



# Perfumes of the East

عطور الشرق

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to 17 March 2024

Press kit

INSTITUT  
DU MONDE  
ARABE

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# Editorial

Jack Lang,  
President of the Institut du monde arabe

Take a stroll through Muscat, Jeddah, Cairo, Tunis, or Marrakech and awaken your senses. It won't be long before you notice a necklace or a handkerchief bathed in flower water; perfumed objects; spectacular bouquets of jasmine, narcissus, or orange blossoms that will leave you in awe and brighten your way.

An invitation to pay a visit is always an occasion to adorn yourself in perfume and to cense and perfume your host before being transported by the aromas of cinnamon, honey, almond, and mint... which create the wonders of Arab kitchens. We also taste with our noses! In the Arab world, perfumes have always been a shared delight.

The Institut du monde arabe has decided to pay tribute to this ancient yet still vibrant perfume civilisation. In the East, perfumes and aromatic spices and herbs have a long history. Happy Arabia, or *Arabia Felix* as the Romans called it, is the historic and geographical centre of this history: a place where spices and fragrances have been traded for centuries, if not since the dawn of time, and a land of promises and legends in which this wealth is the object of fantasies.

The legendary Incense Trade Route crossed Arabia and offered the world the fragrance of gods: incense. Arabian ports also welcomed the mysterious Indonesian oud, the celebrated Himalayan musk, along with many other wonders. This area was the centre of the perfume civilisation that then spread to the Atlantic coast and the shores of the Euphrates. In Antiquity, incense and perfumes belonged to the gods, but the Arab-Muslim culture offered them to humans as well as exclusive use over them.

Rare, sought-after perfumes tell tales about societies and individuals. The perfume culture in Arab lands is delicate, poetic, and tickles all the senses. It is an art of living that is experienced culturally and convivially. The practices for the use and production of perfumes have constructed the social and economic frameworks in cities. Perfume is alive and memorial. It participates in every facet of life. Precious, medicinal, salubrious, and prophylactic, perfume is experienced. It is a treat to indulge in and a song to be listened to thanks to the beautiful poetry of the Arabic language. Perfume speaks to you and speaks about you.

Uncovering the history of perfumes is uncovering the story of humanity and its incessant quest for harmony. It is also about gaining insight into a thousand-year-old life tradition rooted in aesthetic sensibility. From fields of rare essences to the perfumer's workshop, from the streets of a medina to a hammam and the sacred space at home, perfumes are, in the words of Abdelwahab Bouhdiba "a constant reconciliation of humans with themselves, with others, and with nature."

# Exhibiting Eastern perfumes

Words from the curators,  
Hanna Boghanim and Agnès Carayon

Perfumes have been happily wed to the Arab world for quite some time.

In fact, in the Earliest Antiquity, the Arab world became the birthplace of a perfume civilisation. Since, fragrances have occupied a seat of high esteem, deeply rooted and involved in Arab society. This prosperous union dates to the trade culture of ancient Arabia, land of frankincense and myrrh, which built its wealth and prestige on the trade of fragrant materials. During this time, perfumes benefited from a unique position of privilege, which was only reinforced by the Muslim tradition. Living in an aromatic environment and impacted by the position of fragrances in his native land, Prophet Mohammad saw them as a gift from Allah to humans. He considered pleasant smells to be proof of good etiquette, and as such he took good care of his body. He was the embodiment of the perfume culture he came from, which he elevated to the status of a code of conduct, even a code of aesthetic sensibility.

Since, perfumes have carried a strong symbolism and today they still play a very active role in the daily lives of everyone. They permeate cultural, social, and intimate practices. Fragrances, ointments, oils, balsams, waters, and fumigations are present in many aspects of life: well-being and cosmetics, hospitality and conviviality, cuisine and medicine, seduction and religion... Sometimes raw materials also have therapeutic, prophylactic, or culinary properties that prevail over their aesthetic roles and scents.

Today, perfumes known as 'Eastern' are associated with a palette of specific scents, most notably warm, spiced, and amber fragrances.

Together they create a family of scents that perfume houses are bringing back into fashion.

The exhibition thus recounts the close relationship that unites perfumes with the Arab world. It sheds light on their long-shared history, the characteristic fragrances of their bond, and the various traditions playing an essential social role that bring them together.

It is designed as an intimate stroll through different spaces: first in nature, then through the streets of a town, and lastly inside a home. The trajectory reveals to visitors the practices and history of perfumes thanks to the constant echoes between heritage and contemporary works.

But what good is an exhibition on perfumes if we cannot smell them? That is why the pathway is intended to create a conjunction of senses, where the sense of smell is stimulated just as much as the sense of sight. Inventive scented devices invite visitors to immerse themselves in the fragrances especially created for the occasion by Christopher Sheldrake perfumer-creator.



*Incense burner, Mosul (Iraq), mid-13th century, cast brass, silver-inlaid, Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, MTW1663 © The Khalili Collections*



# The exhibition





# I The rarest and most coveted essences

The history of perfumes starts by discovering the raw materials they are made of. Flowers, herbs, spices, and fragrant resins come from various regions: From the Mediterranean countryside to the Levant, from the arid deserts of Arabia to the far reaches of Asian jungles and the Himalayas, the essences collected have sourced the markets of scented products and the ingredients of perfumers.

Starting in the Earliest Antiquity, Arabia – land of incense, grey amber, and myrr – has played a major role in the preparation of perfumes. In a broader sense, the entire Arab world has offered various flowers and spices to enrich these recipes.

Thanks to the development of navigation techniques and trade routes, products from Asia were added to the list of available ingredients. From these far-off lands, essences unobtainable under the Arab skies were also brought in. The origin of certain materials, such as grey amber and musk, were for a long time kept secret. This fed people's imagination and legends of wonder.

Today, the major houses rely on sourcers to travel around the world and find the most exceptional raw materials. For ethical reasons, certain animal-based essences are now replaced with chemical aromas.

## Myrrh and incense from Arabia

Arabia, a region where rain is scarce and the sun intense, is considered to be the land of perfume. Myrrh and incense plant like arid regions and thus grow on its southern coasts and in the Horn of Africa. These resinous exudates are obtained from *Commiphora myrrha* and *Boswellia sacra* trees. Their harvesting process dates back to over a thousand years and is renowned for being difficult. Grey amber, another emblematic essence of the Arab perfume culture, is mainly collected along the coasts of Yemen and Oman.

These products, highly valued and prestigious in the rest of the world, are characteristic of the perfume culture in Arabia, and since Antiquity have been a pillar of its trade civilisation. For many centuries, these materials were at the heart of trade relations between the East and the West, and the caravan routes that made their wealth from them were accredited with distributing them. They remain among the most representative essences of Eastern perfumes.

## Asia, the other land of perfumes

Beginning in Antiquity, the Eastern coastlines of the Indian Ocean were major suppliers of fragrant and aromatic materials. With the development of sea and land routes, long-distance trade intensified. Spices and new essences from Asia were thus fully integrated into Arab perfumery, cuisine, and pharmacopeia. They were then distributed to the rest of the world from the major cities of the Muslim Empire.

The raw materials first imported were of plant origin such as oud wood, camphor, benzoin, nard, and copal. Oud wood, rare and precious and highly valued in Arab countries, grows in the forests of South-East Asia. The use of animal-based substances such as musk, civet, grey amber, and sweet hoof became more widespread later, even though certain essences were already known in Antiquity. Musk, the most renowned fragrant material in Arab-Muslim culture – the scent of Paradise in the Quran and of the beloved in poetry – is collected from male musk deer who live high in the Himalayas.

## Flowery scents

Flowers and aromatic plants are easily accessible materials in terms of harvesting and cost. They grow on the outskirts of towns, and it is not necessary to go the other side of the world to collect them. In use since ancient times, they are an ingredient in perfumes, cosmetics, and therapeutic and culinary recipes. They remain valued by the elites, even though they are more affordable for working classes. Rose has a special status. Sung by poets, and used as a symbol of beauty and spirituality, it is the flower par excellence. Harvested in Moroccan valleys to Isfahan, and from Damascus to the mountains of Oman, roses are a part of several aspects of Arab culture. Narcissus, saffron, and jasmine are other emblematic flowers.



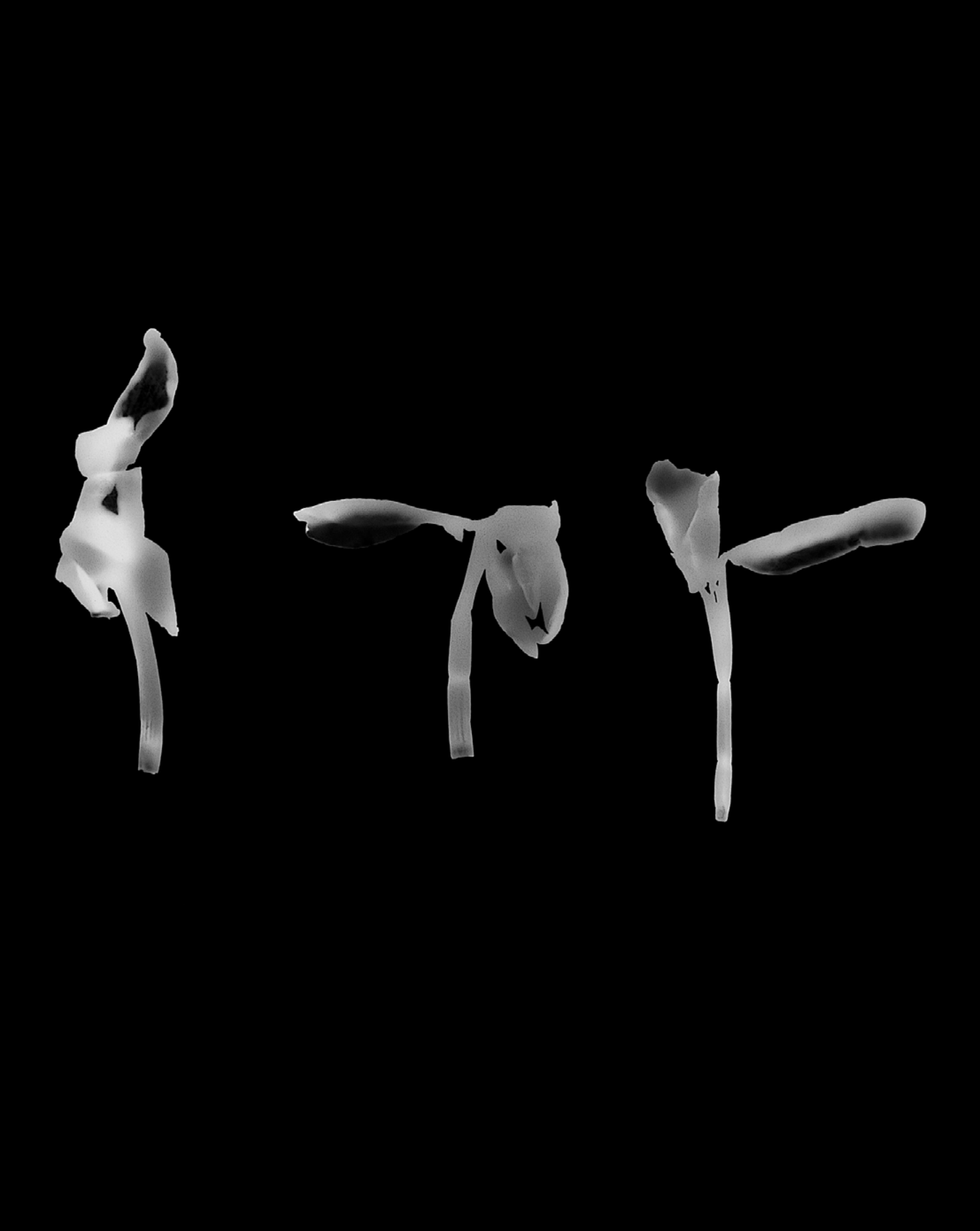


Denis Dailleux, *Cueillette dans les hauteurs du Moyen Atlas*, Middle Atlas (Morocco), 2015, analogue photography, exhibition print on fine art paper mounted on aluminium, 80 x 80 cm © Denis Dailleux

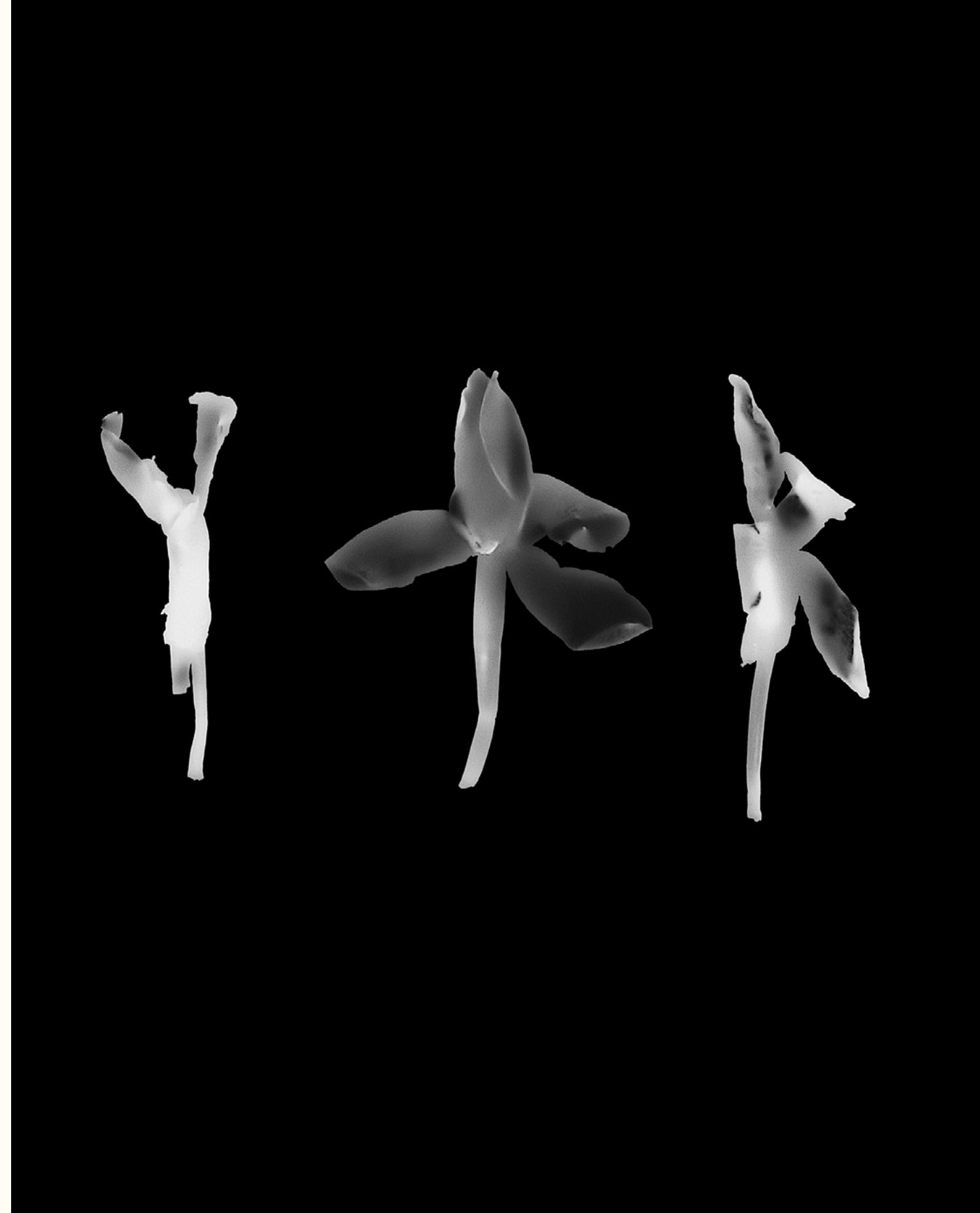


Denis Dailleux, *Cueillette dans les hauteurs du Moyen Atlas*, Middle Atlas (Morocco), 2015, analogue photography, exhibition print on fine art paper mounted on aluminium, 80 x 80 cm © Denis Dailleux





Nadim Asfar, *Hyperimages*, Beirut (Lebanon), 1994-2004, photogram, impression on Awagani paper, 10 x 15 cm (each photogram), Paris, artist's collection © Nadim Asfar



Nadim Asfar, *Hyperimages*, Beirut (Lebanon), 1994-2004, photogram, impression on Awagani paper, 10 x 15 cm (each photogram), Paris, artist's collection © Nadim Asfar

# II The scents of the city

Strolling through the different neighbourhoods of a city, we discover the many ways perfume has been used in the public space. They tell of the significant role fragrances occupy in society. An Arab city is a place for mingling and exchanging where all types of olfactory products can be found with a range of specific uses: cosmetic, therapeutic, and religious. Its neighbourhoods are infused with characteristic scents that give them their identity but also a moral consideration. As such, we can walk from areas impregnated with vile odours to neighbourhoods bathed in smooth scents that are well appreciated and carry positive connotations.

A walk through the perfumers' souk and then a stop at the baths before going to prayer reveals the wealth of fragrances characteristic of Arab countries.

## **Foul odours**

In this space, we are taken aback by the foul odour which, when associated with the display of sheep skin, conjures up the experience of the tanners' district. In the Arab world, unpleasant smells have a negative connotation and even determine the way the Muslim city is organised. They are a marker of social status and are often associated to the workers themselves, considered to be deleterious people who are relegated to the outskirts of the city.

In fact, through the experience of this exhibition, visitors will understand that a perfume is a blend of fragrances, which when taken individually or before transformation can diffuse an unpleasant scent. Once the perfumer has transformed the skins, they take on a leather note which we find in modern Eastern perfumery.

## **The perfumers' souk**

The profession of a perfumer is highly appreciated in Arab society. As a symbol of this esteem, the district where they work is located near the main mosque, at the heart of the city. It is one of the most important places. In their shops, people can purchase all kinds of substances (spices, aromatic herbs, resins, flower water) as well as various ingredients for perfume such as the famous *nadd*, *ramikk* or *ghaliyya*.

Perfumers are also apothecaries who have knowledge about the cosmetic and medicinal virtues of essences. Perfume is a luxury commodity that sits atop the hierarchy of traded goods. It is the result of a skilful blend of various scents and requires great expertise which evolves over time. Starting in the 9th century, the Arabs perfected the distillation process which made it possible

to produce perfumed waters and essential oils, such as rose which is particularly cherished. Since the late 19th century, synthetic products have replaced natural materials and opened the doors to the industrialisation of perfumes.

## **Body care**

An inheritance from the Roman public baths, hammams are essential structures in Arab cities. A venerable place of social interaction, they are also the stage for body care rituals that are particularly important in the Arab-Muslim culture. These rituals respond to the religious prescriptions believers follow in order to clean and purify their bodies. They are also an integral part of a genuine art of living. After exudation, men and women use soaps, oils, ointments, and scented waters to wash themselves and massage their bodies and hair. The products are used for their scents but also for their cosmetic and medicinal properties. These ancient practices are still present today in all Arab countries even though they are becoming rarer and rarer ever since bathrooms invaded homes.

## **Divine perfumes**

Initially, perfumes were created for use solely by the gods. In the religions born around the Mediterranean Basin and Middle East, fumigations were a privileged means of communication with the gods. They materialised the ascent of prayers and constituted an offering to honour them. The Egyptians and the Romans held a special place for them in their worship.

The Jewish and Christian religions inscribed perfumes in their heritage and integrated them into their liturgy with the practices of incensing and anointing with a holy oil.

The Muslim religion broke with this long tradition. Even though it places importance on perfumes, it does not give them a holy use. They are a divine gift for the pleasure of humans. However, we do see a resurgence of fumigations in practices of popular faith to chase away bad spirits.





Vladimir Antaki, *The Guardians*, Mohamad Obeidi, Muscat (Oman), 2023, photography, print on fine art paper mounted on Dibond, 240 x 160 cm, © Museum of the IMA / Vladimir Antaki





Yumna al-Arashi, *Shedding Skin*, Beirut (Lebanon), 2017, projection, 8-min video, artist's collection © Yumna Al-Arashi



# III At the heart of intimacy in arab-muslim home

In the Arab world, the pronounced liking for perfumes is an important cultural phenomenon that can also be found inside the private sphere of the home. Every home is thus filled with various fragrances. It is perfumed for the inhabitants and for their guests to brighten up their daily lives and to show a certain level of etiquette. Perfumes meet inhabitants and visitors as soon as they cross the threshold as a sign of welcome. They also emanate from many nooks in the house. Most notably they come from the kitchen, where spicy odours escape and diffuse their appetising aromas that are very characteristic of a home. Fragrances are also brought into the most private space of the house, the bedroom, to spice up romantic relationships.

The fragrances of the home thus evoke childhood, family, the beloved, and friends. They reveal each person's tastes and preferences, while exposing the status of the head of household and their deepest most intimate penchant.

## **Perfuming hosts**

The duty of hospitality is a fundamental social act in Arab countries. Welcoming rituals are codified and fully integrate the exchange of perfumes and fumigations. This very ancient tradition is still carried out today in the countries on the Arabian Peninsula.

When welcoming guests, it is thus common to perfume their hair or clothes by burning fragrances or spritzing them with flower water. This ceremony shows that respect and consideration are given to the guest as well as for the rules of etiquette. Each person takes part according to their means. The richest will offer prestigious and costly products while the more modest will use more accessible fragrances such as dried flowers. The objects used for this ritual are quite common and have been present in homes for centuries.

## **Inhaling the flavour of dishes**

In the Arab world, culinary aromas are inseparable from the world of perfumes. In fact, Eastern cuisine is known for both its flavours and its aromas. It integrates the ingredients that are also used in the preparation of body perfumes. Spices, aromatic herbs, and flower waters used in certain cosmetics are essential for adding flavour to culinary dishes. Making savoury dishes, desserts, and beverages without them is not an option. Arab kitchens are the kingdom of spices and herbs.

The aromas that emanate from the kitchen help perfume the house and give it its identity. They conjure up particularly strong olfactory memories, often rooted in childhood and which resonate with everyone.

## **The secret of the alcove**

Perfumes, oils, and ointments are included in a series of seduction rituals. They are used to arouse desire, while some raw materials are even renowned for their aphrodisiac virtues. Musk, for example, is often included as an ingredient in many love philtres. The meeting of lovers is thus prepared in advance by buying fragrant products, which are used to perfume the body or diffused in the room. They are an essential component to the exquisite pleasure of these romantic rendezvous.

Arab literature and poetry often recount these practices, revealing the ancient uses that are widespread and still rooted in Arab culture today. They attest to the systematic association of fragrances with sensuality and venerate the strong erotic power attributed to perfumes.





Perfume sprinkler, Iran (?), 19<sup>th</sup> century (?), mould-blown glass, cobalt blue, 35.3 x 10.5 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon  
© Lyon MBA



Nizâmî, *The consummation of the marriage between Khusraw and Shirin*, Khamsa, Shiraz (Iran), c. 1560, ink and gouache on paper, 35.5 x 23.5 cm, The David Collection, 94/2006, fol. 107v. © The David Collection, Copenhagen





Reem al Nasser, *Full rassas* (Arabian jasmine bullets), Jizan (Saudi Arabia), 2023, jasmine buds, 40 x 66 cm, installation © Courtesy of the Artist and ATHR



# Four questions to Christopher Sheldrake

Perfumer-creator

1

*How did this idea of collaborating with the IMA come up? What did motivate you into taking part in a project that differs from your traditional work as a designer?*

The idea of setting up an exhibition on perfumes from the East, the birthplace of modern perfumery, was initially sparked during a conversation between Jack Lang, President of the Institut du monde arabe, and Serge Lutens, an aesthete and enthusiast of Eastern and Arab culture.

As for me, I have always been fascinated by the craft of perfumery, from geographical origins of scents to the history of peoples and their cultures.

And so, considering my ties with brand Serge Lutens, where I have worked as a creative perfumer for the past 30 years, I was delighted to accept the invitation to take part in the conception and display of this exhibition dedicated to a world that has inspired me for so many years.

The people in charge of collections at the IMA teamed up with the Exhibition Scientific Committee, which I am part of, and were keen on building a project that would bring together history, geography, culture, and even contemporary living art and everyday life, which would revolve around the theme of perfume, to delight and educate visitors. In this project, I saw the possibility of exhibiting the mysterious side of scents and of rendering perceptible the fragrances that have always been in our lives, whether we are fully aware of them.

The birthplace of Eastern perfumery lies within *Arabia Felix* ("Flourishing Arabia"), as Greek geographer, philosopher and historian Strabo wrote (circa 60 BC - circa 20 AD): "from Turkey to India, via Ethiopia, Somalia, Yemen, Oman, and Iran, this is where the majority of noble aromatics are found."

I am a designer passionate about perfume for 50 years; this exhibition is a way for me to



"L'envolée des fleurs" olfactory installation © Magique studio



pay tribute to my passion and to share it with the public. It is my personal tribute to our sense of smell; one that is separate from the brands I work for.

2

*The East is present in your personal life, and Eastern themes can be found in several of your creations. Is it one of your main sources of inspiration? How would you define the uniqueness of Eastern fragrances?*

Indeed, the East is present in many of my creations. However, for the current project, my main intention was to showcase all ingredients that had success in the past, in an attempt to create authentic and well thought-through fragrances. I often speak of the blank page, a window open to imagination... My inspirations come from my experiences as much as from the original combinations I have imagined in order to stir provocative emotions.

Each perfumer has their own culture, and way of expressing their perfumery. How thrilling to know that my creations contain ingredients such as myrrh, sacred frankincense, spikenard, and others, all of which are found in Egyptian hieroglyphics and in texts dating back to Antiquity.

These ingredients play an essential role in my creations.

But we should not confuse what Westerners call “an Eastern perfume” with the perfume that Eastern cultures like.

Generally speaking, Westerners describe a fragrance as “Eastern” when there are scents of vanilla, spice, and amber. Whereas Eastern fragrances are influenced by bakhoor, the ancient traditional perfumes of the Levant, and attars from India. In the Middle East, Damask rose, oud, and saffron, are paramount. Today, the West takes more of its inspiration from organic chemistry, opting for fragrances with less figurative notes but that are fresh, floral, and woody.

3

*You created all the scents for this unique exhibition, including several special compositions. How did you come up with them? What guided your creative process? For the exhibition, you worked extensively on raw materials, in particular. How do materials such as grey amber, oud, and frankincense inspire you?*

It was important to me to look for scents that resonate with us and interrogate us, but most of all, that leave an impression on us.

Sometimes, working on one specific ingredient reveals a facet of our collective memory.

Such is the case, for example, of orange blossom. I wanted to bring out its “orange blossom water” aspect as it is used in Middle Eastern pastries, and for almonds, their delicious “almond milk” version.

As for ingredients of animal origin, though still in use in some cultures, they have been removed from Western perfumery.

In the case of deer musk (*Moschus moschiferus*) and grey amber, a secretion of the sperm whale (*Physeter Macrocephalus*) collected on beaches, I preferred to recreate the scents myself, using modern technology and chemistry to synthesize a mix of organic molecules.

Oud diffuses a wonderful smell when burned. Its fragrance is opulent, sensual, warm, welcoming, aphrodisiac, and sweet. It is used for spiritual events, hospitality, and seduction, and is a key ingredient in ‘Eastern perfumery.’

The Latin botanical name of oud, Agarwood in Indian Tamil, is *Aquilaria*. To ward off fungal infections, the trees secrete a dense, black resin which has a seductive scent. The oud I am presenting is based on the natural product, but I have added a smoked oud wood effect.

4

*Stimulating the sense of smell in a museum exhibition and creating connections between smell and sight - or hearing - are techniques which are still quite rare, but gaining ground. What can you tell us about these developments?*

We all have associative memories, in other words a memory or a moment of joy, such as a perfume or a piece of music, that remind us of a place or a person... This becomes an unforgettable memory like Proust’s madeleine.

When we associate an event with several senses—hearing, sight, smell—the experience becomes more powerful.

The (pseudo-) synaesthesia practiced by certain artists aims to combine experiences in order to immerse visitors into a holistic atmosphere.

We would all like to have multi-sensory experiences, but the right associations are crucial.

There are also technical requirements that call for complicated and meticulous preparation.

For *Parfums d’Orient*, I have developed scents that illustrate subjects by stimulating our imagination and taking us on a journey through time. The whole visit should leave visitors with unforgettable, rich, and multi-faceted memories.



# The olfactory devices in the exhibition

By Magique

Magique is a creative studio that explores the sense of smell in all its forms. It was founded out of the need to give it the place it deserves in our lives. Our ambition is to question our senses with poetry and aestheticism in order to forge emotional relationships.

We believe in the dreamlike beauty of the relationship between technology and organic materials, a symbiosis that invites powerful experiences through immersion, interaction, and innovation. Thanks to the olfactory geniuses of artists, scientists, researchers, and creators combined, we co-create artistic and experimental projects. How can you envision an exhibition on Eastern perfumes without inviting visitors to awaken their sense of smell, thus tugging at the heartstrings that connect them to a multi-faceted subject?

The exhibition, featuring almost two hundred works, also includes thirty-one scents designed by perfumer-creator Christopher Sheldrake with the support of Givaudan, as well as three contemporary olfactory works. The challenge for the Institut du monde arabe (IMA) was to integrate a sensory journey right from the design stage, combining the scientific, poetic, and immersive challenges that would propel the project from the outset. The IMA has thus aimed to give the exhibition a real distinguishable personality by seeking to surprise and amaze visitors.

Working closely with the curators, Christopher Sheldrake, and the design teams from Scénografia, Sabir Design Studio, and Gelatic, we conceived and developed unprecedented and, to some, experimental installations, to create one of the most ambitious perfume exhibitions ever imagined.

Our thought process was rooted in the emotions we wanted to evoke in each space, and in our desire to involve visitors in every one of those spaces. The olfactory devices were deliberately designed with a bouquet of experiences, gestures, scales, and techniques in mind. Some have been integrated into the design to serve a purpose in the pathway while others have become independent, original installations.

As such, eight processes were developed, three of which were entirely designed and conceived for the exhibition. With experimentation at the heart of our creative process, we mobilized our technicians, artists, designers, and creators to produce an experience that invites visitors to marvel at how a single breath can trigger a whiff of rose or jasmine petals before their intoxicating scent enshrouds them, or how a perfumer's monumental table combines poetry, creativity, and technology, or even how the scents of kitchen spices and aromas can be mixed in a fun and playful installation.

Our proposal and our contribution to this magnificent project is the development of a pathway within the pathway to offer up poetic pauses that stir emotions and memories, without overlooking or excluding the responsibilities of such an undertaking: to make accessible, to fill with wonder, to educate and to pass on.



"Le secret du Parfum" olfactory installation © Magique studio



# Glossary

## Absolute

The part of concrete that is soluble in alcohol and can be used by perfumers.

## Alembic

An apparatus that produces floral waters and essential oils.

## Grey amber

A product of animal origin, grey amber is an intestinal concretion spat out by sperm whales and collected on the beaches of Arabia. Today, grey amber is produced synthetically.

## Attar

Oily fragrances with no added alcohol obtained by distillation of raw materials.

## Bakhoor

A substance that is burned in an incense burner (see frankincense).

## Balsam

A scented liquid exudate.

## Oud wood

Rare wood resin (or Agarwood) derived from certain 'sick' trees that grow wild in Southeast Asia. This brown, fragrant resin is secreted by the tree when it is attacked.

## Concrete

A fragrant solid, waxy substance obtained by using solvents for plant extraction.

## Distillate

Mixture of water and essential oil after the distillation

vapor has returned to a liquid state.

## Distillation

Method for producing essential oils whereby steam is applied to plants or a water/plant mixture.

## Floral Water/Rose Water

Fragrant water, the result of distilling flowers in water.

## Frankincense

Gum resin extracted by incising the trunk of the frankincense tree *Boxwellia sacra*. Nowadays, real frankincense is in short supply; however, harvesting continues in southern Yemen, Oman, and the Horn of Africa. Today, the term incense refers to any substance used in fumigation. In Arabic, incense smoke is called *bakhoor* and censer is called *midkhan*.

## Enfleurage

A traditional technique for extracting the fragrance of flowers by spreading them on a layer of fat.

## Extractor

An apparatus used to produce concretes and resinoids.

## Extraction

Production of concretes/ absolutes by using a solvent on plants.

## Extract/Resinoid

The result of applying alcohol extraction to a plant.

## Exudate

All substances that ooze from injured tree tissue.

## Essencier

A vessel for capturing essence decanted on condensed water.

## Resin extraction

Incising a tree so that it will produce balsams, gums, or resins.

## Ghaliyya, nadd, ramik

The ingredients of perfumes as described in medieval Arab treatises. They share the same base: grey amber, musk, and oud wood.

## Gum/Resin

Tree exudate that hardens when exposed to air. Gums are water-soluble while resins are alcohol-soluble.

## Essential Oil/Essence

The result of applying steam distillation to a plant. Non-soluble in water and lighter, the oil can be separated from water by decantation.

## Tears

Solidified pieces of gum or resin.

## Musk

A product of animal origin, it refers to the odorous excretion of the abdominal gland of male musk deer living in the high mountains of Tibet and Siberia. Musk is a luxury product. Its use in funeral services, cuisine, and cosmetics was initially



Aisha Alsowaidi, *Midkhans*, Doha (Qatar), 2014, three Pyrex, blown glass incense burners, artist's collection  
© Alejandro Arango

widespread only in the Middle East, but has since spread to the whole planet. Today, musk is produced exclusively through synthetic means.

## Myrrh

The word refers to a thorny tree native to Arabia and the oily resin it produces. It is widely used for anointing, libation, and fumigation. It

has been highly prized since antiquity and is mentioned many times in the Bible.

## Nard

The name is given to various aromatic plants in the Valerianaceae family, such as lavender.

## Damask Rose

Designates the hundred-petalled rose, *centifolia*.

Originally from the Caucasus, it is now widely cultivated both by hand and industrially.

## Saffron

Designates a spice produced from the stigmas of a mauve flower called *Crocus Sativus*. By drying the stigmas from the pistils of the flower, we obtain the characteristic red filaments of the spice.



# Modern and contemporary art in the exhibition

Artists and works  
on display

## Eman Ali

Born in 1986 in Oman, Eman Ali is a visual artist whose work combines photography, text, sound, and installation. She explores and questions themes linked to gender, religion, and the socio-political ideologies of Khaleeji culture. The artist takes a critical look at the histories she has observed coming from the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa.

Eman Ali, *Rose Mountain*, Jebel Akhdar (Oman), 2023, inkjet print on Hahnemühle fine art paper, Paris, Museum of the Institut du monde arabe

This series focuses on rose cultivation in Jebel Akhdar and the work of those who devote themselves to this trade, with a particular interest in the younger generation and women. The latter play an important role in perfume production, alongside men, from picking the roses to preparing the recipes.

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## Aisha Alsowaidi

Born in Doha and based in Qatar, Aisha Alsowaidi reinvents everyday objects using modern materials. Her creations, inspired by centuries-old traditions, have addressed subjects such as memory, nostalgia, and the passing of time.

Midkhans, Doha (Qatar), 2014, Pyrex and blown glass, 16.5 x 7.5 cm, Doha, artist's collection

These contemporary incense burners, in three different shapes, bear witness to the continuity of practices used in hospitality rituals which have existed in the Arabian Peninsula since antiquity.

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## Vladimir Antaki

Born in Saudi Arabia in 1980, French-Lebanese photographer Vladimir Antaki is a globe trotter who travels the world meeting men and women whom he immortalizes in scenes without artifice. He is also the artistic director of the Artistic Agitators agency.

The Guardians, Muscat (Oman), 2023, Dibond print, 240 x 160 cm, Paris, Museum of the Institut du monde arabe

In these photographs, designed for the exhibition, he revisits the approach used in *The Guardians* series and takes visitors on a journey through the souks of Salalah and Muscat in Oman. Presented in actual size, they are striking for the almost physical presence of the shopkeeper who is placed at the centre of the image. A sound device echoes the images and allows visitors to discover the profession of a perfumer and just how much their skills are highly regarded in Arab society.

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## Yumna al-Arashi

Born in Washington D.C. in 1988, Yumna al-Arashi, a documentary photographer of Yemeni origin, explores, in her video creations and photographs, the theme of the female body, its perception and, more broadly, the place of women in society.

Shedding skin, Egypt, 2017, projection, 8-min video, artist's collection

This video plunges visitors into the intimacy of a hammam in Beirut, which here becomes a space for the liberation of women's bodies. The use of light, composition choices, and the position of the bodies question the Orientalist construction of the image of women in European painting.



Huda Lutfi, *The Perfumed Garden*, Dubai (United Arab Emirates), 2008, photographs, newspaper clippings, and found objects, Dubai, The Third Line gallery © Huda Lutfi / Courtesy of the artist and The Third Line, Dubai





Eman Ali, *Rose Mountain, Jebel Akhdar* (Oman), 2023, photography, inkjet print on Hahnemühle fine art paper, Paris, Museum of the Institut du Monde Arabe © Museum of the IMA / Eman Ali



**Nadim Asfar**

Born in Beirut in 1976, Nadim Asfar explores notions of time and space. The photographed subject, the technique, and the very act of taking a photography shot are at the heart of his approach.

*Hyperimages*, Beirut (Lebanon), 2001-2004, inkjet on Awagami INBE 70 gr paper, 10 x 15 cm (each photogram), Paris, artist's collection

This series combines forty-eight photograms of jasmine. The camera-free technique of placing objects on a light-sensitive surface perfectly captures the size, delicate shape, and transparency of jasmine, lending a poetic dimension to these compositions.



**Dia al-Azzawi**

Born in Baghdad in 1939 and based in London, Dia al-Azzawi is a key figure in modern Iraqi art. He is influenced by the modernity of European painting, and his works include Babylonian and Arab-Islamic elements which have forged the Iraqi cultural identity.

*The one hundred and seventy-sixth night. The story of Nur al-Din ibn Bukkar and the Slave-Girl Shams al-Nahar*, plate 5a

*The Lady and her black Slave*, plate 2

*The Lady and her black Slave*, plate 2a

*The Thousand and One Nights*, copy no. 13/25, London (UK), 1986, etching on Velin d'Arches paper, 65 x 50 cm, Paris, Museum of the Institut du monde arabe

In 1986, artist Dia al-Azzawi engraved a limited series of etchings, lithographs, and engravings illustrating scenes from *Arabian Nights*. He produced 26 lithographs illustrating a selection of stories in their English versions, with different symbolic readings. Starting in the second half of the 20th century, Arab artists started to reinterpret *Arabian Nights*, moving away from the vision of a mythical East that is conveyed by the Orientalist movement.



**Lara Baladi**

Born in 1969 in Beirut, Lara Baladi is an Egyptian-Lebanese photographer and multimedia artist. Her work encompasses photography, video, collage, montage, architecture, and installations.

She is a member of the Arab Image Foundation in Beirut, for which she edits a magazine.

*Rose*, 2010, digital collage and gesso print, 410 x 410 cm, London, The Farjam Foundation, K 1735

The work subtly links Eastern arabesque motifs with popular iconography. Using her family ritual of reading coffee grounds, she photographed the cups of each guest who took turns at her father's bedside at the end his life as a way to preserve the memory of these visits.



**Mirna Bamieh**

Born in 1983 in East Jerusalem, Mirna Bamieh, a multidisciplinary artist, created in 2018 a video art project entitled *Palestine Hosting Society*, aimed at safeguarding and highlighting traditional Palestinian cuisine.

*Nafas Immi: In the kitchen with Mama*, directed by Mirna Bamieh and filmed by Marta Wot, Ramallah (Palestine), May 2023. 5-min video. Paris, Museum of the Institut du monde arabe

In this video, preparing and eating *warak enab* (stuffed grape leaves) becomes the pretext for a discussion between the artist and her Lebanese mother. Mirna Bamieh is interested in how recipes are passed down from one generation to the next, and how cooking becomes a tool for expression and a reference to a cultural richness and a form of identity that transcends borders.



**Farid Belkahia**

Farid Belkahia, who was born in Marrakech in 1934 and passed away in 2014, is considered one of the founders of Moroccan and, more broadly, of Arab artistic modernity.

*Aube*, 1984, ink and henna on lambskin stretched on wood, 250 cm diameter, Paris, Museum of the Institut du monde arabe

Farid Belkahia draws on Maghreb parietal art and motifs and symbols from Berber culture which he accentuates within a highly personal aesthetic where the allusion to the female body is omnipresent. The use of stretched skin adorned with natural pigments evokes traditional arts. "Henna and leather are my memories, my grandmother, the environment I grew up in, the smells that are familiar to me."





**Hicham Berrada**  
Born in Casablanca in 1986, Hicham Berrada’s artistic work combines video, performance, and photography. Mobilising genuine scientific protocols and subtle chemical reactions for his creations, he composes poetic installations and *tableaux vivants*.

*Mesk Ellil*, 2015, 3 tinted glass terrariums, Cestrum Nocturnum, horticulture lighting, moonlight lighting, 200 x 50 cm (each display), Lyon, Lyon Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016.5.1

“Lady of the night” or *mesk-ellil* in Arabic, are shrubby plants similar to jasmine, whose flowers release their intense fragrance at night. For this installation, the alchemist-artist reverses the day/night cycle and the flowering of the plants by installing a moonlight lighting system.

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**Denis Dailleux**  
Born in Angers in 1958, Denis Dailleux was a florist before becoming a photographer. The fifteen years he spent in Cairo had a profound effect on his approach, which is largely focused on portraits.

*Cueillette dans les hauteurs du Moyen Atlas*, Middle Atlas (Morocco), 2015, film photography, 80 x 80 cm, exhibition print

The photographer reveals his ability to shoot men and women, as well as still lifes. By working with light, the intensity of the subject’s gaze, and position of their bodies, he gives his compositions a pictorial plasticity.

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**Peyman Hosshmandzadeh**  
Born in 1969 in Tehran, Peyman Hosshmandzadeh is a particularly famous author in Iran and a photographer of international renown. His documentary work, which lies between art photography and photojournalism, explores identity and religious beliefs.

*Dry*, Tehran (Iran), 2011-2017, inkjet print on Fine art paper, Tehran, Ag Galerie

This photographic series, which began in 1998, documents the ancestral practice of public bathing and aesthetic and therapeutic rituals in a Tehran hammam. The artist turns his reflection towards bodies and these places which are becoming increasingly neglected as society evolves.

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**Majida Khattari**  
Born in 1966 in Erfoud (Morocco), Majida Khattari is a French-Moroccan visual artist and photographer who places the female body and clothing at the heart of her work, combining traditional and contemporary approaches. In her performances, she integrates singing, music, video, and dance.

*Bavardages*, Turkey, 2009-2010, Hahnemühle FineArt Baryta paper, collage on aluminium, 120 × 180 cm, exhibition print

*La Clé du Paradis*, Turkey, 2009-2011, Hahnemühle FineArt Baryta paper, collage on aluminium, 120 × 180 cm, exhibition print

Majida Khattari’s photography artworks relinquish Orientalist iconography and revisit the clichés of how Arab women are represented. Perfume, which is very present in *Arabian Nights*, often co-occurs with the fantasy imagery of Orientalism.

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**Mehdi-Georges Lahlou**  
Born in 1983 in Les Sables-d’Olonne, Mehdi-Georges Lahlou is a French-Moroccan visual artist who works in photography, performance, installation, video, painting, and drawing. His work addresses gender issues, the influence of religions, and the sense of cultural belonging. In his work, he too often seeks relinquishment and uses his body as the subject of his creations.

*Bénitier*, 2017, 2 cinnamon stoups, epoxy resin, 35 × 45 cm; 80 × 45 cm (base) for each stoup, artist’s collection and Galerie Transit in Mechelen.

The work blends Moroccan-French cultural references from the diverse environment the artist grew up in. For this piece, he used cinnamon, a spice whose scent is intimately linked to the cuisine, cosmetics, and therapeutic spheres of the Arab world. The brittleness of the work and its fragility evoke themes around the durability of art, culture, and heritage.

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**Huda Lutfi**  
Born in Cairo in 1948, Huda Lutfi is an artist who comments on the history, society, and culture of the Arab world, with a particular sensitivity to the female condition. Using a variety of media -collage, photography, video, and sculpture- the artist draws inspiration from Pharaonic, Coptic, Arab, Mediterranean, Indian, and African cultures.

*The Perfumed Garden*, Dubai (United Arab Emirates), 2008, photographs, newspaper clippings, and found objects, 110 × 10 × 160 cm, Dubai, The Third Line gallery

*The Perfumed Garden* (2008) refers to Muhammad al-Nifzawi’s 15th-century erotic manual *The Perfumed Garden*. The work features glass perfume bottles that house painted images depicting portraits of actresses and singers such as Egyptian icon Oum Kalthoum, as well as the artist’s friends and family members. Enclosed in a bottle, these images lend a political tone to the perfume vessels, conjuring up the restrictions endured by women.

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**Laurent Mareschal**  
Born in Dijon in 1975, Laurent Mareschal is a visual artist and filmmaker. His creations have been exhibited at major international museums, including the Victoria & Albert Museum (London, UK), the Grand Palais (Paris, France), and the Ashdod Art Museum (Ashdod, Israel).

*Beiti*, France, 2011, zaatar, sumac, turmeric, ginger, white pepper, 600 × 500 cm, site-specific installation

Created *in situ* shortly before the exhibition opened, this trompe-l’œil evokes the mosaic tiles found in Palestinian homes at the beginning of the 20th century. This technical feat is composed of spices used in Arab cuisine. The smell brings back memories of shared meals, while the name, *Beiti*, the Arabic and Hebrew word for home, suggests the hope of a new-found communion.

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**Reem al Nasser**  
Born in 1987 in Jeddah, Reem al Nasser draws on her personal experiences and meticulous observations of the religious, social, and cultural behaviours in her native country, Saudi Arabia. Her creations combine photography, graffiti, video, and sound installations.

*Full rassas* (Arabian jasmine bullets), Jizan (Saudi Arabia), 2023, jasmine buds, installation

Created entirely from jasmine buds, this traditional wedding gown- dress and finery- is made just a few days before the exhibition opens so that the flowers remain fresh. The floral ornaments are woven by Yemeni craftspeople in the city of Jizan (Saudi Arabia), where jasmine is widely cultivated. The fine craftsmanship pays tribute to this know-how and to local customs.

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**Farah al Qasimi**  
Born in Abu Dhabi in 1991, Farah al Qasimi creates videos, photographs, and performances that explore postcolonial structures of power, gender, and tastes in the Arab states of the Gulf. She places particular emphasis on intimate spaces and their interior design.

*Oud Bath*, Turkey, 2018, inkjet print, 77.5 × 54.5 × 4 cm (unframed), Dubai, The Third Line gallery, A.P.1 not part of 5 2AP edition

*Perfume (Men, Women)*, Turkey, 2019, inkjet print, 77.5 × 54.5 × 4 cm (unframed), Dubai, The Third Line Gallery, A. P.2 not part of 5 2 AP edition

*Perfume (Obama, Lovable, Flawless)*, Turkey, 2018, inkjet print, 77.5 × 54.5 × 4 cm (unframed), Dubai, The Third Line Gallery, A.P.1 not part of 5 2AP edition

This series evokes the omnipresence of perfume and scented oils in Emirati society, and more specifically their use in the intimacy of the home. These photographic prints bear witness to the industrialisation of perfumes, and cast a critical eye on consumer society.

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**Ibrahim Quraishi**  
Born in Nairobi in 1973, Ibrahim Quraishi expresses himself through a variety of media, including photography, photo-painting, video, film, and installation. His frequent travels between Europe and the Middle East inspire the themes of his works in which he addresses migration, dispossession, and cohabitation.

*Synagogue in Tangier*, from the series *Light into Darkness*, Tangier (Morocco), 2023, 54 × 78 cm, print on Hahnemühle fine art paper, exhibition print

This photograph is part of the series called *Light into Darkness* by Ibrahim Quraishi on the richness of Jewish and Christian cultures in Arab countries. It also bears witness to the gradual disappearance of their places of worship in the Muslim world over the course of the 20th century. The photograph was taken in early February 2023, during the celebrations of the Jewish holiday Tu Bishvat. The rabbi agreed to let the artist photograph this spiritual moment. The incense is a blend of local raw materials burned in honour of biblical sacrifices.

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Laurent Mareschal, *Beiti*, France, 2011, zaatar, sumac, turmeric, ginger, white pepper, linoleum, 600 × 500 cm, site-specific installation ©Tami Notsani / ADAGP

### Btihal Remli

Born in Germany in 1987, Moroccan-born artist Btihal Remli addresses the impact of ritual practices on Moroccan public space, and has turned to documentary photography to explore questions of identity and superstition.

*The Djinn Diaries, Recipes, get rid of anything bad*, Morocco, 2019, herbs embedded in epoxy resin, 29.4 x 21.1 x 1.3 cm, artist's collection

*The Djinn Diaries, Recipes, split a couple*, Morocco, 2019, dried herbs and animals in epoxy resin, 23.4 x 11 x 4.5 cm, artist's collection

From the series *The Djinni Diaries-Recipes*, these two works bring together magic recipes used in Moroccan folk beliefs. The artist scours the country collecting the ingredients for dozens of recipes combining spices, herbs, and dried animals. She sheds light on practices that are still alive in Morocco and often little known to the general public.



### Dima Srouji

Born in Palestine in 1991, Dima Srouji is an architect and visual artist who works with a variety of materials from glass to plaster casts. In 2016, she founded Hollow Forms, a glass-blowing project with the Twam family in Jaba', Palestine. She currently runs the MA City Design studios at the Royal College of Art in London.

*Hollow form: the Scent Collection* (Oud Oil Holder, Wearable Oud Oil Holder, Oud Oil Holder, Wearable Oud Oil Holder Small, Wearable Oud Oil Holder), Palestine, 2019, 5 handmade Pyrex bottles for oud oil, Paris, Museum of the Institut du monde arabe

Although glassblowing has existed in Palestine since antiquity, this project celebrates and perpetuates a living history by exploring new forms and introducing contemporary approaches.



### Rirkrit Tiravanija

Born in 1961 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Rirkrit Tiravanija lives and works between New York, Berlin, and Chiang Mai (Thailand).

*Untitled 2015* (Eau de Rose of Damascus), replica of a rosewater distillery model, 2015, brass and glass, 120 x 50 cm, Paris, Galerie Chantal Crousel, RT15 15

This installation was inspired by the drawing of an alembic made by geographer al-Dimashqî in his 14th century manuscript *Choix des merveilles du monde terrestre et maritime*, presented in this

exhibition. The artist discovered this distillation process at the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization in the United Arab Emirates, and has faithfully reproduced it here in three dimensions.



# Exhibition side events

## PUBLICATIONS

**The Exhibition Catalogue - *Parfums d'Orient*** invites readers to discover the world of perfumes in Arab culture and to embark on a journey from Muscat to Marrakech. Perfume is deeply rooted in this culture and occupies a prominent position. Since antiquity, Arabia has been at the heart of the trade of fragrant materials. As the native land of myrrh and frankincense, Arabia is also the crossroads for the trade of precious spices and herbs, such as the mythical oud and mysterious musk. These awe-inspiring materials were brought by caravan from the Far East and were then taken to the shores of the Mediterranean and the Euphrates. Aside from these historical and trade traditions, the Prophet of Islam had a pronounced taste for perfumes. Did he not say that he loved nothing more than women, perfumes, and prayer? Moreover, the Arab-Muslim civilization is a civilization of scents: perfumes permeate the lives of everyone and play an important role in both social and intimate practices. This book, rich in contributions from over twenty perfume specialists, including perfumers, sourcers, engineers, sociologists and historians, pays tribute to an art as evanescent as it is captivating- one that still structures an entire culture today. From the rose fields of the Draa valley to the saffron-scented streets of a

medina, the heady scents of a souk to the sacred fumigations of a temple, and from the jasmine gardens filled with honey and orange blossom aromas to a Middle Eastern kitchen, let yourself get carried away into the fascinating and sensual world of Eastern perfumes.

*Co-published by SKIRA, IMA and AfalUla*  
224 pages, €32

**A special edition of Beaux-Arts Magazine**  
*Parfums d'Orient*

68 pages, €13

**A children's book - *Parfums d'Orient***

A perfumer's travel diary. Follow a perfumer across the Arab world on a quest for inspiration. In it, discover or rediscover the raw materials, perfumery techniques, and the works from the exhibition.  
32 pages, €6

## CINEMA, PARTICIPATORY PERFORMANCES, OLFACTORY CABARET, EPHEMERAL INSTALLATIONS, MUSIC, LECTURE SERIES, PODCASTS...

Starting in January 2024, a rich programme will be set up alongside the exhibition, enabling visitors to delve deeper into the experience of a field that inspires so many artists and researchers.

*Programme will be published online in November 2023 on [imarabe.org](http://imarabe.org)*

## EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND MEDIATION

### Guided tours

From antiquity to the present day, from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to the farthest reaches of India, from scent to scent, visitors will discover, with the help of lecturers, the history, social implications, and the works and objects surrounding this age-old tradition: to perfume and to wear perfume.

*Every Saturday and Sunday at 2:30pm and 4:00pm. Evenings at 6:30pm on the following Wednesdays: October 4, November 1 and December 6, 2023; January 3, February 7, 2024*

### Workshops

#### Cooking, taste and smell

Taste and smell are intimately interwoven. Participants will discover the raw materials presented in the exhibition in a culinary workshop and tasting session that will surprise their tastebuds. This workshop, led by Chloe Saada, will revolve around the spices that are so dear to perfumery and the various culinary traditions of the Arab world. Perfumes and flavours...

*Saturdays November 11, 2023; and January 13 and March 2, 2024 at 11:30am; Wednesdays December 13, 2023 and February 7, 2024 at 2:30pm*

#### Glass and bottles

Fired arts have a long tradition in the Arab world and were used very early on to create luxurious containers for the most precious essences. In honour of the bottles displayed in the exhibition, participants will have the opportunity to try their hand at a glassmaking technique. *In collaboration with Paris Atelier*

*More information at [imarabe.org](http://imarabe.org)*

#### Masterclass - Leather as a raw material

A renowned raw material for luxury perfumery, leather exudes an unmistakable scent. Candidates or participants will have the opportunity to create olfactory, historical, and technical links between this fragrance and leatherwork with the help of Luca Colosimo from 10.03.53 and specialized artisans.

*Saturday, November 18, 2023 at 3:30pm*

### Story time

*La Roseraie de Leila et autres contes parfumés.* Fazia Kerrad will transport her audience to Leila's Rose Garden - a tale she wrote and illustrated along with other stories full of fragrance and emotion...

*Saturday, October 21, 2023 at 3pm*

*La ronde des parfums.* The East is full of mysteries, scents, and perfumes. The scents of rose, jasmine, and sandalwood envelope people's daily lives and perfume their homes. Each fragrance is carefully crafted to delight the senses. The same is true of tales that invite the audience to savour scents. This circle of perfumes will be articulated around perfumers, secrets and sharing... Scented tales to delight your heart and invite you to savour the subtle fragrances of the East.

*Sunday, December 17, 2023 at 3 pm*

*For all ages 6 and up*

**Part of the Fête de la Science (Science Fair)**  
"Les odeurs qui guérissent" by Jane Plailly and Jean Charles Sommerard. Since the dawn of time, perfume has been a marker of civilisation, hedonism, and virtue. This meeting will enable the public to unearth the meaning of its origins, emotional impact, and benefits and to rediscover its therapeutic contribution to "well-being".

*Dr Jane Plailly, CNRS researcher in Cognitive Neuroscience; Jean Charles Sommerard Perfumer & Aromatherapy expert*

*Sunday, October 8, 2023 at 3:00pm*



The IMA bookshop invites visitors to deepen their knowledge of the fascinating universe of perfumes. On sale is a carefully chosen selection of reference works, stories, and coffee-table books on the captivating history of Eastern perfumes and their uses, from ancient times to the present day.

*Also available online*  
[www.librairie.imarabe.org](http://www.librairie.imarabe.org)

THE IMA LIBRARY

As an extension to the exhibition, the library offers a rich collection of books, journals, magazines, and films for visitors to discover the ancestral traditions and know-how surrounding perfume (beauty, traditional medicine, festivals, funeral rites, magic, purification...) that persist throughout the Arab world, from Morocco to the Sultanate of Oman. Several themes will be addressed in special posts published online throughout the exhibition: perfume in classical and popular Arabic literature, the uses of incense as described by ethnologists, the olfactory impressions of travellers...

*Documents can be consulted on site or borrowed for reading at home.*

SPACE RENTAL

The IMA's space rental service offers companies special tours of the exhibition.

*For more information, send an email to [espaces@imarabe.org](mailto:espaces@imarabe.org) | +33 (0)1 40 51 39 78*

Practical information

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Bus: 24, 63, 67, 75, 86, 87, 89

Temporary exhibition rooms (levels 1 and 2)

**Opening times**  
Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 6pm  
Saturday, Sunday, and public holidays from 10am to 7pm (ticket office closes 45 minutes before closing time) Night visits: October 4, November 1 and December 6, 2023; January 3 and February 7, 2024 until 9:30pm (ticket office closes at 8:45pm)  
Closed on Mondays

**Admission**  
Full rate: €13, €11 (reduced) and €6 (under 26 years)  
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Assisted by Nisrine Grillie — *Givaudan*  
Frédéric Walter — *coordination of Givaudan partnership*

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**Olfactory devices**  
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Mathilde Castel — *Doctor in museology*  
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