

Handmade Finds

You smell Mah-velous: Sonoma Scent Studio

By Handmade Finds August 15 2008

Indie shoppers in the know can occasionally feel overwhelmed by all the possible shopping options their hard earned dollars can support, while some of us simply aren't as aware of all the possibilities waiting to be found. Those of us inundated with advertising might feel that we are doomed to a life of department store fare, never realizing that there are niche perfume houses with options that can offer something different. Why smell like everyone else when you're not everyone else?

We ordered some samples from Sonoma Scent Studio to get acquainted with some of the fragrances offered by Laurie Erickson, Sonoma's perfumer, who is based out of Sonoma, California (lovely wine country).

We were looking for a quirky, offbeat scent and were intrigued by her interpretations in Violet. Violet is a scent that is, in our minds, an odd choice for personal scent, though its roots are quite traditional and Victorian. We sampled *Wood Violet*, *Voile de Violette*, and *Velvet Rose* (for reasons we could not understand as we HATE rose).

Voile de Violette's notes include: Soft violet complemented by iris, cedar, vetiver, violet leaf, a touch of rose, myrrh, tonka bean, hay, and musk. The hay note is intriguing; in fact the notes make this perfume exceptional to sniff, each inhale bringing out something new to enjoy. For those who would like an approachable but not sweet and syrupy Violet scent, this would be worth a sample. It evolves gently on the skin, producing a warm halo of scent with a violet-rose aura

Wood Violet has a more traditional Violet (like a pastille) note, unmistakable and without the rose note we smelled in *Voile*. The notes include: Violet, plum, cedar, cinnamon, clove, vetiver, sandalwood, violet leaf, and musk. This is a fascinating brew, again a mature (not granny) way to wear Violet, without sugar or powder. The notes blend seamlessly—it's truly faultless. The violet lovers violet, with a yummy dry down. Praise, praise. Gets better every minute, like *Voile*.

Finally, *Velvet Rose*, a scent we were not expecting to like, as we really, really, don't like rose. *Velvet Rose* is a magnificent soliflore, which smells like a real red rose. It's insane. Not only that, it's incredibly clean and fresh and the notes dry down into a cozy clean and pleasurable sniffing experience. Notes: A fresh but deep rose soliflore with Damask rose, bergamot, violet leaf, soft carnation, musk, and subtle patchouli. The notes in this perfume can be polarizing for some sniffers (we personally love bergamot and patch and they are well done indeed here) but after the first thirty minutes (which are very, very rosy), we'd be hard pressed to find anything negative to say about this one.

We toss off our hats to Sonoma Scent Studio. The fragrances are approachable, well blended, and familiar without being stuffy or old fashioned. If Laurie Erickson can get us to wear Rose and Vetiver without complaining, we have a feeling we'll be enjoying anything else she puts together! Some other fragrances available: *Ambre Noir*, *Encens Tranquille*, *Jour Ensoleille*, and upcoming scents include *Lieu de Reves* and *Zen Musk*. Samples are available and shipping is quick. Get yourself some samples and start sniffing!