



The Institute for Art and Olfaction Announces Winners of the 12th Annual Art and Olfaction Awards

June 11, 2026, Athens, Greece — [The Institute for Art and Olfaction](#) (IAO) is pleased to announce the winners of the 12th Annual Art and Olfaction Awards, revealed June 11, 2026, at the Gazarte Cultural Center in Athens, Greece. The ceremony brought together perfumers, artists, journalists, educators, and fragrance enthusiasts from around the world for an intimate and friendly celebration of excellence in global independent, artisan, and experimental practices with scent.

Its twelfth year, the Art and Olfaction Awards continued to champion creative innovation and artistic risk-taking in perfumery and olfactory art. Through a rigorous, three-stage, blind-judging process conducted by an international panel of experts, the awards recognize work distinguished by originality and craftsmanship.

“In our twelfth year, we celebrated the work of perfumers from all over the world. The excellence on evidence in the winning and finalist perfumes demonstrate that experimental and independent practices with scent provide a vital model for what can be creatively accomplished with perfumery,” said Art and Olfaction Awards founder Saskia Wilson-Brown.

The 12th awards were judged by a roster of international experts. Alfonso Nicolai, Antonia Kohl, Chloe Coover, Dana Kiley Buchanan, Ineke Ruhland, Linda Sivrican, Maddie Phinney, Matt Sanchez, Mauricio Garcia, Shabnam Tavakol, Terry Carter, and Tianna Blue judged the preliminary independent and artisan round. Dave Kern, Miriam Vareldzis, and Steven Gontarski judged the semi-finals round, while Dag Laska, Denyse Beaulieu, Diana Avellaneda, Kentaro Kuzuwa, Luca Turin, Patrick Boateng III, and Matt Frost judged the finals round. The Experimental award was judged by Alisa Banks, Andreas



The Golden Pear and laurels, photographed by George Galatsis



Keller, Karola Braga, Oswaldo Macia and Simon Niedenthal. The newcomers award was judged by Alejandro Soto Rodriguez, Chi-Wai Tang, Karen Gilbert, Spyros Drosopoulos, Matthias Janke, and Lorenzo Cavallaro. As with last year, the People's Choice was assessed by the larger perfume community attending Award events in Los Angeles at the Institute for Art and Olfaction, and in Milan at Esxence.

2026 WINNERS

Artisan Category Winners

- **Death By Vanity**, Rivendare, David Clarke (Perfumer)
- **Aethi Opum**, Maya Njie, Maya Njie (Perfumer)

Independent Category Winners

- **Nuit Élastique**, Première Peau, Ugo Charron (Perfumer) for Pierre Mergui (CD)
- **Ici, le pas s'arrête**, TERRA•T, Kaiwei Hsieh (Perfumer) for Terrence Chen (CD)

Sadakichi Award for Experimental Work with Scent

- **Goave-Geabbil (Hyundai Commission)**, Måret Anne Sara (Artist), Nadjib Achaibou (Perfumer)

Newcomer Award Winner

- **Water Moon**, Oneiros, Anh Ngo (Perfumer, IFF) for Thanh Dang (CD)

Contribution to Scent Culture Award Winner

- **Grant Osborne**, for Basenotes

Septimus Piesse Visionary Award

- **L'Osmothèque**, accepted by Anne-Cécile Pouant



Maya Njie accepts the artisan award for Aethi Opum, presented by Christina Koutsoudaki, of Vioryl. Photo by George Galatsis



People's Choice: Artisan Category

- **Dandelion Butter**, Clue Perfumery, Laura Oberwetter (perfumer), with Caleb Vanden Boom

People's Choice: Independent Category

- **Verdant**, Ilé Olomu, Andreas Wilhelm (perfumer) for Bawo Ijirigho (CD)

The evening's celebration highlighted the growing international reach of independent perfumery, with finalists and winners representing a broad spectrum of cultural perspectives, aesthetic approaches, and olfactory traditions.

Held against the backdrop of Athens and the Acropolis, the awards reflected the Art and Olfaction Awards' ongoing mission to create meaningful and community-led dialogue around scent as an artistic medium and cultural force.

"We're excited to build on our commitment to international dialogue in perfumery by holding the next edition of the Art and Olfaction Awards in Mexico City, in May 2027," said Wilson-Brown, adding: "Our team is thrilled to bring the awards to this important cultural center, which serves as a geographic bridge between North America and Latin America." Submissions for the 13th awards will open in late September 2026, and will be open to perfumes and projects launched to market between January 1 and December 31, 2026.



Anne-Cécile Pouant accepts the Septimus Piesse Visionary Award on behalf of the Osmothèque at the 12th Art and Olfaction Awards. Photo by George Galatsis.

The 12th Awards were supported by a roster of partners, including presenting partner MANE, producing partners Vioryl, Luckyscent | Scentbar, Pochpac, Perfumer's Apprentice, Esence,



and Smell Lab, and community partners 12Gods, Concepts, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Isno, Lefteris Lisgaras, ÇaFleureBon, and Noted. Venue partners included Baruti, Vryssaki (ArtFix), Gazarte, HGW Std., ImpactHub Athens, and Cre8.

For a complete list of finalists and additional information about the 12th Annual Art and Olfaction Awards, visit <http://www.thegoldenpears.com>.

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About the Institute for Art and Olfaction - Founded in 2012, the Institute for Art and Olfaction (IAO) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that fosters experimentation and access in the field of perfumery, olfactory art, and other expressions with scent. It accomplishes this by initiating and supporting experimental projects with scent, by providing accessible education at the IAO's laboratory as well as in partnership with institutions and community groups, by curating art exhibitions that incorporate scent in the IAO Gallery and elsewhere, and by raising visibility for independent, artisan and experimental and artistic practices with scent as a whole through programs like the Experimental Scent Summit and the Art and Olfaction Awards. Through these efforts, the IAO seeks to extend the world of scent beyond its traditional boundaries of appreciation and use.

About the Art and Olfaction Awards - The Art and Olfaction Awards are designed to raise interest and awareness for independent perfumers, artisan perfumers, and experimental practitioners with scent on an international scale. With the prestigious *Golden Pear* awards handed out annually at convivial ceremonies in cities around the world, and with a rigorous, multiple-phase, blind judging process, The Art and Olfaction Awards provide an important marker for excellence in independent, artisan and experimental perfumery. By shining a spotlight on perfumery's most outstanding creators, the awards help generate support for independent practices in perfumery as a whole.

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