

# From Scarf to Scent

TWILLY BY HERMÈS FINDS NEW LIFE AS A YOUTHFUL (YUMMY) FRAGRANCE  
BY SARAH BANCROFT

You may know Twilly as the perfect accessory—the traditional square silk scarf first introduced by **Hermès** in the 1930s and since produced in hundreds of pattern and colour combos (beyond their round-the-neck use, these have also graced our handbags and hair). Now that this versatile fashion staple has been bestowed with its very own fragrance, we sat down to speak with Hermès perfumer Christine Nagel at her atelier near Paris about the process of transforming scarf to scent.

**You've said that launching a new perfume is still very difficult for you. Why?**

Talking about my perfume is very delicate for me because it is so emotional, and really I imagined with time it would be easier but, no, because each story is special and with each story I reinvent myself. I put my heart into my creations. And it's a very important moment because my work is finished now, and now I know my perfume will live only if women put it on their skin. It's the moment where I let my child go to live its life.

**You had total liberty from the house to create this perfume. How did you start?**

Inside Hermès I find lots of things that are amusing, joyful and young. And I make a connection with young women when I see them on the street taking an Hermès scarf and making it into a belt, a bustier—not just wearing it on their neck or on their purse. Do you know the word *baluchon* [beggar's purse]? I once saw a girl tie knots in all four corners of the scarf and she made a sack on the end of a bamboo stick. And I said, "It's chic! It's good!"

**What about the formula?**

In the past I have worked with a lot of sugar in my perfumes because the brands have asked for that, but this time I am free. I don't have to use caramel. I think young women like other things, not just strawberry and vanilla. I used the spirit of these young women who change the rules.



"Tuberose is a flower that is not beautiful but has a smell that is unforgettable"



**Tell us about your use of tuberose in this fragrance.**

The woman who is the most unforgettable is not the most beautiful. It's her faults that make her human. Tuberose is a flower that is not beautiful but has a smell that is unforgettable—and smells even better from afar. And you know the most beautiful woman in the world when you see her from 10 centimetres away ... it's the same. It's fascinating because it's very feminine. In history tuberose brings an extreme sensuality. In Italy in the religious gardens it's forbidden to plant tuberose, because when the nuns smell it they might have bad ideas. Madame de Pompadour [the mistress of King Louis XV] put little bouquets of tuberose everywhere in her room so that when the king came, he would stay with her. It's a very erotic potion but, when we see tuberose, we don't have that impression. It is very mystical. When you smell tuberose it is green and strong, and I wanted to make it supple, round and generous. I said, "It's like the roundness of young women." It's why young women are sexy, troubling—because they have those two sides. They are still a little bit like children but they are also more womanly than us. I find that is what makes them attractive, that ambiguity.

**The last ingredient is sandalwood, is that not masculine?**

For me sandalwood is Hermès, it's so chic, elegant. It's delicate. It's a soft, milky note. When you smell it it is a little bit animalistic and I wanted to make that note evident.

**And the name Twilly?**

It's the name for the smallest scarf from Hermès. It's perfect for a young woman. It sounds good, colourful. The bottle was designed by Florence Manlik, who is a scarf designer [at Hermès]. It looks like a lantern, only chopped off at the bottom, like a young woman might cut off her mother's skirt. The stopper is oversized, like a hat. When I saw it, it made me smile, it's so cute. And it went from there. And the tie takes two minutes to tie onto the bottle—it's the little details.

**If you could describe the perfume in three words what would they be?**

Colourful, joyful, chic. It's irreverent, it's subversive. It was a risk to make a perfume for young women that isn't sweet. For me it was a privilege, and I did it. ♥