Le parfumeur / The Perfumer (Versailles, 28-29 Jan 21)

Palace of Versailles Research Centre, Jan 28–29, 2021
Deadline: Jun 15, 2020
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Érika Wicky, Université Lumière Lyon 2 / LARHRA

The Perfumer: The evolution of a figure since the Renaissance

International conference organized by Alice Camus (Guerlain/CRCV) and Érika Wicky (Université Lumière Lyon 2/LARHRA)

The purpose of the conference is to study the history of the professional perfumer, analyzing how the image of the perfumer emerged during the Renaissance in Italy, how it was further constructed during the seventeenth century in France and England, and how it continued to evolve to the present day. Under the Ancien Régime, when trade in most European countries was regulated by corporations and states, the assertion of the perfumer's identity was often undermined by a legal struggle to become the sole holder of the right to manufacture and sell perfume products. Since its recognition, this profession has undergone metamorphoses evident in the way they affected each of three operations that have defined the perfumer throughout history: creating, manufacturing and selling perfumes (Gobet and Le Gall, 2011). Indeed, perfumers have had to adapt to changing trends in fragrance use and to distinguish themselves from their competitors at different times in their history by manufacturing and marketing not only scented waters, but also other perfumed products such as gloves, the creation of which was their first vocation, then sachets, cosmetics, hair powders, soaps, and even more recently, scented candles. The evolution of the use of perfumes, sometimes prophylactic, hygienic or hedonistic, also affected perfumers, who in turn allied themselves with other areas of activity, collaborating with apothecaries, hairdressers and chemists, followed by artists and fashion designers.

This conference will offer a multidisciplinary approach to the history of perfumers, their profession, their social status and their representations, through the presentations of specialists from diverse backgrounds: historians, art historians, literary scholars, philosophers, perfumers and professional in the contemporary world of perfumery. The multidisciplinary approach will provide a detailed and nuanced vision of the figure of the perfumer at different moments in his historical evolution by drawing on a wide range of historical, literary and artistic sources (professional documents, legal documents, inventories, etc.). This conference also seeks to highlight the links between the exercise of the profession of perfumer and the socio-cultural environment of his or her time.

Proposals for papers, in French or in English, of about 3,000 characters, should be sent to Alice

Camus (acamus@guerlain.fr) and Érika Wicky (erika.wicky@univ-lyon2.fr), before June 15, 2020. They must be accompanied by a short bio-bibliography.

A more detailed CFP, a french version of it, and more information can be found here: https://olfaction.hypotheses.org/891

Scientific comitee: Eugénie Briot (Givaudan), Natacha Coquery (Université Lumière Lyon 2 / LARHRA), Chantal Jaquet (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne), Cheryl Krueger (University of Virginia), Catherine Lanoë (Université d'Orléans), Rosine Lheureux (Archives départementales du Val-de-Marne), Jean-Alexandre Perras (Voltaire Foundation).

Reference:

CFP: Le parfumeur / The Perfumer (Versailles, 28-29 Jan 21). In: ArtHist.net, Dec 11, 2019 (accessed Nov 17, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/22264>.