

Société Française des Parfumeurs Celebrates 70 Years

“An anniversary is worth celebrating only if it opens bridges to the future,” said Patrick Saint-Yves, president of the Société Française des Parfumeurs (French perfumer society; SFP), before an audience of 400 fragrance professionals at Paris’ Hôtel Potocki, marking the organization’s 70th anniversary. The SFP now has 800 members, 300 of which are perfumers, and remains “dedicated to upholding and promoting the profession of ‘perfumer-creator.’”

International Perfumer-Creator Award

To celebrate excellence in fragrance creation, SFP launched the International Perfumer-Creator Award in 1957 by Ernest-Pierre Meunier, a perfumer at Germaine Monteil, and, at the time, president of the SFP. Its original administrators included Henri Frayse, H.M. Gattefossé, H. Hoffmann and Edmond Roudnitska.

This year’s 82 anonymous entrants arrived from 12 different countries. SFP vice president Patrick de Vilmorin chaired an organizational committee, including Fabienne Pastor (perfumer at Rochas and winner of the 2004 prize), Francis Thibaudeau (perfumery director at Robertet and former SFP president) and Norbert Bijaoui (perfumer and former SFP president).

The technical panel comprised Laurence Fanuel (Robertet), Jacques Huclier (Givaudan), Jean Jacques (Takasago), Nathalie Lorson (Firmenich), Daniel Moliere (Azur Fragrances), Alexandra Monet (Drom), Françoise Guermeur (Symrise) and Elisabeth de Vilmorin (Chanel).

The artistic panel comprised chairperson Dominique Ropion (IFF), Patrick Saint-Yves, (SFP), Norbert Bijaoui (perfumer, Violaine de Carné (author, actress and director), Nathalie Helal (dunezaupalais.blogspot.com), Mathilde Laurent (perfumer, Cartier), Nicolas Olczyk (Rouge Curacao), Antigone Schilling (journalist), Terry François (Terry François Gospel Singers) and Yiqing Yin (designer, Cité de la Mode et du Design).

The winner of the 2012 International Perfumer-Creator Award is Virginie Armand, a perfumer at Argeville in Mougins, France), and daughter of Michel Armand, who has created functional products for Firmenich, IFF and Takasago. Armand, in accepting her award, noted that her scent was based on keywords such as conviviality, lightheartedness and carefree fun, and took as its inspiration the evocation of candy blended with tart cola.

“Imagine a martini glass in which you mix rum and cola,” she said. “Then on the toothpick, you put pieces of candy instead of an olive. That gives you an idea of the concepts I wanted to convey in my fragrance for ‘Le Parfum, C’est la Fête.’”

Promoting and Defending Fragrance: International Circle of Perfumer-Creators Formed

Seeking to ensure that “the accomplishments of the nose [are] recognized on par with the accomplishments of the hand,” the SFP has pursued the establishment of the International Circle of Perfumer-Creators, which has already led to six perfumers being awarded the Medal of Arts and Letters.

The Circle’s mission, said Raymond Chaillan (president, SFP, 1995), is “to define and defend this difficult and often denigrated profession, to welcome into our fold all true perfumer-creators,

to maintain relations with educational establishments and work closely with the Osmothèque, institutions, the Federation, [International Fragrance Association], the European Commission and the press. To voice our concern about the ongoing reduction of our palette of natural ingredients. To sound the alarm that creativity is in danger, reaching its limits—that all of the warning lights are on red, and an entire sector of our French heritage is threatened with failure, with extinction.”

The group’s “committee of elders” includes 29 perfumers and its first plenary meeting will be held soon. Its founding members include Chaillan, Maurice Maurin, Patricia de Nicolai, François Robert, Dominique Ropion, Maurice Roucel, Patrick Saint-Yves, Christopher Sheldrake and Thierry Wasser.

Rose des Parfumeurs

Finally, the SFP and Pierre Neuens, a frequent judge of international rose competitions, presented the results of a rose variety development partnership with Maurice Jay, vice president of the World Federation of Rose Societies and president of the French Rose Society, and Pierre Orard, a rose breeder. The new variety, the *rose de parfumeurs*, according to the SFP, “is a large-bloomed variety whose color is dark red in the bud with visible petals stage and develops into a deep pink in the flower stage.” It is currently marketed in South Africa and will soon be available in Japan.

“This rose emanates a natural, sensual floral accord of damask rose, combined with a powerful fruity note dominated by bush peach with gourmand tinges of red fruits, heightened by a hint of black currant leaf that gives it a fresh, modern vivacity,” said Nuyens. “The variety will take its place as the perfumers’ elegant ambassador in the world of gardening.”

Here’s to the SFP’s next 70 years!



Perfumers Jean Kerléo, left, and Maurice Roucel (Symrise)



Claudie Willemin (president, Société Française de Cosmétologie) and Nicolas Hiéronimus (director general, L’Oréal Luxe)

