

Fragrance Trends

By Jacques Vermorel, Perry International, Woodside, NY

In addressing the question of future fragrance trends, one must first understand the past. Perfumery is a worldwide art and science that has a heritage dating back thousands of years.

The real origin of perfumes comes from the orient and especially from Egypt. The Greeks were great perfumers utilizing essences and aromatic plants for both pleasure and for medicinal purposes. The Roman emperors brought perfume to a high level of use for all occasions.

Concurrent with the reign of Henri III (1579-1589), who was a lover of violet in powder and of amber and used it from head to toe, the use of perfumes expanded from royalty to the bourgeoisie and finally to the people.

During the reign of Louis XIII (1610-1643), perfumes tended to consist mainly of musk, civet, myrtle and iris. For example, "eau des anges" was distilled water from myrtle flowers. Under the reign of Louis XIV (1643-1715) perfumes were harsh, spicy and resinous.

The period during which Louis XV (1715-1774) ruled became known as "la cour parfume" as a result of the many varieties of different fragrances worn by the aristocracy. King Louis XV was a great lover of perfume and Madame De Pompadour. This marked the beginning of the use of eau de cologne which was popularized as a result of Napoleon Bonaparte's (1804-1815) perpetual use of eau de cologne.

In 1790 the first formulas for toilet water were established using ingredients derived directly from natural products. Thus dawned a new

phase of perfumery with single floral fragrances giving way to more complex creations.

In 1828, under the reign of Napoleon III, Pierre François Guerlain started the famous House of Guerlain and created Eau De Cologne Imperial. This was a more sophisticated approach to a classical cologne.

New synthetics on the market influenced and sparked new creativity in perfumery. For example, Houbigant (1882) was the first to use coumarin in Fougere Royale.

In 1898 a new product, amyl salicylate, was used by Piver to create Le Trefle Incarnat. Amyl salicylate in addition with methyl nonyl acetaldehyde produced Reve D'Or. With the introduction of ionone in 1902, Roger Gallet developed La Vera Violetta and Coty launched Rose Jacqueminot. In 1905 the genius of Coty was displayed in L'Origan which due to its originality became a leader and inspiration for many new perfumes.

The inception of Quelques Fleurs in 1912 by Houbigant occurred as a result of the blending of both natural and new synthetic products. This gave perfumers new freedom in their approach and direction with respect to their creations. In 1917, once again the talent of François Coty was illustrated by Le Chypre, which is still a well-accepted perfume accord today. This generated the creation of Mitsouko (Guerlain 1921) followed by Femme (Rochas 1942) which had additional fruity tones.

The first time aldehydes were used in large quantities was in 1921, by Chanel in Chanel #5, followed by Arpege (Lanvin 1927), using less al-

dehydes and adding amber notes and more floral notes—jasmin and muguet. During this time Millot in 1925 used the idea of chypre (Coty), the aldehydes of Chanel #5 and gardenia to introduce Crepe de Chine.

During the 1920s, the perfume business spread to include a new type of firm—"Les Couturiers," the high class dressmakers, the masters of fashion. Knowing that a woman is not perfectly dressed without the aura of perfume and capitalizing on the universal glamour of their name, they wanted to supply both the dress and the fragrance. Their models wore both at original fashion presentations.

Nerolidol and farnesol were instrumental in the creation of Je Reviens (Worth) in 1932 and Fleurs De Rocaille (Caron) in 1935, as was the addition of cyclamal in Zibeline by Weil in 1928 and Replique by Raphael in 1944.

It would not have been possible to create muguet without the discovery of hydroxycitronellal in 1905. As a result of this, perfumes like Muguet des Bois (Coty) and in 1956 Diorissimo (Dior) were conceived.

More recently, with the introduction of Mousse De Metra (oakmoss ivernia) and rose oxide, Paco Rabanne created Calandre and YSL created Rive Gauche in 1970.

Today with the increased use of bourgeons de cassis many fragrances have been marketed such as Amazone (Hermes), Mystere (Rochas), First (Van Cleef), Sportif (Avon), and just recently Magie Noire (Lancome).

On a regular basis, perfumers called upon to create a fragrance for some future consumer product are faced with the question of future fragrance trends. Perfumers live with the challenge of anticipating, and meeting the fragrance demands of tomorrow. As artists therefore, they do not create merely for their own satisfaction, but in response to a vision of the future tastes of the intended audience.

The winning approach in the marketplace today hardly resembles what it was just a few years ago. The women's fragrance market has been tremendously influenced by worldwide changes in fashion, the sexual revolution, the growing independence of women, the changing role of women in our societies, and a woman's own perception of herself as a multi-faceted individual with different needs at different times.

This has greatly increased the demands on today's perfumers. At the beginning of the century, perfumers were often the owners or part owners of the fragrance company. Their creations took years to develop. They knew that ini-

tially their originality would appeal only to an open-minded elite, and that its appreciation by the mass population would take years to be realized.

Until the late 1960s, the fragrance industry had few new perfume introductions. Since then, the number of new introductions has increased tremendously. By the end of the 1960s the market had approximately 60 major women's fragrances. Amazingly, during the 1970s, approximately 175 new fragrances were introduced.

Much of the new fragrance activity during the past three years has centered around four fragrance families: The chypre family, the oriental family, the floral bouquet family, and a new group—the green fruity floral family.

The woody, mossy, fruity, animal, chypre complexes that have traditionally enjoyed popularity in Europe have spread to other parts of the world and are receiving a good deal of attention. Of historical significance are Dior's Miss Dior introduced in 1947 and Femme introduced by Madame Rochas in 1942.

A major introduction in 1979 was Chimere from Prince Matchabelli. The fragrance has a top note reminiscent of Miss Dior but creatively develops into a sweet oriental dryout. Following the success of Chimere and the interest in chypre complexes, Avon introduced Tasha in 1979, Max Factor introduced Epris in 1981, and most recently, Senchal from Charles Of The Ritz was introduced. Another mass market entry in 1980 in the Chypre area was Ciao from Houbigant which contains a fruity-peach topnote similar to Femme.

The classic oriental and recent creative input on this theme is causing quite a flurry in fragrance circles. The excellent acceptance of the oriental has encouraged perfumers to delve into new perfume chords producing some magnificent results. New product activity has been in both the limited and broad distribution areas with recent introductions from Dior with Dioressence in 1980, Zany from Avon in 1978, and more recently the uniqueness of Magie Noire from Lacome.

Florals and sophisticated interpretations of florals continue to gain in momentum with much new product activity in both the limited and broad distribution channels. Some of the more successful floral fragrances are blends of multi-florals with rich and interesting backnotes such as moss, woody and earthy tones.

Norell II, from Revlon, introduced in 1979, is a heady floral containing rich violet and rose notes blended with subtle fresh green notes.

Parts of this theme are carried forward by the 1981 introduction of Volcan D'Amour from Diane von Furstenberg with dominating violet and jasmin notes.

The tuberose theme, popularized by Chloe and Jontue during the mid 1970s reappeared in Michelle from Balenciaga in 1980, but in a more subtle and refined form.

Anais, Anais, from Chacharel in 1980 is a delicate and beautiful floral blend of muguet, lilac, and ylang-ylang that allows the user to indulge in a nostalgic spirit of slower and simpler times.

Two new introductions have been developed from the classic fragrance—L'Air du Temps—introduced by Nina Ricci in 1948, Symbiose from Stendhal in 1979 and Sophia from Coty in 1980.

An area that has received much attention in recent years is the green fruity florals led by the 1978 introduction of Lauren from Ralph Lauren. Since then, the theme has been incorporated in many other perfumes in a variety of ways. The distinctive use of certain fruit notes tied to floral or green floral complexes has found wide acceptance with consumers around the world. For the most part, these fragrances are not "love-hate" perfumes. They are feminine in character, familiar to the nose, and pleasing to wear.

After Lauren the theme was picked up by Coty's Le Sport in 1979 which blends a green-fruity top to a floral body of gardenia and tuberose. Scoundrel from Revlon, introduced in 1980, makes a statement very reminiscent of Lauren, but makes the statement louder and bolder. Nahema from Guerlain in 1980, on the other hand, mixes a rose and spicy accord with a delicate fruity plum note. The use of plum has most recently appeared in Halston's Night, but is surrounded by a heady floral complex of rose and orange flower.

For the future we seek the following trends. *Floral perfumes will always remain, but with less green intensity. They will develop with other single flowers different from what we have seen recently, different from the rose in Nahema, the jasmin in First, and the violet in Volcan D'Amour. We feel future floral fragrances will explore other single flower notes such as mimosa, jonquille, narcisse, and gardenia.*

The traditional chypre will remain but with different twists to obtain originality.

The classical aldehydes will come back. Many teenagers currently use musk. The largest selling musk on the market today contains the aldehydic accord from Chanel #5. As these con-

sumers grow older and their tastes become more sophisticated, they will abandon the musk and show a preference for the aldehydic complex.

The oriental and semi-oriental will continue to play a large role in the market. The amount of creative work that can apply to the oriental is unlimited. This theme is very well accepted by all ages.

Nevertheless, all of these future trends could be modified because of the development and proper utilization of new synthetic products. Modern perfumery today has no room for the sleepy ways of the past. We are all living in the jet age of fragrance marketing. We are all put to the task to keep pace with this pulsating market. Every day is a new day in our fragrance world, and the fragrances that are original, creative, and timely will provide the necessary foundation to establish a successful and enduring perfume.

Acknowledgement

This paper was originally presented at the III Convencion Anual De La Camara Nacional De La Industria De Perfumeria & Cosmetica in Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, Mexico on October 10, 1981.