

TINDERBOX

SPIRITUAL BEINGS BEING HUMAN

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SPECIAL FEATURE

SACRED SCENT

Seeking the divine in the sublime

HAVE YOU ever wondered why Tinderbox describes so many of its fragrant offerings as Divine?

Yes there are quite a few: Divine Car, Divine Doggy, Divine Home, Divine Practice, Divine Travel, Holy Incense, Sacred Scent, even our raw treats have sanctified references.

Maybe you thought this description was rather over-the-top aggrandising language for a simple perfumed libation?

This newsletter addresses why these prolific celestial, mystical, depictions are befitting.

It takes us on a very human journey, back through the fragrant mists of time to reveal the very source, the essence of our obsessive desire for transcendent pure plant perfume.

We learn that no culture or spiritual path was or is immune to the persuasive pull of plant perfume to assist on the universal, inner quest to transcend the human condition, to go beyond the ordinary consciousness and personality.

The expression of spirituality through scent is a deeply rooted impulse as old as self-aware humanity.



Ancient associations between smell and spirit reveal an inner truth

Scent and the Divine

Sacred offerings of the highest form

BEAUTIFUL scent is the sovereign of transitory things.

The compelling aroma of plant perfume has danced across the millennium smell-scapes of human existence and has always been revered as the most sacred form of all offerings to God or the Divine.

Its spiritual use in religious and ceremonial ritual is revealed many times throughout the Vedas, Bible, Talmud, the Book of Exodus, the Torah, the Ebers Papyrus and other well-known spiritual literature.

Its ubiquitous mystical presence can be traced across every continent and throughout many different cultures from the ancient Egyptians to the Vikings.

The continuing use of aromatic herbs, incense and oils in spiritual practices from Neolithic times to the present day testifies to the endlessly

varying esoteric significance that plant scent embodies.

The accumulated knowledge of plant scent and the idea of the creative function of smell were adopted by the ancient Greeks and then the Romans to later pervade European culture and emerge in Renaissance alchemy.

The myriad ancient associations between smell and spirit all align with the universal principle that smells revealed the inner truth of objects - or the soul itself - because scent discloses essential existential truths that provide access to ultimate reality.

Plant scent in particular brings powerful medicine with the ability to evolve in a spiritual way. It is no wonder that it is considered sacred and has been offered and burnt in every temple, church, mosque, or holy shrine by humans for time immemorial.

Beautiful smells represented transcendence for humans, the intrinsic impulse of the evolving human consciousness.

I smell therefore I am

Smell is a source of elemental power and our sense of smell is indeed our exalted sense; the olfactory sensations that perfume provokes impart knowledge of oneself, of the other and of the world.

Scent is carried into us on the very air we breathe, the very breath of life that is breathed into us from Divine source; it bypasses the critical mind to anchor us into our bodies and the present moment where reality happens.

There is no consciousness without the sense organs. The nose the hub of

breath and smell is our portal to higher consciousness.

Certain aromas speak to our unconscious more eloquently in olfactory archetypes that resonate with us more convincingly than any speech.

Only the scents of Nature possess the evocative power to transform human consciousness helping us achieve greater states of divine connection and spiritual attunement.

It is almost as if we were given a nose to smell the fragrance of divinity all around us that is manifest in Nature.

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Perfumed portals of

FROM PAGE 1

Her entrancing scents have always suggested a connection with the 'other world', the non-material world of Gods and spirits.

No human could craft such transcendent wholeness; such shape-shifting glory. The irresistible aromas of Nature are irreducible and hypnotic in their inchoate sensuality while capable of transporting us from the ordinary to the sublime and into the polymorphous power of the present moment.

Evocative and inspiring, living fragrance from plants wakes us up to the holy sacredness of the earth. We need only imbibe its smell - whether fresh, rubbed or dried - or transform the smell into essential oils, perfumes, fragrant herbal blends and incenses.

Constance Classen describes the underlying magnificence of reality when the cloak that covers the sensory world, is lifted: '... the cosmos suddenly blazes forth in multi-sensory splendour: the heavens ring out with music, the planets radiate scents and savours, the Earth springs to life in colours, temperatures and sounds.'

The nose knows what it wants

Odours can strongly attract or repel, rendering them persuasive metaphors for moral virtue and evil.

Our smelling olfactory protuberance juts out from our face into the world and leans into that, that it wants to know, breathing in life force more deeply to imbibe what feels like heaven on earth.

It might be the damp garden after the first summer rain, the velvety down of the voluptuous honeyed rose or the warm softness of a baby's head.

Likewise, the nose flinches from that which it finds repugnant and we literally stop breathing the air that carries the smell into us, which accordingly impedes the essential life energy that sustains us.

This makes us feel bad and it is well understood that certain unwholesome biochemicals of decay do modify our own neuro-chemicals, resulting in depression.

Historically, a foul odour was said to be a signal of demons or the devil, announcing their presence.

Soul sustenance and solace in a harsh world

Paradise has always been depicted as a perfectly perfumed world, a gorgeously scented sanctuary from suffering.

Bad smells represented the worst that earthly life had to offer; the fetid insalubrious odour of death, decomposition, pestilence, filth, defecation and even danger.

Plant scent becomes a saviour from this reek of hell; offering aromatic refuge to counter the foul stench, neutralising, masking and offering antiseptic healing.

Plants gifted us with everything re-



Heavenly: The warmth of a baby's head is an example of a universal scent attraction.

quired for basic human survival and yet the most prized jewel of this gift was embodied within the uplifting scent that it emitted for our soul's sustenance and solace from the adversities of living in a harsh world. The scented essence of a plant was like payment or appeasement to the Gods to stop future suffering. In fact plant scent was symbolic of all our hopes and faith in overcoming death and sharing in divine immortality.

The aromatic atmosphere enriched awareness that ushered humans into a whole new world, focussing attention, raising vibrations and creating a collective feeling of spiritual community.

The perfumed Garden of Eden

Think of the legendary ideal of the Garden of Eden as Nature in its full uncorrupted fecundity, alive with all the multitudinous others or sentient beings, replete with the most beautiful and sensual aromas of exquisitely fragrant plants.

In the Creationist story of Adam and Eve, out of our five senses, scent is the only sense not mentioned as having been involved in the primordial sin of eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge.

It is also portrayed that the sense of smell of all of the senses, did not fall to a lower level of consciousness after Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden.

Blissful, gorgeous scent is symbolic of immortality and Divine union; desire catalyses the fall from grace into mortality and separation and accordingly the rank, unwholesome odour of bodily function, sex and decay.

Accordingly the Rabbis maintained that the sense of smell still holds its original purity and holiness as it was in the Garden of Eden, aroma will forever be an experience of the soul level.

'Odours in and of themselves make myths possible.'

- Gaston Bachelard

The aromatic link between heaven and earth

Scent was considered a Divine blessing and a sign of being Divine, in fact often the gods were attributed with a super sensitive sense of smell and were themselves, strongly fragrant and demanding of copious scented offerings from their mortal worshippers in which they derived great delight.

Prayer has always been likened to a perfume, while the process of prayer itself has been compared to the intermingling of heavenly and earthly aromas.

It is synonymous with incense ascending and grace is like celestial scent

descending. Scented rosary beads and Eastern malas were made of fragrant woods or steeped in oils to assist the passage of prayers to their Holy recipient.

Fragrant plant smoke connects us to the creator or the cosmic intelligence of the universe by creating a bridge between heaven and earth, spirit and matter.

It enabled the gods to work in the world and simultaneously allowed this world to communicate with theirs.

The incense ascends and descends, sanctifying our humble mortal doings with grace from above; we are but a conduit through our sense of smell co-creating with spirit.

Scent acts as a form of communication with the otherworldly and exposes our faith in the unseen mysteries, in what we innately know but do not yet understand.

It represents the gross physical world to which we belong that disintegrates and transmutes into the ethereal and eventually into the great void of nothingness, as will be our own fate.

Its ephemeral nature reminds us of the fleeting passage of our own human life and the same transformation of corporeal to ether, from presence to absence.

Alchemically scent is associated positively with sublimation, the elevating of the concrete to its symbolic meaning.

'Thanks be to God, who ... uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.'

- 2 Corinthians 2:14

The smell cycle of plants was the native calendar

The Andaman Islanders derive the progressing calendar year directly from Nature and the natural cycle of smells, that result from the succession of flowering trees and plants that blossom consecutively to emit their fragrance throughout the year.

Scent carries the tribal collective memories of creation, change and momentous moments within a shifting aroma-scape of different spiritual powers, it is not static, it is dynamic and a continuous ebb and flow into and out of form.

In fact the odours of Nature become the direct link to the vital life force that animates and regenerates all living things; like an invisible smell language that can be perceived through the senses but not the analytical mind. It immerses and enmeshes humans within the sensual world.

Scented religious practice and rites of passage punctuate most ethnic cultural history and still exist today in the few places where Native tribal traditions are minimally exposed to the olfactory anesthetising impacts of the

the Garden of Eden



Vital life force: Scent carries the tribal collective memories of creation, change and momentous moments within a shifting aroma-scape of spiritual powers.

modern, deodorised chemical world. In fact, scent accompanies life's most eventful, significant moments.

A spiritual adept goes through a process of purification with scented ablu-tions, fumigations, fragrant amulets, aromatic sachets, oils and foods.

Numerous odorous combinations meet individuals at major transitional and vulnerable times of life.

The ever-present fragrant herbs feature at birth, circumcision, marriage, sickness and death to protect against malevolent forces, to preserve health and well being and ensure the process of ritual is observed.

Shamanic scent mediators

A high level of engagement and aromatic interchange is a result of living inseparably from the natural world.

Plant scent is spiritual mediator and is used to facilitate transformation in religious, magical and healing rituals like a two-way channel that can also carry messages from Nature spirits.

The gods manifest through scent and the plants, by virtue of their ability to dispense pleasantness, open up communications between the villagers, the

world of the deceased and Divinities. Shamans throughout the world and certainly in South America have long understood the psychoactive and transformational nature of botanical fragrances and perfume is central to their healing practices.

In Peru, these healers are called the 'perfumeros' and they use plant scent to not only heal physical illness, but also mental disorders and even bad luck in love and life.

The perfumeros are highly skilled scent administrators who can transform the auric field that is the energetic/emotional envelope that surrounds people.

Utilising the natural plasticity of this field, they use fragrance to magnetise or irradiate a weakened aura to restore it to its vital equilibrium.

Many witnesses have verified the success of these treatments, yet still science cannot explain how it works. Shamans can actually see the malodorous stench of a malevolent spirit that has invaded a person's aura.

Perfumed essences are sometimes sprayed from the Shaman's mouth over the patient. This combines the scent with breath, endowing it with special powers so that the spirits may manifest - because vibrant scents attract benevo-

lent spirits. Ylang water is one such example used to defend against negative powers.

Scent is our link to source

The beautiful smell of a flower was evidence of that omniscient omnipresence, the very source from which the plant grew.

In fact extracting the scent or essential oil from a plant was expressing its inner essence and considered a sacred alchemical process.

In India, considered the world's oldest civilisation, the ancient science of Ayurveda that originated in the Vedas, tells about the deeper holistic knowledge and healing to be found when individuals come in contact with plant scent and experience its transformative properties.

It describes how scent in all its plant incarnations causes us to experience 'comfort of heart, gladdening of the spirit and rejoicing of the senses'; it is spiritually healing and liberates humans from egoic trappings.

Within the exhilaration of the senses awaits the momentary experience of 'nirvana' or perfect wholeness and the

highest spiritual state. In Patanjali's Yoga Sutra IV.1 it is suggested that aspiring yogis may achieve accomplishments with the help of medicinal plants, herbs and incense along with devotional practice, profound meditation and mantras.

No culture immune to the power of plant smell

In Buddhist tradition, there was the perfumed chamber (gandhakuti) where plant scent was used to prompt the incarnation of deities; they used sandalwood and camphor along with gold to help materialise the Buddha himself.

Exquisite fragrances were the reward of disciplined asceticism and the attainment of enlightened consciousness; they were often used as a focus of meditative practice as a perfumed path to Nirvana.

Through the medium of perfume the body becomes an airborne essence, a vapour; even though this transformation lasts for only a short time before evaporating - not unlike a human life.

The ancient association between scent and spirit is clearly evident in the Jewish-Hellenic book of Secrets of



Paradise: A plant's prized jewel is embodied within its uplifting scent, seemingly designed for our soul's sustenance and solace.

Sacred scent predates written history

FROM PAGE 3

Enoch (30:8-9) where the sense of smell is assigned to the soul and the breath of God.

In spiritual matters, the olfactory sense was given priority over the other senses. In fact scriptures tell that the Messiah perceives the truth by smell rather than sight or hearing.

'The ear is sometimes deceived in hearing sounds, which are only imaginary; the eye, too, sees things in motion, which in reality are at rest; the sense of smell alone is not deceived.'

- Ibn Ezra 12th Century

Sufis are no exception to loving plant scent as an inspiring expression of spirituality and a sign of the universal creator. Sufi mystics considered scent to be the most sublime creation of all Nature's bounties and a manifestation of divine beauty that exhilarates and spiritually elevates humankind.

Arab-Muslim societies also set great store by perfume that conferred purity and Divinity; aromatic ablutions are practised before any religious act.

There is an interesting Divine olfactory reference in a 16th Century manuscript called the *Transitus Mariae* that tells how the immaculate conception of Jesus Christ in Mary was through smell when the Holy Spirit penetrated her as a beautiful scent.

She is portrayed as offering fragrant incense to God in response to this perfumed gift of grace.

Anointing

Anointing served and serves three distinct purposes; it is regarded as a means of health and comfort, as a token of honour and as a symbol of consecration.

Its genesis is impossible to determine with certainty, but the custom appears to predate written history and archaeological record.

It seems probable that its sanative purposes were enjoyed before it became a practice of ceremonial religion.

The eminently human tradition of anointing the dead is a humbling and perhaps last futile attempt to delay the inevitable putrefaction of our decomposing bodies.

The dead body is smeared in heavenly scent perhaps to remind the soul of its paradisiacal destination.

In one of the most unforgettable acts of homage and faith, Mary Magdalene honours Jesus by kneeling at his feet and anointing him with precious plant

oils; a perfumed extravagance indeed for such impoverished times (she understood who Jesus truly was because she had witnessed the miracle of her brother Lazarus' resurrection): "She took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair, the house was filled with the odour of the ointment."

At Jesus's death aromatics once again come to the fore as aromatic omens of Divine immortality when his body is anointed and entombed with oils and fragrant spices.

Ancient Egyptians - the original aromatherapists

Anointing and embalming with fragrant oils to preserve the dead reaches its zenith with the ancient Egyptians, who were probably the original aromatherapists.

Perfume in its most uncorrupted plant form was central to their culture and they made extravagant use of its myriad gifts for nearly every purpose. Fragrant herbs, resins, oils and fats were highly valued and records reveal they used it all copiously.

This included: Camel grass, cardamom, cassia, cinnamon, cypress, dill, henna, iris, juniper, lily, lotus, marjoram, mint, saffron, spikenard, frankincense, myrrh and the resins of fir, pine,

bidellium and mastic. Floral fragrances, scented oils, unguents for cosmetics, scented medicines, embalming oils, incenses were a part of everyday life, including to stimulate aggression during combat, enhance memory in study, arouse erotic sexuality and most importantly inspire spiritual ecstasy.

Beverages such as wine and beer and vinegar were laced with aromatics to increase their effects.

Scent reigned in the temples

In Egypt it was within the esoteric realms of religious ritual that scent played its most important role and aromatherapy was practised as a complex metaphysical science and a profound understanding about the effects of fragrant incense and oils on the human psyche.

A fundamental insight existed about the communicating role of scent that interchanged with the inner and outer worlds, heaven and earth, seed and fruit like the cosmic dance between spirit and matter.

Scent was used to honour, appease and solicit favours from the Gods.

Specific incenses were ritually burned to the accompaniment of chant, for it was believed that odours came from the gods and could return there.

Incensing and oiling was thus a kind of 'communion' and commemoration.

Religions share common phenomena of perfumed holy people in life and death

Fragrance of the Divine Nature

THE 'odour of sanctity' is one of the most fascinating and well-attested phenomena of human experience.

It has been witnessed throughout history how fully awakened or realised human beings have emanated powerfully beautiful scent of their own essence and not the addition of extraneous plant scent.

Many saints were said to emit Divine scent and this natural phenomenon became well-known traditional knowledge. The bodies of purified holy people 'exhaled a perfume of spices'.

Every religion shares a common theme of this mystical occurrence that served as proof of the enlightened state of grace achieved by the holy person.

Christianity is steeped in historical stories of martyrs and subsequently saints that illustrate the illustrious role that plant scent had in the interplay between humans and the divine.

Here was perceptible testimony to the belief that the power of spirituality and the eternal soul prevailed over physical limitations and the body's innate corruptibility.

It was written how the Virgin Mary or Jesus made their healing presence known and felt by the presence of fragrances.

The transcendental aroma of sanctity is often portrayed as an outstandingly beautiful perfume and sometimes with a specific floral signature such as roses, lilies and violets or spices, such as cinnamon, cloves, ginger and myrrh or even apples.

The human scent of Sanctity

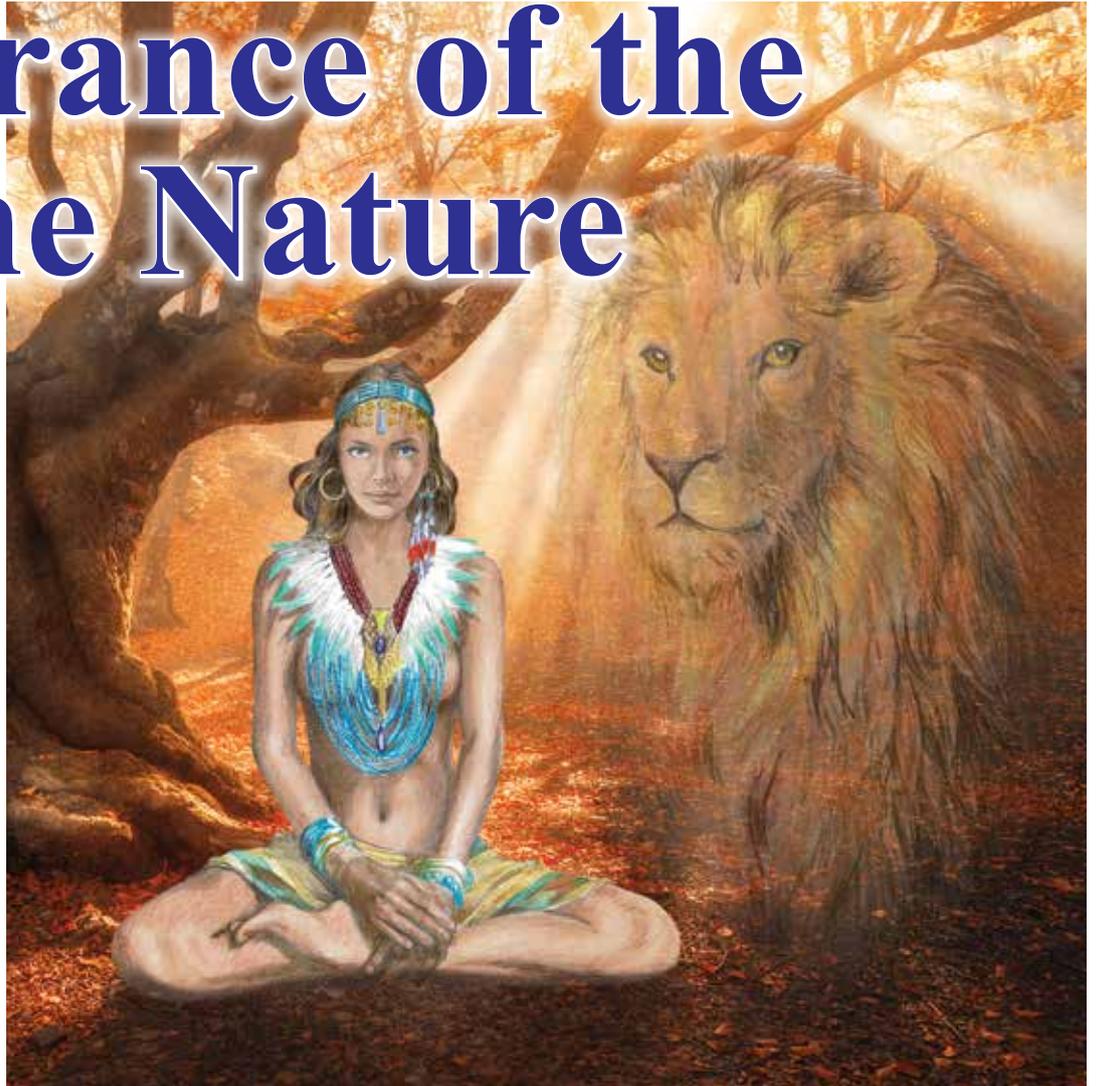
Diverse holy texts and stories from ancient to modern times tell of a permeating scent that was exuded from the dead body of holy people often detected at funeral rites; this was distinct from the odours of anointing oils or incense.

Those who smelt it could only be describe it as Divine or the fragrance of the Holy Spirit.

Teresa of Avila, a saint who cured illnesses and worked miracles, was said to have emitted a Divine scent that even survived her death; imbuing objects she had touched with heavenly scent, later to become holy relics.

Years later after her body was disinterred, the coffin and her clothes had rotted away leaving her uncorrupted body intact and fragrant.

In Avila, St Teresa's body was examined by many astounded people, including physicians, who declared it miraculous how a corpse that had never been embalmed, could be so well preserved and sweet smelling.



Odour of sanctity: Fully awakened or realised human beings emanate a powerfully beautiful scent of their own essence.

The scented saint or the saintly scent

The seventh century Dutch nun Mary Margaret of the Angels was known to be beautifully scented naturally when she was alive and after her death, just as she had prayed for, her body began to produce an aromatic healing oil, which was not only used to cure illnesses, but provided fragrant fuel for the sanctuary lamps.

A Jesuit priest Peter Claver worked among African slaves who were subjected to appallingly unsanitary conditions in overcrowded, foul-smelling hovels full of effluent as well as the seriously ill and dying.

Peter acted as if as if he were in a perfumed garden despite the overwhelming, sordid stench.

When he died his own body emitted a sweet scent that was '... so exuberant that it could be smelt from far away.'

Achemical transformation of a matyr

The account of the death by fire of Saint Polycarp of Smyrna is perhaps one of the earliest (AD155) testimonies to this human alchemical wonder.

"When he had offered up the Amen

and finished his prayer, they lit the fire. A mighty flame flashed forth. Then we witnessed a marvel . . .

"The fire, which looked like a vault, like the sail of a vessel filled with the wind, made a wall around about the body of the martyr; and he was there in the midst of it, not like flesh burning, but like gold and silver refined in a furnace.

"And, as we watched, we perceived such a fragrant smell, as if it were the wafted odour of frankincense or some other precious spice."

The story of Saint Herbert is equally astonishing: "When Saint Hubert breathed his last, there spread throughout Brittany an odour so sweet that it seemed as if God had brought together all the flowers of spring."

Many saints, such as St Francis Xavier demonstrated the heavenly blessing of Divine scent after death.

It was discovered much later when he was disinterred, that he was whole and sweet smelling though no spices or embalming oils had been used to prepare the body.

We need not exclusively look into the past for such Divine manifestations.

In parts of the Himalayas, Bhutan or Tibet for instance, caretakers still tend to the bodies of perfectly preserved, realised people, who have died.

Their bodies defy the laws of decomposition and remain intact, even

growing hair and nails that are tended to by acolytes. These holy bodies seem to be suspended in time, enshrined in celestial scent in their sacred tombs.

Some have become the destination of the pilgrims who seek to witness this fragrant revelation to inspire their ongoing devotion.

The scented 'Rainbow Body'

Remarkable things happen to the great spiritual Masters at the time of death that still cannot be scientifically explained and perhaps this is why we hear so little of these happenings.

Buddhists texts have long revealed the miracle of what they called the 'Rainbow Body'.

Sometimes highly realised beings whom attain the rainbow body at the time of death leave behind only nails, hair and occasionally cartilage.

They dissolve into the subtle level of Akasha or the trinity of light/sound/bliss level, which is represented by the Holy Spirit in Christianity.

The dissolution process may take up to seven days, during which time the body shrinks progressively.

The usual smell of death and decomposition is markedly absent and in its place arises scent of inspiring

The merging of self with infinite

FROM PAGE 5

exquisiteness; the ultimate symbol of hope for those who follow in the master's wake.

Yoga philosophy explains the process at the time of death, as the winds (pranas) associated with the four elements (earth, water, fire, air) deteriorating until those elements can no longer act as a basis or consciousness.

Upon the death of the human, the elemental body disintegrates back into the earth, but also integrates back into Source, a re-integration into the element of space or ether, (*Akasha*) a dissolving of the dense form of matter to unify with a much lighter wide-spread pervasive element.

Scent wakes us up to Spirit as it so beautifully emulates this process.

Leaving only sweet scent in their wake

'When consciousness rules breath, with inbreath we can smell all perfumes.'

- Kaushitika Upanishad

The awakened yogi who has mastered the act of the conscious death, a conscious ego-dissolution experiences a direct merging of self with infinite consciousness.

Some have been recorded to leave signs for those who follow in cases of 'partial rainbow body attainments'; in which the master or yogi halts the dissolution process before it is complete in order to leave behind holy relics for their students.

These objects have sometimes been known to exude Divine fragrance.

It is thought that the different levels of attainment by the great Lamas or holy ones determines the amount of humanly remains to be found after death.

After the gross corporeal elements have shrunk to leave the light elements the body, it has sometimes been described as small and youthful like a child with a luminous quality.

Such was the case with HH Dudjom Rinpoche, and those who have viewed his body in the stupa (grave) still marvel at the small luminous body.

This highest function of spiritual attainment to transcend the gross level of existence could also be attributed to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, whose body completely disappeared after three days.

In no way does it diminish this extraordinary, wondrous event by saying that this was not an isolated case.

Many other Buddhas, Lamas or Holy Mystics throughout history, have attained such spiritual mastery and shone as examples of what may be possible for all human beings.

Smell molecules shiver and shake

For a long time scientists proposed that our sense of smell is based on the



Awakened: Scent reveals to us the real meaning of freedom.

shape of the air-borne molecules that make up different odours.

However, scientist Dr Luca Turin proposes that our ability to smell may instead be based on how these molecules 'quiver and shake'.

Dr Turin believes that the vibrational spectrum of a molecule is the actual property that is detected by the nose, and then interpreted by the brain.

In other words, it is possible that our sense of smell is based on vibration, in the same way our ability to see or hear or sense is made possible by our brain's interpretation of different vibrations.

This is helpful in understanding how we perceive and define some scent as Divine.

Everything in the Universe consists of energy vibrating at different frequencies and certain energy vibrations of a higher nature stimulate the odour-detecting receptors of the brain's neuro-receptors responsible for psychosomatic/spiritual faculty and not just for those who are predisposed or spiritual adepts.

Experiencing certain smells in the presence of spiritual manifestations has occurred too often to disregard as fanciful and even now it is a common occurrence for psychic mediums and paranormal investigators.

To smell is to know

The Latin word for sagacious is *sagax*, which means both a keen sense of smell and a shrewd mind.

Isidore of Seville a 7th Century

Theologian wrote that to smell is to know.

The French have a phrase '*je ne peux pas le sentir*', which translates, 'as I cannot smell him', but what is meant is 'I do not know or trust him'.

The visionary herbalist Hildegard von Bingen of the 12th Century well understood the inherent powers of our sense of smell and its connection to the creative life force of ultimate reality.

Her uncanny insight and knowledge of Divine Nature was extraordinary and revered for its luminosity throughout the dark ages.

"By our nose God displays the wisdom that lies like a fragrant sense of order in all work of art, just as we ought to know through our ability to smell whatever wisdom has to arrange."

Elusive, mysterious and ineffable scent transcends our ability to define it through language, exactly like spiritual experience.

Scent was an apt vehicle for expressing concepts about knowledge and Divinity because it expressed the intrinsic truth and value of objects.

Smell as a super power

Clairolfaction is a form of extra-sensory perception that enables the gifted person to receive psychic or paranormal information by means of psychic or super sensitive smelling.

Clairolfactory psychics are in essence able to 'smell energy'.

According to an informal survey of more than 2000 mediums worldwide, it is estimated that approximately 90 per

cent of all mediums experience psychic smelling from time to time.

Sometimes bereaved individuals report the spontaneous smelling of fragrances that were in some way intimately linked to the deceased.

Like an olfactory hallucination, pleasant and meaningful aromas offer healing and comfort to the grieving about the eternal nature of the soul.

Smells have the unique ability to immediately evoke strong emotions within us, or trigger intense memories.

Nothing else can so instantly bring back a meaningful moment from the past, or invoke the presence of a special person.

It is clearly one of the more powerful ways spirit can validate or clarify whatever message is coming through for us.

The mystical odourist

A 'mystical odourist' in the 17th Century called Lorenzo Magalotti praised the practice of profuse infusion of the imagination continually with inspiring perfume.

"From which the imagination, impregnated and satiated, will rise . . . imbuing the soul with vapours purified of every vestige of matter, which when they reach the mind act as a pure spiritual suffumigation, inundating it with so unique a harmony that all plurality is banished."

'Synaesthesia' is another form of smell superpower recognised in some people who experience a seamless, undifferentiated fusion of the senses.

Such people are able to smell certain pieces of music, for instance, or perceive colours as having a distinct scent that they can smell.

Monks, yogis and seekers after prolonged spiritual retreat sometimes experience a blending of sensory response to stimuli, no matter what sense gate it entered.

Perhaps it is the disciplined reduction in sensory stimuli, the withdrawal of the senses from external influence that enhances the sense organ's abilities.

Here we might note that, each sense in its own way is fecundating: we can be impregnated with Divinity through the nose, ear, the eye and touch.

The perception of scent creates a deep chemical sense of immediacy in the body, which somatically integrates more distant optical and acoustical senses in the synesthetic experience.

Fragrance, because of its molecular imminence, gives us a sense of the immediate present; we fully inhabit present time that is the optimum window in which to effect a change in consciousness meaning a state of total attention and awareness.

Scent reveals to us the real meaning of freedom, as nothing more and nothing less, than life lived awake.

'I was no longer aware whether I was breathing music or hearing perfumes.'

- Guy de Maupassant



Ultimate reality is unspeakable scented splendour

SPIRITUAL experience cannot be described adequately by the analytical logical mind, in fact the dawning of mystical awakening is unspeakable, ineffable; words cannot convey the vastness and magnitude of open awareness or when Grace sweeps through us.

This is in the same way that smells cannot be well described, oral language derived from the left-brain falls short and just like transcendence it can usually only be felt with every fibre of our being, in our flesh, our cells and our heart.

Spirituality and smell share the same spontaneous, uncontrollable access into our deepest psychic centres, pre-existing biological and energetic structures usually dormant, waiting to catalyse into function.

We are biologically predisposed for spiritual awakening; we all have senses, a nose with which to breathe and smell, a spine entwined with a nervous system seething with energy.

This refers to the energetic centres along the central spinal axis whose sole purpose is for Divine illumination.

Olfaction connects us to our feelings in a profoundly intimate way.

Smell carries within it our deepest memories and the emotional states

directly linked to them. Our emotions are full of wisdom and the key for deepening our spiritual practice and our relationships with the world if we lean into them to find the antidotes to our most painful states of mind.

Perhaps the greatest irony of healing is that it occurs when we accept our felt experience, rather than rely on willpower or focused effort to get rid of the unwanted.

Plant scent provides a wealth of vibrational tools to use as aromatic remedies for negative energetic patterns while supporting the cultivation of positive qualities and fine-tuning our energetic bodies.

***‘If perfume leads us
to the future, it never
forgets to hold open the
doors of yesteryear.’***

- Louis de Vilморin

Divine scent has illuminated the way

Potentially the human being is a spiritual being programmed to evolve into the omniscient, radiant Divine Self, like all the Buddhas, Jesus

Christ and the saints before us. To contemplate the natural wonders of these realised Beings and their emanating fragrant essence restores our faith in the body as our temple and how gracefully we can live in it.

The body is uniquely ours, as well as being part of the common human experience.

It is a treasure trove and an exquisite vehicle for our practice of waking up and being with what is; anything is possible when we stop underestimating its potent intrinsic ability to regenerate and transform.

Pure essential oils from plants are a product of alchemical transformation.

They are hydrated and nourished by sun, water and soil and tended to and extracted with human hands to beautifully represent a distillation of life force, or Prana, that animates all of life.

This makes it easy to understand why plant scent can impart the amazing cosmic healing that it does and the potential mystical rapture of which it is capable.

We are fortunate that today there is an increasing revival of the practice of Aromatherapy as more people are learning of its abilities to help, heal and transform our lives.

Make your world a more fragrant, sacred place

- ◆ Repopulate the dwindling botanical world with more planting, cultivating, gardening. Protecting existing botanical sources is foundational.

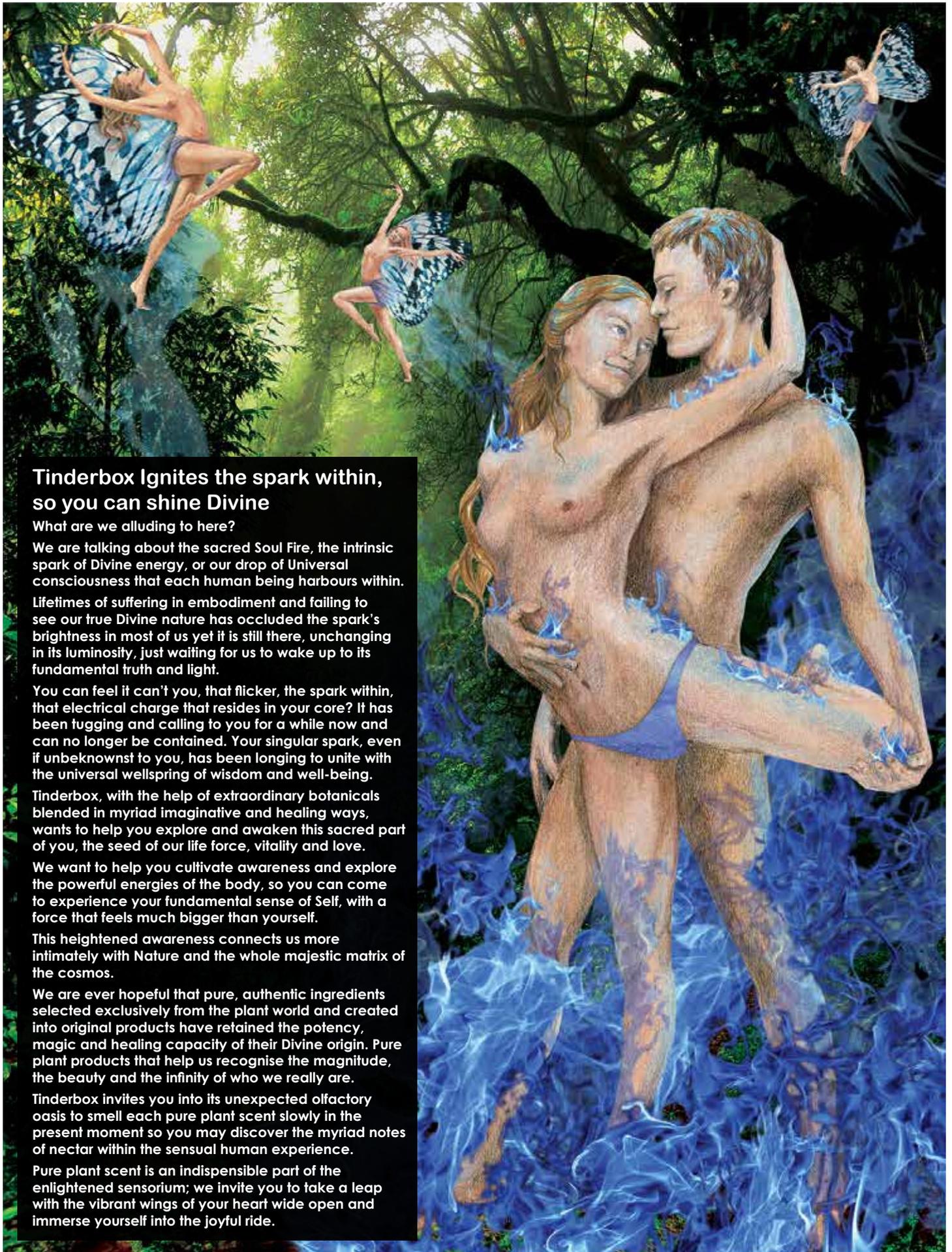
- ◆ Eliminate from our lives the artificial, industrial odours that swamp us in everyday life, anesthetising our olfactory system nose to what it needs to heal and evolve as a human. Start with the home, the workplace and public spaces by replacing fake-scented products with the real deal, pure plant products. Make judicious consumer choices that respect human sensitivities and the wisdom of the plant world.

- ◆ Reawaken the senses, both the sense organs and the worlds to which they correspond, which would heighten awareness and intimacy with the plant world.

- ◆ Cultivate inner stillness with disciplined spiritual work to greatly increase our engagement with the subtle, subliminal world of plant language, the aromatic messages that plants communicate to us.

‘The Earth, after a shower, sends out that divine breath of hers, of quite incomparable sweetness, which she has conceived from the sun. This is the odour which ought to be emitted when the earth is turned up, and the scent of the soil will be the best criterion of its quality.’

- Pliny



Tinderbox Ignites the spark within, so you can shine Divine

What are we alluding to here?

We are talking about the sacred Soul Fire, the intrinsic spark of Divine energy, or our drop of Universal consciousness that each human being harbours within.

Lifetimes of suffering in embodiment and failing to see our true Divine nature has occluded the spark's brightness in most of us yet it is still there, unchanging in its luminosity, just waiting for us to wake up to its fundamental truth and light.

You can feel it can't you, that flicker, the spark within, that electrical charge that resides in your core? It has been tugging and calling to you for a while now and can no longer be contained. Your singular spark, even if unbeknownst to you, has been longing to unite with the universal wellspring of wisdom and well-being.

Tinderbox, with the help of extraordinary botanicals blended in myriad imaginative and healing ways, wants to help you explore and awaken this sacred part of you, the seed of our life force, vitality and love.

We want to help you cultivate awareness and explore the powerful energies of the body, so you can come to experience your fundamental sense of Self, with a force that feels much bigger than yourself.

This heightened awareness connects us more intimately with Nature and the whole majestic matrix of the cosmos.

We are ever hopeful that pure, authentic ingredients selected exclusively from the plant world and created into original products have retained the potency, magic and healing capacity of their Divine origin. Pure plant products that help us recognise the magnitude, the beauty and the infinity of who we really are.

Tinderbox invites you into its unexpected olfactory oasis to smell each pure plant scent slowly in the present moment so you may discover the myriad notes of nectar within the sensual human experience.

Pure plant scent is an indispensable part of the enlightened sensorium; we invite you to take a leap with the vibrant wings of your heart wide open and immerse yourself into the joyful ride.