

les
sentiers
de la
création



VALMONT
GROUP

les
s e n t i e r s
de la
c r é a t i o n



didier guillon ■



sophie guillon ■



silvana casoli ■



Didier

The character has *panache*; he is elegant and well-spoken, with a wry smile, meticulously groomed three-day stubble and glasses that lend him that dapper, intellectual air...

He may appear aloof, fussy, demanding and sometimes strict...

He is *Monsieur Guillon*, *Mister Guillon*, *Didier Guillon*, *DG*...

Monsieur Valmont, playing his role of businessman like a game of chess, with passion, gravitas, strategy and method.

But he is first and foremost *Papa* to his children and simply *Didier* to those capable or lucky enough to have earned his trust...

For he is also wary, fragile, anxious and sensitive...

The *man* is curious, loyal and generous, with good taste and a refined sense of humor.

A cosmopolitan humanist, he travels the world, from Geneva to Barcelona, from Paris to Venice, from Montreal to Tokyo and on to London, Hong Kong, Berlin or Hydra...

On an eternal quest for modernity, he explores, unearths, promotes and defends creation in all its forms: *cuisine*, architecture, sculpture, painting, theatre or cinema... His fields of interest are infinite.

An artist himself, humble and discreet, he sketches, sculpts, photographs...

Undoubtedly in search of truth. His own...

SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

Moderately ♩ = 112

Words and Music by
MICK JAGGER and
KEITH RICHARDS

man of wealth and
long long year - stolen
Pe-ters - burg - when I

Sympathy for the Devil

“Please allow me to introduce myself”

“Paris – May 1968 : I was 15, standing in front of the *Notre Dame de Sainte Croix*, Catholic School in Neuilly, my junior high school. I saw priests in cassocks fighting with young students who were demanding greater social freedom, including sexual liberation. As a bystander, I understood that I was witnessing a major event that would change the course of History. The musty odors and stuffy atmosphere that defined the 1950s and 1960s were fading away...

A few days later, as socio-political protests raged, the Rolling Stones sang *Sympathy for the Devil*. The scathing lyrics of this song, written by Mick Jagger, shocked conservatives who saw in them a cult of devil worship that could exert a nefarious effect on young people.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. I took the tones of these vibrations as my own, along with the deafening arrangements. And those notes, like the period in general – both were immensely inspiring in their own way – stimulated me and revealed my own character, surely planting a few seeds for the man I would become.

This stage of life resonates in me still today as a permanent revolution. I cannot bring myself to accept a calm life. I need intensity to create and a free spirit to move forward; that’s what drives me day by day.”



Barcelona

“From dawn to dusk”

“*Cervantes* is said to have lived there, Jean Genet explored it in drag... Ah Barcelona!* City of irresistible exuberance! Nestled between the deep blue of the Mediterranean and the emerald green of Montjuïc, stunningly portrayed in the novel by Grégoire Polet*, you have snatched me up again and again, steering me through unfettered odysseys into your architecture and history. Your charm, your light, your pulsating atmosphere, your welcoming Catalans, your good cheer, your literary *cafés*, your artists, your avant-garde style, your cosmopolitanism and so much more, bewitch me every time.

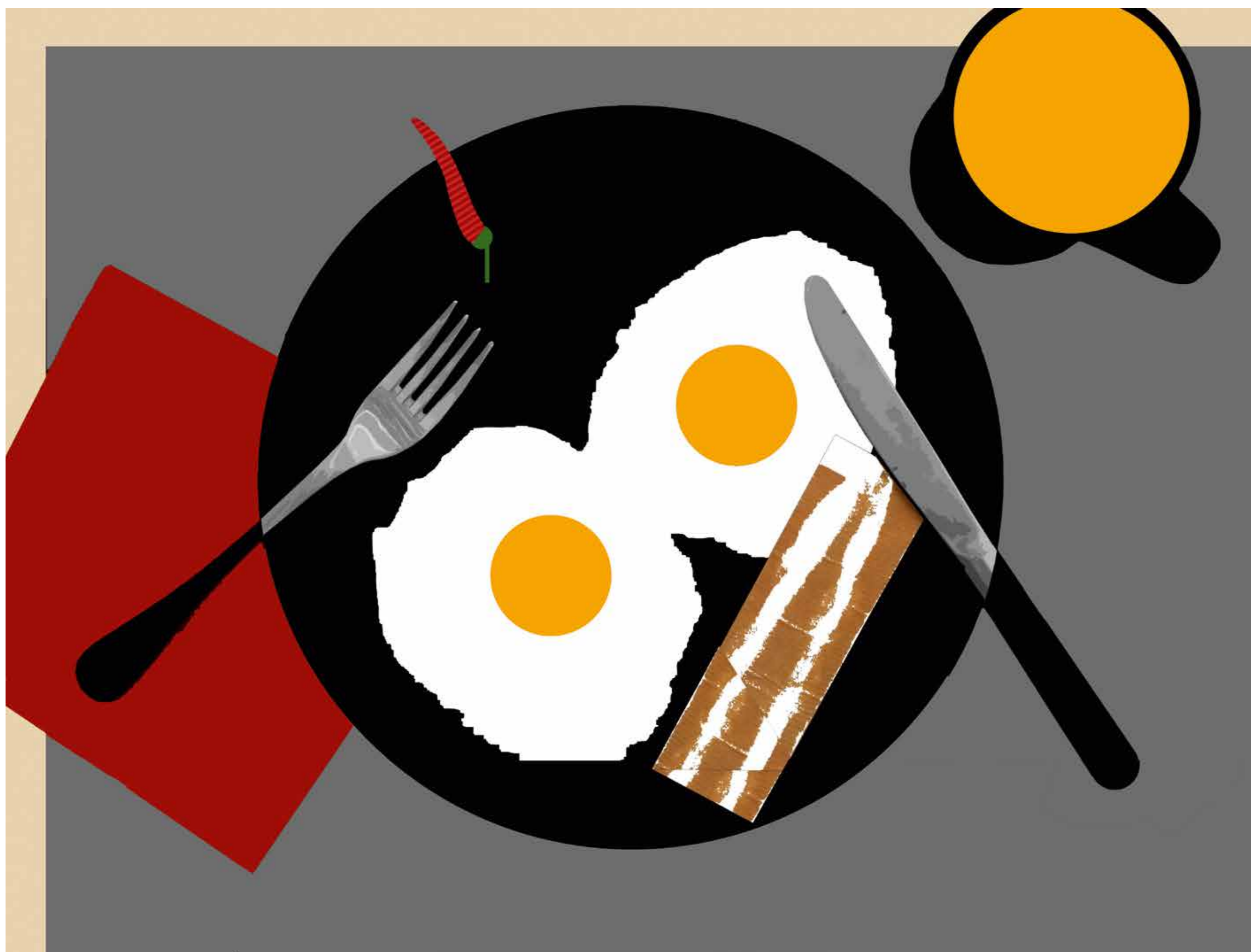
I still remember my excitement as a child when my father showed me the mischievous houses designed by architect Antonio Gaudí, that ingenious jack of all trades, not to mention his daring Sagrada Família and his Casa Batlló, reminiscent of a dragon with the arched back of its roof and its ceramic tiles for scales. Breathtaking, like all of your iconic structures that never cease to captivate me. I can never get enough of you and return for a visit whenever my schedule permits.

First stop: the *Tres Torres/Sarria* neighborhood. In the charming Villa of Pomaret**, that I fell in love with a few years ago, my spirit wanders with erratic abandon, fluttering on the breeze with the butterflies or playing with the reflections of sunlight on the peonies in the Japanese garden. In these places so conducive to musing, halfway between art and beauty, I am at peace. Especially since it is thanks to you, my lovely Barcelona, that I can once again meet up with my lifelong friend, the artist Isao Llorens Ishikawa.*** This friendship offers moments of rare intensity, making my mind even more restless, since our conversations nearly always ignite the spark of creativity.”

* *Barcelona I*, Éditions Gallimard, 2016.

** Site of the Valmont Spa and the workshops of artists associated with the Fondation Valmont.

*** Isao Llorens Ishikawa, artist and grandson of Joan Gardy Artigas, the ceramic artist known for his collaboration with Joan Miró, among others.



Fried eggs

“Fried eggs and a cup of tea, please !”

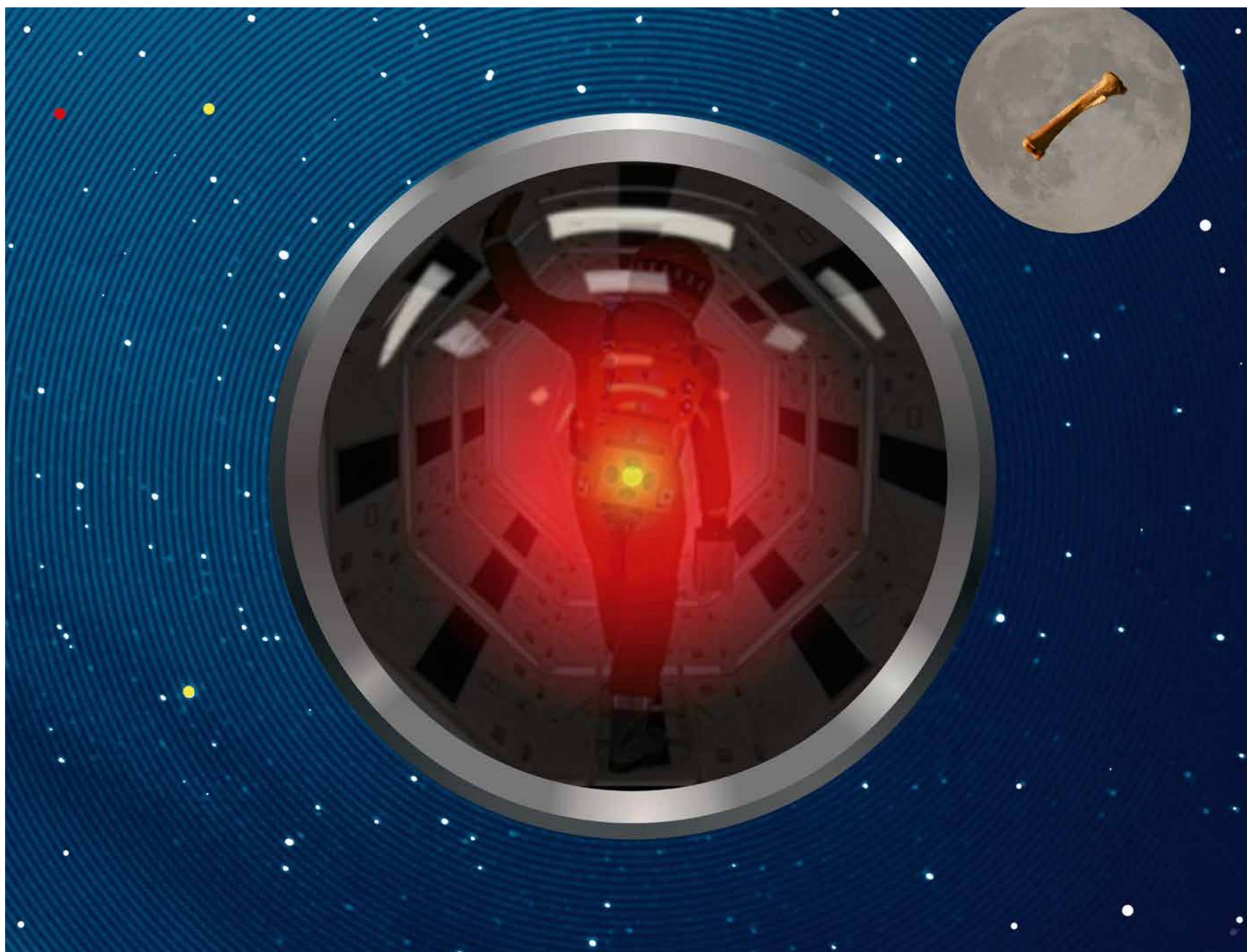
“At breakfast time, no caffè latte with buttered toasts for me; I crave fried eggs. Especially when they go together so harmoniously on the plate and are prepared by the chefs at the Hotel Café Royal in London. Their minimal aesthetic reminds me of Suprematism. I am nearly certain that Kasimir Severinovich Malevich could have invented this dish.

I have tried them scrambled, poached and hard-boiled, but my little girl Valentine and I always go back to our first choice, preferably served with a cup of milk tea. It is a kind of tradition and a true moment of bonding that even inspired us to write a poem.

Looking closer, subjectively combining various images, these eggs, prepared sunny-side up to match the Valmont colors, seem inconspicuously to sketch the outline of a deep-seated essence. Just before digging in, I see myself with Sophie, my wife, my friend and my alter-ego in the Valmont adventure.

This dish, the epitome of modesty, perfectly reflects the simplicity and coherence of our creations, the qualities we have always aimed for in each of our initiatives. Together, we strive for even greater excellence and we focus on the basics.

Another subliminal quality of these eggs: they symbolize birth. That of Valmont, that of our many creations, and of course that of our three children. A revolution that continues to resonate in me.”



2001 : A Space Odyssey

“A space poem”

“When you think about it, *2001 : A Space Odyssey* is a true masterpiece !

I was 15 when it first hit the silver screen in 1968. Immersed in the vastness of the universe for more than two hours, I was speechless in front of such cinematic genius. The images were groundbreaking, and all the more astounding as man had yet to set foot on the Moon. A modern myth was born, and with it the deep-rooted conviction that humanity was at a turning point in its history.

The genius of Stanley Kubrick, the director who spoke to an entire generation, reaches its climax with this film : his talent blends with the intelligence of the subject itself, which breaks loose from the overly rational contours of a philosophical tale. It would be quite presumptuous to claim that I grasped the film’s many dimensions at that tender age, but the magnetism of this work lies more in the emotions it inspires than in than in any rational explanation. It is above all a sensory experience that asks questions without providing answers. Several shots have remained engraved in my memory, and those that have nourished my spirit all these years continue to offer me inspiration. The arid landscapes of the dawn of humanity, the vessels traveling through space, the famous white room, its architectural lines clearly recalling the wonderfully pure universe of Richard Meier*... And most of all, the persistently majestic appearance of the eminent black monolith, like a unifying theme for the movie : a fascinating object that could have sprung from the mind of Carl Andre**.

But that’s not all. Although some shots are perfectly silent, Kubric generally cloaks his film in well-known classical music. A masterstroke ! Hearing ‘Also Sprach Zarathustra’ by Richard Strauss and Johann Strauss’ ‘Blue Danube Waltz,’ I find myself overcome with emotion. I feel like I can fly.”

* Richard Meier, born in Newark, New Jersey on October 12, 1934, is an American architect and designer of the MACBA, the Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art in Spain (1995), the Getty Center in Los Angeles (1997) and the White Plaza in Basel, Switzerland (1998), among other structures.

** Carl Andre, born in Quincy, Massachusetts on September 16, 1935, is an American minimalist painter and sculptor.



An architect – Richard Meier

“Beyond the walls”

In every country, every culture and every stylistic tradition, architecture is an art I particularly appreciate. At the crossroads of scientific reasoning and pure artistic instinct, this wonderfully inspiring discipline moves and transports me. In the architectural melting pot that spans the globe, from Mondrian’s Holland to the Russia of Sonia Delaunay, not to mention Le Corbusier’s Switzerland, Barcelona found in Antoni Gaudí the antidote for its conservatism. But alongside the virtuoso of the Sagrada Família and other great names who made the Catalan capital what it is today, there are masters for whom architecture is a deep and consummate quest, where thought organizes both space and the senses. Richard Meier, with his enlightening MACBA*, is such an architect.

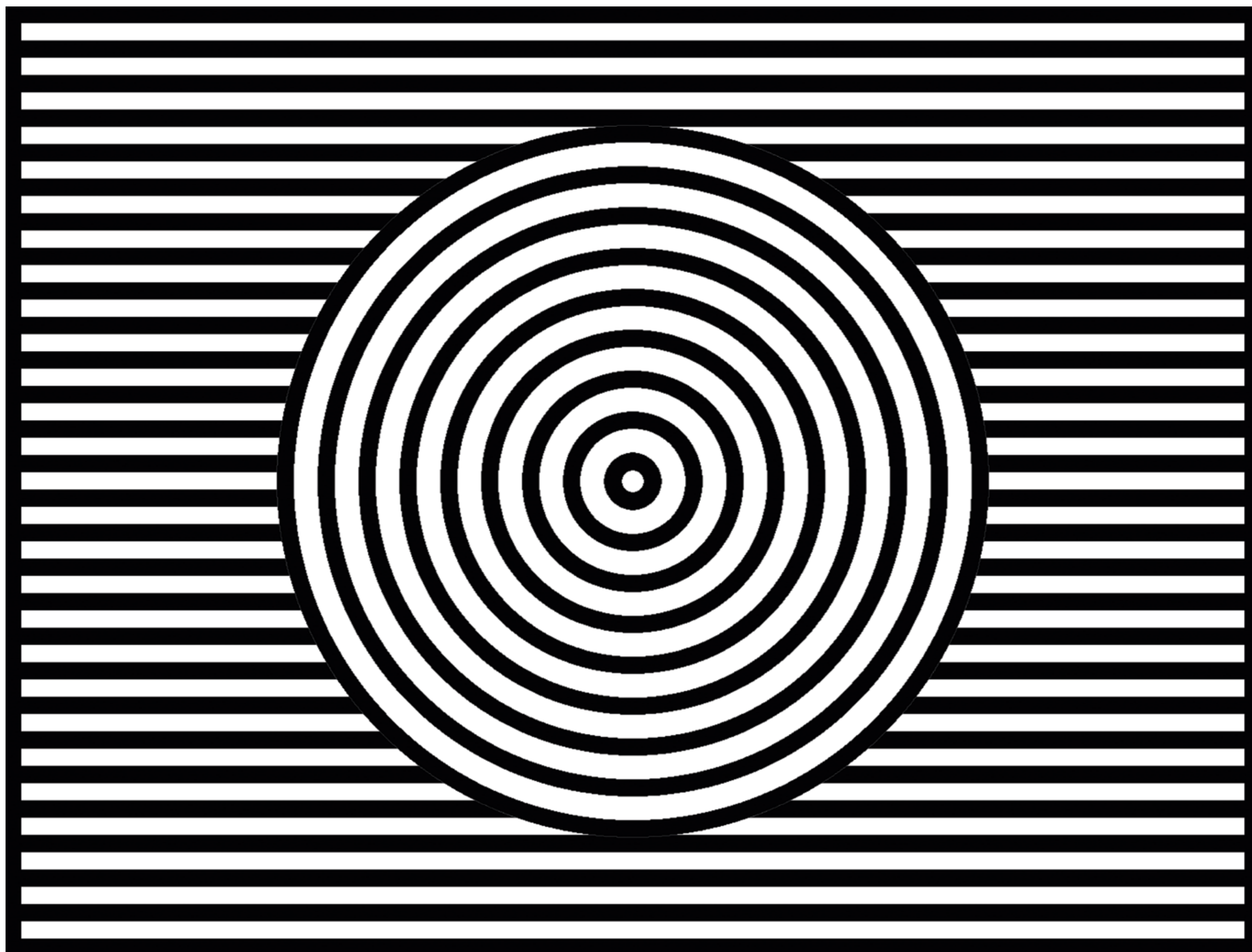
I remember the genuine shock I felt in 1995 upon discovering this particular museum. As I crossed the threshold, I was overcome by the circular space and vertical elegance, reminiscent of a cathedral. Think of the resolutely immaculate white – or rather white light – that engages in constant interplay with the structure’s lines and perspectives, further enhanced by the use of glass walls and reflective materials. Between the clarity and the shadows produced by the natural lighting, these sometimes minuscule details underscore the quality and timelessness of the work in each and every room.

These images also inspired the illustrations for our Expert of Light product line, as well as the decor of various exhibitions by the *Fondation Valmont* in Hydra and Venice.

Even today, I return to this museum regularly, strolling through the corridors and taking in the atmosphere. This museum re-energizes me and lets me reconnect with myself, confident that we all love anything that awakens our senses. As such, ‘I will never lose myself for that which the senses can take in. But only for the *je-ne-sais-quoi* found nowhere but at the heart of the Mystery.’**

* MACBA is the Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art, devoted primarily to exhibiting works created during the second half of the 20th century. Designed by Richard Meier and built from 1987 to 1995, MACBA opened on November 28, 1995.

** Quote from a poem by Saint John of the Cross.



Sol LeWitt

“Art at its purest”

“Far from the precepts of my middle-class upbringing, and undoubtedly contrary to its basic principles and values, throughout my youth I devoured the works of a handful of flamboyant artists: the American conceptualists of the 1960s, who invented the idea of a purely visual and minimal form of art.

Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Robert Morris, Carl Andre and others... they all continue to captivate me. And surely none more so than Sol LeWitt*.

During his lifetime, he fashioned his works with care: simple or sophisticated, all alive with straight lines, curves and other variations of abstract shapes. With an expressive veneration for subjectivity, the artist succeeded in uniting the precision of repetitive geometry and respect for methodical rules, all the while vindicating creative movement. For example, his Wall Drawings – mural puzzles of a sort – defy the imagination. They subjugate the viewer with their apparent simplicity, giving off a mysterious and nearly hypnotic beauty. Like a Stanley Kubrick picture!

I would describe my relationship with art as essentially philosophical. So when this rapport becomes tangible, I in turn start creating. I create cages directly inspired by the minimalist cubes imagined by Sol LeWitt in the 1960s. Large, small, gilded, burnished, glass or metal, in all shapes and sizes... I explore them with the broadest possible approach. They all symbolize the disillusioned world that humanity has created to confine itself and filled with dreams, nightmares, frustration and any other sensation. We can all escape from our cage – every side is open – and aspire to a brighter future.”

* Solomon “Sol” LeWitt (1928-2007) was an American minimalist and conceptual artist.



Death in Venice by Thomas Mann

“Divine beauty”

“*Death in Venice* leaves no one indifferent, I am sure of that. The deadly passion that overwhelms the famous but aging Bavarian writer Gustav von Aschenbach upon seeing Tadzio, a Polish youth of beguiling beauty, is poignant.

I was only 20 when I read this novella with keen interest, following the little sailor suit and red silk bow through a cholera-ravaged Venice and admiring the magnificence of this image to bind the storyline.

In this context, Mann’s prose takes on a flavor of revelation and subtlety. I remember wrapping myself in every word, sometimes rereading a passage until I had soaked up its very essence.

The lines certainly do not condone this forbidden love. Indeed, sexuality – both carnal and emotional – may be evoked, but is never materialized. What shines through is rather the strength of the attraction between the two characters. With remarkable concision, the author goes even further, probing, qualifying, questioning and carrying to its utmost limit the mortal fascination that such an attraction can exert. In the end, the story comes down to an expression of beauty harboring a platonic philosophy that allows the soul to soar... like an evanescent, lyrical and personal breath.”



Romeo

“In search of perfection”

“For me, there are no objective criteria involved in choosing a perfume. My selection is entirely emotional. I especially like perfumes with character, scents that evolve and that, without being linear, strike a certain balance.

In Il Profvmo's Shakespearean trilogy, *Romeo*, the “afternoon lover”, captivates me with its unforgettable bouquet. Its refined composition, its unexpected, vaguely spicy blends and its sophisticated ingredients that unlock a singular sensory expression on the skin. The jolt of a whip or the softness of buckskin, its carnal and committed note of leather is more delicate than it first appears. Suave and mellow, this fragrance disconcerts the senses... like a gentle kiss. In another register, Penhaligon's Juniper Sling is a potent catalyst. An energizing and fleeting surge of rare intensity, this fragrance inspired by London Dry Gin – England's most famous spirit – and the atmosphere of the Roaring Twenties envelops the skin in a veil of infinite tenderness.

All the same, I have yet to find the perfect scent. Only my wife Sophie could ever create a fragrance to match my character, surely somewhere in between *Romeo* and *Juniper Sling*. For me, that would be the ultimate statement...”.



Murano glass

“Art and substance”

“When I first wandered through the alleyways of Venice, under a sprinkling of mist rising from the lagoon to enshroud the city’s architecture in an unearthly aura, I also discovered the colorful treasures of the Berengo Studio on exhibit in the *Palazzo Franchetti*. They were all captivating... and all made of glass. I meticulously examined each piece, realizing that the greatest contemporary artists had managed to give free reign to their creativity in glass, experimenting the substance in every shape, even the most unexpected structures. I was fascinated by the highly skilled *savoir-faire* of these master glass blowers. The substance itself attracted me as well. Thanks to its spectrum and sorcery, it takes on a true personality. It captures and imprisons light. Ethereal yet structured, glass flirts with extremes: from superfluous luxury to mass consumption, from intense refinement to the practicality of daily life. This material is a highly technical product; its appearance depends entirely on the use made of it. When a craftsman truly delves into the glass, new architectures emerge from the substance, like this cage that Leonardo Cimolin, one of the most gifted master glass blowers, helped me create out of... Murano glass! And since I need constant contact with the water, I designed it in Cobalt blue, one of the most stunning hues in the infinite palette the medium offers. This intense and translucent shade magnifies space and plays with light, drawing man into infinitude.”



My arrival in Switzerland

“Encounter at the summit”

“I will always cherish the memory of my first steps on Swiss soil. It was 1989. At the time, I was living in Paris and working half-heartedly in *La Défense*, a gray and uninspiring imitation of Manhattan. My life was going nowhere and I had little in the way of career prospects, until the day the family business I was working for sent me to Switzerland to look into a sale offer from a certain Mr. Willy Schopfer, founder of the Valmont brand.

Shortly afterwards, I landed in Geneva, where the chauffeur responsible for conveying me to my destination had the welcome idea of driving along *La Côte* and the shores of Lake Geneva. It was a magnificent day: the prairies were resplendent, surrounded by shaded slopes, the placid lake glimmered like a mirror, innumerable shades of green stretched to the horizon, the nearby mountain peaks cast their majestic gaze over the land, and in the distance, I glimpsed the awe-inspiring snow-capped greatness of *Mont Blanc*.

The beauty of this unique landscape with its many peculiarities captivated me more with every mile: a series of perfectly enchanting postcard-like images. I immediately felt as if I had found my home, and had no doubt that this country was bursting with magnificent treasures of which the world was generously invited to partake. I literally fell in love, and the honeymoon continues to this day. Today, blending the purity of Switzerland’s natural resources and the power of science, *La Maison Valmont* continues to master the signs of time by offering the finest cosmetics.”



Sophie

“Bursting with creativity, light as a butterfly and mighty as a dragon”

Not for the faint of heart !

A figure as vivacious as Sophie never goes halfway. If she likes you, she loves you. Generosity is her motto, for every thought and every deed ! I have seen this doctrine at work, in her relationships with her friends, her family and her career.

What is the secret to her openness and unfailing perspicacity ? A gift of omnipresence ? No. Rather, it is the inexhaustible energy particular to those who succeed in everything they do. Energy that comes from the heart. She cultivates her own style, a simple elegance seasoned with a touch of fantasy but devoid of ostentatiousness. A devoted mother and authority figure, she shows respect for each person's uniqueness and encourages their talents.

What sets her apart in her professional life ? Her insatiable curiosity, her openness to innovation, the pleasure she takes in flinging open the bolted doors of science and traveling the precarious paths of the unknown. Those who know her have grown used to seeing her explore the worlds of beekeeping, glacier water, gallinacean and – why not ? – even the occasional jellyfish.

At Valmont, don't ever tell her that it can't be done. It is simply waiting to be done ! She seeks out the best for her creams, for beauty and for her clients.

Her team is made up of passionate professionals who have taken on her philosophy as their own. Valmont creams seem to have been created in Sophie's image : light texture, potent formulation.

Finally, in the silence amid her bonsais, she finds moments of reassurance, an indispensable break after her myriad trips around the world and her incessant activity, catching her breath before taking off again, ever faster, ever stronger !

Olivia Sellier



China Girl

“Light and free”

“As the *Bateaux Mouches* set off for their last cruise under a starlit sky, the bells of *Notre Dame Cathedral* marking the passing hours, I was about to head home from a party when suddenly, ‘Oh, oh, oh...’

The first notes of David Bowie’s ‘China Girl’ soared above the din of the evening’s festivities. My body and my heart immediately responded to the exotic tones of this eminently recognizable, rough and sultry voice. Holding my stilettos in my hands, I raced to the dance floor. ‘*I could escape this feeling.*’

Propelled by a breath of freedom, a mischievous smile accentuating my girlish dimples, I danced like there was no tomorrow. This glam rock sensation, as sophisticated as it is apocalyptic, struck a chord within me, taking control of my body like an irresistible impulse. It overwhelmed me, rekindling the link between Europe and Asia and uniting the lands of my roots. And the fact that these words were sung by my blond-haired, blue-eyed British crush only heightened my euphoria.

‘*I hear her heart beating...*’ As strong as mine.

The night dissolved into joyous folly. I was spinning, happy and carefree, carried away by the melody. I felt light. Something indescribable was happening. At the age of 25, I was a young woman in full bloom.”

« Ajoutez deux lettres à Paris
c'est le paradis! »
JULES RENARD, 1925

Jusqu'aux
étoiles

RIVE
DROITE

dentelle
de verre

GRAND
PALAIS

18^h00 : Balade
le long des quais
de Seine

City OF Light



RIVE
GAUCHE

19^h00 : place de la
Concorde



15^h00 : SPA du Mévise
JARDIN DES TUILERIES



Café le Georges
CENTRE POMPIDOU
10^h00

Paris

“My heart aflutter on the *Pont des Arts*”

“As far back as I can remember I have always adored Paris. Aside from calling it home for many years, I love the City of Light for its joyous insolence. I love it for its maze of streets through which I never tire of wandering, and for the infinite possibilities it offers. I love its distinctive architecture, its monuments, its hotels and the Haussmann buildings ... the whole history of the city.

I am bewitched by the *Seine*, its embankments and its succession of bridges. The air is so sweet, drifting along the river banks.

Aside from its fabled beauty, I also love Paris for its contrasts, its concrete, its traffic jams, its gray skies and eternal drizzle, its constant commotion and its sometimes uncouth disposition.

Whether a first-time visitor or a dyed-in-the-wool Parisian, you cannot help but succumb to the charm and energy of the French capital. The city awakens the senses. From art galleries to impromptu exhibitions, not to mention little bistros to discover on the fly, including my favorite, *Le Georges*, atop the *Centre Georges Pompidou*, as well as the colored stalls of the street market in the 17th *arrondissement*: the flavors of Paris, both savory and intellectual, never cease to thrill me.

The elegance of Parisian women, their heels clicking on the pavement, always capture my attention. Cheerful, spirited and full of charm, they have the gift of attracting light. So much so that on every trip to Paris, I explore the colors, materials and cuts of their outfits to keep up with changing styles and behaviors. This sophisticated atmosphere is a source of inspiration to create new Valmont formulas.

Those who say I'm too Parisian are absolutely right! Jules Renard* said it best in his Journal : “Add three letters to Paris and you get Paradise.”

* Jules Renard (1864-1910), novelist and playwright, wrote *Journal*, 1887-1910 in 1925.

YOU'LL NEED:

- 6 cups chicken stock
- 2 stalks lemongrass
- 3 kaffir lime leaves
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 fresh red chili
- fresh shiitake mushrooms
- juice of 1 lime
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- soy sauce
- shrimps
- other vegetables
- coconut milk
- sugar
- fresh coriander
- secret ingredient?

ต้มยำซุบ



Tom Yam soup

“The taste of pleasure”

“Naturally, given my Vietnamese background, I could have talked about my love for Phở, the soup I was brought up on. Though my roots are my support, I don't let them hold me back. That's why the soup I crave today, especially when shared with Capucine, my eldest daughter, goes by the Thai name of Tom Yam. Once you taste it, it is forever etched in your memory.

I discovered its quintessentially Eastern aroma later in life, in a Thai restaurant, and its rich, spicy taste gripped my palate.

Its subtle blends of flavors and colors makes each spoonful an experience, bursting with authenticity. Most importantly, every ingredient counts. Just like at Valmont!

The delicate aroma of lemongrass instills a freshness without acidity, while coriander infuses a soft savor suggestive of aniseed. The coconut milk lends an exceptional softness to the dish, with a smooth, fruity bouquet reminiscent of almond and tiare flowers that lulls me into sweet contentment and paves the way for the intriguing jolt of ginger. Or maybe it's that dash of Thai curry that echoes the mysteries of the Orient?

Indeed, a bowl of this gastronomic masterpiece is all it takes to make any meal exciting. It reflects the way I want to live my life: spicy and colorful, never dull!”



Bienvenue en Suisse, Tomorrow and En Quête de Sens

“Mother Nature as a muse”

“In the *Pantheon* of the silver screen, I cannot claim to have a single favorite, but I could name a Top Three.

Let’s start with *Tomorrow**. This film, directed by Mélanie Laurent and Cyril Dion, made me think. The two protagonists, driven by unfaltering optimism, set off together for a trip around the world to film pioneering and constructive initiatives in support of the environment and a new kind of society. They make us aware of how the world is changing and what we will leave for our children if nothing is done. Universal concerns that reflect real-life truths!

I would also choose *En Quête de Sens (In Search of Meaning)*** . Also well-known albeit more anecdotal, this is a road movie in which two childhood friends decide to leave everything behind, indulging their wanderlust and their dissatisfaction with the way the world is going. An in-depth philosophical journey together with an inner quest that gives hope to future generations who have lost their bearings.

Last but not least in my Top Three list is *Bienvenue en Suisse (Welcome to Switzerland)****, a sparkling comedy by Geneva-based director Léa Fazer. Light, funny and satirical, the filmmaker took on her native land, poking fun at the clichés that so well illustrate the contrast between Parisian intellectualism and Swiss authenticity. Every time I see this film, I laugh out loud while reliving a few of my own experiences.

Although they look at the world under different angles, these three feature-length movies share the very essence of life: a sense of love and of being one with nature. They show us how vitally important it is to see the Earth as a source of life rather than a simple resource to be used and discarded. They provide me with daily inspiration that also contributed to our Essence of Bees line for *Elixir des Glaciers*. We will never outdo Mother Nature, so let us do everything we can to live in harmony with her.”

* *Tomorrow* by Mélanie Laurent and Cyril Dion – 2015.

** *En quête de sens* by Nathanaël Coste and Marc de la Ménardière – 2015.

*** *Bienvenue en Suisse* by Léa Fazer – 2014.

Couture

luxury fabrics

elegance

romantic

embroidery

silhouette

fluidity

fantastic!

sophistication

unique

EMBODY THE

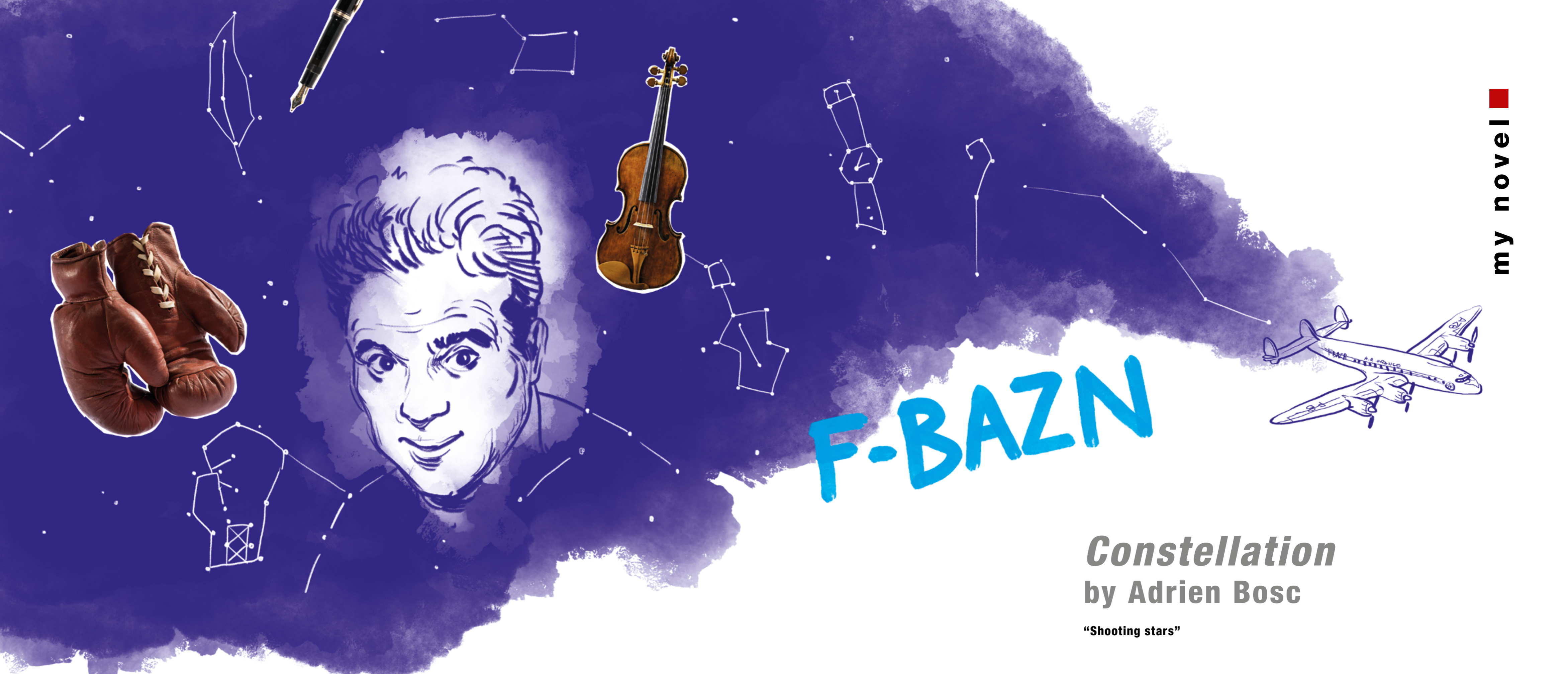
Dream

Oscar de la Renta

“Sacred union of the fantastic and the material”

“His creations are iconic references in the world of fashion. Floating, elegant, feminine, colorful, cherished like jewels. His dresses have won over countless actresses, celebrities, queens and princesses, not to mention American First Ladies. And for good reason! His gowns, long and romantic with their fitted bodice, embody an art of sophistication devoid of bourgeois airs. This Dominican-American fashion designer lived in a world of dreams. He loved women and proved it throughout his career. As you may have guessed, these words describe non other than Oscar de la Renta, one of the figures who has most inspired me. Having worked alongside him from 1989 to 1992, I saw first-hand his commitment to the female body. He devoted himself to elevating the female form, bringing together every continent in his artistic expression. Thanks to him, women emerged from the bonds of trendiness and became themselves, freed from the obligation of highlighting their elegance with special effects. He had the gift of making women unique. He sanctified them with his art. That is exactly how I see cosmetics. In *La Maison Valmont*, we are all at the service of women – and especially their skin. With each of our creations, we spare no effort to pay them the tribute they deserve.”

* Oscar de la Renta was born Óscar Aristides de la Renta Fiallo in Santo Domingo on July 22, 1932. He died on October 20, 2014 in Kent, Connecticut, and was an American fashion designer.



F-BAZN

Constellation by Adrien Bosc

“Shooting stars”

“I devoured Adrien Bosc’s first novel, *Constellation*, in a single sitting when it was published in 2014. *Constellation* : the title refers to the airplane that crashed in the Azores archipelago in October 1949, carrying legendary boxer Marcel Cerdan to New York where he was to be reunited with Edith Piaf before his fight against Jake LaMotta. Like many people, I already knew about the event from films and other books recounting the love story between “La Môme” and the “Casablanca Clouter.” However, I knew nothing of the other passengers killed in the crash. Today, when flying is as routine as driving, risk is almost forgotten. But in the early days of aviation in the 1940s, flight was reserved to a select few. Thus, illustrious figures pursuing singular destinies climbed aboard this steel sarcophagus like so many luminaries shimmering in a well ordered yet hazardous flock : a virtuoso violinist, the inventor of the Mickey Mouse watch, Basque shepherds, a journalist, a paper winder, et alii. On the path to tragedy, the life stories of these shooting stars collide, leaving behind wreckage, dreams and memories. My heart sinks. Especially when I come to the chapter where the author connects his personal story with his yearning to explore the fragments of a random series of events. The lines impart a certain poetry interspersed with more detached, quasi-philosophical reflections that make my head spin.”





my mood
my fragrance



Several

“Skin deep”

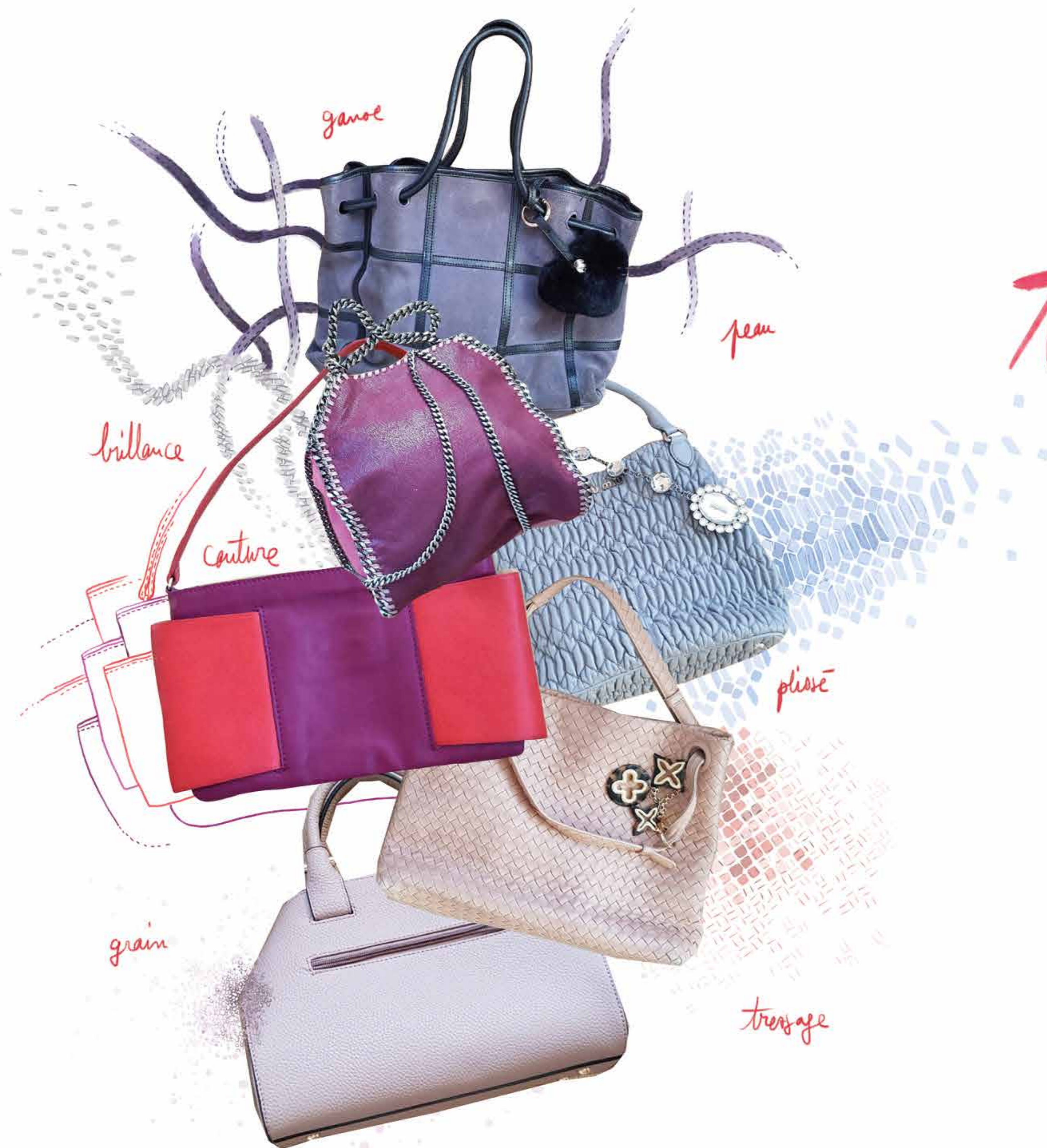
“Thirty years ago, choosing a perfume was a life-long commitment. Today, faced with a dizzying abundance of temptations, I admit that I myself flutter from perfume to perfume like a honey bee buzzes from flower to flower. Sometimes fresh, sometimes wild or romantic, I choose my fragrance depending on my mood, continuously reinventing my olfactory identity. Don Giovanni said: “I will change your fate.” Even taken out of context, this sentence perfectly reflects the multiple lives that perfumes offer us.

Laurent Mazzone’s *Chemise Blanche* for Monday mornings. This fragrance fits my professional identity. It calls to mind clean linen drying in the sun... Its aura, neutral and delicate, hints at a fruity chord of bergamot and mandarin. The heart reveals a blend of iris and lily of the valley, along with a touch of rose, making a lasting impression and giving me the intellectual acuity I need to start a new week.

More opulent and extremely intimate, *Chocolat* by Il Profvmo harbors sweet notes and deep aromas that take me to a new dimension. My strength of character and my femininity become subtly suggestive, almost carnal, with a laser focus on the now.

Delving into another style, I also love powdery scents. In this regard, *White Suede* by Tom Ford is an absolute gem. An unusual take on musk conveys a deep and almost commanding gentleness. Like a second skin, this fragrance is alive with physical and ethereal sensuality, expressing woman in all her glory.

Lately, my heart has been beating for *Verde Erba*, the newest olfactory masterpiece by the House. Its voluptuous floral symphony, and especially its overtones of mockorange, or Poet’s jasmine, expresses a broad array of emotions. Elegant, graceful and soaring, it imbues every day with a sense of springtime in a sunbathed prairie. Pure ecstasy!”



LOVE THE
DIFFERENT

textures

OF LEATHER

Leather

“A carnal connection”

“I am a great lover of materials of all kinds, but one particularly stands out: leather. Tanned, treated, tawed or suede, not to mention Russia leather... these skins are simply irresistible. And once the temperature starts to drop, my wardrobe overflows with leather. Additionally, by juxtaposing the material with a touch of silk or mohair, I play with different textures. I quite enjoy underscoring the complexity of contrasts. In the end, my vision of matter goes beyond simply contemplating or admiring a material; it must connect, or even merge with another substance.

And let's not forget that leather, because of its specific qualities, is a dynamic material: even inert, it has the reflexes of a living organ, a second skin that breathes and evolves with time. It melds with the body, and ages so gracefully that it can proudly display the wear and tear we strive to prevent on our own skin. Leather offers endless possibilities, countless textures, like the materials we use to create our creams. When creating a formula, we eschew any unexceptional ingredients: as a rule, we source our raw materials from the heart of Switzerland's natural bounty. We constantly strive to find new ways of extracting biologically active ingredients of the finest quality, which we then re-orient for other uses. More than anything, I love finding the right trick to adapt ingredients for use beyond their initial purpose. For me, this is a way of re-awakening the senses and celebrating matter, real, tangible matter. The kind that gets under your skin.”

under my skin



Time Master

“Customized extravagance”

“These are many instants, both funny and moving, that determine the course of our lives. They produce the happy or painful memories that we share in conversation with our loved ones. For instance, I have joyful memories of the successful creation of *Time Master*, today one of our flagship products.

In the late 2000s, as our company was enjoying rapid growth and launching new products to cover the market, I thought it wise to entirely restructure our product offering into three main lines, each line targeting a specific set of needs for the skin. To mark the successful conclusion of this classification, I began thinking about an overall treatment that would encompass all four components. In other words, a product so ingenious that it could cure any skin condition, leaving the skin hydrated, radiant, visibly firmer and more youthful. My idea was to create a nano-emulsion so fine that it would sink into the skin in a fraction of a second, ensuring optimal effectiveness. A daunting challenge to be sure. I wanted to harness Valmont's key strengths, based on a dynamic duo of exclusive active ingredients : DNA and RNA. However, to create a nano-emulsion from these molecules, they would first have to be liposomed, which is akin to fitting an elephant into a size 8. As Shakespeare would say, 'Ay, there's the rub !' Those who claimed it was impossible – and there were many – didn't take measure of my resolve and determination. After five years of research and development, Valmont achieved a true technological feat by creating *Time Master*, a cellular treatment of rare nobility, the ultimate weapon to turn time into an ally.

‘To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time.’**

**William Shakespeare – excerpt from Macbeth.



turn
back
the time

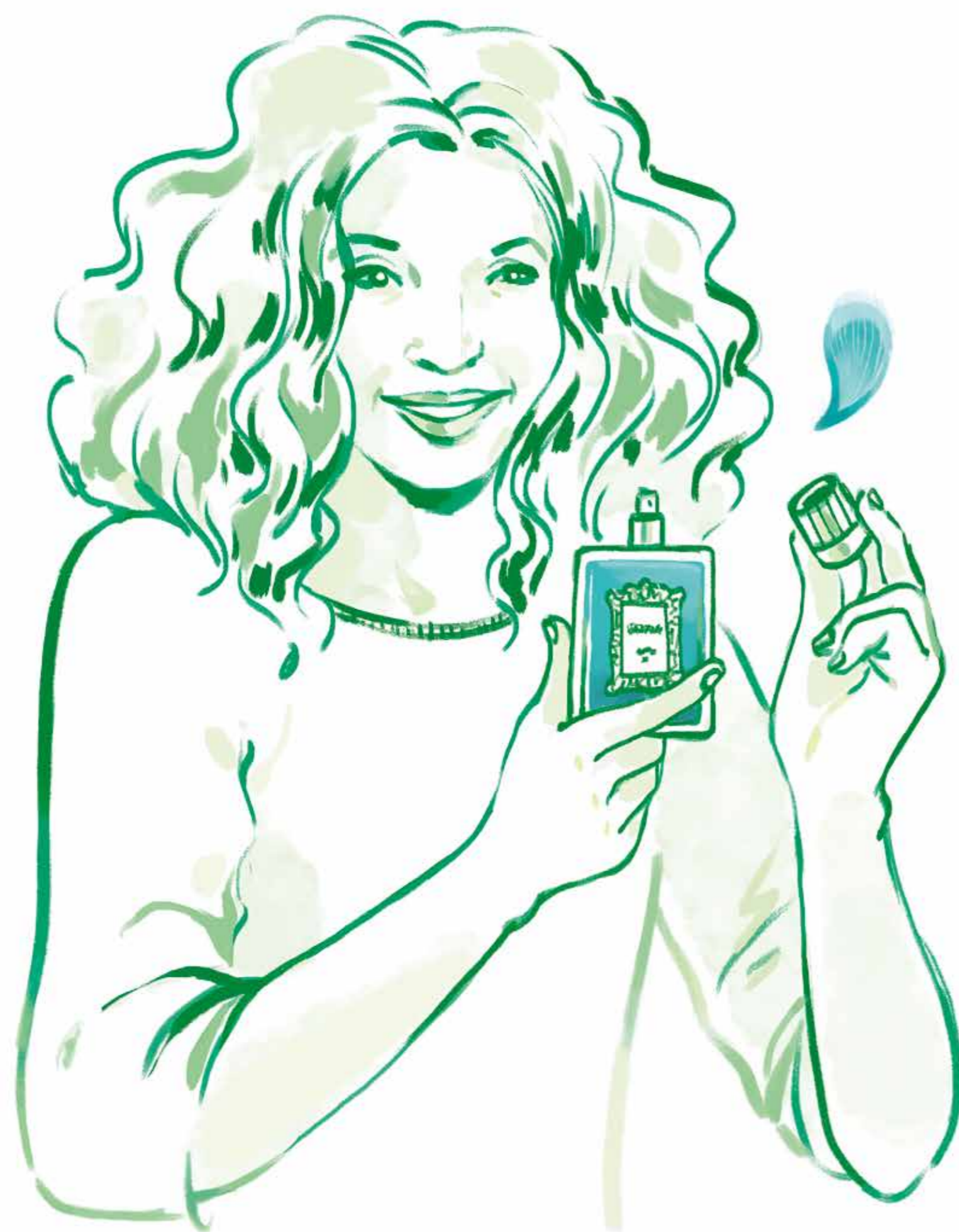
I dream a dream

“The invention of an elixir”

“What do I dream about? What remains of my dreams when night gives way to daylight? A beauty treatment, naturally! Let me share a secret: my most extravagant dream would be to invent an elixir, a kind of *Time Master* of the future to be sipped and applied on the skin, and containing the boldest ingredients ... unfortunately, many of the ingredients I dream of using – human stem cells, placenta extracts and certain hormones – are prohibited.

To be more precise, this cosmetic product would feature an invaluable formula that melds perfectly into the skin and – the apex of ingenuity – containing mini-sensors, waves or electric agitators to ensure constant stimulation for the skin. It would never rest, except at night. As physical activity is crucial for health, this delicate and indelible emulsion, designed for both men and women, would serve as a workout for the skin.

I admit it would be no easy task. But in the end, I have always been able to find the right people to bring my ideas to life. Believing in your dreams gives you strength, confidence, and a self-evident feeling of freedom. I champion that as a universal law.”



Silvana

“The art of Perfumery”

Silvana. A friend. A lifelong friend. Even though I have known her for less than 20 years. Together we have shared joy and sorrow, hard work and moments of carefree pleasure.

A free spirit, bold, independent and generous in her work and her life. Her “children,” as she likes to call them, are born from her intuition, from careful research, from intense feelings, from occasional or enduring encounters.

Her perfumes reflect her character. They have no common theme, they defer neither to trends nor to marketing diktats: they captivate the wearer, subsequently growing into a gratifying obsession.

Her most providential intuition was to create *Chocolat*, a unique, courageous and intriguing fragrance bursting with energy. Her first perfume gave rise to a whirlwind of fragrances created in a spirit of resolute intellectual freedom: *Aria di Mare*, *Touaregh*, *Pioggia Salata*, *Vanille Bourbon*, *Cannabis*, *Fleur de Bambù* and my personal favorite, *Ambre d’Or*: a perfume in perfect harmony with my skin and my soul! Often cast aside for work or pleasure, but always rediscovered like a warm cashmere sweater.

Today, *Silvana* is an ode to twenty years of redolent creation, and to the finest and most precious raw materials in the art of perfumery.

Thank you Silvana!

Amelia Liberati



David Garrett

“Garrett is free”

“When I create my different olfactory notes, I need absolute silence. But in my daily life, I love moving to the sound of music, particularly music played by the young German-American violinist David Garrett. At every one of his concerts, he carries me off to some star-studded horizon. With the artistry that springs from his fingertips, his virtuosity vividly instills intense emotions through unforgettable compositions. Reinterpreting modern music with a classical touch, he instantly captivates and moves his audience.

He handles the instrument with fiery passion, coaxing it to sing a declaration of love. The melody becomes a haunting refrain. Making the strings resonate with rage, tenderness, love or violence, he takes the sense of hearing to a new level of excitement, recalling gypsy culture. My soul is bewitched.

Listening to him play, watching him move, he appears weightless. I love this freedom of expression. As a person of instinct, I also love to take flight, as free as air !”



Lisbon

“A cry from the heart”

“*Lisboa*. This melodious name, with its discreet hint of exotic lands, conjured up precious little in my mind: I knew next to nothing of the Portuguese capital until my son Andrea moved to Lisbon as a student. Then I went for a visit in 2004 and my heart skipped a beat. With its mosaic of tiled roofs covering the hills, its labyrinthine alleys where the eye catches the occasional glint of the vast *Mar da Palha*, its lights and colors – so intense –, its facades adorned with azulejos, its rickety streetcars and the smiles on the faces of the locals... Lisbon is alive with old-fashioned charm and a welcoming nature.

I especially remember strolling along *Rua da Rosa*, just before dinner when the light evening breeze cools even the hottest days. The street hummed to the sound of animated discussions going on in the ubiquitous crowds. An inquisitive cat was enjoying the spotlight on a windowsill when my ear caught the melancholy sound of a *fado* echoing from a small house, and my nose perceived, among the profusion of scents that make up Lisbon, the pungent aroma of a savory *caldeirada**. And it was just a few blocks away, on *Rua Garret* next to the bronze statue of Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935), that I found inspiration for the notes that would come together to form *Black Dianthus*. An epiphany!

Receptive to all the flashes of everyday life that infuse any city with a soul, I have kept this exuberant lifestyle in my heart, and I have loved Lisbon from afar ever since. Wherever I am, at the slightest reminder of my enchanting visit to the “Queen of the Sea” my mind wanders back and the emotions of Lisbon come alive once again.”

*Portuguese culinary specialty: a stew of fish, vegetables and clams.



Lemon risotto

“A dash of sunlight”

“When it comes to fine cuisine, rice is often seen as unworthy, fit only for pseudo-Asian fusion recipes. Fortunately, Italian cuisine is here to remind us that this humble grain is bursting with bravura. Take risotto! Epicureans have limitless flavorful possibilities to choose from: meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, flowers and the list goes on. This traditional primo piatto whets the appetite like no other.

So, what is my guilty pleasure? Lemon risotto, no question about it. I often make it for friends or just for myself. There are no rules. However, before preparing the ingredients, I first make sure that the kitchen is calm and quiet. Risotto requires complete concentration. For 20 minutes, I stir the rice and think about nothing else: the ideal alibi for a moment of relaxation.

Once the dish has been served, there is no waiting. Golden, plump, creamy and perfectly al dente, it regales the nose with the potent yet evanescent aroma of stewed fruit. No one can deny that this dish is the ultimate tribute to Southern perfumes and the many nuances of citrus. *Presto*, I plunge my fork into my ambrosial masterpiece, savoring the succulent hot and velvety texture. Burning with impatience, I also end up burning my tongue. No matter: a sip of red wine – Italian, of course – relieves and delights my taste buds. The flavors merge and exalt each other with every bite... I take another helping and surrender willingly to this sublime harmony.”



Out of Africa

“Shades and Depth”

“*Out of Africa* (1985)* never ceases to move me. Directed and produced by Sydney Pollack, the film has the power to conjure the weight of the air in faraway lands, the serenity of nature, the majesty of Africa. Against the backdrop of Kilimanjaro, this noble land, alive with ancestral traditions, abounds with mysteries and contrasts.

“What’s more, I see the characters of Karen Christence Dinesen (Meryl Streep), a courageous woman who refuses to belong to any man, and Denys Finch Hatton (Robert Redford), a hunter as fierce as the big game he pursues, as reflections of life’s battles. Battles against a disease our heroine contracts from her unfaithful husband whom she later divorces, battles against swarms of locusts and ferocious lions, but also battles against arrogant Imperialists who accuse her of sympathizing with the ‘natives.’

“I see the impossible and intertwined love story that unites the protagonists despite the many torments they face. This palpable theme underscores the power of the seemingly trivial moments that sustain their eloquent encounters, as reflected in the scene I love so, where Robert Redford patiently washes Meryl Streep’s hair in the middle of the desert. The tender generosity of this gesture overwhelms me. The outward simplicity, colored by John Berry’s score, gives rise to internal stirrings that make for a beautifully crafted film.”

*Film adapted from the autobiographical novel *Out of Africa* by Karen Blixen (1937).



Serge Lutens

“The Man in Black”

“I have long admired Serge Lutens. In the world of cosmetics, this French artist, photographer, filmmaker, fashion architect and, of course, perfume designer, is an unparalleled figure. His bold aesthetic and cynical humor, coupled with the glint in his eye that contrasts with otherwise sober features, have led him down paths never before travelled.

“In the early 90s, when he created the cult fragrances *Féminité du Bois* and *Ambre Sultan*, it was clear that he focused less on the product than the overall image. At a time when flowery perfumes were in vogue, this modern-day Midas chose to buck the tide, reviving and celebrating raw materials that everyone else seemed to have forgotten. With his creations – impossible to define, as capricious and intangible as twilight – Lutens plays with different interpretations to better question our preconceptions. He does not create scents: he gives voice and meaning to each elemental essence, sublimating it, relating its past, its hopes and its fears. Lutens has the power to send us to a thousand and one real and imaginary realms. I have always been bewildered by his view of perfume as an individual experience. As he aptly puts it, ‘a perfume is the dot on the *i*. It is never an end in and of itself, but rather an ornament, an expression, a statement, a theft, a murder, or whatever it may be in the moment...’”



A Moveable Feast

“Paris”

“I have been to Paris often, but, my visit during the spring of 2001 definitely had a flavor unlike any other trip before or since...On the outskirts of the *Marais* neighborhood, under a torrent of colors, I was strolling lustily through the aisles of the flower market. Here and there, boughs of forsythia brightened the urban landscape with their vivid yellow hue. Mission bells loftily flaunted their suspended cup-shaped blossoms, while the lovely narcissus displayed its many varieties. My eye, and especially my nose, were drawn to a row of fragrant plants. At that very moment, right by my side, a man of rare elegance caught my attention by the supreme care he was taking to choose the perfect plants. His strikingly delicate touch, the uncanny way he had of breathing in the aromas, remained etched in my memory. We barely exchanged more than a few glances, but as we both dashed off towards our respective destinies, I noticed that we had bought the same shrubs...

Years went by, and this time I was at home in Italy, perusing the paper, when I stumbled upon a few lines relating the olfactory operations of Jean-Claude Ellena, former ‘nose’ of Hermès. Along with Jo Malone and Serge Lutens, Ellena is without a doubt one of the figures whose work I admire most. At that instant, I had a flashback to that day at in Paris: lo and behold, the identity of the mystery man was revealed! I smiled to myself, dumbfounded, for several years earlier and without ever realizing it, I had shared a glance with one of the Gods of perfume.”



Chéri by Colette

“Tell me a story”

“*Chéri* is a tender and moving novel. An aging woman and a growing man... depicted in the throes of a misguided passion that is unsurprisingly sacrificed and ultimately doomed to failure.

The pages brim with love, often unrecognized, sometimes unspoken. The responsibilities, forbearance and some self-evident realities that are part of any intimate relationship spring forth like floodwaters devastating everything in their path. Pure romanticism!

Looking back, I also see extraordinary modernity in these lines, as well as the author’s own emancipation. Indeed, Colette neatly shattered the rules of decorum of her time, be they social, sexual or of any other type. She painted a satirical portrait of her age, poking cruel fun at the passage of time and the pain it inflicts on women. The 2009 film adaptation directed by Stephan Frears and starring Michelle Pfeiffer and Rupert Friend very clearly illustrates these different aspects.

The autobiographical *La plume de Colette* sparkles with intelligence; it is alert, forthright, full of life and spirit. The characters are complex, and most display a certain *je-ne-sais-quoi* that I find charming or moving. But Colette shows herself to be as melancholic as she is playful, telling a sad story – the story of mourning lost love – with untold nuances, tension and grace.”



Musk

“An aphrodisiac”

“Nature works in mysterious ways, and mankind has a remarkable talent for using her gifts. Of all Mother Nature’s treasures, musk is the one that truly makes my head spin. What power! A pure delight! Its earthy aromas, reminiscent of forest moss, give me endless inspiration. Granted, today we use synthetic or “white” musk – the animal that produces the natural substance is now endangered – but we are lucky enough to have myriad varieties to choose from. From fruity and floral to powdery notes, not to mention woody and waxy bouquets, this rich animal scent “sings the transport of the mind and the senses,” to quote Baudelaire*. Not only does this substance strike a perfect chord with the skin, it is also indispensable as a delivery and fixing agent for the most volatile notes in my perfumes. It imparts a full-bodied yet flexible quality, enhancing a chord or lending a hint of exhilarating mystery. It enriches a perfume with its endurance and tenacity. Neither too spicy nor too mild, it instills just the right dose of sensuality. Musk offers women an aura of strength and mystery, while men choose it for its subtle potency. Captivated by these emanations, my mind starts to wander, overcome by some long-lost memory. These winding paths are essential to me, as they allow passion to prevail over reason.”

*Les fleurs du mal by Charles Baudelaire – 1857.



Precious flower of fire

“Poppies”

“I remember a wonderfully inspiring vista... As a child, I had hardly reached the age of reason when, for the first time, ambling down rolling hills illuminated by beams of sunlight and life, I came face to face with a magnificent field of wheat. Imagine my amazement when, in the center of this pasture, I discovered a blanket of colors that extended as far as the eye could see. Proudly punctuating the amber waves of grain, thousands of poppies swayed in the breeze. I can still feel the gentle breath of summer caressing my cheek.

These unexpected flowers, so fragile and delicate, unfolded their silken petals with the grace of a ballerina. These crinkled blossoms with their wild “black eye” heart made nature even more ravishing thanks to the dazzling intensity of their bright red imperial robe.

Overwhelmed by this bucolic landscape, I was immediately struck by the relationship between pigments and flowers, like the cosmic but secret passions that prompt tears and chills, inspiring dreams of unlimited possibilities.

Scattered here and there, the poppies gave off sweet poetry. Their fleeting nature seemed to cry out to me with a passionate appeal: “Love us while you may!” And as their beauty is ephemeral, let us not wait, but savor this dainty fervor without delay.”



Creating a perfume for the Pope

“Heaven in a bottle”

“My career has taken many surprising turns, but so far none can match the opportunity to create the personal perfume of Pope Benedict XVI.

While on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, His Holiness happened to smell *Acqua Della Fede* and *Acqua Della Speranza*, two fragrances I designed especially for the Church. They clearly caught his attention, because he asked me to create a perfume specifically for him. What an honor! I obviously could not turn down such an extraordinary privilege.

The Holy Father had his heart set on a fragrance that would evoke his favorite garden, the landscaped grounds within the Vatican walls where he liked to reflect and pray. During his frequent travels around the globe in the years to follow, the Pope wanted to maintain a link with his private oasis. He wanted a scent that would transport him back to this sanctuary redolent of cypress, stone pine, box trees, rosebushes, lemon flowers, verbena, spring herbs, thyme and peppermint.

I thus composed an olfactory pilgrimage, inspired by the gentle yet vibrant harmonies of Mother Nature. Naturally, I cannot divulge the exact structure, but I can reveal that Bach flower solutions breathe life into this divine nectar.”

Les sentiers de la création

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blanche

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