

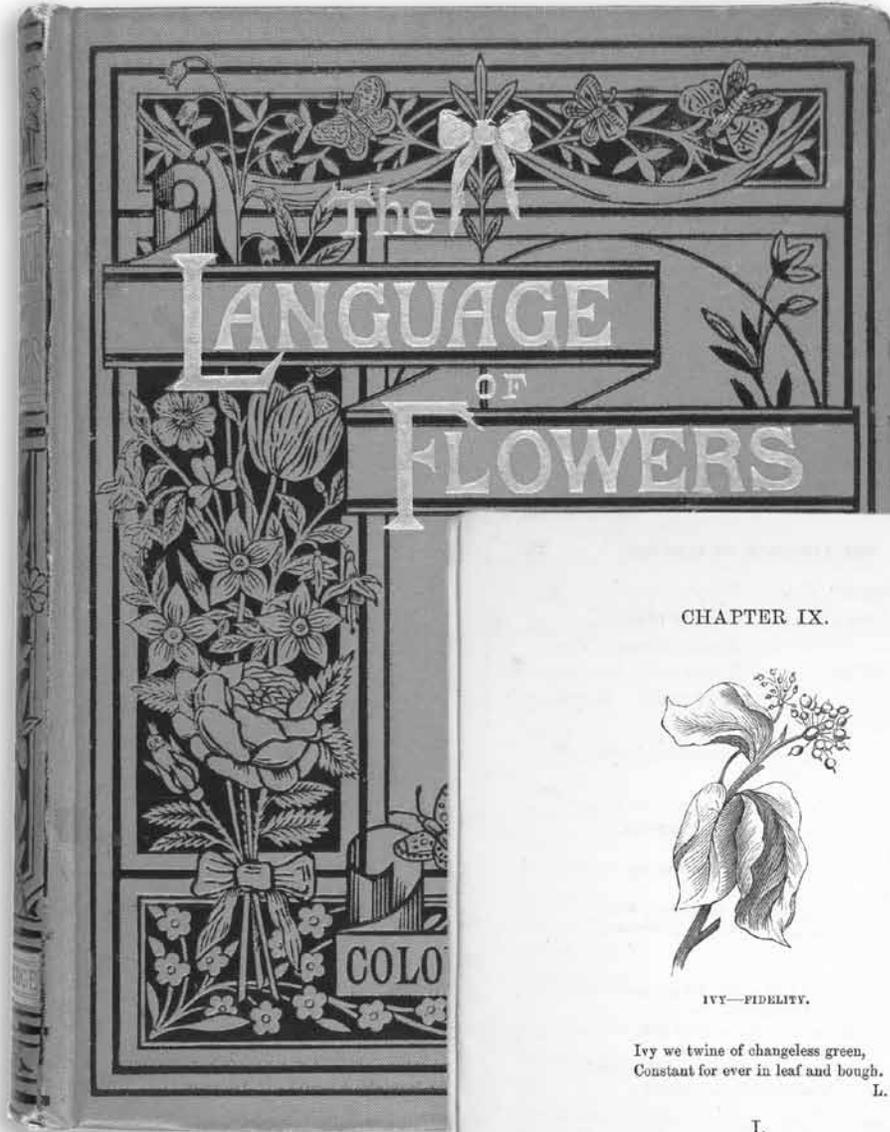


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of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation



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Above left: Robert Tyas (1811–1879), *The Language of Flowers, or Floral Emblems or Thoughts, Feelings and Sentiments* (London, George Routledge and Sons, 1869, cover), HI Library call no. DG21 T977L.

Above right: Lithograph by an unknown artist for Anna Christian Burke, *The Miniature Language of Flowers* (London, George Routledge and Sons, 1856, p. 30), HI Library call no. DG21 B959M.

CHAPTER IX.



IVY—FIDELITY.

Ivy we twine of changeless green,
Constant for ever in leaf and bough.
L. E. L.

I.

Ice Plant	Health.
Imperial Montague	Your looks freeze me.
Indian Cress	Warlike trophy.

In Memoriam

Anita L. Karg

(29 November 1923–2 February 2011)

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation is deeply saddened to report the death on 2 February 2011 of Anita L. Karg. She joined the Institute staff in March 1972 as the assistant archivist and became the archivist in September 1988. After nearly 28 years at the Institute, she retired in December 1999 with the title, Archivist & Senior Research Scholar, Emerita (see *Bulletin*, 2000, 12(1): 6, for article).

During her years in the Archives, Mrs. Karg collected biographical information and portraits of plant scientists. She developed bibliographies of these materials and replied to requests for information and portraits of natural scientists. She organized, documented and preserved plant scientists' papers, letters, journals, oral histories and mementos and assisted researchers in the use of these materials. In addition to these curatorial and bibliographic duties, she contributed to catalogues of the department's holdings that included the *Guide to the Botanical Records and Papers in the Archives of the Hunt Institute*, Parts 1–3 (Pittsburgh, Hunt Institute, 1981–1988) and the *Catalogue of Portraits of Naturalists, Mostly Botanists, in the Collections of the Hunt Institute, The Linnean Society of London and the Conservatoire et Jardin Botaniques de la Ville de Genève*, Parts 1–3 (Pittsburgh, Hunt Institute, 1987–1999). She assisted with the development of a biographical register of botany, which will document the contents of the Institute's master biographical file as well as the holdings of collaborating repositories and individuals throughout the world. She wrote several articles for the Institute's *Bulletin* about manuscripts in the Archives collection that fascinated her: Franz Carl Mertens' letters (1999, 11(1): 6); Chrétien Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes' manuscript on plant classification (1989, 7(1): 3–4); and Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti's manuscript about Pier' Antonio Micheli (1983, 5(1): 3–5).



Anita L. Karg, a photo taken in the Archives for an Institute publicity brochure, July 1988. Photo by Frank A. Reynolds, Graphics Manager.

Mrs. Karg received a B.S. in general studies from Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) in 1950 and an M.L.S. from the University of Pittsburgh in 1971. She was a member and former president (1992) of the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries (CBHL) and a

member of the Society of American Archivists, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archivists, the Curators Coalition of Pittsburgh and the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

—Scarlett T. Townsend, Publication and Marketing Manager

Recent publications

Huntia: A Journal of Botanical History

Volume 14, no. 2, 2011. 104 pp.; 35 figs.; 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 10"; 1 lb. Paper cover, \$30.00 plus shipping and handling. ISSN 0073-4071.

Contents: M. E. Mitchell, "A somewhat esoteric pursuit": The course of lichenological inquiry from 1700 to 1950"; Roger L. Williams, translator and editor, "On the establishment of the principal gardens of botany: A bibliographical essay by Jean-Philippe-François Deleuze"; Michael Witty, "Über die Wirkung des Lichtes

auf einige höhere Kryptogamen"; A translation of Ivan Borodin's (1847–1930) 1868 paper on fern physiology"; Book Reviews and Announcements.

Hunt Institute publications are available directly from the Institute. Hunt Institute Associates receive a 25% discount on up to four publications. Everyone receives a 40% discount on purchases of five or more publications. For a complete list of our publications, visit our Web site. To order this publication or others, contact the Institute.

News from the Art Department

Flora's Lexicon on display through 30 June 2011

The 19th-century Language of Flowers phenomenon, spurred on by the era's increasingly popular interest in botany, considered plants and blooms to be charged with sentiment and meaning and thus held the potential to express emotion within the strict confines of social etiquette. Using these lexicons of plant lore, a carefully chosen bouquet could pursue a courtship or reject a suitor, convey feelings of admiration and friendship or express unhappiness or disappointment. Every subtle shade of emotion could be communicated by the precise combination of flowers, leaves and fruits.

So pervasive and popular was The Language of Flowers novelty that authors developed the floral dictionary in which they defined the corresponding concepts, qualities or emotions of many hundreds of flowers, as well as grasses, herbs, trees and even fruit. This sentimental craze and the books associated with it originated in France and quickly spread to Great Britain and the United States, where they attracted the skills of an increasing number of authors and editors, both male and female. These small volumes were intended as gifts for young, well-read ladies, and their intricate bindings and glorious illustrations were often prized over their written content. Beautifully embellished, they were typically small in size with pastel slipcases and gilt edges. The book covers were often decorated in gold, with ornate floral designs, while the engravings inside the books were frequently colored by hand in clear, vibrant watercolors.

Anna Christian Burke was one of a number of female editors to be involved in Language of Flowers books. Her small volume is an example of the simple format that these floral dictionaries often took, listing the sentiments in alphabetical order and coupling them with flower names. Poetry pertaining to a particular flower is interspersed throughout. The book is punctuated with charming yet anonymously produced illustrations of particular flowers, this one revealing the sentiments of the rose, ivy and myrtle presented as a bouquet. The inscription, "To beauty, friendship and love," spans the page beneath the illustration, suggesting the meanings of the respective flowers (Fig. 1).

The Language of Flowers book phenomenon, therefore, appealed to well-respected botanical artists of the era, including Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759–1840), Pancrace Bessa (1772–1846), Pierre-Jean-François Turpin (1775–1840) and Pierre-Antoine Poiteau (1766–1854). Although their illustrations for this genre differed in scale and scientific detail from their major works, they were prized for their beauty and added to the appeal of these intricately bound and decorated volumes while serving to familiarize a large segment of the population with the artists' talent.

Flora's Lexicon presents a selection of Language of Flowers books from the Hunt Institute's Library, including a number from the personal collection of Hunt Institute founder,



Figure 1. To beauty, friendship and love [rose, ivy, and myrtle], hand-colored engraving by an unknown 19th-century artist from Anna Christian Burke, *The Illustrated Language of Flowers* (London and New York, G. Routledge and Co., 1856, p. 48), HI Library call no. DG21 B959I.

Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt (1882–1963). A wide variety of works by key 18th- and 19th-century botanical artists and illustrators from the Art Department are also featured. This exhibition examines the scope of The Language of Flowers phenomenon, from the influences on its beginning to its continued presence in 20th-century publishing, while revealing varied approaches to the floral dictionary and exploring intricate systems of meaning through the artworks of many of the artists involved in this phenomenon.

History of floral sentiment

The 19th-century European and American Language of Flowers was by no means the first of its kind. Japan had long used its own system, hanakotoba or "flower language," to create floral arrangements with meaning while Persia used flowers to suggest love and India used particular blooms to imbue religious offerings with definitive meanings. It was the publishing of the letters by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762) in 1763 and again in 1861 that made European society aware of the Turkish *sélam* or language of flowers. Montagu was the wife of Britain's ambassador to Turkey, and she chronicled her time in that country in her letters to friends and family in England. She described her astonishment at the *sélam*, a system of communicating through flowers and other objects in place of writing.

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News from the Art Department



Figure 2. [Flowers in basket with fruit, birds and nest], oil on canvas by Cornelis van Spaendonck (1756–1840), undated, HI Art accession no. 6688.

Art had long treated the flower as a symbol. During the 17th-century Dutch golden age, flowers were objects rich in association that could act as reminders of the inevitability of death or as bearers of divine messages. The floral still life was associated with mortality, wealth and luxury. Since flowers were reserved for the wealthy elite, especially in such bountiful bouquets, they suggested earthly excess. Just as the cut flower would wilt and die with time, so too would human beauty fade and mortal delights disappear upon death.

Dutch artist Cornelis van Spaendonck (1756–1840) made a successful name for himself as an oil and gouache painter, concentrating primarily on the popular floral still life. His 18th-century paintings of floral bouquets drew upon the symbolic traditions established in the 17th century, in which the flower portrait was a mirror of commonly held moral and religious concerns.

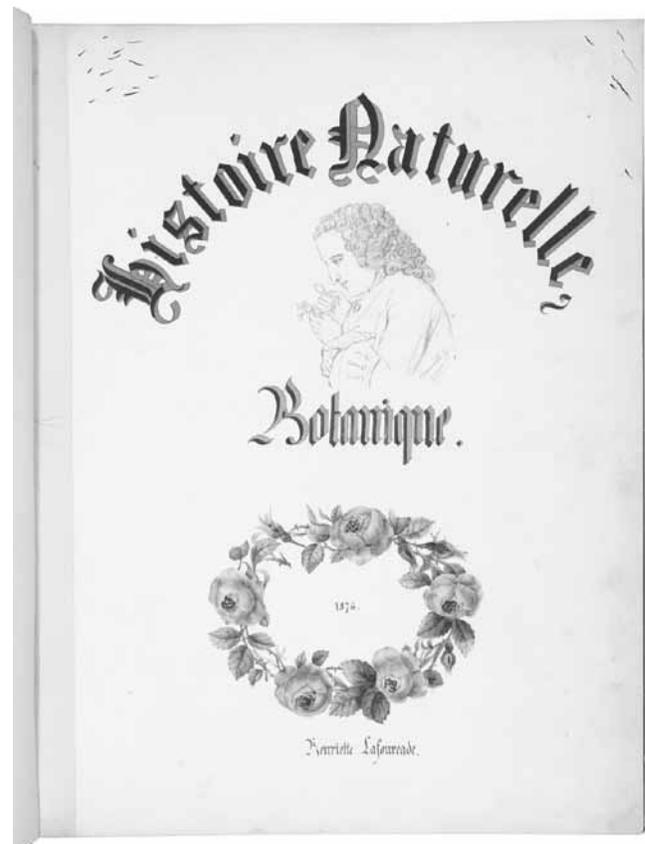
[Flowers in basket with fruit, birds and nest] highlights van Spaendonck's virtuosity as a still-life painter (Fig. 2). His work is widely admired for its botanical accuracy and the variety of floral elements represented as well as the artist's technical skills and draftsmanship. His loyalty to nature

Figure 3. *Right*: Title page with portrait of Linnaeus, watercolor and graphite pencil on paper from a manuscript by Henriette Lafourcade (19th century) for her *Histoire Naturelle, Botanique* (France, 1876), HI Art accession no. 2295.14.

waivered somewhat, however, in his choice to combine flowers that did not appear simultaneously in nature, and the angles from which he painted his blooms were different for individual plants. These artistic licenses allow for a spectacular composition, a dynamic, vibrant still life featuring elements that speak not only of luxury, wealth and abundance but also of the fragility of all living things. The birds and their nest, soon to be home to new offspring, symbolize new life while the flowers that surround them will wilt and die with time. The poppy that crowns the composition symbolically speaks to never-ending sleep while the pink rose in the lower left suggests the opposite quality of youth and vigor, again hinting at the ongoing cycle of life.

The popularization of botany

In the 19th century, a woman's interest in flowers was fostered by new scientific developments. Flower studies had long been considered the most suitable of the sciences for women, and a large number of middle-class ladies made a hobby of botany with the aim of self-improvement. Botanical science reached an unheard level of popularity during this particular time, however, and the study of flowers became appealing to more women than ever. With the influx of new plants from natural history expeditions in the 17th and 18th centuries, many European botanists were vying to create a classification system that would include these new discoveries. The Swedish naturalist Carolus Linnaeus' (1707–1778) sexual



system of botanical nomenclature (genus, species) made the identification of plants accessible to the educated public, leading to the increased number of amateur botanists.

This new popularization of botany was so far reaching that it became apparent in The Language of Flowers books. A common inclusion became the floral clock, a list of a flower's opening and closing times, based on Linnaeus' observations. Classes and orders were often listed next to a plant's name in addition to its symbolic meaning, while other books included chapters on a flower's structure, along with information on the birds and insects that pollinated it. Linnaeus himself found his way into the pages of these sentimental floral volumes as many authors dedicated chapters to a description of his life. The likeness of the scientist even graces the cover page of a beautiful botanical study by Henriette Lafourcade (late 19th century) that contains notes on Linnaean botanical taxonomy and watercolor illustrations of plants and flowers (Fig. 3).

The new Language of Flower book drew the interest of many botanical artists of the period who were established illustrators for scientific and academic purposes. By contributing to the illustration of these small sentimental flower volumes, their work became familiar to a much larger audience. French artists Pierre-Antoine Poiteau (1766–1854) and Pierre-Jean-François Turpin (1775–1840) were two such individuals who worked on the Language of Flower books. Having met while serving in the French army, they went on to collaborate on multiple projects throughout their careers. Both followed in the stylistic tradition of Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1817–1824) and utilized the printing techniques that the older artist had developed, working closely with Eugene-Hyacinthe Langlois (1777–1838), the great master of color printing who supervised much of Redouté's work.

In B. Delachénay's *Abécédaire de flore* (Paris, De l'Imprimerie de P. Didot l'ainé, 1811), Poiteau and Turpin's simple, engraved illustrations appear in charts used to illustrate the author's complex system of floral meaning and language, in which a particular symbol from the flower's name matched a symbol in an emotive word (Fig. 4). While these graphics are printed here in black and white, color versions of the plants appear in the rear pages of the book, along with depictions of the birds and insects involved in the fertilization of plants that were key to Linnaeus' sexual system.

Floral poetry

While the increased interest in botany during the 19th century fueled the demand for Language of Flowers books, not all volumes concentrated on scientific developments. Instead, many remained true to pure sentiment and focused on poetry and lyrical verse by both well-known and amateur poets. While some books had a moral overtone, including mention of Saint's flowers and the flower as a message of God, a great majority remained romantic and nostalgic in character.

Charming illustrations by some of the finest botanical artists of the era accompanied the maudlin text, often depicting bouquets of true love and everlasting admiration. With each flower given a sentimental meaning, these books held the key to secret communication between friends, sisters or a young

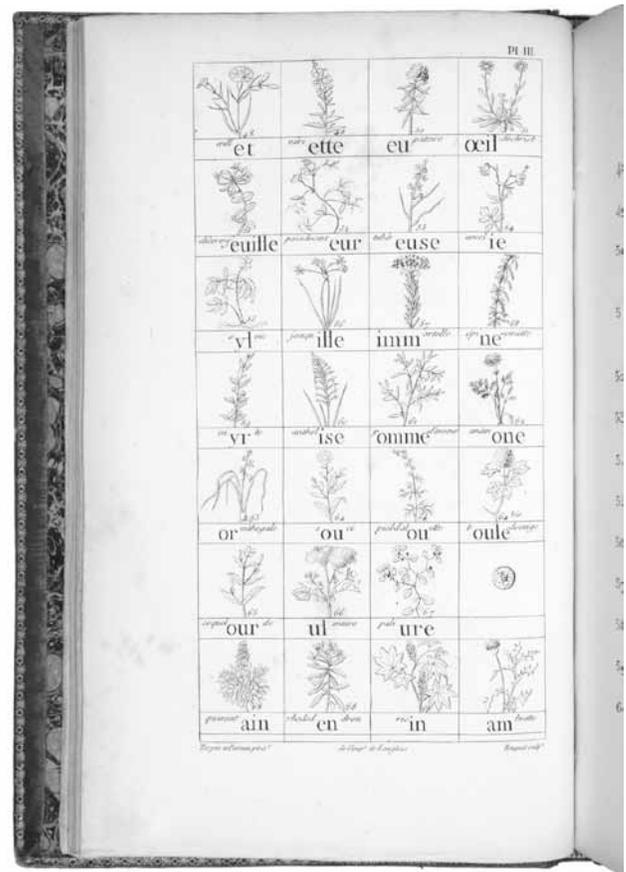


Figure 4. Noms des fleurs substituées aux syllabes formées de plusieurs lettres, engraving by Bouquet after an original by Pierre-Antoine Poiteau (1766–1854) and Pierre-Jean-François Turpin (1775–1840) for B. Delachénay, *Abécédaire de flore, ou Langage des Fleurs, Méthode Nouvelle de Figurer avec des Fleurs les Lettres, les Syllabes, et les Mots, Suivie de Quelques Observations sur les Emblèmes et les Devises, et de la Signification Emblématique d'un Grand Nombre de Fleur* (Paris, De l'Imprimerie de P. Didot l'ainé, 1811, PL. III), HI Library call no. DG21 D332a.

lady and her suitor. While little documentation exists on the actual use of these books to communicate secret messages, instructions were plainly given to suggest the best manner to present a floral message.

Anonymously authored *La Couronne de Flore* (Paris, Imprimerie Gregoire et Compagnie, 1837) is a collection of French floral poetry that is arranged by the season, with flowers filed under the months in which they bloom (Fig. 5). The rose is first to appear, coupled with the sentiments of beauty, kindness and pleasure, which is then accompanied by the poem, "To Mr. Redouté," composed by Mme. Amable Tastu. The subject of the poem, and author of its illustration, was Belgian naturalist and painter Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1817–1824), well respected as one of the premiere botanical illustrators of the 19th century. Official court artist to Queen Marie Antoinette and later Empress Josephine, Redouté's skills rocketed him from an amateur, self-taught painter to a highly sought-after genius. While the majority of his works were large-scale, folio-sized illustrations, smaller versions of his art were included in sentimental floral volumes such as this one. The rose was a favorite subject of his, appearing over and over again in his oeuvre.

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News from the Art Department



Within *The Language of Flowers*, the color of the flower and its scent both held significance. It was commonly understood that the strongest sentiments were expressed by the most penetrating perfumes and the brightest colors. A white rose (I am worthy of you) would mean something different from a yellow rose (jealousy) while a striped carnation (refusal) would differ in meaning from a red one (ardent love). To make matters even more difficult for someone wishing to compose or decode a bouquet, there were no set meanings to the flowers. While a great number of books were based on each other, and thus shared meanings, other authors had turned to different traditions and influences to create the sentiments in their books.

Figure 5. *Above left*: Eté: Rose, lithograph by Nicolas Amarantthe Roulliet (1810–1889), undated, after an original by Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759–1840) for *La Couronne de Flore: ou Melange de Poesie et de Prose, par Mesdames Desbordes-Valmore, Amable Tastu, la Comtesse de Bradi, et M. Jules Baget: Ce Recueil est Destine a Accompagner la Naissance des Fleurs, Ouvrage Lithographique Compose de 300 Groupes de Fleurs* (Paris, Imprimerie Gregoire et Compagnie, 1837, pl. 1), HI Library call no. DG21 C861. *Figure 6. Below right*: Œillet, Gesse Odorant, Armoise, Heliotrope, Œillet, Luxerne, Épide blé, Mercuriale, If, Douce-amère, Violette blanche Buglose, Mirthe, Acante, Armoise, Coquelicot, color stipple engraving by Slaes after an original by Pancrace Bessa (1772–1846) for Louis-Aimé Martin (also attributed to Charlotte de la Tour), *Le Langage des Fleurs* (Bruxelles, Louis Hauman et Compagnie, 1830, pl. 11), HI Library call no. DG21 L271M.

In addition to the obvious choices of color and variety, *The Language of Flowers* also included the way flowers were worn or presented. Presenting flowers upright conveyed a positive meaning, but presenting them upside down meant the opposite. If a ribbon was included with the flowers and tied to the left, then the meaning of the flowers refers to the giver, but if the ribbon was tied to the right, then the meaning referred to the recipient. Also, flowers could be used to answer questions. When they were presented with the right hand the answer was “yes,” but when presented with the left hand, the answer was “no.”

The delicate illustrations by Pancrace Bessa (1772–1846) for Louis-Aimé Martin’s *Le Langage des Fleurs* (Bruzelles, Louis Hauman et Compagnie, 1830) demonstrate the intricacies of floral meaning (Fig. 6). Each flower stands for a corresponding sentiment from the accompanying poem by Évariste Desiré de Forges, vicomte de Parny (1753–1814). On the second line, two flowers appear upside down, thus negating their original sentiments of love and life.

Homage to the tulip

Throughout history, different flowers were at different times admired with an enthusiasm sometimes nearing a mania. The rose dominated as the most popular and revered flower from the classical period until the 16th century. From the mid-1500s onwards, the botanical landscape of Europe began to undergo a radical transformation as large



numbers of unknown plants arrived from the New World and the Near and Far East. During the decades following the introduction of the tulip to the Netherlands in the 1570s, the flower remained a curiosity in the gardens of the aristocracy, remaining unknown to the bulk of the population.

Floriculturalists, botanists and wealthy collectors dedicated themselves with enthusiasm to the new arrival and busied themselves with the creation of new varieties. Most of these were named after prominent persons—the floriculturalist who first grew the flower, an important person from antiquity or a conspicuous personality or admired beauty of the period. The gardens of wealthy collectors quickly came to be filled with unusual and expensive examples of the tulip, for which artists were commissioned to paint in a manuscript to be shown to other collectors and potential buyers. The tulip passed directly from the catalogue into the repertory of still-life painters of the period.

Unbeknownst to tulip cultivators was the fact that the uniquely patterned varieties they had worked so hard to create were actually the result of a virus that only in the 20th century was identified and isolated. The number of varieties steadily increased, and flamed tulips, those with stripes, became very precious and were ranked in a hierarchy. At the bottom were bizarres, yellow tulips with red or violet flames. Above these were white tulips flamed with purple. The pinnacle of desirability was a white tulip flamed in red, and the emperor of tulips, the *Semper Augustus*, was deemed the finest example of this kind. Depending on the progress of the virus, a tulip could break, or appear flamed, in a different way each year. An ordinary solid breeder tulip could suddenly break into flame and earn its owner a fortune, while a *Semper Augustus* might break out in a rash and ruin a man.

By late 1636 thousands of people had been drawn into the excitement of becoming instantly wealthy through the tulip trade. However, many fortunes were short-lived as the bottom of the market fell out in 1627. Although the Dutch economy as a whole was not seriously affected, the outcome on the Dutch psyche was considerable. The tulip became an object that produced a powerful response, be it of tears, anger or laughter. Thus it appears the history of the tulip had serious bearing on its symbolic meaning. The tulip in general is commonly thought to suggest fame, a seeming understatement for a flower whose popularity nearly ruined a country's economy. Its varied colors are listed in the majority of floriography books and suggest that the difference in hue also has a bearing on a bloom's meaning.

Although the exact date of Johann Theodore de Bry's watercolor is unknown, it was certainly painted before the Dutch Tulipomania of 1636, during a time when the tulip was known to and appreciated only by the wealthy and the elite (Fig. 7). As prized as the flower itself was, so too was the painting, since it served to portray the wealth and prominence of its patron. This depiction of four different varieties of tulip illustrates the diversity of floral meanings attached to them in the Victorian era. While the pink tulip

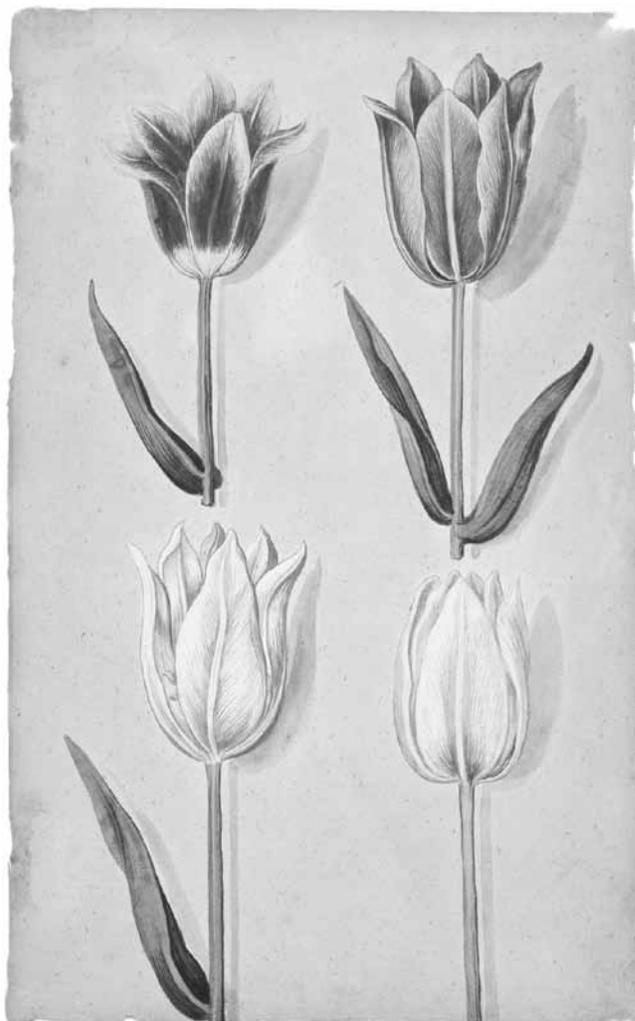


Figure 7. [Tulips], watercolor on paper attributed to Johann Theodore de Bry (1561–1623), undated, HI Art accession no. 0151.

and white tulip are rarely listed in the dictionaries, the red is considered a declaration of love while the yellow suggests the more melancholy message of hopeless love.

Floral symbolism revisited

In the last years of the 19th century, new sentimental flower books became scarce, especially *Language of Flowers* books. Changing social and cultural values contributed to the demise. The sentimental flower book was intended for women and as such presented a view of women that was seriously challenged by the end of the century. As America and England continued to become more urbanized, women were no longer associated as much with the country and its natural elements. New urban standards of femininity developed, and the popularity of botany as a hobby declined along with the change in science from the Linnaean system to the natural system of classification. In the world of publishing, wildflower guidebooks quickly filled the void that *Language of Flowers* books had left.

The era of *The Language of Flowers* is considered to have peaked with the publishing of Kate Greenaway's *Language of*

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News from the Art Department

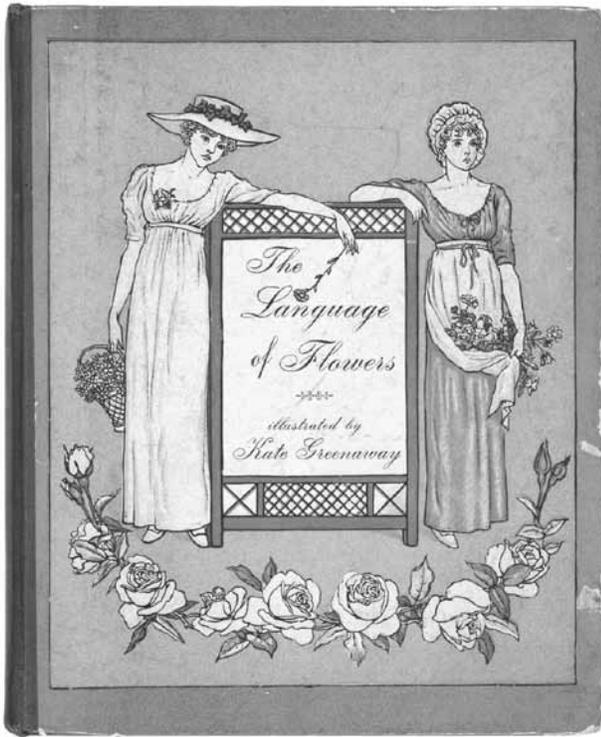


Figure 8. *Above left:* Kate Greenaway (1846–1901), *Language of Flowers* (London, Frederick Warne and Company, Ltd., ca.1900–1910, cover), HI Library call no. DG21 G798L 9. *Figure 9. Below right:* Madonna lily: *Lilium candidum*, watercolor on paper by Marilena Pistoia, undated, for Laura Peroni, *Il Linguaggio dei Fiori* (Milan, Arnoldo Mondadori, 1984, p. 99), HI Art accession no. 6773.43.

Flowers in 1884 (see Fig. 8 for a later edition). While the book found great popularity, it was the last sentimental flower book to do so. Tastes in flowers were changing by the mid-19th century. Plants personified as people, frequently dressed in flower costume, became an interest of children and young mothers while a turn from the sentimentalization of nature reflected the changing tastes of the educated lady.

Although *The Language of Flowers* phenomenon faded out by the close of the 19th century, flowers continue to be powerful signifiers of meaning in today's world, and there exists a residual interest in the Victorian romanticism that surrounded the popularity of the sentimental flower book. New editions of old books continue to be published while authors and artists alike remain drawn to the documentation and illustration of the meaning of flowers. Facts and fables about plants and their meanings are compiled in *The Language of Flowers* by Laura Peroni (New York, Crown Publishers, Inc., 1985), accompanied by the artwork of Italian botanical artist Marilena Pistoia (Fig. 9). A highlight of the book is the white lily, a flower that is attached to many traditions and histories and that has been regarded in high demand throughout the development of cultures and religions. The

Greeks believed the flower's symmetrical form of three petals to be the result of divine will while the Romans supposed it was begotten from Juno's milk and was so dazzling that Venus introduced yellow stamens to its center to quiet its whiteness. The Madonna Lily has been considered the appropriate symbol of purity in relation to the Virgin Mary within the Christian world, and those virginal overtones have long contributed to the white lily bearing the symbolism of purity, dignity and nobility.

While many subtleties and nuances of the Victorian Language of Flowers have been lost to time, the interest in the flower as symbol of meaning continues still to this day, not only through literature and artistic pursuits but also as a cultural zeitgeist. It is well understood by all that a bouquet of flowers can be a token of love, a way of apologizing, a gesture of get-well wishes or a message of congratulations for a new achievement, all without the accompaniment of the written word.

—Catherine Hammond, Curatorial Assistant



Open House

26 and 27 June 2011

In conjunction with *Flora's Lexicon*, the Hunt Institute will hold its annual Open House on 26 and 27 June 2011. We will offer talks, tours and opportunities to meet one-on-one with our staff to ask questions and

see items in the collections. We encourage everyone to consider visiting us during this Open House. It will be a good time to see the exhibition before it closes and to have an inside look at our collections and our work.

Schedule of events

Sunday (26 June)

- 12:30 Registration (continues all afternoon)
12:45–1:00 Welcome and Introduction to the Hunt Institute in Reading Room by Librarian Charlotte Tancin
1:00–1:30 Exhibition tour by Curator of Art Lugene Bruno
1:35–2:05 “Mixed messages: Love in the era of The Language of Flowers” by Curatorial Assistant Cate Hammond

While *The Language of Flowers* proved a wildly popular craze in the late 19th century, a detailed comparison of floral definitions in multiple books reveals a flawed and potentially confusing system of communication. Varied and often conflicting sentiments attached to the same flower, coupled with particularly complex systems of presenting floral messages, set the stage for many a miscommunication.

- 2:10–2:40 “Love’s labors lost: The work of women and wives in botany” by Archivist Angela Todd
(includes time to view display)

One story exemplifies how women have quietly forwarded botany and its historical record. Walter Hodge’s work on the flora of Dominica, with wife Barbara (Bobbie) sharing fieldwork, earned him a 1941 Harvard Ph.D. World War II’s search for quinine alternatives took the Hodges to Peru. Todd will show some of Walter’s beautiful photos that chronicle the environs of the Cinchona from which quinine came and describe Bobbie’s labor as his helpmate.

- 2:40–3:10 “The art of the folio: Botanical art and text, supersized” by Librarian Charlotte Tancin
(includes time to view display)

Rachel Hunt’s love of flowers led to her interest in collecting many important examples of beautiful, illustrated botanical works, especially those from the 17th to 19th centuries. She had a special fondness for large folio works. Their large-format images, sometimes colored and sometimes not, reflected the intention not only to reproduce plants life-sized when possible but also to reproduce them in a grand scale as enthusiasm for new and exotic plants grew. Illustrated books were of necessity more expensive than those having only text, and books with hand-colored engravings, or laboriously printed stipple engravings, would be more costly still. Such books today command princely sums on the infrequent occasions when they appear on the antique book market. Librarian Charlotte Tancin will discuss the history of this type of publishing along with the examples shown on display from the Library.

- 3:15–3:45 Department News and Q&A with the Curators and Graphics Manager Frank Reynolds
3:45–4:30 Enjoy exhibition and displays; talk with curators and staff

Monday (27 June)

- 1:00 Registration (continues all afternoon)
1:00–1:15 Welcome and Introduction to the Hunt Institute in Reading Room by Librarian Charlotte Tancin
1:15–1:45 Exhibition tour by Curator of Art Lugene Bruno
1:50–2:20 “Mixed messages: Love in the era of The Language of Flowers” by Curatorial Assistant Cate Hammond
2:25–2:55 “Love’s labors lost: The work of women and wives in botany” by Archivist Angela Todd
(includes time to view display)
2:55–3:25 “The art of the folio: Botanical art and text, supersized” by Librarian Charlotte Tancin
(includes time to view display)
3:30–4:00 Department News and Q&A with the Curators and Graphics Manager Frank Reynolds
4:00–4:45 Enjoy exhibition and displays; talk with curators and staff

News from the departments

Hunt Institute's 50th Anniversary: Celebrating the Collections of Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of our founding, the Hunt Institute will present rare gems from the original collection of our founder Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt (1882–1963, Fig. 3) from 16 September to 15 December 2011. What

began as an early love of nature and books for this Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania, native grew into a lifelong pursuit of rare and historical works about plants, gardens and botany. She became fascinated by the people associated with these books and also collected their portraits, letters, manuscripts and original artworks. Rachel's love of the book as object led her to study the fine art of bookbinding with Euphemia Bakewell (1870–1921). While traveling in Europe with her parents, she acquired tools, papers and leathers

and upon her return set up her own bindery, Lehar (Rachel spelled backwards), in her parent's home on Morewood Avenue in Shadyside in Pittsburgh's East End. Her bindings were included in several important national exhibitions, and she received private commissions for her work (Fig. 1). After her marriage to Roy Arthur Hunt (1881–1966) in 1913 and the birth of her four sons (Alfred, Torrence, Roy Jr. and Richard), Rachel realized that she would no longer be able to focus her energies on family and civic responsibilities while also devoting herself to the detailed craftsmanship required in bookbinding. She gave up binding books and instead focused on collecting them and sharing that interest with others. She had been given a rare garden book, *The English Gardener, or a Sure Guide to Young Planters and Gardeners* (London, printed for Parker, 1670), at the age of 15 and had purchased literary works, many from modern private presses. With the purchase of her first two botanical books at the age of 29 from the 1911 sale of the collection of noted New York bibliophile Robert Hoe (1839–1909; Fig. 4), her future as a collector soon blossomed. Rachel accompanied Roy on business trips to South America, the Caribbean and Europe and visited botanic gardens, libraries and bookshops, and in



Figure 1. Left, Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt's 6 May 1914 rebinding of Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536), *Desid. Erasmi Roterodami Colloquia* (Amsterdam, Ludovicus Elzevirius, 1650), Hunt binding 83, HI Library collection, as enumerated in Marianne Fletcher Titcombe's *The Bookbinding Career of Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt* (1974).

Figure 2. Center, Library at Elmhurst, 1953, HI Archives Hunt Collection 252, box 57, Elmhurst 1953 green album, photo 3. Photo by Harry and Mary Arnold, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Figure 3. Right, Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt at Elmhurst holding a Spanish manuscript of music dated 1458 (now in Hunt Library's Fine and Rare Books Collection), 1962, HI Archives Hunt Collection no. 252, box 52, portrait no. 21. Photo by Jones, East Liberty, Pittsburgh, Pa.



1929, as a member of the Garden Club of America, she went on an extensive tour of gardens throughout Europe. While visiting libraries in the United States and abroad, Rachel developed friendships with librarians, professors, bibliographers and art historians who were knowledgeable about her area of collecting. Rachel never had an agent and was known to pour over dealer and auction catalogues.

In 1936 the Hunts added a library to their home Elmhurst, on Ellsworth Avenue in Shadyside, to house Rachel's growing collection (Fig. 2). She confessed in an interview years later that books were also in every closet but Roy's. Throughout her life Rachel welcomed visits from scholars, hosted garden clubs and entertained

publishers, book collectors and authors at Elmhurst and also shared her collection through talks and gallery and museum exhibitions. Under the editorial stewardship of her personal librarian, Jane Quinby (1901–1979), and with essays from leading authorities on her collection and the historical background of the items in it, work commenced on the *Catalogue of Botanical Books in the Collection of Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt* (Hunt Catalogue; 1958–1961). As Rachel's eyesight deteriorated and reading her beloved books required a magnifying glass, she and Roy considered the future of the collection. By the 1950s Rachel Hunt's collection was widely known for its excellence and was sought by some of the country's leading universities and botanical centers. Wanting the collection to remain in Pittsburgh, Rachel and Roy decided to donate it and a building to Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) to house both her collection and a campus library. The Hunt Botanical Library was dedicated in 1961 as a research center focusing on the history of botany and the history of botanical publication and as a repository for her collections so that they would be preserved, curated, augmented and made accessible to researchers.



Figure 4. *Above left:* Iris d'Espagne and Iris Florence, etching by Berrurier for Jean Franeau (fl.1615), *Jardin d'Hyver ou Cabinet des Fleurs* (Douay, 1616, [pp. 150–151]), HI Library call no. DG23 F826j. An early gardening manual purchased by Rachel in 1911 from the sale of noted bibliophile Robert Hoe.



Figure 5. *Below left:* I. Ornithogalum minus. II. Hyacinthus Orientalis mixtus. III. Hyacinthus Orientalis variegatus [Ornithogalum umbellatum L., *Hyacinthus orientalis* L.], hand-colored engraving by an unknown artist for Basilius Besler (1561–1629), *Hortus Eystettensis* ([Nuremberg?, s.n.], 1613 and later editions), HI Art accession no. 1972. Basil Besler was a German apothecary who was also in

charge of the garden of Johann Konrad von Gemmingen (1561–1612), Prince Bishop of Eichstatt. The garden was begun in 1596 when the Prince Bishop commissioned botanist/physician Joachim Camerarius the Younger (1534–1598) to create it. Following Camerarius' death two years later, Besler took over its management and expanded its plantings. In 1606 he began work on an atlas folio catalogue of all of the kinds of plants in the garden, paid for by the Prince Bishop. Scholars disagree as to whether Besler made the drawings or whether others did. Ten engravers were hired to translate the drawings into print.

Beginning with Rachel Hunt's early interest in bookbinding and her transformation to a collector, examples of the botanical books, artworks, manuscripts and related portraits and correspondence referencing milestones in botanical history will be featured. The exhibition will be divided by subject and will reflect her interests in the history of the herbal (Figs. 6, 7), the development of gardens and garden plants (Fig. 4), the foundation of botany as a science (Figs. 8, 9, 10) and the botanical discoveries made through travel and exploration and the large color-plate folios from the 17th to 19th centuries (Fig. 5). The exhibition will conclude with the foundation of the Hunt Botanical Library in 1961 and its evolution to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation in 1971. It will examine how Rachel Hunt's original collection has been substantially augmented in all four departments (Archives, Art, Bibliography and Library) and continues to be a living collection, with a regular exhibition and publication program and accessibility for research on a variety of scientific and cultural subjects related to the plant sciences, in accordance with Rachel and Roy Hunt's original vision of how the collection should be available to the public.

The first edition was published in 1613, a year after the death of the Prince Bishop, who did not live to enjoy this bibliographic celebration of his garden, a glorious florilegium containing 367 plates, depicting more than 1,000 flowers representing 667 species.

Figure 6. *Above right:* De Pedelionis and De Lactuca, woodcut by an anonymous artist from *The Grete Herball*... (London, Peter Treveris, 1526, chap. ccliii and ccliii), HI Library call no. CA G834. This is the rare first edition of the first



illustrated English herbal, a translation of *Le Grant Herbar en Francoys* (Paris, ca.1520), its text based on one or more 15th-century manuscript herbals. The illustrations also appeared or are based on those in earlier printed herbals and were reused in at least one later work. They are a good example of the sort of crudely done, often generic-looking images that preceded the use in later books of images drawn from life.



Figure 7. *Below right:* Swallow-wurte and Sperage, woodcut by an anonymous artist for William Turner (?–1568), *A New Herball*... (London, Steven Mierdman, 1551–1562, pp. 56–57), HI Library call no. CA T954ne. The Hunt Catalogue called this the first edition of the first essay on scientific botany published in England. Turner found many inaccuracies in the 1526 *Grete Herball* and wrote *A New Herball* partly to counter them. He derided outmoded beliefs and superstitions that were prevalent in herbals of the time. This book gave his English readership an early look at the wider world of European botanical studies and also included Turner's original observations along with information on where the plants could be found growing.

A color-illustrated catalogue of a selection of the items on display will accompany the exhibition. We also will offer several talks and tours. On Sunday, 18 September Archivist Angela Todd will present "USDA botanist B. Y. Morrison and his forward-thinking secretary May Blaine." During Carnegie Mellon's Cèilidh Weekend, Curatorial Assistant Catherine Hammond will give a gallery tour on Saturday, 29 October, and Publication and Marketing Manager Scarlett Townsend will give a tour of the Reading Room on Sunday, 30 October. Curator of Art Lugene Bruno's talk, "Pierre-Joseph Redouté and his collaboration with botanists," is on Sunday, 6 November. Librarian Charlotte Tancin's talk, "At the center of the network: Dutch botanist Carolus Clusius (1526–1609)" is on Sunday, 4 December. All talks and tours will take place at 2:00 P.M. on the respective days; see our Web site for more detailed information. We hope that many of you will have the opportunity to visit the Hunt Institute during this exhibition to view a wide range of collection gems—many on display for the first time.

(continued on page 12)

Bulletin

of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation

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News from the Art Department

(continued from page 11)

Figure 8. *Right*:
Amaryllis
aurea [*Lycoris*
africana (Lam.)
M. J. Roem.],
watercolor and
monochrome
wash on paper
by Pierre-
Joseph Redouté
(Belgium,
1759–1840) from
Charles Louis
L'Héritier de
Brutelle (1746–
1800), *Sertum*
Anglicum (Paris,
Didot, 1788–
[1792], pl. 15 bis.),
HI Art accession



no. 0041. The famed flower painter Redouté studied exotic flowering plants at the Jardin du Roi in Paris, where he met Charles Louis L'Héritier de Brutelle (1746–1800). L'Héritier recognized Redouté's talent and taught him what information was needed to accurately portray the specific characteristics of plants so that they would complement the text of the botanist. They would come to collaborate on several botanical projects, including *Sertum Anglicum*, which documented exotic plants growing at Kew.

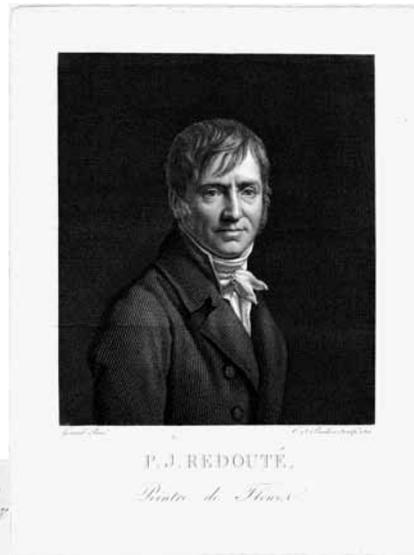


Figure 9. *Below center*: Invoice from Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759–1840), n.p., to Charles Louis L'Héritier de Brutelle (1746–1800), n.p., 18 May 1793, HI Archives General Autograph Collection (GAC), no. 200 Redoutéana. This invoice written by

Redouté charges L'Héritier for plates prepared for the two additional publications for which he provided illustrations, *Stirpes Novae aut Minus Cognitae* (Paris, Pierres, 1784–1785 [i.e., 1785–1791]) and *Cornus* (Paris, Didot, 1788).

Figure 10. *Above*: Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759–1840), engraving by C. S. Pradier, 1811, after an original by F. P. S. Gerard, HI Archives portrait no. 3.

—Lugene Bruno, Curator of Art;
Charlotte A. Tancin, Librarian;
and Angela Todd, Archivist