

Vintages

Vintage Scented Postcards: Versace's Blonde

03/27/18 09:48:53 (10 comments)

by: **Miguel Matos**

"A dress is a weapon", said Donatella Versace. **Blonde**, the fragrance created in homage to her, is "fragrance as a weapon."



Watching the second season of American Crime Story – *The Assassination of Gianni Versace*, on FX channel, the show comes to a very endearing point in the plot, when we witness the deep relationship between Gianni and his sister, Donatella. How it develops and grows, how deeply connected they are and how he made her grow as a woman and as a designer.



Edgar Ramirez and Penelope Cruz as Gianni and Donatella Versace in American Crime Story - The Assassination of Gianni Versace - based on the book "Vulgar Favors: Andrew Cunanan, Gianni Versace, and the Largest Failed Manhunt in U.S. History," written by Maureen Orth.

According to the show's narrative, in 1993, when Gianni knows about his ear cancer, and thinks that he may not survive, he decides to start the process of leaving Versace as a design house in the hands of his sister. But she doesn't think she can do it alone. Donatella, a very strong and talented woman, isn't

aware of the amount of power she has inside. Gianni pushes her hard, to see the woman he knows is inside emerge. And this is a painful process for her. She has a hard time drawing, their visions of the brand don't always go side by side. And then, they start to design a dress together, based on her idea that a dress is a weapon; something women can use to get what they want and feel empowered.



Penelope Cruz as Donatella Versace

The dress is ready, and Gianni decides that this is the dress that reveals the new Donnatella to the world. The real one. The strong blonde bombshell we know today. She has doubts, but accepts to wear this sexual black dress with leather straps to an important ceremony: the 100th anniversary of Vogue magazine. As they arrive, and Gianni uncovers his sister by removing the cape she was wearing over her shoulders, the press goes mad. The vision of this woman is disturbing, too strong to go unnoticed. And this picture is published all over the fashion press. It's an iconic image that is still remembered. An icon in the history of fashion. But it's also a portrait of Versace as a brand and of a connection between a brother and a sister.



Donatella and her brother Gianni Versace at Vogue's 100th anniversary party.

A few years later, in 1995, Gianni, already out of danger, again makes a move and creates another homage to his sister: **Blonde**. It's a tuberose fragrance composed as a tribute to Donatella, and a coveted vintage treasure nowadays. Fragrantica says: "Blonde was created for a woman who can do anything in her way and under her conditions only. It is a very intensive and seductive floral composition. It was created by **Nathalie Feisthauer** and opens with silky-sweet notes of gardenia, Pitosporum flowers with their intensive, sweet scent, powdery violet, orange blossom and bergamot, which rounds this passionate bouquet with its fresh and sweet notes. The heart seduces with notes of tuberose, daffodil, ylang-ylang, which adds spicy tones and carnation, which gives its pepper-sourish tone to this composition. The base contains benzoin, sensual musk, civet and milky-powdery sandalwood.

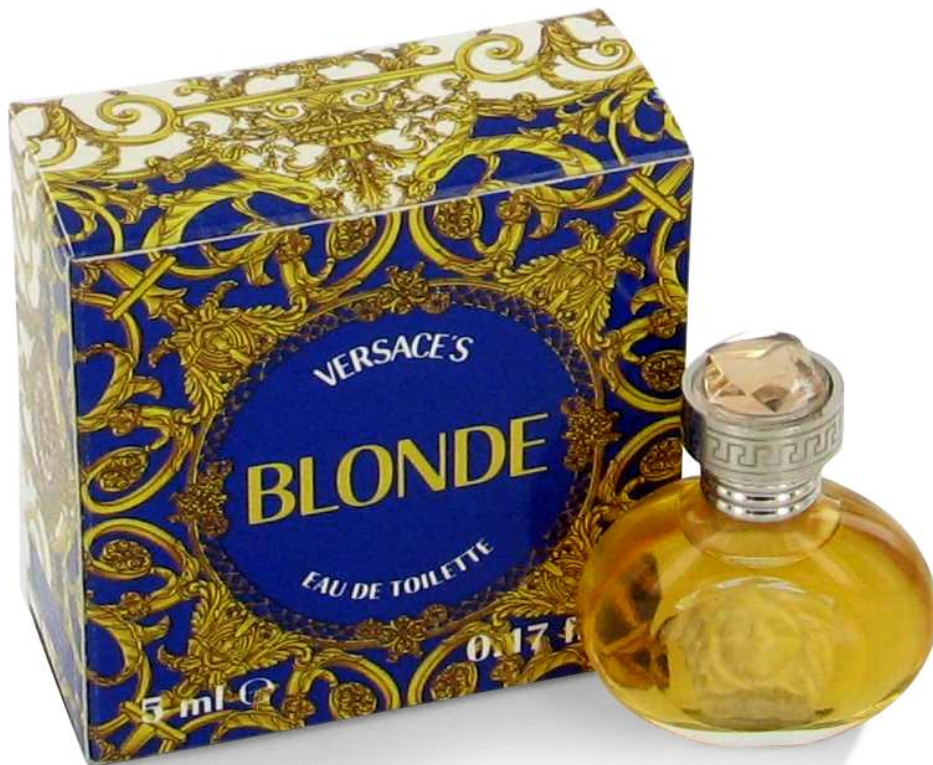
According to the name, apart from being dedicated to Donatella Versace, it is appropriate for blonds, but also for other women who cannot resist it. It is luxurious in every sense, with Medusa's head in the middle of the round bottle and a box with a motive characteristic for Gianni Versace. A bit of this aphrodisiac on your skin will make you very noticeable."



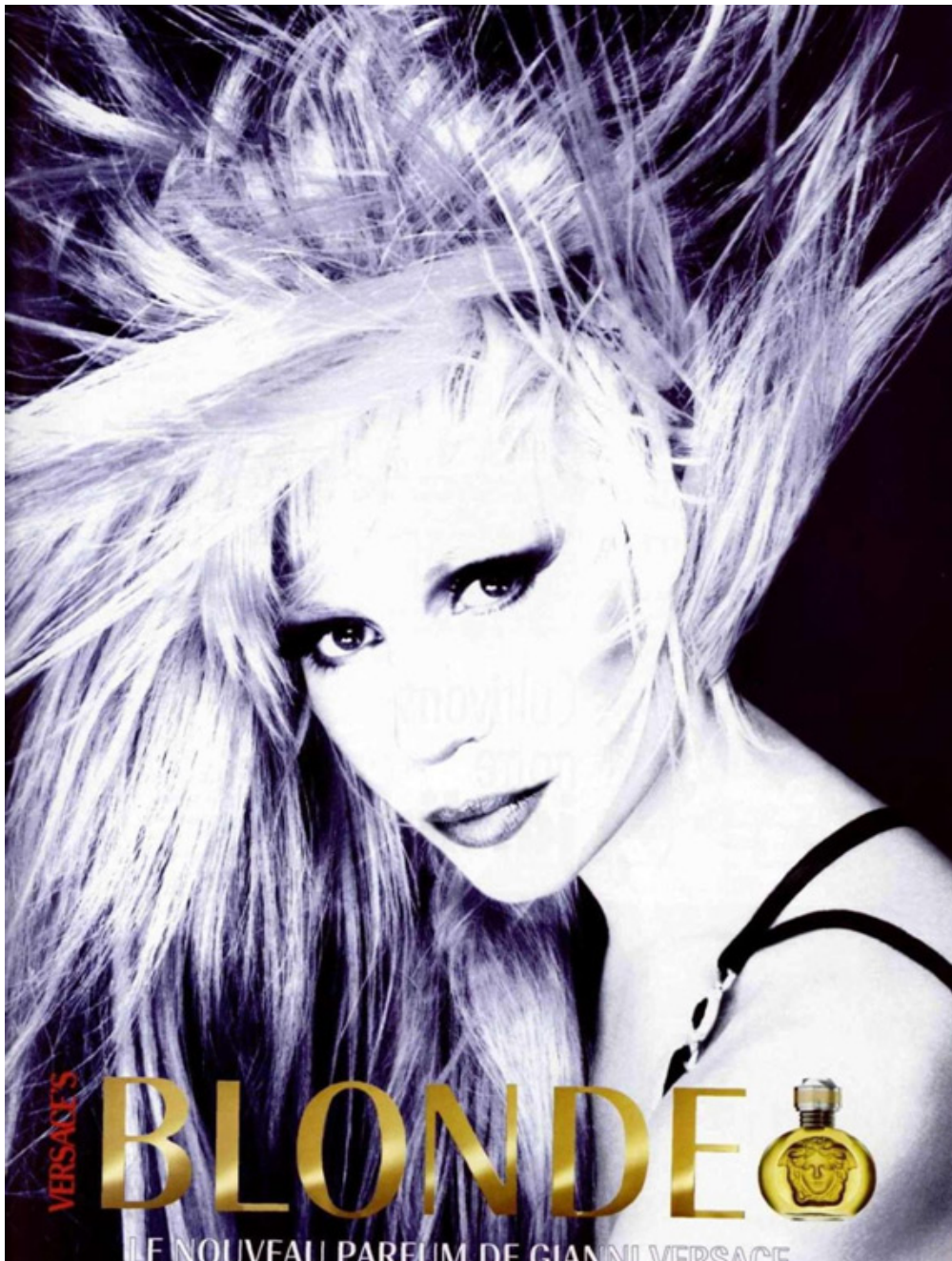
I have a small bottle of Versace Blonde in my collection, a treasure in the *extrait de parfum* concentration. When I noticed it had been composed by Nathalie Feisthauer, I decided to ask for her comments on this creation. She was happy to remember this fragrance and told me about the meetings she had with Donatella, at the very same house where the tv show was filmed. "I was in Miami to visit Donatella. Madonna was there and she was the one behind the choice of tuberose as the main note. She was always with Donatella and smelling and giving her advice. Madonna was a true tuberose fan. There was no price limit for Blonde. We used real tuberose... The world production was needed for the launch. Nice memories of the 1990s."



VERSACE



As for how Versace thinks a Blonde should smell, it's a white floral bouquet of very carnal personality. In fact, if you want to portray a powerful, dangerous and sexy woman, what flower would you chose? Tuberose seems to be on the top of the list. Blonde is the typical tuberose soliflore with touches of other white and yellow florals to enhance it's glow, and animalics to bring up the carnal aspects of the flower. The resulting composition is rather classical, following the style of *Fracas*, but perhaps a little more naturalistic. It smells vegetal, green and floral with a strong structure that is not bony at all. It has tons of voluptuous flesh, and is full of curves and sexy edges. The version I know best is the Extrait concentration, which is predominantly buttery, syrupy and full bodied. It doesn't have a crazy sillage, but it is very tenacious. Smelling the *eau de parfum* concentration, I find it much more diffusive and radiating, a lot more sparkling and luminous, even though you lose some of the sultry hypnotic notes of the Extrait.



Blonde is the perfect example of tuberose as true to nature as it gets in perfumery. And in that sense, it has a purity of intentions. On the other side, it is not groundbreaking or innovative. It's just a classic note that is elevated to perfection in a world where there is no space left for such an expensive absolute to be used in such a high proportion inside a fragrance formula. Consequently, Blonde is as extravagant and opulent as it gets, and it is a perfect embodiment of the values of the Versace brand. A bold scent that is light years away from what the brand is doing now in its main fragrance line (I mean, Versace Pour Femme Dylan Blue and Versace Eros), which is mainly a mix of cheap aroma-chemicals without any creativity. Blonde is Versace. Blonde is Donatella. Blonde is fragrance as a weapon, just like a dress can be. And for Donatella, you can either be brunette or platinum blonde, this is the essence of the extreme, whatever the color of your hair.



VERSACE'S BLONDE

Top notes: gardenia, pitosporum, violet, orange blossom, bergamot.

Heart notes: tuberose, narcissus, ylang-ylang, carnation.

Base notes: benzoin, musk, civet, sandalwood.



*Sad final detail: while I was writing this review, my bottle of **Blonde** fell on the floor and was shattered to pieces. My floor smelled of tuberose for a week and I was left with the sweet smell of Versace in the 1990's. Just like Gianni Versace, the fragrant tribute was suddenly gone.*



Miguel Matos joined Fragrantica in 2013 and edits the Portuguese Fragrantica.com.br. Miguel also writes for Beautyalmanac.com.

[Previous](#) Vintages

Advertisement

Elysia



Sorry for your loss, Miguel.:(
Great article, for me, Blonde is matching the image of Donatella to a tee.
I was lucky enough to buy a bottle of the extrait a couple of years ago. The bottle, the box and the scent all reflect the excessive, unique style of Versace. This was actually my first tuberose scent, followed by Carnal Flower, Fracas, Tubéreuse Criminelle and Truth or Dare. It does remind me of Fracas a lot but has its own allure.

mamakatt38



I'm still searching for a bottle of the EDT with an affordable price tag. Btw, RIP to your broken Blonde, Miguel :(

PerfumeEmpress



Always wanted to try this. Never could find it.

guynspfld



I smell coconut and amazed it is not listed

hantafromsanta

Oh nooooo, my heart winced for that poor little bottle! :c So sorry that happened.

It's amazing to learn Madonna was involved during creation. And of course the reason for the tuberose choice. Well I'll say that I prefer Blonde more natural approach to tuberose to Truth or Dare, definitely.

Do you assume they kept using real tuberose? I'd be amazed to have such high value ingredient gems in my collection - since I'm so lucky to have gotten both versions a few years ago, merely when experimenting and getting to know tuberose as a note.

Medusa82

Loved this perfume
The name the bottle
Wonder would they ever bring it back
It's soooooo Versace!

RottyG

Has anybody seen the TV Movie called House of Versace?

It's from 2013 and to me is much better than the American Crime Story one IMHO.

Gina Gershon portrait Donatella and Enrico Colantoni as Gianni. WOW, they look so realistic!

keoncharles27

P.S

The Assassination of Gianni Versace is EVERYTHING!! Edgar Ramirez looks so much like him its scary , and Penelope does a very scapel sharp Donatella.and the guy who plays Andrew..... he was born to play psychotic characters..who knew.

keoncharles27

R.I.P to your vintage Blonde Miguel.Great article its crazy to find out Madonna was the reason tuberose was chosen as the main accord, I think she said her memories of her mother are tied with her always smelli g of tuberose.My mother owned a bottle in probably parfum concentration and my grandmother swore this always reminded her of Fracas In family terms Blonde is the Mother who shares DNA with her grandmother Fracas & her daughter Truth or Dare.

Mar
27
2018

Alex1984

:(sorry bout your bottle Miguel.
I hoard my 1995 edt (I think it was only made as edt and extrait)



and I find it has the diffusivness needed to showcase the tuberose. It's not a beast although quite strong, and the longevity is amazing. Those were the years, and I find it a perfect tribute to Donatella. Nice to learn about the launch, the preparation and the idea behind it!