



THE (NEW) WILD ONE

COACH CREATIVE DIRECTOR, STUART VEVERS, DISCUSSES THE LABEL'S LATEST SCENT, 'COACH MAN', ALONGSIDE POSTERBOY AND GQ COVER STAR JAMES FRANCO.

It's been a few years between men's sprays for Coach. Four, in fact. And while it's fair to suggest that in that time they've failed to enlist a decent copywriter (check some of the PR speak below), it does out that the alluring American label's taken care with what and where they want the new men's scent to play. Also, who best embodies what the ingeniously titled 'Coach Man' is about.

Enter actor, and this issue's cover star, James Franco. A multihyphenate known for artsy passions (acting, writing, directing, painting) and quirks (cue a CV that involves a catatonic level of on-screen spliffs, some decent indie turns and a stint on *General Hospital* alongside his mother), what Franco ultimately delivers the NYC brand is a sense of cool – a point rammed home by the James Dean-esque ad campaign shot by Steven Meisel, starring Franco, vintage motor (a Plymouth Valiant) and leather jacket.

Coach creative director, Stuart Vever, first met Franco to discuss his involvement with the fragrance on the darkened set of the actor's upcoming HBO drama *The Deuce*.

"The set was like the backroom of a nightclub," says Vever. "It was perfect."

Franco agrees. "Yeah, the show is all about the porn industry and the sleazy New York of the '70s, and I'm



JAMES FRANCO IS THE NEW FACE OF 'COACH MAN' FRAGRANCE.

sitting there with my full-on porn 'stache – it just felt like the perfect meeting place to discuss fragrance.”

Today, the pair's reunited in the less dubious environs of the label's starkly minimalist New York headquarters, where celebrations for its first men's scent since 2013 take place over a breakfast of citrus bergamot donuts and geranium and white asparagus flan. Yep, flan.

As the TVC plays on loop, the accompanying campaign guff heralds an approach wanting to capture an 'American dreamer, a maverick spirit, an adventurous risk taker with a rebel heart and a romantic streak. [It] evokes a feeling – it has a New York attitude, an American authenticity'. Eager to include some alliteration, we're also told the scent's 'curious, confident, creative, cool'.

"I loved the idea of working with an American brand and I was familiar with what Stuart had been doing since he got to Coach – it really fit my sensibility," states Franco. "All of my style icons are American – from the 1950s and 1970s – and Coach was drawing on that real kind of classic American influence. We seemed to share a lot of the same tastes. It was the perfect fit, really."

Built on notes of veviter, suede and ambergris – working to top notes of green nashi (pear), bergamot and kumquat – the fragrance is both crisp and (their words) 'energetic', entwined with a warmth that spills from its woody base.

Interestingly, Franco's fragrance story (yes, that's a thing) to this point has involved some petty theft, lifting bottles of Guy Laroche's 'Drakkar Noir' as a teen.

"We were idiots," the actor admits, adding it was all a ploy to impress girls. "We would drown ourselves in it. We thought girls would be so into it."

Vevers manages to steer things away from illegality and back to fragrance, stating the clear vision he wanted to take with the 'For Men' scent and Coach's partnership with Franco.

"I really focused on how I see the Coach guy and what it is that inspires me about him, which is a maverick with a nostalgic heart... The man who wears this fragrance sums up New York – there's attitude, but there's also a bit of charm thrown in."

Sounds good. ■
'Coach Man', (60ml)
\$85; coach.com



JAMES FRANCO TALKS FRAGRANCE WITH COACH
CREATIVE DIRECTOR STUART VEVERS (CENTRE).



**“IT JUST
FELT LIKE THE
PERFECT MEETING
PLACE TO DISCUSS
THE FRAGRANCE.”**