

LOVE SCENTS

Since this is the love issue, we thought what better fit than perfume! Not just any perfume, but CREED perfume - one made with that special ingredient so missing in not only other perfumes, but as well in most things mass consumed: "love".

Erwin Creed is all about love, he loves scents, he loves the forests, he loves children, and he loves KA.

KA — In the last issue of KA, the responses to your questions were amazing and seemed to originate from a place of "love". How much does love play a part in your daily choices?

EC — I love what I do, certainly. I am so fortunate in that way. I do not think it would be possible to work in this field without a great love of beauty as expressed in fragrance, love of nature, love of adding something extraordinary to the daily experiences of clients. Yet, I think everyone can identify with this notion. Everyone has a smell they love, be it the smell of roses when they open, the smell of a favorite cuisine, even the smell of a favorite place, even if it is a golf course or a beach or home. We try to innovate, using as always the classics and nature as a guide, to create what we love, that which is true and good and beautiful. And we hope people will respond and share that feeling with us. What is interesting is to see how this love is passed generation to generation. I -- and in fact our clients -- have the great privilege of smelling not only what my father, the master perfumer, loves to create, but also the creations of his father and his, and so on back to 1760, all seven generations of us. It is all there all around the world now: at Holt Renfrew, the CREED boutique at 794 Madison Avenue in New York, at Neiman Marcus, at Printemps, at Lane Crawford. What a pleasure it is to share this love with so many. What an honor.

KA — People tend to fall in love with the fragrance of the people they admire most, often times having more of an emotional response to the scent more so than an image of the person. Why do you think that is so?

EC — Scent is so closely linked to memory, and emotion. Have you ever had the occasion to smell, let's say, a scarf that belongs to someone who has just left the room and forgotten it? In the very act of forgetting and leaving, they remind you and remain. The scent is so evocative. You miss the person immediately. The essence of scent is so impressive to the one left behind. In a larger sense, this is true throughout life, including when romances end. The scent of the person who is gone still has an influence over us. So does the smell of a new person we meet! Fragrance is very powerful, and this is something that powerful people have always known. To smell CREED Fleurs de Bulgarie today, the fragrance made for Queen Victoria, you take in immediately not only the abundant roses, which is literally the queen of all flowers, you sense also the power of the woman because of the musk base. It's quite bold. It's the fragrance of a monarch. It's feminine, but it's unmistakably a fragrance of stature. This is the essence of the woman and an

almost extrasensory impression she left on everyone who met her. With CREED, there are so many examples of this in our 250 years, so many evocative fragrances.

KA — Vanilla is known as an aphrodisiac, that along with cacao, became a form of currency. The Spaniards returned from South America and proclaimed vanilla and chocolate to the erotic duo. In Sublime Vanille, was your choice of Vanilla to make a scent centered around the enhancement of love?

EC — The very interesting thing about vanilla is that it can be shared by men and women equally, so it is a natural part of any romantic interlude. Vanilla is one of the best loved essences across all time, in all geographies and cultures. Vanilla unites us. For a perfumer, it is impossible not to fall in love with vanilla while you're working with it. First, there are so many varieties. We chose two special ones for Sublime Vanille -- vanilla from climbing orchids of Tahiti and vanilla from South America. Delicate and heady. Elegant and evocative. It's a fine combination, if I say so! My father did a wonderful job, and it was my great pleasure to assist him, as the generations of my family have done without ceasing since 1760. Vanilla is comfort. It is reassurance. It is timelessness. It envelops and soothes. It is a very powerful ingredient.

KA — The earthquake in Haiti has been something as surreal as one of those disaster films, but much more painful and real. How has this affected you?

EC — Of course, Haiti is part of the French-speaking world. We in France hear the anguish of Haiti in our common language. There is no barrier between us in that sense. We hear Haiti. CREED has for many years been a proud trading partner with Haiti. The CREED fragrance Original Vetiver is made in part with the essence of Haitian vetiver grass. We purchase vetiver grass there and extract the essence in our workshop in France in a unique hand process. The result is a magnificently refreshing fragrance with now a large following in many countries. So we have always felt that we have contributed to the success of Haiti, the prosperity of Haiti, through time by being an economic partner with them. Now, of course, we respond in Haiti's hour of need. Five percent of sales from www.creedboutique.com are dedicated to Haitian relief. The funds go to a charity, www.adra.org, that is highly recommended to us by experts working in Haiti. More money for medical assistance and water purification are the results. We are more than happy to help our friends.

Everyone has a
smell they love,
be it the smell of
roses when they
open, the smell of
a favorite cuisine,
even the smell of
a favorite place...



KA — CREED as a company has a culture of giving back and charity. Why is that such an important part of your corporate DNA?

EC — When a business reaches 250 years of operation, as CREED has in 2010, it is easy to see, from my vantage point of being the seventh generation, the interconnectedness of everything. In the example of Haiti, you can see how connected we are there. The same is true all over the world.

To create the fragrance CREED Original Santal, My father and I travel to the sandalwood forests of Mysore, India, where the world's best sandalwood is located -- although in a place totally inaccessible by air. The sandalwood there is the most expensive in the world. People say to us, "Why not choose cheaper sandalwood from Australia, for example?" We choose Mysore because we have a commitment not only to using the best ingredients, but also to paying a price that supports the community of Mysore. My family has done business there for generations, working within complex local rules about sustainable harvesting. I can see that my role and the role of the next generation of growers are connected. We need each other. The province in which Mysore is located is very poor. How could we walk away? We'd lose quality but also humanity. So we make a commitment.

KA — What is it about fast cars that attracts you?

EC — Everything! A fast car is a sculpture and a source of power. I love the speed, of course, but I also love the sounds. I love the smell and texture of the wind as it whips through the car. The smell of the leather, but it must be real leather, of course! No substitutes. And I love competition.

KA — Have you discovered any new music you wish to share with us?

EC — Always! Fragrance is an art form, like music, that can change how you feel. You often find people who work with fragrance also love music, food and all the things that are pleasing to the senses. Last time I mentioned to you Chester French, who are great. Kings of Leon, also great. Anything that moves you. Beethoven and Brahms I can recommend without reservation.

KA — What is next for Erwin CREED?

EC — My father and I will soon release the next fragrances in the Royal Exclusives Collection. Sublime Vanille is the first in the Royal Exclusives Collection. There will be more! The next is Jardin d'Amalfi. If you know the garden of Villa Rufolo on the Amalfi coast in Italy, this is the inspiration for Jardin d'Amalfi. It is not to be missed. While we work on that, I squeeze in as much skiing as I can on the weekends. I can never get enough.