

PARIS

## Davide Stucchi

SUNDOGS

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To speak of a perfume's *sillage* is to evoke the trail of scent that follows its wearer, to contemplate how a fragrance diffuses around a body, or, more metaphysically, to consider what lingers in the air after one has left the room. Sillage, in other words, is an afterlife: the ghost of a scented body, a projection. Sometimes it fades fast, while other times it hangs heavy in the atmosphere, not unlike lovers who leave lasting imprints, or mental images that dwell with varying shades of clarity. Such trails of sense, skin contact, and romance make up the conceptual underpinning of Davide Stucchi's work, which traces the frail sillage of feelings and memories as we attach them to objects. For this exhibition, the artist asked a recent ex-lover to arrange such bric-a-brac into makeshift Hermès catchalls in the wake of their split. Perfume caps, Eiffel Tower keychains, a Nespresso capsule, a Comme des Garçons patch, a metro ticket, and a pocket square make for a stream of emotionally laden trash relinquished by someone who made an indelible impression on the artist. Plexiglass cases containing flattened perfume packaging from Serge Lutens and Prada decorate the apartment-gallery's living room walls. As noted in the artist's text, the minimal visual languages of *Borneo 1834* and *Infusion D'Iris*, both 2019, ask to be considered for their "openness," which is another word for emptiness, or as prompts to exercise the imagination in the absence of substance. It recalls a common misconception about sillage. Just as the power of a perfume is not the same as its projective potential, Stucchi's scent ephemera prods at an object's capacity to translate personal resonance into the public sphere. The significance of one's effects tends to stick "close to the skin," or, as Chandler Burr once wrote on the difficulty of extracting scent from certain flowers (such as the violet), such meaning-making in art "implacably refuses to surrender its smell."

— Sabrina Tarasoff

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