

— ARTIST #15 —

THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

LA MAISON DU WHISKY



La Maison & Velier

2025



THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

Launched alongside the Artist #15 range *Something in the Water*, the collection **The Dark Side of the Moon** explores the world of sherry cask ageing through **six single casks distilled between 1989 and 2015**. From oloroso to pedro ximénez, these expressions showcase the many facets of Andalusian influence.

Its title, a deliberate nod to a musical monument of the 1970s, echoes a series of Velier bottlings: Glen Grants from different vintages, aged in sherry casks and selected from the Signatory Vintage warehouses. These cuvées, among the very first chosen by Luca Gargano (CEO of Velier) when the Italian house began importing whisky, stand as the symbolic starting point of this new collection, like a late sequel composed twenty-two years later.

Comprising Speyside single malts (Benrinnes, Linkwood, Mortlach, and one undisclosed distillery) and Highland malts (Ben Nevis, Ardmore), this new series is illustrated by artist Sthenjwa Luthuli, born in 1991 in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. One of his works, reproduced on the label of the *The Dark Side of the "M"* bottling, actually belongs to Luca Gargano's private collection.



SHERRY & WHISKY

Echoing the history of independent bottling, the range also fits into an even older tradition: **the use of sherry casks for ageing Scotch whisky.**

This practice dates back to the late 18th century, when sherry was exported in bulk, shipped in oak casks. Once emptied in the United Kingdom, these containers, often 500-litre butts, were naturally reused by distilleries, initially out of pragmatism, and later for the aromas they imparted to the spirit.

The practice became widespread from the mid-19th century onwards, before declining in the 20th century as sherry exports increasingly shifted to bottles. To make up for the scarcity of these casks with their exceptional aromatic qualities, the industry developed seasoned casks specially prepared for whisky maturation. Yet even today, some distilleries continue sourcing directly from Spanish bodegas, keeping alive this long-standing exchange between Jerez and Scotland.

STHENJWA LUTHULI



A South African artist trained at the B.A.T. Centre in Durban and later at the Velobala programme, **Sthenjwa Luthuli** has developed a graphic language infused with contemporary references. From 2011 onwards, he exhibited in South Africa and then internationally, notably in Germany. Winner of the second prize at the Sasol New Signature Competition in 2017, his work has gained growing recognition, confirmed by the Latitudes Art Fair 2019 and a notable collaboration with McLaren.

Deeply rooted in **Zulu culture**, his art reinterprets traditional motifs and objects — textiles, beads, headdresses, ritual shields — through a contemporary aesthetic.

On wooden panels that he carves, polishes, and hand-paints, Luthuli creates hypnotic compositions, close to abstraction and optical art, inhabited by figures with dancing silhouettes.



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BEN NEVIS 2015

Aged 10 Years

Highlands, Single Malt - 58,3 %, 70cl

Single Cask #202 - First Fill Sherry Finish

Limited edition of 655 bottles

LMDW exclusive

Marked by sherry cask ageing, this high-calibre young single cask opens the 15th edition of the Artist range. At the end of the 19th century, Ben Nevis experienced such enthusiasm that in 1878, to meet growing demand, a second distillery was built on the same site. Named "Nevis", it remained in operation until 1908, the year it merged with its elder, inaugurated in 1825. Perfectly embodying the West Highlands style that makes Ben Nevis such a unique single malt, this version stands out for its authentic and generous character. Its aromatic and flavour palette recalls the Andalusian harvest season, with intense fruity accents, liveliness, and a spirited temperament.

Tasting notes:

Colour: orange copper.

Nose: rich, deep. Mineral (slate), medicinal and camphorated, the aromatic palette also reveals smooth notes of chocolate, fruity (orange zest), heady (iris) and vegetal (straw). With aeration, it becomes spicier (Espelette pepper), autumnal (chestnut, date), balsamic (Oregon pine), while a fine rancio gradually sets in (apricot, kirsch cherry).

Palate: lively, stately. Flavours of café au lait, tropical fruits (mango, passion fruit), quince jelly and marmalade bring great substance and freshness to the gustatory profile. Then, various honeys (heather, lavender) and red fruits (strawberry, raspberry) mixed with scents of rose petal and orange blossom delicately coat the taste buds.

Finish: silky, slightly tannic. Unveiling numerous dried fruits (date, almond, chestnut) and strewn with dry leaves, it poetically evokes a luminous autumn, warmed by the last rays of the sun. Finding a second youth, it then takes up its pilgrim's staff towards southern Spain, where it becomes filled with flavours of walnut, curry, salted almond, apricot and mango fruit paste.



Untitled - 2022

(Hand-carved wood block and acrylic; 152 x 101 cm)



ARDMORE 2009

Aged 15 Years

Highlands, Single Malt - 57 %, 70cl

Single Cask #3 - First Fill Pedro Ximénez Finish

Limited edition of 337 bottles

LMDW exclusive

The only peated whisky in the Artist #15 range dedicated to sherry cask ageing, this single malt highlights the Ardmore distillery. Founded in 1898 by Adam Teacher, to the west of Aberdeen, it has been equipped since 1974 with four wash stills and four spirit stills. Until 2002, its pot stills were still directly coal-fired. Acquired in 2005 by the Suntory group, the distillery also produces from April to August a second unpeated single malt, Ardlair, mainly intended for blending. Highly expressive, this version showcases peat that gradually melts into malty, spicy, and chocolatey nuances.

Tasting notes:

Colour: old gold with copper highlights.

Nose: rich, powerful. Initially, blocks of dry, grassy peat and intense smoky notes take centre stage. The aromatic profile then evolves toward more cereal notes (barley), saline hints, and fruity accents (orange zest, apricot). With aeration, it becomes chocolaty and spiced (clove, Cayenne pepper).

Palate: concentrated, smooth. Less dominant but still present, the peat here expresses itself through more rooty (gentian) and milky (barley porridge) facets. Over time, the palate develops tropical notes (ripe banana), honeyed touches (lavender), and floral hints (broom, mimosa). This evolution, however, remains veiled in a layer of smoke (burning cigar).

Finish: calm, complete. Initially medicinal (iodine tincture), the peat gradually crumbles to give way to more vegetal notes reminiscent of salt meadows. Both pastoral and mineral (slate), the retro-olfaction highlights the full power and strong character of this Ardmore single malt.



Identity demands - 2020

(Block of super wood, hand-carved, with oil-based offset lithographic ink; 183 x 137 cm)



THE DARK SIDE OF THE "M" 2005

Aged 20 Years

Speyside, Single Malt - 61,1 %, 70cl

Single Cask #44H - First Fill Sherry Butt

Limited edition of 331 bottles.

LMDW exclusive

The 15th edition of the Artist range continues its journey through the winding, hilly roads of the Speyside. Produced at one of the region's emblematic distilleries, founded in 1824, this single malt, named The Dark Side of the "M", reveals an aromatic and flavour profile of great nobility. A magnificent land of contrasts, it unfolds from floral sequences — dominated by the heady scents of mimosa and iris — to fruity registers, irresistibly evoking the most venerable fruit eaux-de-vie.

Tasting notes:

Colour: old gold with copper highlights.

Nose: delicate, complex. Beautiful citrus and rancio aromas (freshly pressed orange), apricot and malty notes gradually give way to more vanilla, buttery, and caramelized tones (toffee). With aeration, the aromatic profile becomes spiced (ginger, nutmeg) and herbal (pipe tobacco).

Palate: lively, refined. At once honeyed (linden), juicy (apple, pear), candied (lemon) and nobly spiced in turn (cardamom), the palate continually gains in gourmandise (Aix calisson, Bêtise de Cambrai). Finely licorice-scented and silky, it opens up to resinous (pine) and roasted (coffee) flavours.

Finish: elegant, full-bodied. Naturally reminiscent of malted barley, it also expresses rooty (gentian) and spiced (grated ginger) facets. Returning strongly to the citrus notes from the nose, it then develops chocolatey and toasted (biscuit) tones of great smoothness. Shaded yet luminous, the retro-olfaction poetically evokes the onset of a radiant early autumn.



"The Native" Umdabu - 2021
(Hand-carved wood block and paint; 204 x 91 cm)



BENRINNES 1997

Over 25 Years

Speyside, Single Malt - 52,3 %, 70cl

Single Cask #9746 - Sherry Hogshead

Limited edition of 221 bottles

LMDW exclusive

Selected for the Artist #15 range, this single cask takes us to the heart of the Speyside, at the Benrinnes distillery. Between 1826, the year of its founding under the name Lune of Rurhrie, and 1896, when it was largely destroyed by fire, Benrinnes endured many trials: a flood (1829), several bankruptcies (1834, 1864), and a reconstruction in 1835 a few kilometres from its original site. Completely rebuilt in 1956, it later became notable for practising partial triple distillation from 1966 to 2009. Imbued with tertiary aromas and flavours whose maturity is matched only by their depth, this expression has also retained its naturally malty character intact.

Tasting notes:

Colour: mahogany.

Nose: delicate, complex. Medicinal (iodine tincture), spiced (saffron, curry), honeyed (heather, linden) and fully developed (prune, fig, date), the aromatic profile is both elegant and profound. With aeration, scents of mushrooms, lichen, and roasted chestnuts delicately infuse a particularly nuanced olfactory space.

Palate: dense, refined. Flavours of dark chocolate, tobacco, and prune form a first gustatory sequence rich and noble. Then, a multitude of fruits (mango, persimmon, orange, apricot) enrich a second tasting phase, both gourmand and juicy. A beautifully powdered, licorice-like bitterness (turmeric, cocoa) is also noticeable.

Finish: both full-bodied and delicate. Initially, a hint of camphor gives remarkable dynamism to its delightfully tropical (plantain banana), resinous (pine sap), and oily (pipe tobacco) tones. On the retro-olfaction, malted barley grains literally roll across the palate, in a final flourish of refinement.



*Emotional Connection - 2022
(Hand-carved super wood block with oil-based offset lithographic ink; 184 x 138 cm)*



LINKWOOD 1995

Aged 30 Years

Speyside, Single Malt - 51 %, 70cl

Single Cask #21 - First Fill Pedro Ximénez Hogshead Finish

Limited edition of 339 bottles

LMDW exclusive

The Artist #15 range continues its exploration of Scottish distilleries, heading to the left bank of Spey Bay, to the town of Linkwood where this whisky was distilled. Founded in 1821, the distillery doubled its production capacity in 1971 and added two additional stills in 2013. The single malt it produces is particularly prized by master blenders, who affectionately describe it as "green and grassy." Rich and nuanced, and deeply malty, this expression with Andalusian notes highlights the purity of a spirit full of character while remaining extremely elegant.

Tasting notes:

Colour: orange copper.

Nose: delicate, deep. Intensely malty, heady (iris concrete) and citrusy, the aromatic profile evolves toward more medicinal (Tiger Balm), herbal (alfalfa) and honeyed (acacia) notes. With aeration, scents of coconut, lychee, and passion fruit give it great exuberance.

Palate: both lively and silky. Powdery (ginger), infused (gentian) and fruity (pear, mirabelle), the palate is remarkably youthful and fresh. Closely reminiscent of barley, it then energetically leads us into a malting realm. Flavours of candied lemon and perfectly ripe mango flow across the palate.

Finish: long, delicate. Delightfully vanilla, it is also marked by tobacco notes of great nobility. Enriched by numerous herbal infusions (bay, thyme, oregano), the retro-olfaction transports us to Andalusia. Raisins, dates, and almonds underline the influence of a sherry wine, both spicy and saline.



Compassion - 2023

(Hand-carved super wood block, mixed media and paint; 184 x 138 cm)



MORTLACH 1989

Over 35 Years

Speyside, Single Malt- 44,2 %, 70cl

Single Cask #S-28607 - Second Fill Sherry Butt

Limited edition of 250 bottles

LMDW exclusive

The oldest whisky in the Artist #15 range dedicated to sherry cask ageing, this single malt takes us into the heart of the oldest of the six distilleries in the village of Dufftown, self-proclaimed Whisky Capital of the World. Founded in 1823 by James Findlater, Mortlach was dormant between 1837 and 1851, during which time it was successively used as a church and a brewery. Expanding from three to six stills in 1897, it is notable for practising a partial triple distillation (2.8). A magnificent journey through time, this expression unfolds a tapestry of fruity, infused, honeyed, waxy, spiced, chocolatey, and malty chapters, whose patina and nobility of expression are infinitely poetic.

Tasting notes:

Colour: orange copper with greenish highlights.

Nose: broad, elegant. Scents of wax, candied orange, roasted nuts, vanilla pod, and musk form an initial aromatic ensemble of remarkable depth and complexity. With aeration, a fine layer of salted butter caramel, a bay leaf infusion, and Sichuan pepper gradually take over the olfactory space.

Palate: rich, silky. Infused (verbena, chamomile), the palate is also nobly spiced (saffron, cardamom), herbal (green tea), and jammy. Gradually, honeyed (lavender) and fruity (pineapple, banana) flavours lend it remarkable smoothness and balance. Over time, cocoa powder spreads across the palate.

Finish: long, stately. With a velvety touch (peach skin, Corinthian raisin), it develops finely chocolatey, powdery, and spiced (ginger, clove, cinnamon) notes. Reclaiming the waxy notes from the nose, the retro-olfaction returns gracefully to malty and saffroned territory. Equally refined, the empty glass remains waxy.



Untitled - 2022

(Hand-carved wood block and acrylic; 102 x 91 cm)



[Watch Sthenjwa Luthuli's video](#)

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