

Credits

THIS special Finery section appearing today in all editions of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers was coordinated by Marie McGee, special sections editor.

Special writers were C. L. Rugenstein and Joan Boram. Photographers were Dan Dean and Stephen Cantrell. Cover design was by O & E graphics editor David Frank. The cover was photographed by Steve Fecht.

Advertising coordinators were Marsha Stamps and Jan Halm.

Shown on the cover is a Mongolian lamb collage creation of Andrienne Landau, available at Jacobson's stores. Questions regarding the section should be directed to McGee at 591-2300, Ext. 313.

Fragrance

delightful thoughtfulness

By Joan Boram
special writer

SINCE THE earliest times, mankind has enjoyed sweet fragrances and has used them to celebrate both life and after-life.

More than 3,000 years ago, the Egyptians burned sweet-smelling fragrances to the sun god, Ra, as he made his daily journey across the sky, and perfumes have been found in tombs of Egyptian pharaohs.

The first known perfume bottle, also Egyptian, dates back to 1,000 B.C. From Egypt, the fashion for perfumes spread to Greece, then to Rome. (The word "perfume" comes from the Latin "per" "I fumus," "through smoke.")

The Jews, during their captivity, learned the art of fragrance from the Egyptians, and there are many references in the Bible to the use of perfumes. Judith and the Queen of Sheba each used the power of fragrance to ensnare her victim.

The use of perfumes waned during the dark ages (which have been designated "1,000 years without a bath"), but was reintroduced during the 1200s by the crusaders, who brought back not only sensuous harem perfumes, but also the first atomizer.

When Catherine de Medici came from Florence in 1533 to marry Henry II of France, she brought with her the arts of cooking, astrology, and perfumery. Her perfumer, Renato Bianco, set up a little shop near Notre Dame, where he sold both perfumes and arsenic poisons — Olf with the old, and on with the new!

THERE IS NO QUESTION that Napoleon divorced Josephine for political reasons. However, he liked light fragrance, and she in-

sisted on using musk oil, which he detested.

Before leaving the royal apartments for the last time, she doused them with the heavy fragrance, assuring that both the emperor and his new bride would be reminded of her for a long, long time.

While some people have more sensitive "noses" than others, an ordinary untrained nose can smell 0.000,000,000,000,071 ounce of skunk odor!

Fragrance falls into four main categories:

• **Oriental** (heavy, sultry, rich. Characterized by musk and sandalwood ingredients)

• **Classic florals** (blends of lily of the valley, rose, jasmine)

• **Modern blend** (Aliphatic aldehydes, considered novel, daring, modern. Synthetic chemicals have been used extensively in perfumes since the late 1800s)

• **Woody** (forest) blend. (Mossy-leaves or resinous. Often have ginkgo, fern, herbs, to add earthiness)

In modern times, fragrance has been available in three options: perfume, the most concentrated and the most expensive, eau de toilette, and the weakest, cologne. Recently, a fourth category, eau de parfum, stronger than eau de toilette, but less concentrated than perfume, has been introduced.

"WE CARRY THE fragrances that are too expensive for the big chains," says Annemarie Croinn, owner of the eponymous "Annemarie" in Birmingham. The store carries a few very precious perfumes, as well as investment-quality antique atomizers, fountains and other accessories associated with fragrance.

"Floral scents are new this season," says Croinn. "A scent with 20 floral notes, Ebullience per-

fume is \$450 an ounce and is packaged in a signed and numbered unique art glass bottle. At \$150, the dusting powder is the most expensive on the market.

"The puff is made of mink and maribou feathers, and the box can be ordered in a number of custom colors, to match the lady's boudoir, as can the box that the perfume comes in. A 12-ounce bottle of Ebullience toilet water, also in a unique art glass bottle, is available for \$1,200."

"Zarolla" comes in a copy of a Tiffany bottle — the gold is blown into the glass, so it won't be scratched off with extensive use. The bottle is secured with sterling-silver twine. A light floral/citrus fragrance, the perfume is \$450 an ounce. A large copy of the Tiffany bottle, holding about 20 ounces of perfume, is \$10,000.

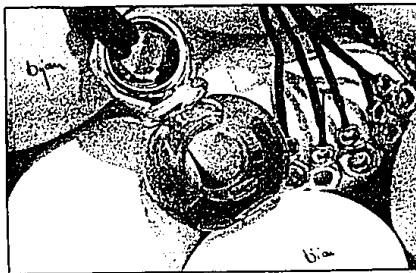
"We sell about one a year," comments Croinn. For that amount of money, the purchase can expect more than just to smell good.

"The bottles are an investment, says Croinn. Take this 43-ounce of L'Air du Temps. It's in a Lalique bottle signed and numbered, and is priced at \$1,900.

This bottle continues to increase in value every year, and there are a limited number of them around."

With this attitude, can it be long before "Passion" and "Optim" are joined by "Equity?"

THE ANTIQUE PIECES at "Annemarie" are stunning. A signed Tiffany bottle, gold with green hearts, is \$2,500. "It's the ultimate in chic," says Croinn. "Your own perfume bottle. The only one like it in the world, and the value is continually going up. I had a Lalique bottle in the store



DAN DEAN/staff photographer



Pendants (above) containing "Ben-jan" fragrance is a first-time offering at Jacobson's. At the left, a three-piece Moser set, carved entirely out of malachite at Annemarie's in Birmingham.



Victorian accessories for the dressing table from Jacobson's.

for one year. When I got it, the auction value was \$3,500. One year later, the auction value was \$7,000.

A monumental three-piece Moser set, carved entirely out of malachite and withing with sinuous nudes, angels and flowers in bas-relief, is \$3,800. There are samples of Victorian glass as well, and lavish Belle Epoch Czechoslovakian pieces.

Jacobson's is introducing "Ben-jan" for women exclusively in this area. A romantic blend of narcissus, ylang-ylang, orange blossom and jasmine, the perfume is \$350 an ounce, and comes in a handblown bottle with an open circle center. Sixteen ounces of eau de parfum in the same style bottle is \$750, and a pendant containing 1/2 ounce of perfume is \$65.

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DAN DEAN/staff photographer

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Mink is still No. 1 choice

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the most prized is the black-brown of Blackglama and Black Willow, the Rolls Royces of the

mink world, so to speak.

"Black Willow is a ranch in Coalville, Utah," Dittich explained. "They raise enough skins for 60 or so coats a year, and they're the finest in the world."

PRICES FOR THE other coats may range from \$2,900 and up, depending on the number of skins used, but Black Willow prices are "all about the same — \$28,000 for a full-length coat."

Chudik's customers like mink too, but he's given the No. 2 spot to fox. A current Chudik ad calls it the "fur of the year."

"Fox has really come down in price," Chudik said. "Now, a finer, silver fox coat, which used to sell for \$10,000 is going for \$6,000."

The reason, he notes, is the lower cost of labor for what he called "off-shore" imports from places like Canada.

Styles and treatments are new in furs, too.

The seven-eighth-length is one Dittich has noted as popular. So are "cuddie" coats — those are the ones that come below hip level and are gathered in snugly at the bottom by a band of fur.

Epaulettes, half-belts with buttons, and tighter cuffs are some embellishments popping up on the coats, too.

But all the care in choosing a coat will be for naught if it isn't cared for properly. Both salons recommend a yearly cleaning with the furrier's method, and cold storage.

The furrier's method involves tumbling the fur in a large, dryer-like drum with a moistened sawdust-type material (it's actually meal with ground chicken and fish bones). It's put through a second wire-mesh drum to shake out the "sawdust," and all the dirt and oil that adhered to it. After that, the fur is blown out with an air hose, glazed with a special mangle (to restore the sheen) and fluffed.

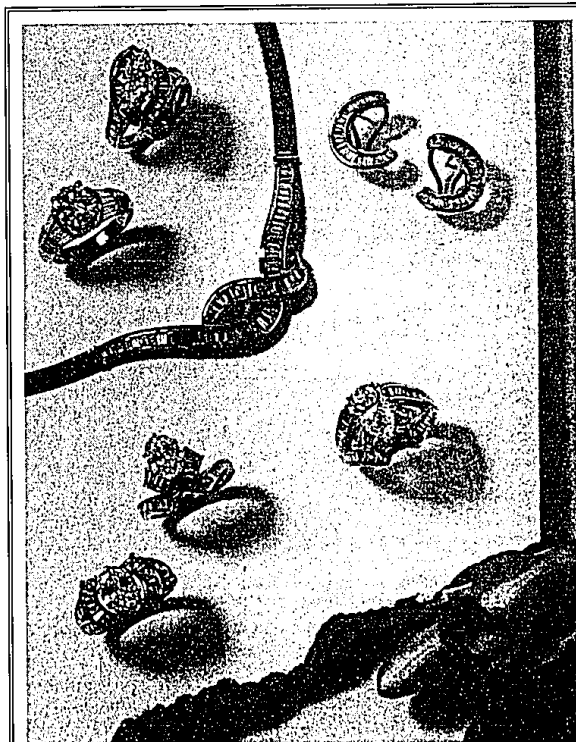
Cold storage is important because it kills insect-type varmints — moths prefer fur, too.



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Mink is still the nation's No. 1 best seller in furs. This one is a ranch mink by Oscar de la

Renta. \$20,000. Dittich's Furs, West Bloomfield.



THE · ICE · ON · ICE · COLLECTION

Orin Jewelers

Available Exclusively In Your Area At

GARDEN CITY
29317 Ford Rd. at Middlebelt
422-7030

NORTHVILLE
101 E. Main at Center St.
349-6940

BRIGHTON
8139 Grand River, Brighton Mall
227-4977