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# Post-Pandemic Scentsploration with Barbara Herman, Founder of Eris Parfums and Author of *Scent and Subversion*

**Ryan Day Castle**

***Cartier; NYU Stern School of Business, MBA 2015***

Ryan Day Castle started her career with a foundation in corporate finance prior to breaking into the world of luxury goods. Following an MBA from NYU's Leonard N. Stern School of Business, she joined a global perfume house where an unexpected love of fragrance took hold. She continued to explore the complementary relationship between fashion and fragrance with American retailer Bloomingdale's, and then as a brand strategist for a consulting firm in Dubai, helping brands find their olfactive voice in a crowded market. Her passion for the retailization of fragrance led to the

**ABSTRACT** A conversation between two perfume industry leaders, Ryan Day Castle and Barbara Herman, highlights the cultural value of scent as a communication vehicle, debates the specificities of the sense of smell and its impact on human emotions, and examines the fragrance industry from a new perspective.

**KEYWORDS:** scent, olfaction, perfume, fragrance industry, perfumery, smell, senses, creativity

I have the honor of being joined today by Barbara Herman, Eris Parfums founder and author of *Scent and*

**opportunity to grow this burgeoning category across North America for Cartier. ryandaycastle@gmail.com**

*Subversion: Decoding a Century of Provocative Perfume* (Lyons Press, 2013), to contribute to the conversations surrounding our senses in this first issue, under the direction of our dear friend, Thomaï Serdari.

Because we're both coming from the fragrance industry, ours is a focus on the sense of smell. Following a long year of uncertainty and mourning over the loss of life and independence, our meeting is one of the first public socializations for us both. A warmly welcomed one.

The search for holistic self-care solutions stagnated some rising trends, and spurred a few lucky others. Scent was revisited again and again, as an escape to people we hadn't seen in far too long, to places to which we wished we could click our heels, and to memories that brought us comfort and peace. It is important as we look to the future of consumption versus experience, that we be mindful of the fleeting moments that contextualize our past and bring nostalgia to the present.

**CASTLE: Firstly, because we're coming off the end of a whole pandemic year, how has it affected our senses? And how do you feel that it has affected, more specifically, the sense of smell?**

HERMAN: Well, for me, the senses were a refuge: All of them. But particularly the sense of taste and the sense of smell. One of the ways that I comforted myself was through cooking and eating, learning new dishes, trying new spices... Having the time to really explore, because I couldn't explore other places.

I spent the beginning of the pandemic dealing with the isolation through smell and taste with respect to food. And then after a while, I realized, oh, wait, I also now have the time to get back to sniffing perfume. I had spent so much time developing a fragrance for my brand — in fact, I actually released a fragrance during the pandemic, which kept me very focused on one fragrance. So it was nice to return to just sniffing random perfumes.

**What was the fragrance?**

Green Spell! My perfumer, Antoine Lie, and I had three early, incomplete versions that I was going to present in 2020 at Esxence, an international trade show in Milan. I didn't end up going, of course, so I said to myself, "You know what? I think that you can spend a little bit more time on this fragrance." And we ended up getting one version to a point that I was super happy with.

**So you took the time to revisit it while you were in the quarantine phase? Did you change some notes given what you were experiencing at the time, or did you have a different feeling that you realized you wanted to evoke?**

Both maybe? Since I couldn't present the early versions in Milan, I decided to choose one of them and make it the most extreme version of green that we could.

I'd gotten the most positive responses to the intense, natural green version. It really evokes the outdoors. And like you said when you first smelled it, you picked up on a hint of grass. And I had a friend who said it smelled like bent stems and torn leaves.

**I like that!**

She just made it sound very sensual and physical. And, you know, it's surprising that I haven't thought about this...but Green Spell was evoking the very thing that I couldn't really experience during the pandemic — not just a beautiful day, but a beautiful day with other people. So we decided that we were going to make it as naturalistic as possible, while still creating an elegant perfume that's an intense and joyous celebration of the sort of thing that many of us were missing: a spring or summer day with friends out in a meadow. If we couldn't be outdoors with friends and loved ones as we were used to, at least we could have it in this bottle.

**Makes perfect sense.**

I also wanted to make sure that it was released in 2021 and not 2020, because I knew that 2021 at least was going to open up a little bit more. Or at least I hoped it would, in a way that was very clear wasn't going to happen in 2020. I just wanted to have that fragrance commemorate a new beginning, springtime, happiness and all of that.

**I love hearing the story behind your inspiration. The fact that you had something that was almost on its finishing leg, and you said, 'Let me revisit it and re-analyze now that our environment has changed, given that it may affect what we want to imbue into the fragrance.'**

It's funny that I didn't think about that too much at the time, but definitely.

**You wanted to make sure the right emotion was evoked. That's really interesting. It sounds like you definitely do not feel that we were desensitized to sight, sound, taste ...**

Oh no, no.

**Is there a more heightened awareness of them, then?**

I think so. I've always been into the senses. I've always loved food; I've always loved perfume. But during Covid isolation, they were even more important. They were my entertainment. It's very interesting to me, now that I think about it, that I didn't read very much.

**Especially being an author!**

I just couldn't get into it! People would recommend things to binge-watch or read. And I did a little bit of both. But I would say that I was primarily reading recipes. I was smelling things, tasting things, you know? And I was looking out my window and taking walks in Prospect Park. I was taking in the outside a little bit, but it was very basic sensory stuff.

**Yeah, taking it back to the basics.**

The idea of reading something — I couldn't get lost in words. I almost feel like getting lost in words is about interiority. So if you're running

around and busy at work or seeing friends, words are a refuge, because you get to go inside a little bit. Well, I was inside this whole time, so I needed something to touch and feel, reach out to, to have something really move me. I was in my head too much already. I wanted to be in my body or senses or get jolted out of feeling trapped in my apartment.

**That's beautiful. I love the way you put that. One side effect that came from some Covid cases, I'm sure you heard, is a loss of the sense of smell and/or taste. Was that ever a concern for you? Were you ever more avoidant of public spaces because we're in an industry reliant on our sense of smell? Did it make you more cautious?**

I was cautious because I didn't want to die. That was really the primary thing. In terms of loss of smell or taste, to be honest, even though I read the stories about that, I wasn't afraid of that happening. I was afraid of getting sick. And actually, I think I had COVID in February 2020. I went to California and immediately got the sickest I've ever gotten.

**Oh no!**

I had never before felt the symptoms I was feeling. I might have even lost my sense of smell for a brief bit, but I think that experience of feeling like I was on my last legs made the fear of losing my sense of smell or taste, as much as that would be devastating for me — it was not top of mind. I just wanted to survive.

**Wow. Totally.**

I mean, I was in a neighborhood where people were really getting sick. I lived close enough to a hospital that I would hear the sirens right as they began. Almost 24/7.

**I remember the same. It really puts everything into perspective. I think we all can appreciate that.**

**One thing that you wrote in your book, that we briefly touched on earlier, is that there's a feeling that we must grab scents while they're here, because once they're gone, they're gone. So I wanted to read a small excerpt that speaks to that, and I'd love to hear you elaborate more on this idea.**

Sure!

**And she writes,**

“Perfume is inherently fragile and evanescent, but these regulations that were affecting the very DNA of perfume made seeking out vintage perfume even more urgent for me: Time was running out to discover their disappearing styles and stories. I wanted to smell as many vintage perfumes as I could before they were gone forever. Thanks to eBay, estate sales, Ye Olde Junque Shoppes, online purveyors, and decanted samples from readers of my blog, Yesterday's Perfume, many of these originals became mine. As I was collecting vintage, I was still seeking out contemporary perfume, but I felt there was time to learn about the new.” (Herman,

*Scent and Subversion: Decoding A Century Of Provocative Perfume 4).*

As I'm hearing you read those words, I have to laugh because it sounds so impractical to me: this idea that I urgently needed to smell vintage perfume. But for me, it felt urgent then, because as I say in that chapter, I didn't know how long they'd be around. You can find the first edition of a book. If it falls apart, it's going to be sad that that one book has fallen apart, but you can still get it on Kindle, or wherever. That's not the case with perfumes.

When I started collecting, the thing that was so thrilling was to find a really well-preserved bottle. You knew that somebody's grandma had squirreled the bottle away in the back of her dresser drawer, maybe because she didn't like it, but maybe because she was preserving it. Who knows? And then you'd get one that smelled "off." So being able to smell really intact perfumes is like smelling the past. There's something very magical about it. And also, because they smell so different from contemporary perfumes, I felt like if I don't smell these vintages, they're going to disappear. And unless somebody has the formula and redoes them, these are artworks that are going to be lost forever. I needed to smell them for myself.

**Why do you feel that it's so important to smell them as the creator intended, perhaps before some ingredients are deemed no longer viable or ethically sourced?**

Because the style of the perfumes reflects the zeitgeist; they tell us something about the culture. That's why I like to say that "I sniffed my way through the twentieth century," because I was really sniffing the way this particular perfumer envisioned what, for example, femininity meant in 1932. The big shock for me, and this formed part of the thesis of the book, was that many so-called "Grandma perfumes" were so powerful, were so interesting, and what we would now consider "masculine." The question of why women were able to smell in such a variety of ways in the past when they had relatively little social power, and now their perfume options have narrowed, intrigued me. I wouldn't have been able to even ask that question without smelling these perfumes myself. Smelling a tobacco perfume that was made for a woman who until only recently hadn't been able to vote had more impact than reading about it.

**So as the Founder of Eris Parfums, what story are you trying to tell? And what mark for the twenty-first century, maybe more so around this last decade, are you hoping to make?**

Wow, that is a really good question. I have to walk this line when I'm explaining what Eris is, because my background with perfume started with an interest in vintage fragrances, but I'm not trying to reproduce the past. I'm not trying to create a retro perfume. What I love about these older fragrances is how uncompromising they seem to be, how bold.

I like, 'in your face' scents. So if it is green, I want it to be the greenest note; if it's animalic, I want it to be the most pungent. I don't like to do things half-measure. I want Eris to be uncompromising. I also hope it somehow reflects what's going on in culture. For example, after the first trio, which are an homage to animalic florals of the past for contemporary perfume lovers, I went immediately into a perfume which was called Mx. (pronounced "mix"), the gender-neutral title for people who are non-binary or just don't want to be identified by gender. I wanted to pay homage to the gender revolution happening in culture with a perfume that mixes the idea of conventionally masculine and feminine fragrances.

**That's awesome.**

I wanted the fragrances to either make a statement from an olfactory perspective or have a name that's provocative. Hopefully both. But I don't like these perfumes that are the result of market research to find out what everybody wants, followed by an algorithmic formula in a bottle. I want Eris to be the complete opposite of that. I hope that some crazy thing that I like is something someone else likes, even if it only has an audience of 20. I'm okay with sustaining this business model as long as I can, so that I don't compromise. That was a very roundabout way of saying "uncompromising."

**No, that's the perfect descriptor. Uncompromising.**

But that was the way many brands made fragrances in the past. One perfumer and one creative director. And I think that that's the best way to do it.

**From the inspiration of the owner, perfumer, or brand creator...you find your audience from there? Your style and community?**

Yes. Which is not to say I don't react to feedback. For example, in Green Spell, the perfumer provided six versions, and the one that we chose at the end was not the original one that I wanted. It was one that I liked, but the more I heard people really responding to that one, I was like, "Maybe I should go back to that." So I'm not completely impervious to feedback, but I have to be persuaded. I have to be really into it.

**Got it. That's great to know. And correct me if I'm wrong, but Eris seems to be a majority e-commerce brand. Or do you have a lot more retail stockists?**

I have about 11 stockists in the US, soon to be 12. I actually get more purchases through my retailers selling to their customers than I do through the website.

**Oh okay, that's great insight.**

I mean, that could just be due to my poor digital marketing skills.

**I don't think that's it. We've definitely talked about the proliferation of perfume brands, digital-first and otherwise. It's hard to break through for sure.**

Yeah, so it's actually more brick & mortar than it is e-commerce. It's easier to buy a full bottle after smelling it, and that's easier if you go

to a store. But I also offer samples and incentives to purchase online.

**Do you see both sides. Do you recognize a distinct difference in the discovery experience with those retailers versus your e-com and digital platforms?**

I do, because on digital, I get across to the folks who are reaching me through Instagram, which is primarily where I do my marketing. I should have a newsletter, but I can never get around to pushing that out there. So it's primarily Instagram, Instagram Lives, and Facebook Q&As. That's how they find out my personality and the visual world that I've tried to build around Eris. They often Direct Message me to talk. They might not buy from me, but they will later from one of my retailers. So I feel like it is two distinct experiences. If they go into the store, they're going to be able to smell it, pick up the bottle, and smell it for themselves. They may make the purchase primarily through the scent and the bottle, and what the sales associate says. The retailers that I have are really into fragrance, so I'm sure they're experts at selling it. But I have a feeling it's a completely different experience.

**Do you feel like there's a client preference for one or the other? Or do you think they both need to exist?**

There are some people who want to know who you are, and they want to talk to you and ask questions and find out what other people are saying about you. I wonder if they go to the brick & mortar shop and they're just really smelling the fragrance. Whereas I might be able to convince them, before they smell it, through other means.

**Mmmm. More storytelling.**

Maybe so, yeah.

**How do you feel that fragrance can be a tactile experience? Of course, when someone goes to a retailer, they can touch the bottle. Do you think that a haptic experience can happen virtually as well?**

If we're talking about conveying perfume through other senses besides smell, I think that can happen digitally, especially on Instagram, because that's where I can show you color. That's where I can add music.

I had this cinematographer create a movie trailer for Green Spell perfume. I considered each of the ingredients as the star of the movie/perfume, and the director was my perfumer. The cinematographer filmed this like it was the trailer to a film. Toward the end of it, there were two reviews from people who had smelled Green Spell. So there's the color element, there's music, the sensuality of the images. And then my and Antoine's words. There's a whole lot of stuff going on in digital that is not happening when someone goes to a shop. (And vice versa.) They can't smell it, but we can do everything else there. Even if they can't touch it, there's something sensual or dreamy or soft about the colors and how he filmed it. You can create



all that fantasy like perfume ads of the past used to do, before you even go to smell the perfume.

And my sense, and I said this in the book, has always been that I think of perfumes like movies. You need the marketing, you need the trailer, you need to hear feedback from other people who have tried it. It's the bottle too. The name. All of that works together. To me, it's never just about scent. As much as a purist as I am about perfume, I would like it to be that way, but even I don't appreciate perfume that way. I need to see the bottle. I need to hear the story. I need all of it.

**Yeah.**

When I lived in New Orleans, I worked for a brief time when I was writing this book, at a perfume shop. I had never worked retail with perfume, so that was a very eye-opening or rather nose-opening experience. I remember one day this older woman came in, and there was a Nasomatto perfume she liked called Narcotic Venus. And I was just like, "Oh that name is so good." It was a beautiful jasmine fragrance, in a square bottle with a wooden top. And she's like, "I really love this fragrance, but do you have it in a different bottle?" I said no. She says, "Oh, well, I can't buy this then." I replied, "But you love it! You were just here for half an hour smelling it. I don't understand..." She's like, "Well, it won't look feminine on my dresser. So I don't want it."

So to me, that was weird. But it reminded me that for some people, perfume is more than the juice. It's what the bottle looks like. It's what the juice smells like. It's everything. Because it is such an invisible thing, you need this whole armature of sensual storytelling to get people into its world.

**Right. It's definitely multi-sensorial. And when you describe it to people, how do you tell them how fragrance can inspire or spark synesthesia?**

Well, there's the color aspect. There are categories of fragrance, like green fragrances, where the perfume smells like things that are associated with the color—leaves, stems, grass. Is the fragrance soft, sharp? Does it have angles? Is it sweet, sour? All of that stuff. You have to use other sensory descriptors, and sometimes deploy taste language to get people into it.

**Yes. In my own experience talking to people about fragrances, they may become overwhelmed if they don't think they have the right vocabulary. They shy away, like, "Oh, well I don't want to say the wrong thing." And I think language that draws upon other senses helps to put in play that you can describe it as anything. There's no wrong answer about how something is making you feel. If it's deep, rich, soft, sharp, or sweet, like you said... those are all great descriptors!**

Exactly. Sometimes when people don't have vocabulary for it, they'll say it reminds them of something, or some other fragrance. And

even if it's not correct, and it's an ambery fragrance and they're actually describing a floral, it doesn't matter. Because they're doing what they can to verbalize it.

**That's it right there. I also want to talk about your path in getting into the industry. Some people have called you a fragrance expert, and I know you don't like that term. But you've been here a while, and accumulated a lot of knowledge in vintage perfumery. You have great language, as an author, around how to describe it for people that are like myself (working in the industry), but also for others that just need it in layman's terms. I think people from all ends of the spectrum can relate to the way that you write and describe things, which is wonderful. So tell us about how you broke into the industry and how you just got swept off your feet by fragrance?!**

Yeah, so I was working at PopSugar in San Francisco as a blogger, and first started out writing for a humor website, believe it or not. And then for a women's issues website under the umbrella of PopSugar. And around this time, I started noticing that there were a lot of forums, articles and books on the subject of perfume. And I started digging into that. So it was first through reading that I became interested in perfume. And there were some really provocative descriptions of vintage fragrance.

The thing I loved about vintage, first of all, and this touches on the luxury aspect: They were rare. They were hard to get. I could go into Macy's and try Narciso Rodriguez For Her, which is a lovely neo-chypre. It's a beautiful fragrance. But can I smell Diorella? Well, in order to smell Diorella from the 70's, I really had to do some digging around. I didn't know this about myself, but I liked doing that! And so I would search for it. If I found a good version, I would go home, spray it, and it was like a drug. This was sort of my cocktail hour. I really would go into a reverie.

I talk about that on my blog with Chanel No 19. I seriously remember spending an entire Saturday night in my kitchen at my dining table sniffing Chanel No 19 and just going into this fantasia. Writing about what it reminded me of. Thinking about the woods it evoked, these witches in the woods ... it really took me to another place.

**Wow! You were ready to write the next *Harry Potter!* “[joking]”**

Oh, my gosh. I was like, this is crazy. This little bottle of perfume, which I'm now keeping in my refrigerator with all of my other vintage acquisitions because I didn't want them to go bad — it was way more entertaining than I would have ever thought. It took me other places, but it also required my imagination. I started going deeper and deeper, getting more and more perfume. And eventually I realized I needed to start writing down those thoughts. I thought I was just going to try perfume, but I didn't know I was also going to have anything to say about it.

So I started writing my impressions, and then I started doing some historical research and adding that. Then I started looking for ads to at least make the blog look a little interesting. And before I knew it, I had people from all over the world asking me questions. I was wondering, "How is this possible that I'm the one that people are asking now?" And then realizing, "You may not be an expert, but you've smelled these things. So in that sense, you have a lot over most of the people in the world." So I just kept doing it. And eventually I said, "Ok, this is a book." "[both laughing]"

Because I am an extreme person, that's when I decided to quit my job, sell all my things in my apartment, and move to New Orleans. Because, you know, you gotta move to New Orleans to write a book!? No, you don't. But I did.

**Right, you couldn't do your day job and do this full time.**

Of course I could, because that's what I had been doing. In the same way that this perfume journey took me to crazy places, it was also asking me to experience a different way of living. I didn't want to live and work in San Francisco anymore. There's the expression "follow your nose." My nose was taking me to all these different places. And I was following where my instinct was taking me.

**I think it's going to be a super inspirational story for a lot of people who maybe feel in a rut and have a side passion or side hustle that they're not fully attending.**

I would feel irresponsible if I told people to do that with *everything*. But I do think you only live once. And if something can occupy as much quality time as perfume has occupied mine, I don't think that there's any way I could have ever regretted that.

**It's really special to hear that story. How did you become close with perfumers? Because you reference a lot of conversations with perfumers in the industry and in your book as well.**

When I need to talk to certain perfumers, many of them were very generous with their time. They wanted to explain things to me. They wanted to talk about the industry. They would sniff some of the vintage perfumes that I couldn't find the notes for, and they would use their expert noses to tell me what was in the fragrances.

**How generous, indeed. They didn't have to do that at all.**

They had better things to do!

**But they probably loved to.**

They knew that I was passionate about the fragrances. And also, I was sending them these really great vintage perfumes. I don't think too many people, unless they're in a subculture of this perfume world, were out buying things on eBay. So here was a chance, not that they couldn't have had it, but for somebody to send them some of the more unusual ones. So I just wrote to them and said, "I'm writing this book, I'd love to interview you." And most of the time they said yes.

**And how did you find a perfumer for Eris?**

In the last chapter of the book, called “*Scent Visionaries*,” I interviewed people who I thought were helping to move perfumery into the future. I met Eris’s perfumer, Antoine Lie, through that chapter. He’d composed a notoriously scandalous perfume called *Sécrétions Magnifique*, which was supposed to smell like all of the fluids in your body before you have an orgasm! I interviewed him and asked him to walk people through how he translated that into scent. And I loved his body of work — emphasis on “body!!” because his perfumes are very sensual — and when I asked him later if he was interested in creating perfume for Eris, he said he was.

**Wow. So there's a lot of people interested in understanding the business side of fragrance ...**

I'm interested in that too!

**You're already in there. You are.**

I feel like I'm no expert on the business side.

**I mean, you're an entrepreneur, you're running a fragrance business. So you're there. There are multiple facets of the business. There's a lot we don't know until we're exposed to it. I didn't know that these famed celebrities were not in the back concocting their own mixes, until I was introduced to the concept of fragrance houses and learned that there's just a few main houses that are responsible for launching the majority of fragrances in the world.**

**How do you think that it's changing how people are going to get into the industry? And do you think there is a more important aspect for becoming successful when you think about exposure (being exposed to people in the industry) or having education (such as going to perfume school)? Do you think either of those are necessary?**

Within the past five to ten years, there has been an explosion of self-taught perfumers who did not feel like they need to follow the classical European model of studying chemistry, going to Grasse or any of these schools, apprenticing at one of the big perfume houses, and finally getting to create perfumes. I don't know if market share is a measure of their power right now, but I think a lot of the big guys are watching them.

There's a reason I chose a master perfumer to create Eris. I wanted to work with someone who had the technical skill to create and adjust a formula as precisely as possible, based on my creative direction. And I just loved Antoine Lie's style of perfumery.

There are an increasing number of artisanal or indie perfumers right now who don't feel like they need to get all this training. And there are consumers who don't think they need to either. There's a lot of creativity there. There's also a lot of chutzpah, as you can imagine. Chutzpah that I don't have.

**You do!**

Ok, maybe I have chutzpah. But not enough to compose the fragrances myself! I do think these indie perfumers are making the big players nervous. To know that someone with very little traditional perfume school training can become very influential, very quickly.

**What do you think the public thinks about the authenticity of David vs. Goliath brands and how they were born (self-taught compared to a traditional training path)? Or do they care?**

Some perfume lovers are interested in big brands, and like the assurance, in their eyes, that they're getting value, guaranteed quality, for their purchases. Others are brand-agnostic. And a small subset are only interested in niche and/or self-taught perfumers, because they feel it's more cutting edge, authentic, rare, or more creative.

**It's fascinating. And I tend to agree. There's space for everyone. And each origin story carries with it a different brand value and weight. With our most dominant communication methods being digital in nature, and new launches popping up every day, how can we best differentiate new ideas to younger generations, especially Gen Z?**

I think my audience is mostly Millennials and older, but I'd love to have a Gen Z following, of course. How to reach them? Well, I recently downloaded TikTok, but I don't want to be the try-hard older lady talking about perfumes to weird background music. Unless I market myself as the "eccentric aunt" niche perfume lady. I feel like that could work. [laughs]

**I don't even have a TikTok account yet, so you're way ahead of me. I acknowledge I need to fix that ASAP. But we can't call ourselves "older ladies." That doesn't work. The Cool Auntie or Rich Auntie is much more relatable and aspirational. I can see the comments on your posts... "Auntie Barb, what does this one remind you of? :)"**

Yes. I'm going to go with "Eccentric Auntie!"

**That's perfect. I say just watch a lot of videos for a week and see what you like most on TikTok before starting your own.**

For sure. I just hope this means I don't have to start dancing!

**I can tell you are always yourself no matter what. Just a matter of finding the best way to bring your passion to a new platform.**

**I would love to wrap up by asking what are you most looking forward to in the fragrance industry?**

I'm focused on growing my brand and on bringing to life the long list of perfumes I've named that are in a Google doc I have, because that's how they start — as names! And as I mull over the names, the ingredients come into focus, and the stories.

### **You start with the names of the perfumes?**

Well, remember, I'm a writer! And as I mentioned I became passionate about perfumes through reading.

### **So true. Full circle!**

...

### **Conclusion**

This conversation was not only a great introduction for me to delve into Barbara Herman's fascination with vintage fragrance and the unique entry points into the world of perfumery, but also for us all to challenge the why behind our own creations and pursuits. To then seek understanding on the impetus for the now – why we should do, see, touch, taste, hear and smell everything while we can.

Time is not promised. And for some, evoking our senses is one of the best ways to express gratitude to our bodies for the wonders we can experience today.

We thank you, Barbara, for this reminder.

### **Notes on contributor**

Ryan Day Castle started her career with a foundation in corporate finance prior to breaking into the world of luxury goods. Following an MBA from NYU's Leonard N. Stern School of Business, she joined a global perfume house where an unexpected love of fragrance took hold. She continued to explore the complementary relationship between fashion and fragrance with American retailer Bloomingdale's, and then as a brand strategist for a consulting firm in Dubai, helping brands find their olfactive voice in a crowded market. Her passion for the retailization of fragrance led to the opportunity to grow this burgeoning category across North America for Cartier.

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