modern classic.

Go back 100 years, when the perfumer was making for a few select clients, and the cost of rare materials did not matter as the clients were rich and demanded the finest, most costly ingredients. Today the modern world rarely allows perfumers carte blanche to use these rare materials when creating a new fragrance. Ironically exceptions come in the form of some of the oldest fragrance houses who are enjoying revivals in the quest for legitimacy and authenticity. This is true for Lubin with its great creations like *Nuit de Longchamp*; Grossmith, who revived three of their legendary scents not once taking into account the cost of the formulae; and most importantly of all Houbigant who revived one of the most important scents of all time, *Quelques Fleurs*, whose influence can be found in nearly every other scent's structure. It is the scent which defined the floral bouquet with its blend of muguet, rose, jasmine, vanilla, sandalwood, and orris. We can see its influence on creations such as Chanel No5, *Arpège*, *L'Air du Temps*, and *Madame Rochas* – classics in their own right alongside much more recent creations like the Tom Ford Musks. Also Houbigant's *Fougère Royale* which was so influential it paved the way for modern perfumery through the inclusion of the first synthetic materials – had languished for years; I have had the pleasure of working on its recreation and not once until the formula was complete was I asked the cost. More recent additions would be Clive Christian, with the scents that bear his name. He sums it up eloquently thus: "In luxury and creativity there is a heartbeat that the financially driven just do not get."

Today marketing teams tend to work on research briefs, market analysis and minimising risk factors resulting in fragrances that tend to be safe, similar and somewhat uniform. Luckily there are still people who believe vehemently and passionately in an olfactory project, and however many times they are told they should modify their creation, they believe enough in what they imagined when they closed their eyes and dreamt of a smell they had never smelt before, that another classic will slowly emerge and see the light of day. We will all be touched by it, and perfumery will once again be spiralling off in a new direction and these new illustrious fragrances will join the elite band of true classics.

Classic: Definition -A work recognised as definitive

Roja Dove





# PERFUME INSPIRATION

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## STORIES THAT INSPIRE BEAUTIFUL FRAGRANCES

The world's most enduring perfumes are inspired by some of the most beautiful and passionate love stories ever told: sweet narratives that reverberate in our hearts and minds long after any pleasure of the skin has dissipated. They conjure up images of sensuality and old-fashioned romanticism like nothing else can; holding us close, ensnared, spellbound.

Think of Guerlain's Shalimar. Sanskrit for 'temple of love', it is the name of the 17th century Emperor Shah Jehan's favourite Mughal gardens in Lahore where he would often walk with his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. The story goes that, lovesick and aggrieved after his wife's sudden death in childbirth, he touchingly dedicated his life to the creation of the Taj Mahal in honour of her memory. Likewise, the free-spirited Jicky was created by Aimé Guerlain and named after his sweetheart Jacqueline whom he wanted to marry (his nickname for her was Jicky), but it was never to be. Or L'Heure Bleue, the last great scent to be created before the First World War, it is said that Jacques found inspiration as he walked along the banks of the Seine at that fleeting, fragile moment in time (neither day nor night) when twilight falls. He encapsulated it forever in one of the most romantic perfumes ever created – the one his wife Lily always chose to wear.

Surely few can fail to be moved by the dramatic bouquet in Creed's Fleurissimo, created for Grace Kelly on her wedding day on behalf of her Prince Rainier; or the impending sadness in Caron's N'aimez Que Moi, which became a symbolic gift to wives and fiancées as French soldiers departed for the trenches; or even the more fiery Fracas, by Piguet, inspired by the single image of Hollywood legend Rita Hayworth in Gilda the epitome of femininity and eroticism, the 'Love Goddess', as she tosses back her mane of red hair. Others merely allude to the soft feminine form: Villoresi's Teint de Neige, a soft powdery scent that sketches a picture of a delicate young girl sitting at a lacy glass dressing table, powdering her face and illuminating her exquisite skin; or Frederic Malle's En Passant, the image of a young girl on a warm green morning in early spring, strolling along the banks of the Seine, catching wafts of fresh white lilac buds over a wall.

Perfume has a unique ability to capture our bitter sweet, cherished memories, to hold them dear and revive treasured thoughts with startling clarity and emotion at any given moment with one sharp intake of breath. For, unlike our other senses, smell channels fragrance directly to the brain's limbic system: the emotional part of the brain, home to our memory and imagination. So when you detect a fragrance you haven't experienced for a long time – perhaps that scent you wore on your own wedding day, or your first date – you can picture every detail: from the rustle of the gown, the sound of laughter and music, each warm embrace, the rush of unexpected happiness. Or indeed, you may quiver with a deep sadness should that memory be of some heartfelt loss. Much like hearing a piece of music

that can instantly take you back to a certain time and place, the faintest trace of a fragrance can evoke strong memories and powerful reactions from within. And every one of us has our own olfactory memory which is completely individual and made up of all our personal experiences. A single drop of perfume has the ability to revive the dream and memory of loved ones past and present.

We relate to perfume perfectly. Imagination stirs the senses. And when a love of something or someone is the inspiration behind the drive to create a fragrance, the story of this passion intrigues us, captures our heart, ensnares it, echoes our moods and emotions and, according to leading perfumers, makes us feel closer to either the creator or the muse. This may inspire us in some way, sparking us to buy a fragrance and ultimately to wear it.

“What inspires me the most in the world is... women,” says Francois Demarchy, Director of Olfactory Development for LVMH. “For me, composing a perfume is much easier when I have the image of a woman in my head. I think this is important to the women that wear my fragrances because they know that they were a part of the creative process.” Likewise Jean-Paul Guerlain recalls, “My grandfather (Jacques Guerlain) used to say that a successful fragrance is one whose scent exactly matches the dream or vision that inspired it. It is the story of a sublime and sensual passion. My point of departure in the quest of this sensuality may be a smile, the fragrance of a woman’s skin, the fleeting vision of a face. Every one of our fragrances was inspired by a muse. Behind each one, you find yourself in the presence of a woman who was loved or admired.” So we put ourselves in her shoes...

ROBERT  
PIGUET  
PARIS - FRANCE





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“Most consumers are looking for a sensory experience and to live a dream,” says Françoise Donchy, nose for Parfums Givenchy. “To bring a story is a way to strengthen the relationship between

product and her users, to give them culture, and interest, to allow them to dream, and above all seduce. In a world where speed and stress are permanent, stories are very necessary and provide high pleasant moments. They act like an 'oasis'. They bring refreshment, reflexion and enrich the mind. "When a fragrance has a story behind it, it makes it more real, more alive, more true" adds Lyn Harris. "It has more emotion, something more to connect with. It's always easier to relate to something like this, with a story, with nostalgia, rather than something abstract."

Of course, the moment we fall under the spell of a scent, stories no longer exist in the realm of fancy or in the dreams and imaginings of a perfumer. The stories swiftly become our own, as too does the perfume. So forget the bottle, the packaging, the dreams sold therein, it is our own unique associations thereafter that makes a perfume irreplaceable in our lives: the memories of an instance, a perfect picture that never fades, encapsulated like a molecular moment of magic, fleeting, imperceptible and elusive. A perfume is loved because of a single slice of our own life, our own love story, be it partner, lover, father, mother or child.

Like a secret haunting of the senses, fragrance touches our nerve centre and knows no boundaries. It touches and becomes an integral part of us for eternity. For me, that one swift intake of Le Dix or Les Reviens – both my late mother's life-loved scents – releases a raw intensity of emotion and I am swiftly moved to tears. The stories are now of my own making; my memories of every cherished hug and kiss, that most heavenly bond that really does rip the heart and soul apart once it is gone, are placed upon a pedestal, to be loved and revered for eternity. Much like a favourite story... much like a well-loved scent. Too touching for words.

Jo Glanville-Blackburn

# PERFUME BOTTLES



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