

Until January 8, 2019

Begijnhofkerk, Brussels, BE

For *Flemish Masters in Situ*, I set out to create a fragrance that would inspire visitors to experience and look at a painting in a completely new way.

For the painting '*Saint Ursula'* bythe Flemish master 'Theodoor van Loon' (1581 – 1649) I explored different kinds of lilies and lily fragrances to make up a unique scent, eventually incorporating the two extremes of the lily spectrum: the white lily or 'Madonna lily' and a really heavy scented oriental Starfighter Lily.

However, while the white lily exudes a sweet and mellow fragrance as it blooms, the starfighter lily spreads a rather strong and penetrating one. I made two scents: *Flower*based on the white lily and *Deflower*based on the oriental starfighter lily.

I named the work *Flower-Deflower* in reference to the 11,000 virgin handmaidens who accompanied Saint Ursula on her voyage to join her future husband, drawing attention to the virginal and non-virginal aspect of the legend (they were cruelly massacred for refusing to

copulate with or marry the invading Huns) . The created fragrance ‘
Flower’
is lighter, purer and fresher, while the created fragrance ‘
Deflower’
is heavier and sultrier, but both have retained their unmistakably flowery roots. ‘
Deflower’
also contains a few other fragrances, like Moroccan rose, jasmine, etc., while ‘
Flower’
, in its turn, has subtle soupçons of daffodil and a number of other white flowers that make it stand out even more as a distinctly ‘flowery’ fragrance.

Apart from just flowers, I also incorporated myrrh, galbanum, incense and labdanum ciste in ‘*Flo wer’s*
virginal scent’, in reference to Christianity.
Deflower
does not have this. Some fragrances were added to allow the scent to linger longer, including sandalwood, palo santo wood, oakmoss, vetiver, the smell of green stems, hay and earth.

The synthetic smell of blood was also added to ‘*Deflower’* very sparingly to make the fragrance dryer, to give it suffocating and metallic undertones without affecting the warm sensation it provokes, and obviously to refer to the deflowering of virgins in this case. Only seasoned noses will be able to detect the smell of blood in the scent, however!

{gallery}exhibitions/2018/vanloon{/gallery}