



The scene at the Exsence trade fair.

Milan's Scent Fair Attendance Up 20%

By KERRY OLSEN

MILAN — The mood for niche scents wafting around the fragrance sector has clearly put trade fair Exsence on the industry map. The third edition of the four-day exhibition that closed here April 3 drew 4,937 visitors, an uptick of 20 percent compared to last year. According to Exsence organizer Celso Fadelli, buyers from La Rinascente, Coin, Printemps, Harvey Nichols, Russian retailer Douglas Rivoli and Dubai's Paris Gallery were among those trolling the fair.

Fellow fair organizer Silvio Levi, of distribution firm Calè Srl, kicked off the exhibition by underlining the sector's potential. Last year, Italy's artistic perfumery sector recorded retail sales of 134 million euros, or \$192 million, an uptick of around 12 percent compared to 2009.

Oud-based and patriotic scents headlined the exhibition. Profumi del Forte introduced 150 Parfum to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Italian unification, whilst Rome-based Eau d'Italie unveiled its latest unisex citrus juice, Jardin du Poete (the poet's garden), inspired by Sicily and created by perfumer Bertrand Duchaufour. Company founder Sebastián Alvarez Murena said sales grew 10 percent last year but are still below 2009 levels. The brand is carried in about 300 doors worldwide and is set to open in the Australian market later this year.

Meanwhile, on a royal tip, Boadicea the Victorious touted its new fruity scent, called Regal and created by London-based nose Michael Boadi. A 50-ml. flacon is 120 euros, or around \$172. Resurrected historical English perfume house Grossmith, revived by Simon Brooke, a great-great-grandson of the founder, previewed its latest eau de parfum, Betrothal, based on an updated historical formula created for the marriage of Princess May of Teck to George V in 1893. Floris also showcased a scent dubbed Wedding Bouquet.

A coterie of ouds included German niche brand Humiecki & Graef unveiling its eighth fragrance, called Blask, slated for a global rollout in the fall. Sebastian Fischenich, co-owner of Humiecki & Graef, described it as a new reinterpretation of an oud, although it doesn't utilize the ingredient. Formulated by perfumer duo Les Christophs, the juice is composed of bay leaf oil, red wine and a woody walnut. "Many people call their scents niche, but it's only a strategy. It's important that the product itself is niche," said Fischenich.

"I try to stay away from the idea of niche. I would describe Byredo as an independently owned fragrance house," said Ben Gorham of his Stockholm-based perfume house, founded in 2006. He was exhibiting at the fair with Italy-based fragrance distributor Intertrade Europe and its latest releases Oud Immortel and Accord Oud. The brand is set to hit Canadian department



Jardin du Poete by Eau d'Italie.



Celso Fadelli

store Holt Renfrew in August, and launch in the Middle East before summer. Intertrade also introduced Bond No.9's New York Oud, originally created for Harrods in 2008 and now set for worldwide distribution.

Standout novelties included Swedish brand Agonist with its new line of natural scents packaged in one-off glass sculptures and set to rollout from June. Prices range from 600 euros, or \$858, for the scents to 150 euros, or \$215, for the spray line. French brand Nez à Nez, introduced Immortelle Marilyn, a fruity women's edp intended to evoke the legend of Marilyn Monroe; 100-ml. flacons retail for 115 euros, or about \$165. The Paris-based *maison* is carried in 160 doors worldwide, including Henri Bendel in the U.S., Printemps in Paris and Liberty and Fenwick in the U.K. "Our brand requires human resources to sell it," said co-founder Christa Patout. Swiss nose Vero Kern, who launched her own line of artisanal scents in 2008 called Vero profumo, was in agreement. "I want to grow distribution, but I need good people selling them," she said. "In Northern Europe, there still remains the culture of buying what you find in glossy magazines."

Calè unveiled two woody scents, called Fulgor — created by Maurizio Cerizza and Silvio Levi — and Roboris, by Mark Buxton and Levi, inspired by storms in Death Valley. Perfumer Lorenzo Villorelli showcased Iperborea, inspired by the Nordic hyperborean winds, and Italian brand Nasomatto (meaning "crazy nose" in Italian) unveiled Pardon, a riff on masculine elegance. Costume National kicked off its new "pop collection," an energetic, fruity edp in four colored flacons created by renowned nose Dominique Ropion; 100-ml. flacons are 85 euros, or \$122.

Bumble Buzzes Into Print Ad Campaign

BUMBLE AND BUMBLE continues to pioneer how a salon brand can enter the retail arena while maintaining — and even driving — business to its 2,400 U.S. network salons.

This May, Bumble is launching its first print advertising campaign, which is intended to make 20 million impressions in its two-month commitment, to grow the brand's awareness, which is admittedly low. The move follows Bumble's announcement this week that its products are expanding from 10 Sephora stores — where they were tested in key markets for six months — to all Sephora stores in North America, excluding Sephora's store-in-stores in J.C. Penney.



A Bumble and bumble ad image featuring hairstylist Jimmy Paul.

Because it's a key anchor brand to Sephora's hair section, the balance of about 250 Sephora stores will dedicate a similar amount of space to Bumble as those that tested it, including fully Bumble-branded merchandising, customized fixtures and, in select locations, touch screens. One aspect of the retail partnership that will change — which Bumble learned from the test — is that, going forward, Bumble will hold biannual national salon client referral events, where the consumer who purchases a full-size product will get a styling card entitling her to a free 30-minute consultation and blow-dry or style at a participating network salon. This replaces a promotion that gave consumers discounts on haircuts at Bumble network salons. It turns out consumers often felt they were "cheating" on their usual stylist, making them hesitant to try someone new.

The ads, which will appear in May and June editions of Vanity Fair, Allure, Nylon and New York magazine, among other titles, come in two versions. One ad shows a model close up with a perfectly undone, textured hairstyle; the other focuses on the relationship between a hairstylist and model — behind the scenes. Both feature Bumble texture hair(un) dressing creme, a hair styler designed to create the perfect rolled-out-of-bed, textured look, that launched in March and has since become Bumble's number-three best-selling sku, behind the venerable Thickening Spray and Sumotech products. Sales of Texture in March, said Bumble and bumble president Peter Lichtenhal, were 20 percent ahead of plan.

The ads were designed to tell a story in fashion, styling and products — all components of Bumble's DNA.

"Overall, brand awareness is actively low, but once there is brand awareness, loyalty is extremely high.... We are a pro brand finding new ways to draw new business and [to drive business] to our core [salon] channel," said Lichtenhal.

He stressed that the ad campaign is incremental support to the brand, and is likely to emerge again in the fall. He said while Bumble's launch campaign is a spread, single-page ads are possible, too.

Bumble also has a digital ad campaign in the works, to make an additional 10 million impressions. Details are still being hammered out.

Bumble, which is sold in the top 1 percent of salons, is also sold in Bloomingdale's 59th Street, Space NK, Colette and Mecca. Bumble is exploring ways to expand distribution with Bloomingdale's, Lichtenhal said, but could not add details. The ads also appear at a time when the salon industry needs a push to return to levels it had prior to the recession. Sales in 2010 for the overall professional industry has been reported as up 2 percent over 2009.

— ANDREA NAGEL