

FORGET ME NOT FRAGRANCE BY VICTORINOX QUESTIONS TO THE PERFUMERS



Dora Baghriche and Julien Plos of Firmenich, one of the leading global fragrance houses.

How did you pursue the desire to become a perfumer?

Dora:

I originally felt it was my destiny to pursue the world of travel journalism because I wanted to discover the world. It was while reading an article in a newspaper about the life of a perfumer that I was drawn to the world of perfume. It was “love at first sight” for this work that I was just discovering, yet which already seemed so familiar to me. At the age of 22, I dedicated myself to perfume: an echo of my childhood, of my desire to write, and of my desire to create.

Julien:

My story is more straightforward. My mother is a perfumer, and I was immersed in the world of fragrance at a young age. I discovered my passion for natural ingredients while learning about the history and traditions of perfumery in Grasse, in the south of France. I’m also keenly aware of the science and the technical aspects of olfaction, which fascinate me.

From where do you get inspiration for the creation of new fragrances?

Dora:

My sources of inspiration are eclectic; my creativity is nourished by contrasts. I am passionate about modern art, and about the social movements that break codes and create new ones. I practice boxing to give me energy, and Japanese archery to control my energy according to the “zen” way of life. I enjoy seeing the works of artists who inspire me - in the culinary arts, in music, in photography, and then meeting the artists. These first-hand exchanges nourish my inspiration. I capture all my experiences in a journal; it's a wealth of complex, multi-faceted observations. Through this little book, I reconnect with my literary roots. I write everything down, from descriptions to inspirations.

Julien:

I am often inspired by new ingredients, new technologies and new ways of interacting with perfume. I love using the latest high-tech extraction methods to explore different, unexpected facets of natural ingredients. I am also fascinated by consumer data which allow me to understand consumers' culture and predict their expectations. I enjoy building new sensory approaches and imagining new innovative fragrance gestures to connect with consumers and deliver them new experiences with fragrance.

What inspired you during the creation of the Forget Me Not scent?

Dora and Julien:

First, we enter the universe of the brand and then the specific demands of the project. Once we have that base of understanding, we start thinking about the story we want to tell and the emotions we want to share through the perfume.

For Victorinox, the Swiss culture, landscape and flora are endless inspirations. We thought about creating a perfume inspired by a beautiful blue flower found in Switzerland: Forget Me Not.

Which spontaneous associations and thoughts do you relate with the forget me not flower?

Dora and Julien:

Forget Me Not is definitely a romantic flower. The name itself is full of meaning!

According to a legend, a knight and his lady were walking along a river. He stooped down to pick a flower for her, but lost his balance because of his armor and fell into the water. As he was drowning, he threw the flower at his lady and shouted: "Ne m'oubliez pas!" ("Forget me not!").

This was our starting point to create a joyful and optimistic fragrance.

As the product name implicates, the fragrance stands for not forgetting about oneself. How do you make sure not forgetting about yourself?

Dora and Julien:

For us, the key is to learn two things; first, adopting a more assertive approach, and then, trying to feel and listen to your body and mind. Use “I” instead of “we”, try to find some time for yourself, adopt a more positive and self-care philosophy. We know that it is not always easy, but this is how you achieve a more optimistic lifestyle!

The scent reflects a strong, authentic and independent woman who feels comfortable in her own skin. According to your bio, you get pleasure from travelling on your own, a situation where these attributes are definitely required. Does it help in the creation process to build a scent that reflects your own personality? Please explain.

Dora:

A perfume is the original interpretation of the perfumer's creation, so there is always a link between the perfume and the perfumer. I like to say that I work with fragrance. It is my ally, and it exposes me to infinite emotional possibilities. With each creation, each collaboration, I retain a little magic.

You love drawing and enjoy creating contrasts, playing with light and dark and sketching forms such as statues. Forget Me Not also plays with contrasts combining a spring-like opening with a romantic heart and a sensual, woody dry-down with hints of sweetness. Can you tell us about the key to combining such contrasts in the creation of a new, harmonious and aesthetic scent?

Julien:

In most fragrances, it's a question of creating the right balance between the contrasts. That's what fascinates me in drawing or even playing basketball; that attempt to find the right balance between light and dark or speed and precision. It's what I strive to achieve in my fragrances. There has to be the right balance in the fragrance to first incite, then seduce, maintain your interest and leave you wanting more. It's a question of timing, craft and ultimately, balance.

What is it that makes your fragrances special? What can't be missed? What's your "secret ingredient"?

Dora and Julien:

We tried to find something unique to bring to Forget Me Not, and we were inspired by these amazing seeds: hibiscus and angelica. Hibiscus immediately conjures up ideas of warmth and care, while angelica is usually known for its strength and force, as it grows in cold climates. Despite their differences, both are known for delivering health benefits. Together, they seemed to bring important pieces of the idea of Forget Me Not: nurture and nature, giving a more holistic approach to taking care of yourself or the one you love.

Do you still use perfume yourself and if yes, are you changing frequently?

Dora and Julien:

We both love fragrance, so yes, we both wear perfumes. We each have our favorites, but we do change and evolve, depending on our mood or personality. Perfume is a way to express yourself; it's a question of personal taste. A good perfume, first and foremost, is a creation that tells a story and that brings to life the sensibility of the person who wears it.

How do you think scents influence people? How do they influence you, your mood, your feelings?

Dora and Julien:

The range of possibilities for expressing our personalities is extremely broad today; fragrances can evoke an emotion or can correspond to different desires at different stages of our lives. The sense of smell is so closely connected to our brains; scents remind us of intense, deeply buried emotions – memories of childhood or moments of our life that we may have forgotten. Fragrance can bring us back to a specific moment in our lives, take us back in time, or help us to project who we are, who we want to be and how we want to live our lives.

ABOUT VICTORINOX

Victorinox AG is a worldwide operating family business, which today is run in the fourth generation. The headquarter of the company is located in Ibach, canton Schwyz, in the heart of Switzerland. This is where the founder of the company Karl Elsener I set up his cutlery business back in 1884 and, a few years later, designed the legendary «Original Swiss Army Knife». Meanwhile, the company produces not only the world-famous pocket knives, but also high-quality household and professional knives, watches, travel gear and fragrances. In 2005, the company took over Wenger SA in Delémont. The Wenger pocket knives were integrated into the Victorinox range in 2013, so that the Wenger product portfolio today consists of watches and travel gear. Products are available online, in own stores as well as via a widespread network of subsidiaries and distributors in more than 120 countries. In 2019, the company with its more than 2100 employees generated sales of CHF 480 million.



ABOUT FIRMENICH

Firmenich is the world's largest privately-owned perfume and taste company, founded in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1895 and has been family-owned for 125 years. Firmenich is a leading business-to-business company operating primarily in the fragrance and taste market, specialized in the research, creation, manufacture and sale of perfumes, flavors and ingredients. Renowned for its world-class research and creativity, as well as its leadership in sustainability, Firmenich offers its customers superior innovation in formulation, a broad and high-quality palette of ingredients, and proprietary technologies including biotechnology, encapsulation, olfactory science and taste modulation. Firmenich had an annual turnover of 3.9 billion Swiss Francs at end June 2020.