

The English formula

IN THE LATE 1880S, ENGLISH PERFUMERY GROSSMITH EARNED A ROYAL WARRANT FOR THREE FRAGRANCES THAT WERE SAID TO HAVE ENSNARED THE ESSENCE OF THOSE HEADY TIMES. MEET THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIVING THESE CLASSIC ENGLISH FRAGRANCES

When Simon Brooke decided to revive the classic British perfume house founded in 1835 by his great-great grandfather John Grossmith, he was faced with quite a task. In its heyday, Grossmith was among a coterie of revered English and French perfumeries following in the footsteps of the legendary houses of Lubin and Houbigant. While the business had languished, that legacy was huge. The starting point was the remastering of three classic fragrances – Hasu-No-Hana (1888) named after the Japanese lily, the Indian-inspired Phul-Nana (1891), and Shem-el-Nessim (1906), named for an Egyptian spring festival. Part culture, part history, their revival was a saving grace for a special piece of English culture.

"I decided to revive the company partly for sentimental reasons," Simon explains. "It had a great pedigree and enormous potential because of the trend towards classics, naturals and legitimacy. I am deeply proud of my ancestors' achievements and feel privileged that with Grossmith back in family ownership I can continue the tradition." For Simon, success is something personal: "Turning a dream into reality... Reviving a business with amazing potential... Continuing where my ancestors left off... Helping the perfume industry return to its classic roots..." As Grossmith's historic fragrances are introducing people to a forgotten era of glamour, the future is bright for this classic English perfumery.