

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## Louis Vuitton elevates perfume to art with Frank Gehry collaboration

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Five fragrances make up the new *Les Extraits* collection. Image courtesy of Louis Vuitton

By NORA HOWE

French fashion house Louis Vuitton is spotlighting the power of creativity and design with a new collection of fragrances in collaboration with esteemed Canadian-American architect Frank Gehry.

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Considered the **most important architect of this age** by *Vanity Fair*, Mr. Gehry has designed some of the world's most recognizable structures and buildings, such as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles and the Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris. For the French brand's new *Les Extraits* collection and Mr. Gehry's first fragrance project, the architect reimagined Marc Newson's original bottle design to reflect the perfume's movement and transparency.

"I wanted to approach the project from a sculptural point of view," Mr. Gehry said in a statement. "To bring something different to perfume.

"It is not a finished geometric form, it is just movement," he said. "Visual movement with the added interest of ephemerality."

Les Extraits

Louis Vuitton's *Les Extraits* collection includes five new fragrances: *Dancing Blossom*, *Cosmic Cloud*, *Rhapsody*, *Symphony*, and *Stellar Times*.

With *Les Extraits*, Louis Vuitton master perfumer Jacques Cavallier-Belletrud aims to reflect and celebrate the spirit of travel. The collection was inspired by the desire to get away and reach new horizons.

Influenced by Mr. Gehry's unique design aesthetic, a dynamic style focused on distorting elements, Mr. Cavallier-Belletrud created the fragrance without top, heart or base notes.

Instead, he deconstructed the typical structure of fragrance to revisit foundational themes and reveal the purity of Louis Vuitton perfumery.



*Mr. Cavallier-Belletrud drew on floral movement and scent for aromatic inspiration, while Mr. Gehry drew on the movement of the sea for his bottle design. Image courtesy of Louis Vuitton*

"I wanted to revisit perfume's major families," Mr. Cavallier-Belletrud said in a statement. "To give them a twist, expand them, exaggerate certain facets and reveal purity."

"In revisiting chapters, florals, chypres and ambers, you create movement and rounded, caressing forms, every time," he said. "I wanted to imagine a freshness that lasts and a sensuality that's not heavy."

For Dancing Blossom, the perfumer chose to interpret a floral scent with the Grasse rose, Sambac jasmine, Indian tuberose and Chinese osmanthus.

Cosmic Cloud is founded on a collection of fruity musks with the Venezuelan Tonka bean providing a chocolatey aroma.

For the first time, Mr. Cavallier-Belletrud combined grapefruit and ginger with orange and bergamot for the Symphony fragrance.

To emanate a journey through time, Stellar Times combines orange blossom with white amber and Peruvian balsam.

Dancing Blossom, Cosmic Cloud, Symphony and Stellar Times are each available for purchase at Louis Vuitton boutiques and [online](#), retailing for \$530.

Mr. Gehry also reimagined the maison's iconic fragrance bottle with his own signature design, as well as a custom fragrance trunk.

A fan of sailing, Mr. Gehry expresses his passion for the sea and life's movements by altering the original lines into dynamic curves.

Taking a sheet of aluminum and crumpling it like paper, he topped the bottle with a hand-polished cap stamped with an LV seal on the interior.



*A Frank Gehry-designed trunk houses all five fragrances. Image courtesy of Louis Vuitton*

The refillable bottle and its cap are sealed in a cylindrical white box with a slightly beveled top, acting as a symbol of movement and elevation.

The fragrance trunk designed by Mr. Gehry celebrates Louis Vuitton's trunk-making heritage, and highlights his ability to bring movement to even the most static elements.

Louis Vuitton's relationship with the arts began nearly a century ago, when Gaston-Louis Vuitton, grandson of founder Louis Vuitton, began commissioning artists to create for the label's stores.

Since then, the house has continued to strengthen its ties to the art world, collaborating with a series of artists who have brought their unique visions to Louis Vuitton, including Mr. Gehry.

#### Luxury and Frank Gehry

In 2014, the opening of the Frank Gehry-designed Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris saw the brand's relationship with the arts reach new heights.

Featuring distinctive glass "sails," Mr. Gehry's landmark structure and its 11 galleries pay homage to Louis Vuitton's mission toward introducing modern and contemporary art to global audiences ([see story](#)).

Although Mr. Gehry has collaborated with Louis Vuitton on a number of projects, he has also been commissioned by other luxury brands for his unique eye for design.

Last year, he designed a limited-edition decanter for French Cognac brand Hennessy in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Hennessy X.O., drawing inspiration from French culture and Hennessy's illustrious heritage.

Mr. Gehry made sure to preserve the general structure and integrity of the emblematic Hennessy X.O. bottle, but embellished the design with an impressive surface of crumpled gold and glass, to mimic the movement of the Charente River ([see story](#)).

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