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Reyach

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The Form of Perfume

Volume II

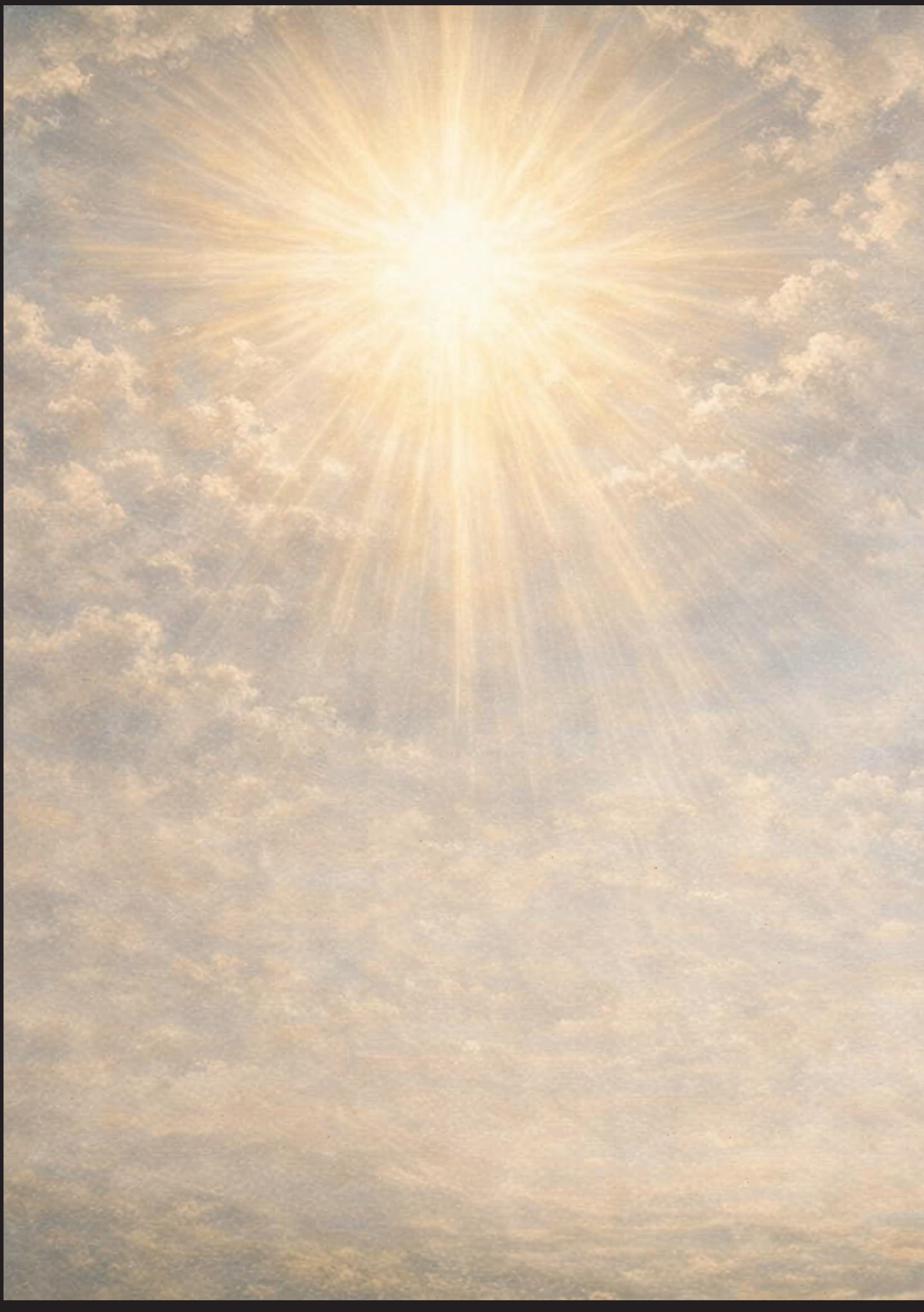


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INSPIRATION, WHAT IS THAT?

People often ask how a fragrance should be described. Yet the question itself is inherently limited. How does one explain the scent of vanilla without referencing something that already contains vanilla? Such descriptions become circular. What is often overlooked is that the question is not truly about scent, but about experience. What people are seeking is an understanding of the feeling an aroma evokes, because preference is shaped by memory, emotion, and lived experience.

When a perfume is described as containing vanilla, appreciation does not arise solely from the ingredient itself, but from the emotional response that scent has previously produced. In this way, fragrance functions as a communicative vehicle. It translates experience from creator to receiver. Every perfumer, whether consciously or not, is engaged in the act of communication; capturing a feeling, moment, or memory within a bottle.

The origin of this act of communication is what is commonly referred to as “inspiration.” However, inspiration is frequently misunderstood. Its etymological roots trace back to the Latin inspirare in meaning “into” and spiritus meaning “breath” or “spirit.” At its foundation, inspiration is not a mental process, but a spiritual one. To be truly inspired requires engagement beyond intellect alone.

According to biblical understanding, humanity is composed of spirit, soul, and flesh. Whether consciously recognised or not, all creative expression is shaped by this triune nature. Yet contemporary culture increasingly produces work from the flesh alone with fast fashion, mass-appeal products, and formulaic creations driven by immediacy rather than depth or meaning.

Reyach meaning fragrance, aroma, or scent in Hebrew shares its etymological origin with Ruach, the word for Spirit. Fragrance, therefore, is far more spiritual in nature than it is often perceived to be. It carries presence, breath, and meaning beyond the material.

Reyach exists to restore inspiration in perfumery and across all art forms, by returning creation to its spiritual origin by showcasing those that still dwell in inspiration.





PLATO AND THE THEORY OF FORMS

At first glance, the relationship between philosophy and perfume may seem unclear. Yet the connection is more intuitive than it appears. To understand it, one must briefly turn to Plato. Between approximately 380 and 340 BCE, Plato developed an epistemological framework explaining the nature of reality, known as the Theory of Forms. While complex, its central idea is straightforward.

Plato proposed that beyond the physical world of objects and sensations lies a higher, non-physical realm composed of perfect and unchanging realities called Forms. The objects and experiences encountered in everyday life are not perfect in themselves, but rather imperfect reflections of these Forms.

Consider the example of a circle. Many circles can be drawn or observed in the physical world, yet none are ever perfectly round. Each contains minor imperfections. Despite this, people possess a clear understanding of what a perfect circle is, even though such a circle has never been perceived through the senses. Plato argued that this understanding originates from the Form of the Circle which is a perfect, eternal reality that exists beyond the material world. Physical circles merely participate in or imitate this ideal Form.

Plato further suggested that the human mind maintains a connection to this realm of perfection. Through insight or divine election, individuals are able to access these Forms. One person may apprehend or “draw” the perfect circle, while others are able to recognise and affirm it, precisely because they share this same metaphysical connection.

This philosophical framework offers a compelling lens through which to view perfumery. If applied analogically, one might posit the existence of a Form of Perfume — an ideal essence toward which perfumers consciously or unconsciously strive. Each fragrance becomes an attempt to approach, interpret, or reflect that ideal. Likewise, consumers are not merely searching for pleasant smells, but for resonance with that same underlying perfection.

However, this perspective only accounts for perfumery driven by the pursuit of perfection. Perfume, at its core, is also a form of communication. Some perfumers are not attempting to reach an abstract ideal, but to transmit lived experience e.g: the scent of a city, the warmth of a memory, or the familiarity of a grandmother’s pecan pie. In these cases, fragrance becomes narrative rather than imitation.

What emerges is a distinction between creation born from depth and intention, and creation driven by mass appeal and the idle desires of the flesh. Modern corporate perfumery often prioritises immediacy, trend, and consumption, severed from spirit or meaning. Yet perfume, when rooted in spirit rather than impulse, becomes something more enduring.

This is where the conversation converges. Perfume exists not merely as product, but as expression, a bridge between the visible and the invisible, the material and the spiritual. To create meaningfully is not simply to manufacture, but to connect. And it is within that connection that perfumery finds its highest purpose.

RECONCILIATION

Lets tie this all in. In Genesis 2, Scripture recounts that God brought the animals to Adam “to see what he would call them.” This moment is not a test of divine knowledge, nor does it suggest uncertainty on God’s part. Rather, it reveals an invitation: humanity is granted participation in the ordering and articulation of creation. Adam is allowed to exercise discernment as an image-bearer, recognising reality rather than inventing it.

This same structure can be applied to perfumery. Fragrance, like creation, is not a blank canvas upon which meaning is arbitrarily imposed. The materials of perfumery: resins, woods, spices, florals possess inherent character, temperament, and direction. Their “nature” exists prior to the perfumer’s intervention. Oud is not made mysterious by branding; amber is not made warm by marketing. These qualities precede interpretation.

From a metaphysical perspective, the essences of aromatic materials exist before they are named, blended, or bottled. Just as Scripture describes creation as formed “according to its kind,” fragrance materials carry intelligible identities grounded in creation itself. These identities are not abstractions floating independently, but expressions of divine order embedded in the world. The perfumer does not create these essences; they encounter them.

When a perfumer works with raw materials, the task is not to impose meaning, but to recognise it. Composition, at its highest level, mirrors Adam’s act of naming. The perfumer discerns how a material wants to speak, how it relates to others, and what experience it naturally communicates. A fragrance succeeds when its structure aligns with the truth of the materials involved. The result “fits” because it corresponds to what already is.

God’s decision to allow Adam to name the animals before affirming those names reflects the distinction between absolute knowledge and participatory understanding. Likewise, while the nature of scent exists independently of human creation, the perfumer must arrive at understanding through time, intuition, and attentiveness. This process is not arbitrary freedom, but freedom exercised in alignment with truth.

In this way, perfumery reflects a deeper theological structure: essence precedes expression, form precedes naming, and meaning precedes marketing.

The task of a craftsman “is not to generate meaning, but rather to cultivate in himself the skill of discerning the meanings that are already there”

- Dreyfus and Kelly



MONTHLY MENTIONS



TONKA HEAVEN

These are pieces that feature heavy amounts of tonka, which is a complimentary ingredient in winter.



MYRRH & TONKA
JO MALONE

Myrrh & Tonka by Jo Malone is a popular classic among the fragrance community. This alongside Velvet Rose & Oud are standouts amongst Jo Malones collection due to the vast difference in scent profile to the rest of their fragrances which are lighter in consumption. This leaves nothing on the table in terms of performance with it lasting on skin all day long. In terms of scent profile its quite simple you are met instantly with a blast of lavender in the opening which is quite polarising, so prepare your nose but once past that you get the smoky/ churchy incense from the myrrh which in my personal opinion shifts from mid to base note. It then settles quickly into a sweet combination of myrrh, tonka and vanilla in the base which is a sweet aromatic experience and a joy to wear.

The inspiration is to bring you to “the golden sand dunes of the Namib: home of distinctive myrrh trees. The alluring scent of its resin travelling on the hot air; mingling with the warm almond and lush vanilla notes of the tonka bean. Noble and intoxicating.”

Enjoy.



TONKA HYSTERIA
D’ORSAY

Tonka hysteria may actually leave you hysterical. This iteration and usage of tonka is truly sensational. I remember testing this Spring 2025 and thought instantly wow. This is definetely in the same family as Myrrh & Tonka with a strong incensey nature to it but the main difference here is the mastery with the tonka and vanilla. So refined, so luxurious. It is not a gourmand yet you do wish you could experience it through another sense.

Ingredients comprise of Benzoin and olibanum and cinnamon to form an Amber accord then a buttery Orris and lily of the valley in the mid and in the base is you one of a kind tonka vanilla accord which is truly sensational.

Performance is not something to be concerned about and neither is longevity and contrary to opinion, there is nothing that smells exactly like this out there.

Some have dubbed this as the baby ‘Babycat’ but trust me when I say this is nobodys son.

WARMTH

There is something about these that just warm you, which makes it just perfect.

Boss Bottled Absolu won the Fragrantica Awards for best mens fragrance in 2025 and rightly so. When you consider price, quality and mass appeal this is a clear standout. When I intially smelt this, two fragrances hit my nose. Stronger with you Absolutely and Red Tobacco by Mancera Paris. You get the instantly ambery boozyness from the stronger with you absolutely and then you get the polarising tobacco from red tobacco and in my opinion you combine that and you get this absolute winter staple. The biggest strength of this fragrance has to its projection and longevity. It fills a room with ease and will remain the same for hours upon hours.

I know your short form creators would call this ‘ beast mode’ but its an accurate description, wear to your discrection but also consider your peers.

Hugo Boss say the inspiration is the “Hugo Boss Man”, capturing a powerful depth. Though the source is vague if you resonate with the depiction of Hugo Boss in media then this is for you.



BOSS BOTTLED ABSOLU HUGO BOSS

Amber Superfluide is not the one you would expect us to choose in this monthly mention. Especially with its younger brother Supermassive stealing the show across social media this season. However we’ve chosen this as it is more suited for both genders than its younger brother. They are almost identical in profile. The inspiration behind this scent was to evoke “ a long winter’s day spent by the fire”. Imagining “ aromas of apple and cinnamon pie and ginger bread wafting in from the oven”. This inspiration is beautiful and you can tell when someone has translated inspiration into form. This is what you look for in perfumery.

Enough has been said, try this, blind buy this, just do something with this!



AMBER SUPERFLUIDE LES EAUX PRIMORDIALES

EDITORS NOTES





DO WE NEED A MASSIVE COLLECTION OF FRAGRANCES OR A LIMITED COLLECTION? THE QUESTION EVERY FRAGRANCE HEAD PONDERS

That one question rests on my mind consistently. One day I am sure that I need to have a massive collection and have a range of perfumes and collect loads because I like them; another day I am convincing myself it is chasing after the wind to be collecting tens and hundreds of fragrances when most of them I will not wear. This question I am sure chases most lovers of expensive liquid.

So is there a correct answer?

Yes and no.

I know you wanted a solid answer and this looks like a cop out, maybe it is a cop out. However the answer truly is yes and no. There is nothing wrong with having a massive collection and there is also nothing wrong with having a limited collection. Having a big collection does not mean you've been in the game longer or know more about fragrances likewise having a limited collection does not mean you are a rookie. It is all dependant on your

WHY?

ECCLESIASTES 11:4
“ONE WHO WATCHES THE WIND WILL NOT SOW AND ONE WHO LOOKS AT THE CLOUDS WILL NOT HARVEST.”

VOLUME TWO: QUALITY OR QUANTITY?

Your why is what will be your compass on your fragrance journey. It is so easy to look at other peoples collection and they have so many and start to feel

“I NEED MORE”.

This feeling is provoked by the thief of comparison likewise seeing someone with a refined collection can make you say

“WHY DO I HAVE SO MANY”.

When you start to compare your journey and others that when you lose sight of your own journey and lose your way. Figuring out your why and remembering and standing on it is what will keep you from being swung side to side and ending up buying what you did not want or witholding yourself from that which you wanted already.

WHAT IS YOUR WHY?

Figuring out your why is not something this magazine can tell you. Your why is something you figure yourself.

I possess a limited collection.

Why?

Because I do not like too much choice on a daily basis.

Your why is simple, it is not complicated or mysterious.

You probably know your way but just have not articulated it before.

Take this moment to articulate it and meditate on it before you buy that next perfume.

“I’m working on a masterpiece and I haven’t quite finished it”

- Sir Lewis Hamilton

GLOSSARY

Accord
A blend of ingredients that work together to create one clear scent.

Aroma
How a scent is experienced, including how it makes someone feel or what it reminds them of.

Craftsmanship
The skill of working carefully with materials by understanding them, not forcing them.

Essence
What something truly is at its core.

Form
A perfect idea or ideal that exists beyond the physical world, which real things try to reflect.

Fragrance
Scent used as a way to express feeling, memory, or meaning.

Inspiration
The source of creative ideas, rooted in spirit rather than just thought.

Naming
The act of recognising and expressing what something truly is.

Olfactory Experience
The way scent is felt, remembered, and understood by a person.

Participation
Taking part in expressing something that already exists, rather than creating meaning from nothing.

Perfumery
The craft of creating fragrance with intention and understanding.

Reyach
A Hebrew word meaning fragrance or scent, connected to the idea of spirit.

Ruach
A Hebrew word meaning spirit, breath, or wind.

Substance
What something is made of at its most basic level.

Truth
Something that exists whether it is recognised or not.



Our Father, who is in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Main Editor Signature: