



JEAN-CLAUDE ELLENA. A Retrospective

One of the most important and influential artists of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Jean-Claude Ellena (b. 1947) has in his forty-three year career not merely created landmark masterworks. Ellena changed the state of the art multiple times. He pushed the medium of scent to take forms, convey meanings, and express ideas no other artist had before, and he remains arguably unequaled in the variety of aesthetic schools that he both pioneered and mastered.

Ellena will be the special guest of Pitti Fragranze with the **first major retrospective exhibition dedicated to him, curated by Chandler Burr, perfume critic and ambassador of Pitti Fragranze.**

The olfactory masterpieces of his career and a series of images that trace the life of the master will be at the center of an experiential installation inside the Stazione Leopolda. On this special occasion there will also be a **conversation / interview** moderated by Chandler Burr, to tell the ineffable history of his perfumes, and **the presentation of his latest, unmistakable creation, "Rose & Cuir" for Editions de Parfums Frédéric Malle.**

"This first ever retrospective of Ellena's career from 1976 to 2019 presents fifteen of the artist's most seminal works" **says the curator Chandler Burr.** "Some are important because they established the art medium firmly within entire aesthetic schools: *Bulgari Eau de Thé Vert* (1993) was the first great work of Minimalism in scent; *L'Eau d'Hiver* (2003) is one of the medium's seminal works of Abstract Expressionism".

"Taken as a whole, however, the works that span these four decades recount an extraordinary evolution in the artist, one he continues. Ellena has had a lifelong chameleon-like ability to self-reinvent, to not merely experiment with new aesthetic approaches but to develop and create new compositional techniques and structures. Ellena executed his first widely recognized work, *First* (1976), in classic early 20th-century Romantic style, then after creating that great work of Minimalism he did *In Love Again* (1998), a masterpiece of neon Fauvism. *Angélique Sous La Pluie* (2002) is Photorealism. With *Kelly Calèche* (2007) Ellena experimented in Post-Realist terms. In these works are both the arc of an artist and the arc of a life.

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13/15 September - 10.00 am / 6.00 pm

Stazione Leopolda

Opening: Friday 13th September - 11.30 am

TALK / Chandler Burr in conversation with Jean-Claude Ellena

Friday 13th September - 6.00 pm

Conference Space, Stazione Leopolda

Presentation of the new fragrance

"Rose & Cuir" by Editions de Parfums Frédéric Malle

Saturday 14th September - 11.00 am

Conference Space, Stazione Leopolda

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Biography of Jean-Claude Ellena

Born in Grasse, the cradle of Haute Parfumerie, Jean-Claude Ellena made his debut at Chiris in 19631, before joining the perfumery school of Givaudan in Geneva in 1968.

Considered to be one of the greatest perfumers in the world², he has created a number of iconic fragrances including First for Van Cleef & Arpels (1976), L'Eau de Campagne for Sisley (1976), L'Eau parfumée (1992) for Bvlgari (1992), Déclaration (1998) for Cartier as well as Bigarade Concentrée for the Editions de Parfums Frédéric Malle (2002).

In 2004 he became the exclusive in-house perfumer at Hermès³ where he remained for 14 consecutive years. He created fragrances which made their mark on the French niche perfumery scene for this fragrance Maison. For Hermès he created, in particular, the Un Jardin collection for the Hermessence range (Un Jardin de Méditerranée, Un Jardin sur le Nil, Un Jardin après la Mousson, Un Jardin sur le Toit, Le Jardin de Monsieur LI), Terre d'Hermès, Voyage d'Hermès, as well as the collection of Hermès Colognes (Eau de Pamplemousse Rose, Eau de Gentiane Blanche, Eau de Narcisse Bleu, Eau de Mandarine Ambrée and Eau de Nérolí Doré).

In 2019, Ellena became the exclusive Director of Olfactory Creation for Le Couvent des Minimes, debuting this collaboration by creating a new Collection, Les Eaux de Parfum Singulières. Inspired by the discoveries of the traveler-botanist Louis Feuillée and the majestic animals that crossed his path one day, he composed five portraits of Nature: Nubica, Lysandra, Hattaï, Saïga and Heliaca.

Alongside his craft as a perfumer, Jean-Claude Ellena is also a word enthusiast. In September 2007, with the Presses universitaires de France, he published a version of the book *Perfume (Que sais-je, 1888)* dedicated to perfume. This followed the first publication of the book, in 1980, written by the perfumer Edmond Roudnitska. In 2011 he published *The Diary of a Nose: A year in the Life of a Parfumeur*, which was translated into around ten languages and, in 2013, the novel *La Note Verte*, published by Éditions Sabine Wiespieser. In 2017, he continued his career as an author by publishing *L'Écrivain d'odeurs* with Nez Littérature and in 2019, *The Fabulous History of Eau de Cologne*, by Nez éditions.