



museum of arts and design

**MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN PRESENTS  
FIRST MUSEUM EXHIBITION EXPLORING THE DESIGN OF PERFUME  
OPENING NOVEMBER 20, 2012**

***The Art of Scent* Features Pivotal Modern and Contemporary Works Including  
*Chanel N° 5* by Ernest Beaux, *Jicky* by Aimé Guerlain, *Aromatics Elixir* by  
Bernard Chant, *Light Blue* by Olivier Cresp, *Pleasures* by Annie Buzantian and  
Alberto Morillas, and *Untitled* by Daniela Andrier**

**Diller Scofidio + Renfro Designs Exhibition**

**New York, NY (November 6, 2012)** – *The Art of Scent 1889-2012* is the first museum exhibition dedicated to exploring the design and aesthetics of olfactory art through twelve pivotal fragrances, dating from 1889 to the present, which profoundly impacted the course of the medium. On view November 20, 2012, through February 24, 2013, at the Museum of Arts and Design, the exhibition examines major stylistic developments in the evolution and design of fragrance, and provides unprecedented insight into the creative visions and intricate processes of the artists responsible for crafting the featured works. Each scent is experienced individually in a special installation designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro that emphasizes the distinct combination of artistry and raw materials used in their creation.

A **Press Preview** of the exhibition is scheduled for the morning of November 20, 2012. The exhibition's opening date has been rescheduled due to the impact of Hurricane Sandy.

Organized by MAD's Curator of Olfactory Art, Chandler Burr, *The Art of Scent* explores the progression of olfactory art, highlighting the artistic and cultural movements as well as the social and political occurrences that influenced each scent artist in the creation of their work. The exhibition examines scent from the beginning of the late nineteenth century—when the introduction of synthetic molecules freed scent artists from the constraints of using all-natural materials, making scent a true artistic medium—through the present day. Opening with the work of Aimé Guerlain, who was among the first to introduce synthetic molecules alongside natural materials with the design of *Jicky* (1889), *The Art of Scent* then leads visitors through an olfactory experience that showcases some of the most significant scents created during the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, ending with Daniela Andrier's neo-brutalist fragrance *Untitled* (2010).

“At MAD, we are always looking to push boundaries and question the hierarchies in art by exploring the materials and processes behind groundbreaking work,” said Holly Hotchner, the museum's Nanette L. Laitman Director. “There has not been the exploration or recognition of olfactory art as there has been of art that stimulates the other four senses. In plain language, this exhibition is a game changer.”

Presented in MAD's fourth floor galleries, the exhibition facilitates a focused olfactory experience through the near-complete removal of visual indicators, such as logos and marketing materials, encouraging visitors to concentrate exclusively on their sense of smell. While commercial presentations of scent utilize alcohol, *The Art of Scent* features scent machines that disperse the scents in minutely focused streams of air—allowing for a more concentrated scent experience. The exhibition also provides visitors with an unprecedented glimpse into the labor-intensive artistic process of creating perfume by showcasing the stages of development for one fragrance, *Trésor* by Sophia Grojsman, from the initial written brief to the first iteration and through the layering and modification of scent required to reach the final desired work of olfactory art.

At its center, the exhibition presents the work of some of the most significant modern and contemporary scent artists, including:

- Ernest Beaux, who in 1921 used chemical compounds known as synthetic aldehydes in combination with a floral structure to create the first great modernist work with *Chanel N° 5*;
  - Bernard Chant, whose *Aromatics Elixir* (1971) was one of the great mid-twentieth century works that brought America into the forefront of perfume creation;
  - Annie Buzantian and Alberto Morillas, who in using a carbon dioxide extraction in their influential *Pleasures* (1995), mainstreamed a major technological advance in the medium and altered olfactory design;
  - Oliver Cresp, whose *Light Blue* (2001) presents a straightforward “still life” of scents from the natural world without ornament or aesthetic subtext;
  - Jean-Claude Ellena, who pioneered a minimalist school in scent with works such as the light and brilliant *Osmanthe Yunnan* that have maximal impact; and
  - Daniela Andrier, whose *Untitled* (2010) is an ingenious neo-brutalist work that references nature both violently and abstractly.
- Other works of olfactory art featured in the exhibition include: *Jicky* (1889) by Aimé Guerlain; *L'Interdit* (1957) by Fabrice Fabron; *Drakkar Noir* (1982) by Pierre Wargnye; *L'Eau d'Issey* (1992) by Jacques Cavallier; *Angel* (1992) by Olivier Cresp; and *Prada Amber* (2003) by Carlos Benaïm and Clément Gavarry.

Recognizing the social aspect of selecting and experiencing perfumes, *The Art of Scent* culminates in a space where visitors may converse and compare the featured works of olfactory art, and provide feedback about the exhibition. The shared responses and personal insights become part of the exhibition's record, underscoring that the individual experience of fragrance is the concluding factor in the works' artistry and design.

“Much as museum visitors typically follow the trajectory of modern art and design by viewing a succession of iconic works, at MAD they can explore the aesthetic evolution and creative innovations of modern and contemporary olfactory works using their sense of smell,” said exhibition curator Chandler Burr. “While these perfumes are regularly experienced, they are seldom acknowledged as the works of art and design that they are. My goal for this exhibition is to transform the ways in which people respond to scent artists and their art. The works presented in this exhibition are ones that have each had a profound impact on the history of this artistic medium.”

## **EXHIBITION ORGANIZATION AND CREDITS**

*The Art of Scent* is made possible by The Estée Lauder Companies—the Founding Major Donor—and other Major Donors, including Chanel Inc., Givaudan, Hermès, International

Flavors & Fragrances Inc., L'Oréal and P&G Prestige. Additional support for *The Art of Scent* is provided by Funders Arcade Marketing USA and Guerlain, as well as Diptyque and Women in Flavor and Fragrance Commerce Inc.

#### **ABOUT DILLER SCOFIDIO + RENFRO**

Diller Scofidio + Renfro is an interdisciplinary design studio that integrates architecture, the visual arts, and the performing arts. Based in New York City, the 100-person studio is led by four principals – Elizabeth Diller, Ricardo Scofidio, Charles Renfro, and Benjamin Gilmartin. In 1999, the MacArthur Foundation presented Ms. Diller and Mr. Scofidio with the 'Genius' award for their commitment to integrating architecture with issues of contemporary culture. Selected projects completed or in design include: the High Line Park, New York City; Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts Redevelopment Project, New York City; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Blur Building, Switzerland; Brown University's Creative Arts Center, Providence; The Broad Museum, Los Angeles; the Museum of Image & Sound, Rio de Janeiro; and the Hirshhorn Museum Expansion, Washington D.C. Installation and performance projects recently completed include: *Be Your Self* with the Australian Dance Theatre; *How Wine Became Modern*, an exhibition designed and co-created for SFMoMA; and *Exit for Terre Natale*, an exhibition accompanying the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP15) in Copenhagen.

#### **ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN**

The Museum of Arts and Design explores how craftsmanship, art, and design intersect in the visual arts today. The Museum focuses on contemporary creativity and the ways in which artists and designers from around the world transform materials through processes ranging from the handmade to cutting edge technologies. The Museum's exhibition program explores and illuminates issues and ideas, highlights creativity and craftsmanship, and celebrates the limitless potential of materials and techniques when used by creative and innovative artists. MAD's permanent collection is global in scope and focuses on art, craft, and design from 1950 to the present day. At the center of the Museum's mission is education. The Museum's dynamic new facility features classrooms and studios for master classes, seminars, and workshops for students, families and adults. Three open artist studios engage visitors in the creative processes of artists at work and enhance the exhibition programs. Lectures, films, performances and symposia related to the Museum's collection and topical subjects affecting the world of contemporary art, craft and design are held in a renovated 144-seat auditorium.

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