23rd Annual International with the American Society of Botanic Artists and Wave Hill

SEPTEMBER 5 – DECEMBER 6, 2020

Thank you for visiting Wave Hill and taking the time to enjoy The ASBA 23rd International.

This digital catalog was created to provide additional information about the artists and artwork on view. It features statements by the artists describing and recalling the plants depicted in their drawings. These were collected by the ASBA and are also cataloged on their website.

At the end of this digital catalog you'll find a map of Wave Hill that indicates where in the gardens some of the plants depicted in the exhibition can be found.

If you enjoyed this exhibition, here are other ways to deepen engagement with the ASBA 23rd International Exhibition:

Studio Visit with ASBA Artist Liz Shippam in England
Tue, Nov 10, 2020, 2–3PM

Register Here

Pre-recorded screening with ASBA Artist Pastoriza-Piñol from September 15th
Thu, Oct 29, 2020, 2–3PM

Watch Here

Pictured above:
(Left to Right) Jessica Daigle, Charity Dakin, Gaye Grossman; Photo: Stefan Hagen

Heather Gross

Before the Storm, 2019

Iris germanica

Watercolor on paper
21 × 17 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$985

We built our second family home on what was once an open farmer's field. It was on this property that my green thumb emerged as I planted gardens drenched in full sun. Coerced by a horticulturalist to add a "black" flower to my perennial selection, I reluctantly included 'Before the Storm'. From my garden records that was in 2004—16 short years ago!

With our family grown, my husband and I found our next "forever home" on a Carolinian woodlot. There were no gardens, however. After home renovations, it was time once again to plan and plant gardens. When we moved from our earlier home I had divided my perennials, carefully transported them, and temporarily planted them in what I called "the orphanage plot" out back. The challenge in our new location was to embrace shade gardening while finding a place for my beloved sun-seeking plants where possible.

'Before the Storm', an award-winning, tall bearded iris first introduced in 1989, captured my heart. A cross of 'Superstition' and 'Raven's Roost', it was challenged by the lack of sun in the Carolinian woodlot. I had to relocate this iris several times for success. Today it thrives in a small, sunny garden leading to our back door. I look forward to its late spring/early summer blooms. 'Before the Storm' is one of the darkest of the darks in my garden, and yes, at times it truly looks black!

"Black" flowers do not occur naturally. Rather, through selective breeding, high levels of anthocyanins are induced. I wanted to emphasize that this "black" iris sports deep purple showy flowers with blackish overtones and blue beards—far from being dull, drab, or boring! The extremely flaring falls give the iris a graceful, flowing look, which I enjoyed depicting. They stand about 37 inches tall in my garden. The low mound of green sword-like leaves are indistinguishable, really, from several of my other iris varieties. Therefore, I chose not to include the leaves in my composition.

Never did I dream that a "black" flower would become one of my all-time garden favorites. 'Before the Storm' has been a focal point in my gardens, and its extraordinary beauty compelled me to paint it. I feel blessed to enjoy my relocated perennials alongside the natural wildflowers of our Carolinian woodlot. I am forever indebted to the horticulturalist who said to me, "Add a black flower just for fun and drama." I encourage you to consider adding a "black" flower to your gardenscape, too. Be bold, be daring, and enjoy!

Cristine Piane

Virginia Bluebell, Blue Magic Hyacinth, Lugano and Lemon Glow Daffodils, 1997

Mertensia virginica, *Hyacinthus* 'Blue Magic', *Narcissii* 'Lugano' & 'Lemon Glow'

Watercolor on paper
27 × 25 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$4,100

I had a set of terraced stone walls with flower beds built into them adjacent to the steps leading from my kitchen down into my backyard. The area was mostly a Spring flowering garden underneath a birch tree. I walked out back in Spring 1997 and was charmed to see these hyacinths, daffodils and the Virginia bluebells all blooming at the same time, though the bluebells were a little behind. The composition was done to reflect the plants as they grew, and I submitted the painting to this year's show at Wave Hill for that reason.

Constance Scanlon

Crabapples × 6 Redux, 2020

Malus cv.

Watercolor on vellum
24 1/2 × 22 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$10,000

This painting is from a neighborhood crabapple tree that has always captured my attention through the seasons on frequent dog walks around the block.

Some viewers might assume that the title suggests having painted this subject twice, however that is not the case. Having not been selected last year, I found that rejection can encourage personal growth and renewed dedication to the art. The experience taught me how to regain lost confidence and just 'give it another whirl'. It is titled *Crabapples × 6 Redux* because of this second submission, (and also because one of the leaves was tweaked just enough to warrant full disclosure).

These crabapples, or those blueberries, or whatever makes my fingers tingle and come alive, that is what makes me lose myself in time, and experience the wonder and magic of art. Painting the crabapples the size of big snowballs allowed me to capture the rainbow range of reds in them. The incredible coolest hues of deep magenta are equal in beauty to the hints of sun-kissed warmest reds. I prefer any leaf that has been nibbled and aging, thus showing personality, rather than a more perfect form. The different stages of disintegration captivated and challenged my every level of skill and interest. It is an honor that it was selected on this "redux."

John Pastoriza-Piñol

Pomegranate, 2019

Punica granatum

Watercolor on paper
30 3/4 × 23 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$4,000

The pomegranate is an ancient, mystical, unique fruit borne on a small, long-living tree cultivated throughout the Mediterranean region. It is native to the region of Persia and the western Himalayan range. Pomegranates are considered an emblem of fertility, fecundity and have a strong affiliation to women. They feature prominently in myth/ religion and are a symbol of the seasons of death and rebirth.

For those of us who missed out on Classical Studies at University, Hades was the brother of Zeus and the god of the underworld, Persephone was the daughter of Demeter, the Goddess of nature. Hades fell in love with Persephone and decided to kidnap her. Whilst being held against her will in the underworld she was persuaded to eat the seeds of a pomegranate and she fell in love with Hades. Persephone never fully escapes but instead takes a leave of absence for four months to spend a portion of the year with her Earth Mother, Demeter.

Goethe spoke of all things perishable, as merely an image. An awareness of the impermanence of all things engenders an appreciation of their beauty and their ephemerality. The pomegranate is like a jewelled ornament, glowing in the rather dull and bare winter landscape, the last fruit to ripen before the cold of winter.

If I were fortunate to have a retrospective of my work, the pomegranate would feature heavily. It is a subject that continually eludes me and consequently my fascination with them never wanes. It was my first botanical subject I ever painted in watercolour at the age of 15. This rendition is unique as it is an enlargement of the fruit: a deliberate shift in my practice since my last major solo exhibition in 2017.

Liz Shippam

Blackthorn, 2020
ASBA Eleanor Wunderlich Award

Prunus spinosa

Watercolor on paper
16 × 15 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,250

Blackthorn has lots of associations for me: collecting sloes as a child to make sloe gin; many walks with blackthorn in the hedgerows, covered in beautiful blossom at Easter, then with berries slowly ripening through summer. The thing about blackthorn is that it grows in all the best places!

It is also a wild relative of the domestic plum and you can see they're related, but it's rougher and wilder looking, spiky with smaller, harder fruit.

For all these reasons I wanted to paint it.

I knew where to find my subject: there's a nature reserve not far from where I live. The path leads up through an ancient yew forest to the top where there are Bronze Age burial mounds and wonderful views—and a beautiful clearing lined with blackthorn. On the way home from a day spent walking there I scoured the trees for a suitable branch with plenty of sloes.

Sloes are a beautiful soft blue when they're ripe and gradually become darker and shinier as the weather erodes the bloom. I chose some that still had most of the powdery surface intact but with a little weather damage, revealing the darker color beneath.

I began by matching the blue of the fruit and gradually built up the color and form with lots of layers of paint. I used four colors in total, as I prefer to keep things simple, and adjusted the color as I progressed. It's a slow process using small brush strokes to build in texture. The markings on the surface were added at the end with a less diluted paint.

Inma Medina

Bird of Paradise, 2018

Strelitzia reginae

Watercolor on paper
21 1/2 × 29 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,000

The bird of paradise has been a favorite since I was a little girl growing up in the Dominican Republic. I loved visiting the botanical gardens with my family. Many years ago on a trip to Bermuda, I visited their botanical garden. It was like heaven on earth for me. I took so many photos of the beautiful tropical flowers in bloom at the time.

Recently, I came across the Bermuda vacation album and noticed the huge collection of plant photos from the botanical garden visit. I must have been destined to paint the Bird of Paradise. I had so many very good photos of the flower. I immediately pulled aside the photos and started to draw versions to plan the composition.

The bird of paradise flower meaning includes joy, freedom and paradise, as it is the quintessential tropical flower. It originates from South Africa, where it is also nicknamed the Crane Flower. This flower has been grown at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, UK since 1773. The scientific name for the bird of paradise is *Strelitzia reginae*, which was named by Sir Joseph Banks, who was the director of the royal gardens. He named the genus after Queen Charlotte who was the Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

The bird of paradise gets its name from the fact that its flower is made of three bright orange petals and three blue petals which are fused together into a single bud. As the flower blooms, each petal makes its debut and the resulting shape mirrors that of a tropical bird in flight. Although birds of paradise are best known for their bright orange and blue colors, their flowers can also be white.

The bird of paradise is a very popular source of inspiration in fine art. Famous floral artist Georgia O'Keeffe painted White Bird of Paradise during her time spent in Hawaii in the 1940s, and it is one of her most famous paintings from that time.

The Bird of Paradise was a play that came out in 1912 about a torn interracial romance between a Polynesian beauty and a young American sailor. The play popularized Hawaiian culture and was adapted for film in 1932.

Painting this flower was such a pleasure. I used a lot of Schmincke translucent orange. as most of the flower is in this color. This paint is like sliding soft butter over a freshly baked slice of bread. I can smell it as I write this. The paper is Moulin Du Roy, hot press, 300lb. The most amazing combination of materials for me to paint with. The side view of the flower is a good way to depict its form. The colors are in contrast, orange and navy creating drama.

The bird of Paradise painting represents for me my tropical roots. I enjoy brightly colored subjects, especially this particular translucent orange that I have used in almost all my paintings so far.

Patricia Luppino

Tulip Fever, 2020

Tulipa cv.

Colored pencil on paper
22 × 20 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,900

Another dying flower arrives at my drawing board this year. This time a tulip. In February. Just before the Coronavirus pandemic hits in earnest in New York. It was one of a dozen I typically purchase weekly from Trader Joe's to help brighten up the gray winter and hope for spring.

I loved the shape of this one. I enjoy titling my work before I start, and with the pandemic in the headlines, I decided on "Tulip Fever". This was not any reference to the Dutch Tulip Fever, but instead this flower looked as though it was holding the back of its little hand to its forehead and was about to swoon, clearly suffering from some ailment or other. It seemed to be a fitting representation of the angst we are feeling worldwide.

I typically begin by taking many photographs of the specimen using various lighting positions, intensities, and angles. I select the best photos and refine them over many days using Photoshop. Once I have a photo that best matches the subject's colors and the pose I want to achieve, I will print it out. When I work in colored pencil, I use a handy app called the Color Pencil Picker tool that scans a photo and helps determine, quite accurately, which pencils and combinations of pencils you should use to achieve the colors in the photo. I use the app recommendations as a starting point for a color chart.

Once transferred to drawing paper (I typically use Sanford Col-erase erasable colored pencils for my outline drawing vs. graphite to avoid any grimy traces), I begin with an underpainting using watercolor pencils, careful to avoid any highlight areas. Completing the drawing requires many layers of colored pencils, referring to my color chart, and using odorless mineral spirits to blend each layer.

I enjoyed this drawing, especially during this difficult time. My wish to all its viewers...may "Tulip Fever" be the only fever you experience.

Natalia Zueva

Beauty, 2019
Honorable Mention

Alcea rugosa

Watercolor on paper
21 × 17 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,100

When I became interested in botanical painting several years ago, I noticed that *Strelitzia* is one of the favourite objects for painting. This is a rare plant for me as it does not grow in our region. I could only enjoy it in the botanical garden or flower shops. I read about this plant a lot when I chose it as an object for my work. It struck me why it was called “royal” and “bird of paradise.” The similarity of the flower with a bird’s head is quite noticeable. My understanding of why the plant was called “royal” came in the process of my work. This plant amazed me with its splendor and dignity, so like the royal lily.

I have placed it on a sheet of paper in a calm, strict profile composition in order to show the dignity of a flowering plant in a better way. I have not used many colors in my work. My palette was limited. Combining the techniques of wet-on-wet and dry brush, I tried to convey the difference in textures: the roughness of the greens and the smoothness of the sepals.

I knew that the orange colors, as well as the yellow ones, were difficult to paint to convey their depth. When I finished my work on the sepals, I could not get rid of the feeling that they looked unnatural because, to me, their colors looked like bright plastic. I began reading some notes written by contemporary artists, consulted colleagues, and I looked for the answer in the books of the great masters in order to find the solution. I decided to complicate my orange color with violet and blue hues after the preliminary mixes. The result was a real breakthrough for me. Instantly, my work changed. I achieved the feeling of depth, which the work previously lacked, and I was subconsciously searching for. These orange sepals, these arrows, have changed from their artificial hue, and it suddenly reminded me of the triptych by Uccello, a master of the Renaissance—specifically “The Battle of San Romano”—where he painted a multi-figure composition of horsemen with spears. In this work of the great artist, the spears create their own artistic rhythm and dynamics. Finally I found the rhythm of complex hues of orange and violet “spears” in my newly transformed work. I am still overwhelmed with a breathtaking feeling when I remember my “discovery.”

I have continued to study botanical painting. The sense of accomplishment that I experienced at the end of my work on this *Strelitzia*, and have described in this small story, will be a guiding line for my future work.

Olga Ryabtsova

Rose Cactus, 2018

Pereskia grandifolia

Watercolor on paper
27 1/2 × 22 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,950

Pereskia grandifolia is a shrub in the cactus family. The *Pereskia* genus is basal to the cactus family, its members retain leaves of significant size, whereas other cacti only have rudimentary leaves or no leaves at all.

Native to the coastal forests of Northeastern Brazil, *Pereskia grandifolia* has especially large long leaves. It may not look like a cactus, but it has long sharp spines hidden below its leaves.

The depicted specimen grows at Fullerton Arboretum, one of my favorite botanical gardens in Southern California. The large shrub attracted my attention on a rainy winter day when I saw it covered with unusually shaped clusters of fruits. I kept observing the plant throughout the seasons. When I visited the arboretum in June, I saw the shrub covered in beautiful pinks flowers. Those flowers earned *Pereskia grandiflora* its unofficial name “rose cactus.”

Eventually I bought a seedling of *Pereskia grandiflora* at the arboretum, so I have my own specimen in my garden.

Gaye Grossman

Morning Glory Frieze, 2019

Ipomoea nil × *purpurea* 'Chiaki',
Ipomoea quamoclit, *Ipomoea alba*,
Ipomoea nil, *Ipomoea tricolor* 'Heavenly Blue',
Coccinella septempunctata

Watercolor on paper
19 × 38 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,800

I have always loved vining plants, especially morning glories. To prepare for this project I planted several seed varieties from the genus *Ipomoea*. Most of them grew beautifully, and I knew it would be tough to decide which flowers to include in my composition. I was discussing the idea of a frieze with Robin Jess, and she told me about something called a "Yard of Roses," a 36-inch-wide print of roses made by lithography companies around 1900. Prints of kittens and puppies by the yard were also popular. This frieze format struck me as an ideal way to explore multiple species of morning glories.

Two of the species shown here, *Ipomoea nil* × *purpurea* 'Chiaki' and *I. alba* 'Moonflower', were grown at Wave Hill. *I.* × *multifada* 'Cardinal Climber', *I. nil* 'Kikyo-zaki', and *I. purpurea* 'Heavenly Blue' were grown in my garden.

'Chiaki' is about 3.5 inches in diameter and has five sky blue petals with white spokes and a picotee edge. The stems are delightfully fuzzy, almost amber in color. The leaves are long and narrow with wide, graceful lobes. They were climbing a romantic, rustic arbor at Wave Hill. This is a soft, relatively subtle flower, especially in contrast to the next one in line.

'Cardinal Climber' has bright scarlet, one-inch-wide petals on a tubular base. The delicately cut leaves are almost tropical in feel and are much smaller than typical morning glory leaves. This flower was a favorite of the hummingbirds in my backyard.

As its name implies, 'Moonflower' opens in late afternoon and quickly closes in morning sun. On overcast mornings the flowers stay open for several extra hours, and I was able to squeeze in plenty of time for observation. The fragrant blossoms are five to six inches in diameter and the trumpets are about six inches long They are a positively luminous white when fully open, but even when completely closed, the buds stand out with their wild shape and a hint of magenta. The leaves are easily as dramatic as the flowers, with dark green embossed patterning.

'Kikyo-zaki' pops with color and vibrancy and a clean white edge. This type of morning glory can get to be about five inches across, and it has the more interesting leaf shape, much like 'Chiaki'. Both flowers come from Japan.

'Heavenly Blue' is absolutely my favorite. The deep, bright yellow of the throat against a small rim of white, and then the glorious blue petals are just a perfect combination. I also love the lighter green, heart-shaped leaves. A big part of my affinity dates to childhood, when my parents gave me a beautiful, hand-painted desk covered with twining morning glories and various butterflies and ladybugs. While the painting was not overly realistic, I could see exactly what the artist, Charlotte Hartmann, intended with her 'Heavenly Blue' morning glories. They have certainly left a lasting impression on me after all this time.

I used watercolor and mostly drybrush to paint this piece. The paper was 156lb HP, and the brushes ranged in size from 3/0 to 2. My favorite brushes in the smaller sizes are synthetic.

Jessica Daigle

April Remembered, 2020

Camellia japonica

Oil on panel
12 × 15 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,100

In Connecticut winters can be very cold, snowy, and bleak. To brighten these gray days, I love venturing to my local nurseries to be surrounded by some fresh green life. This January, at my local nursery for a botanical pick-me-up, I came upon a beautiful plant that had just opened for its winter bloom. It was a beautiful pink *Camellia japonica*, commonly called "the rose of winter." I was captivated by this large vibrant bloom that immediately transported me to the warmer days of spring and summer. To keep this feeling alive, I knew I had to paint this specimen as soon as I returned home.

Camellia japonica leaves are rich green and glossy. With little variation in the dark green tone, this leaf is thick and hardy. Particularly interesting is the contrast in personality between the leaves and flowers—the soft and velvety touch of the flower petals feels less everlasting, but it is a perfect contrast to the deep green surrounding it. Each petal had a beautiful transition in color from bright pink at the edges to a light cream in the center, but the texture is subtle and difficult to capture in a painting. To meet this challenge, I chose to paint in oil. This medium allows me to capture vibrant, deep color along with the unique texture found in this flower.

More specifically, the technique I used is known as "indirect" oil painting. The process is time consuming, but the results are well worth the effort. Unlike "direct" painting, in "indirect" painting the image is built up in layers. Oil paint is thinned with a solvent-free solution of safflower oil and alkyd resin before it is applied. Each glaze layer dries fully before another is applied in order to build up rich color and overall dimension. This technique allows light to bounce through all the layers to create a luminosity and depth of color that is difficult to achieve with other methods.

Trying to capture both the vibrant pink color and soft texture of the flower juxtaposed against the dark green, glossy leaves was challenging and enjoyable. Painting a specimen in this detailed manner allows me to see the flower in a way that the casual observer cannot appreciate. As an artist, it is my great pleasure to try and capture the fleeting natural beauty of these wonderful plants to share, in some small way, how they lift my spirits even when days are short and gray.

Charity Dakin

Kauka Wilder Plumeria, 2020

Plumeria rubra 'Kauka Wilder'

Watercolor on paper
17 × 15 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$850

"Painting from nature is not copying the object, it is realizing one's sensations." –Paul Cezanne

I have always been drawn to interact with the natural world around me. While we most often sense beautiful things through sight, form, color, and light, there is so much more that informs a full appreciation of a plant: texture, scent, habitat, and surrounding sounds.

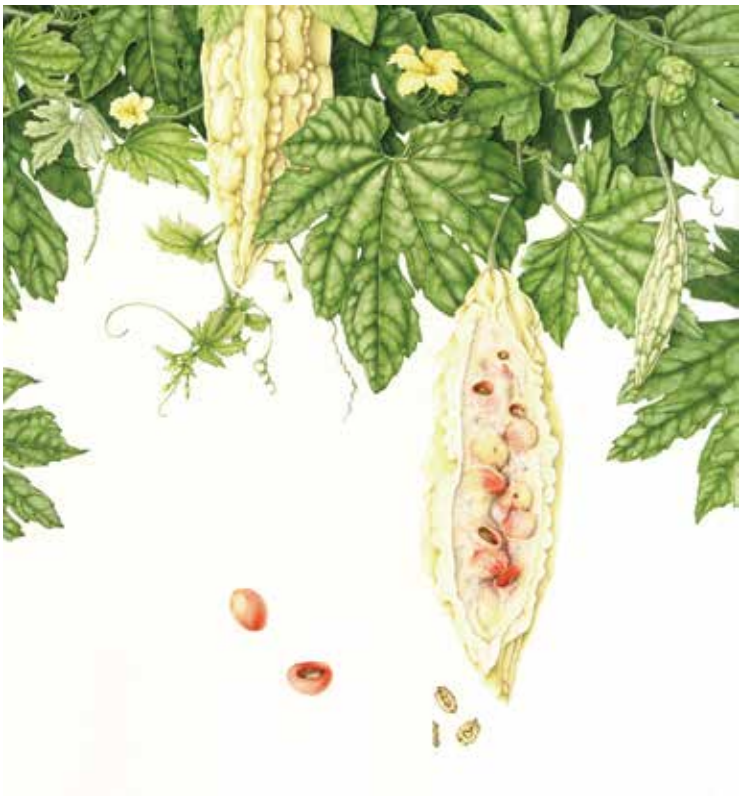
Living in northern Canada provides an abundance of such interactions with the native flora and fauna throughout spring and summer. Although most specimens here are inconspicuous relative to, for example, big showy tropical plants, my interaction inspires artistic decisions and expression. To paint an object merely for the sake of painting or for its visual qualities has never been quite enough for me. Usually, there is something I respond to deeply. It can be a small and fleeting sensation, but it is still there.

Two years ago, I took my first trip to a warm climate, Hawaii. It was not a typical holiday of lounging but one where I immersed myself in the natural history and exploration of a new environment. Especially interesting are native and endemic species of an area. Although *Plumeria* is an introduced genus it is important in Hawaiian culture, used to make leis, traditional flower garlands given as a token of affection. One place where we lodged had beautiful shrubs and plants in the yard, and we were kindly asked by our hosts to periodically go out and chase off wild goats to keep them from eating the landscaping. Here I discovered incredible branching forms, textures, rich color, and an unbelievable, sweet, spicy scent emanating from several *Plumeria* cultivars. Everything about *Plumeria* was engaging to me, as deserving of artistic endeavor as any of the native specimens.

While painting is limited to two dimensions, I wondered if I could portray even a fraction of the sensory experience of the cultivar 'Kauka Wilder'. Color was obviously important, and I went through several types of magenta, rose, and pink before deciding on one that was vibrant enough to capture that rich velvet of the petals. In fact, the whole color palette was new to me for this piece. Texture and light were also important in planning the composition. I cannot say that any aspect of this piece was a challenge, maybe because my initial interaction stayed with me.

My intention was to capture this beautiful flower and express my experience. I had no idea it would receive this kind of attention and resonate with others, but I am pleased that it does.

Sengmany Phommachakr



Bitter Melon, 2019
Richmond and Lili Bates Award

Momordica charantia

Watercolor on paper
23 × 21 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,800

As I was slicing the bitter melon and the two halves fell away from each other, I knew in that moment I had to paint it. It was September 2018 and I was helping my mother prepare a family meal, using their home-grown produce. My parents' garden is full of edible treasures. They grow a variety of vegetables, from familiar staples such as cucumbers and tomatoes to more unusual varieties, such as chayotes, and Thai purple-podded, yard-long beans. Their most exotic crop is the bitter melon, also known as balsam pear or bitter gourd. Friends had given them the seeds after they had been to Taiwan. In Asia, the bitter melon is considered both a food and a medicine. Its name reflects the distinctly bitter taste that can be quite off-putting when eaten for the first time. My mother's recipe is to hollow out the bitter melon and fill it with a mixture of ground pork, mung bean noodles, coriander, soy sauce and pepper. The stuffed melon is then slowly braised in a homemade chicken broth.

This member of the *Cucurbitaceae* family is an elegant, tropical vine with deeply lobed palmate leaves that release a pungent odor if bruised. The diminutive male and female flowers are yellow and fragrant. The warty, oblong fruit hangs amidst the leaves like piñatas. Its light green skin, when young, turns to a very pale yellow when it is ready to be harvested. However, if left to over-ripen, the fruit changes to a dark yellow/orange color. When cut open, the cross-section reveals the nearly white lumpy rind that harbors fleshy, moist, bright red arils, reminiscent of silkworm cocoons which, like nesting dolls, hide the unique and bizarre-looking seeds. This plant had exactly the type of complex textured surface I find so challenging and rewarding to draw and paint. I knew I wanted the cross-section of the fruit to be the focal point but was overwhelmed by the infinite possibilities for the composition.

Later that Fall, at the ASBA Annual Conference in St. Louis, I attended a lecture and tribute to the late Pandora Sellars given by Margaret Best. As slides of her work scrolled by, I was struck by Pandora's impeccable technical skills and fearless approach to composition. I admired how she used leaves as backdrop to highlight important elements of her paintings. I immediately envisioned the bitter melon's yellow flowers and fruits against a lush layer of dark green leaves. Back in Ottawa at my drawing table, after playing with my sketches, the various components of the final piece came together. I realized without a doubt I had found a worthy subject to occupy my thoughts while I painted in my studio during the shortening days leading to winter.

Tammy McEntee

Hale's Best 45, 2020

Cucumis melo var. *reticulatus* 'Hale's Best 45'

Colored pencil on paper
26 1/4 × 29 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,900

Those who know me know I like ornamental gourds, okay, love ornamental gourds. So, when a farmer at our local Saturday farmers' market was selling 2" gourd seedlings last summer, I jumped on them. She didn't know what variety of gourd they were as the tags had gotten mixed up in the greenhouse and there was a possibility there may be a cantaloupe or two in the group. What she did know was that if there was a cantaloupe, it was a Hale's Best 45. It turns out they were all cantaloupes, which I found out when the tiny smooth spheres appeared and quickly started to develop a glorious web all over their bodies. That webbing had me hooked; I studied it daily waiting for minute changes to occur. Not to worry, my neighbors have grown used to seeing me lying in my garden beds, pencil in hand.

I started my piece by rendering the mature fruit; the highways of webbing were a real challenge. Many a colored pencil point was broken in the task. It also required many layers of color to attain that slightly raised net look. I wanted the overall painting to have the feeling of dancing or lightheartedness that I associate with warm summer weather. I felt I could achieve this through the tumbling vine, the back and forth of the leaves and the twirling tendrils.

I learned a great deal while working on this piece. Here in the United States we grow muskmelons not cantaloupes. We just call them that. Cantaloupes are grown primarily in Mediterranean countries and are not netted. Approximately 2 billion muskmelons are grown every year in the U.S. on 90,000 acres of farmland. I could go on and on about cantaloupes/muskmelons but will use some self-control.

If nothing else, I guess I have also learned something about myself while rendering this painting. My love isn't only for ornamental gourds but for all members of the *Cucurbitaceae* family. The possibilities are endless!

Carol Woodin

Two Orchids II, 2018

Paphiopedilum 'Doll's Kobold'

Watercolor on vellum over panel
16 × 14 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,200

Over the years I've painted more slipper orchids than any other subject. Most of these have been species, however once in a while a hybrid grabs my attention enough to impel me to paint it. This is a primary hybrid—that is a cross of two species, in this case *Paphiopedilum henryanum* and *P. charlesworthii*. The glossy surface and rich color of petals and lip add surface texture, and the dark spots on the dorsal sepal add interest. The painting focuses exclusively on these two flowers and the relationship between them, in their different stages of growth. This is painted on vellum that I've stretched over a panel and shadowboxed.

Monika de Vries Gohlke

Ponderosa, 2018
Brooklyn Botanic Garden Award for a Print or Drawing

Citrus × *limon* 'Ponderosa'

Copperplate aquatint etching with chine collé
17 × 17 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$400 / SOLD

Late in winter I visited the Brooklyn Botanic Garden to experience something "green" in the conservatory. Upon entering I was "greeted" by an impressive lemon tree, the 'Ponderosa,' living in a large container, heavy with fruit and blossoms. I had never seen this type of citrus before and felt amazed and awed by the beauty and size of the plant and its fruits.

'Ponderosa' is a hybrid of a pomelo and a citron and has been grown in the U.S. since the 19th century, but never commercially for fruit; it certainly makes a glorious ornamental, though.

I read that the fruit tastes just like a regular lemon, and as the little kid standing next to me commented, it wouldn't take many of these to make a whole pitcher of lemonade. Mmmmm! Dreams of summer overcame me, the temperature in the conservatory rose by a few degrees, and I didn't want to leave either place or plant.

Next best thing, I returned with my drawing pad and for several days sketched the tree until I had enough information in my mind and heart to try to recreate the experience, the shiny dark leaves, flowers, fruits, and thorns.

It is a hot day today—lemonade, anyone?

Lizzie Sanders

Coelogyne Orchid, 2020

Coelogyne lawrenceana

Watercolor on paper
16 1/2 × 19 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

*** Not for sale**

Note: Sadly, Lizzie Sanders, noted botanical artist and graphic designer, passed away this past summer. She will be greatly missed by her many friends and admirers in the botanical art world!

What to choose to paint in time for spring submission to an exhibition? Working from Scotland always has some added difficulties—the winter light here is very poor and a spring deadline for submission means I am always working in the dark. Scotland's plants are often small and insignificant, perhaps botanically interesting but without too much pizazz!

This year an added difficulty presented itself—a plant pathogen had infected the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh (RBGE), meaning no plant material, not even dead leaves, could be removed from the garden. Usually I like to bring my plants home to work on in the studio. This time I would have to find a space somewhere...and find a plant which would survive over some weeks on its own.

As the RBGE is a research establishment as well as a gorgeous garden, the plants are often being grown for projects—so you can turn up to find your chosen plant has been culled, pruned, propagated, or just gone!

The plant I chose is *Coelogyne lawrenceana*, originally from the higher elevations of Vietnam, growing in a temperate glasshouse. There were several specimens all with new growth. I don't often paint orchids but this one appealed and would last long enough for me to complete the piece.

Adding to my challenge, I chose to work on a thin hard paper—Schoellershammer G4. This is similar to Bristol board; coated, very smooth. It takes ink well and hates water. It is almost like working on vellum. This paper will not put up with a single mistake. You can't scrape it or wash off. A very dry brush with tiny strokes is the only solution.

I'm happy to say the piece worked—a good flower, fantastic rhizomes. And it was accepted into the ASBA show.

While writing this, I am planning how to get it matted and framed as we are still in Covid-19 lockdown. I do hope you will be able to see it in the Fall!

Esmée Winkel

Late Spider Orchid, 2018

Ophrys fuciflora ssp*. apulica*

Watercolor on Paper
19 × 15 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,950

Bee orchids are such a lovely group of plants within the orchid family. This 'Late Spider' orchid is a type of Bee orchid that crossed my path when I was painting another one at the Hortus botanicus Leiden. It had such a distinguished appearance. To me its flower looks like a dancer wearing a colorful skirt and its pinkish petals spread out like little arms inviting me to paint it. The journey of catching this orchid on paper has been such a joy. Every time I looked up from my paper to its flowers I was greeted with a big smile. However, it probably was inviting its pollinator to co

Ophrys, or bee orchids, are nearly always pollinated by solitary bees and these orchids have a peculiar way of attracting them. Pollination is the transfer of pollen from one plant to another of the same species. This enables fertilization and production of seeds from which its offspring can develop. In Ophrys it is always the male bees that visit the flower. The flowers do not attract them with rewards like nectar but instead mimic the female bees and even produce their sex pheromones. These signals stimulate mating behavior in the males, and they attempt copulation, or pseudocopulation, with the flowers. During pseudocopulation, pollen is attached to the bee and when it discovers it has been deceived, it flies off with the pollen. When it arrives at another flower of this same orchid species, once again enticed into pseudocopulation, it accidentally transfers this pollen.

Bee orchids are a charismatic group of orchids and I look forward to next spring when they start flowering again!

Jean Emmons

Black Panther Tree Peony 2019

Paeonia 'Black Panther'

Watercolor on vellum
17 × 17 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,600

Tree peonies are the stuff of myth. Cultivated in China for hundreds of years, they have inspired poetic names such as 'Coiled Dragon in the Mist Grasping a Purple Pearl', 'Dancing Black Lion', 'Drunken Jade Circle', and even 'Auspicious Dewy Cicada'.

The name of one peony, 'Qing Long Wo Mo Chi', translates to 'Green Dragon Lying in an Ink Pool'. There is a charming story behind this name. Briefly, a little dragon tried to help some plants. For his kindness, a flower goddess saved him from another deity who was menacing him. She decided to hide him in a pool of ink. She saved the little dragon, but as a result, her petals turned midnight blue.

Serious peony-viewing parties are often held in Japan. I have my own peony-viewing party out in my front garden with my cat and some black tail bumble bees. The petals are waxy, reflecting the colors around them. In the opal light of an overcast morning, colors change gradually as the clouds scud by.

The tree peony 'Black Panther' was the first plant I ordered for my new home in 1997. It was grafted, expensive, and required a large sunny space in loamy soil. I knew it wouldn't bloom for several years. The day it arrived, I was about to catch a ferry and a plane to go to my first ASBA conference. Since it was bare root, I had to drop everything and quickly dig a hole deep enough to cover the graft. It has repaid me ever since.

I first painted 'Black Panther' about 20 years ago on watercolor paper. I remember trying to match the local color and struggling for an active composition.

Now I work on Kelmscott vellum and underpaint with everything but the local color. I use many more colors and many, many more drybrush layers than I used to. Paintings take a lot more time, but I'm happier with the results.

Like many beautiful things, tree peonies have a fatal flaw. In the winter, after the leaves drop, the woody stems couldn't be uglier in terms of plant architecture. Nature is balanced.

Kathy Schermer-Gramm

The Fading Cranefly Orchids' Last Dance, 2020

Tipularia discolor with mycorrhizal fungi

Watercolor on paper
17 × 15 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,500

Literally beneath the forest floor is where I was looking in search of a new subject to paint, hoping to begin a new body of work focusing on what goes on 'behind the scenes', or in this case, underground, I discovered this specimen. The challenge became how to present an interesting composition while concentrating on the intricacies of the plant's root system.

Along a small woodland trail on our property grows the diminutive cranefly orchid I decided to use for this painting. While threatened in the Northeast, it is prevalent in the North Carolina piedmont region where I live. It is often either overlooked or just hidden in plain sight among the forest leaf litter. Bending down to have a closer look in winter, this plant looks rather shy peeking its single green leaf up through the decaying leaves. Flip the leaf over and surprise, its flamboyant purple underside is revealed. The plant fades and disappears completely after winter, only to return months later without the leaf to flower. Interestingly, the drab cranefly looking flowers are pollinated by noctuid moths, which carry the pollinaria attached to (of all places), their eyes, which sounds very uncomfortable.

My specimen included a chain of underground corms with thick fleshy roots. This in itself is fascinating and interesting to depict, but like other orchids, this one has a beneficial relationship with the mycorrhizal fungi from the surrounding decaying wood where the orchid grows. So, my goal was to focus on this root structure and depict it in a way that portrayed movement and grace. Instead of remaining still beneath the surface, I envisioned the delicate pale colored corms and roots wrapped in fungi and swirling around in the debris of their dark subterranean realm.

As I worked along on the painting this pair of tiny plants became more like a pair of potato bug-like creatures dancing happily with each other. The leaf of one is bug eaten and just starting to fade, while the other has completely faded to a warm russet color, usually seen before the plant disappears. To me it seems these two are doing their last dance and kicking up their roots before slumbering away again.

The process I follow in my watercolor paintings is to work from life as much as possible, usually using several specimens to make one portrait. Not knowing how the leaves would hold up, I started by creating a detailed pencil tonal study. I then painted the leaves first, applying washes, then layers of alternating dry brush and thin color glazes. The corms, roots and fungi were painted later in a manner where slight color shifts were used to differentiate the various overlapping parts. Relying on optical color mixing by adding thinly disguised contrasting colors along the edges of the roots helped to add weight to these extremely pale elements. As I work, I tend to shift colors multiple times while building up the form, mixing color both on the palette and on the paper.

Debra Pinciotti

Champagne Currants, 2020

Ribes rubrum 'Champagne Pink'

Watercolor and colored pencil on paper
18 × 16 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,600

Several years ago, my husband and a few neighbors started a community garden. These beautiful pink champagne currants grow next to our neighbor's black currants which are completely homely, but which make the most delicious jam! These champagne currants are edible right from the bush but are not very delectable. However, the first time I saw them I was enchanted by their subtle beauty. The translucence, the stripes in the skin, which remind me of the gooseberries my great grandmother used to grow (the plants are related) and the variation in color between individual currants inspired me to paint them.

Many of my pieces are created with more than one medium. Given no outside constraints, I like to let the textures of the subject dictate which medium I use. I thought the veiny leaves and peeling bark would be best rendered in colored pencil, with light washes of watercolor over them to keep them integrated with the rest of the piece. The smooth currants would fare best with watercolor, a translucent medium to capture the same quality of the fruit. The lightest of lines drawn with colored pencil capture the lines of color on the surface of the fruit's skin. I enjoyed conveying the translucence of the currants, which is the most remarkable quality of this subject.

For the sake of the composition, I simplified my drawing quite a bit from what was actually on the bush. Several currants were left out and others had to be moved; I was always mindful of how the move would affect the light on each currant. I like the shape of the finished painting, with the leaves like umbrellas over the clustered fruit.

This is one of a series of paintings on which I am working, which illustrates some of the unusual plants and flowers that my husband and I grow, with delight and enthusiasm, in the gardens at our home in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Lucy Martin

Lichens of Mallorca, 2020
Honorable Mention

Caloplaca sp., *Lecanora* sp.

Gouache on paper
25 1/2 × 19 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,200

My painting, “Lichens of Mallorca” is unusual for a botanical art exhibition, both in subject matter and format. It is made up of 6 panels, each one 5 1/2" on a side. In each panel is a composition of lichens I found on the island of Mallorca, off the east coast of Spain. As for the subject matter, I’ll begin with the obvious, that lichens are not plants. They are symbiotic organisms, typically a union of a fungus and a photosynthesizing alga or bacteria.

Mallorca is a beautiful place, with dramatic geological formations. We went there after visiting my son in France; Mallorca is a famous cycling destination. So, while my husband rode his bicycle over the mountain passes, I hiked on mountain trails, through wild rosemary, observed by grazing goats. Wherever I go I am always looking for interesting subjects to paint. Beside these rugged trails I saw striking patterns of lichen on the many rock outcroppings. The exquisite and subtle palette of colors of the lichens attracted me immediately: rust-red, deep brilliant orange, olive gray, warm to cool pale grays, a range of yellows from golden to palest lemon, as well as black and white.

I’ve been—it’s not an exaggeration to say—obsessed with lichens for several years now.

I have made several paintings of lichens on tree branches and twigs, on soil and on rocks. The current painting is in the last category and consists of crustose lichens: flat lichens adhering closely to the rock. I first noticed lichens with a thought of creating artwork in Pinnacles National Park in central California where rock formations display a vast array of brilliantly colored lichens. I was enraptured by the enormous abstract paintings that nature herself had created. I was fascinated by the infinite variety of colors and shapes and forms that emerge as lichens ever so slowly colonize the rock surfaces. (A note on this slow growth: some species grow only 0.5 mm per year, and there are patches of crustose lichens that are thought to be as much as four thousand years old). I was moved to create paintings that were of real views of lichens, but yet also somewhat abstract.

Since that first painting of lichens in Pinnacles National Park, I have made paintings of lichens in the desert of eastern Oregon, the Rocky Mountains, Northern California, coastal Brittany, on the standing megalithic stones of Carnac, and finally in Mallorca. Some are triptychs, some what I call “quartets”, with four panels, and some six panel paintings like this one in the 23rd Annual International.

I select the lichens to include in these panel paintings to create a balance of color, shape and texture. I typically include a fair amount of the rocky substrate, which has been an enjoyable challenge to learn to paint. There is often one-color element that ties together the different panels.

The lichens of Mallorca presented a more restricted range of colors than in some other sites I have seen. There were not a very great a range of species, probably because the island

is windswept and very dry. But this very restriction seemed to present an opportunity for me: to focus closely on the fascinating, intricate forms created by the growing lichens, along with their apothecia, or reproductive structures. (These are the tiny disks you see on the lichens in the painting.) The open space inside the loops of lobed lichens is where the very oldest part of the lichen has died, so the growth is occurring around the outside of the loop. In some of the panels you can see new lichens growing in the spaces that have opened up.

I paint in gouache and watercolor, using the somewhat opaque property of gouache to create many layers, working often from dark to light. I like the dense quality this gives to the painting, particularly when it's a painting of something solid like this very tough lichen growing on a rock surface. I plan the overall composition carefully, and lightly sketch a general outline of the form of the lichen in each panel. But I do most of my drawing with the brush, as I am painting. I use many layers of transparent wash to modify colors as I work. In this painting I worked on two or three panels at a time, each in a different stage of completion. This allowed me to make small changes in color and composition as I proceeded.

I am a beginner when it comes to identification of lichens. I rely on kind lichenologist friends to help me when I need to identify the ones in my paintings. Since this location is so remote from California, where I live, the lichenologist I consulted was only able to make suggestions for the genera represented. I don't know if this habitat contains any unique or unstudied lichens. Stephen Sharnoff in his authoritative Field Guide to California Lichens says that "Our present knowledge of the lichens in California is still quite incomplete". So confidently identifying lichens in a place such as Mallorca would require contacting a European lichenologist—perhaps I can do that on a future trip.

Lichens are some of the least noticed of living organisms. Many friends have commented that they never even saw them until they went on a walk with me. But they thrive in almost every ecosystem and have important roles to play. They provide food and nesting material for animals and birds, prevent soil erosion, and are a significant source of fixed atmospheric nitrogen for plants. They are also of great interest as indicators of air quality and are studied by scientists for this reason. My love of lichens arises, though, from the beauty and multiplicity of their shapes and colors. They richly repay close observation. I feel I am just beginning to discover the marvelous gifts lichens have to offer me as an artist.

Jeanne Reiner

Oakleaf Hydrangea Nearing the End, 2019

Hydrangea quercifolia

Colored pencil and pastel on acetate film
21 1/2 × 24 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,000

On a damp day at the end of September I was running past a lineup of Oakleaf Hydrangeas planted alongside the parking lot at NYBG. With my head down to avoid the rain, I was suddenly smacked in the chest with an enormous soggy leaf. Without any thought to what I was doing nor even slowing my pace I tore it from its branch and said out loud, "You're going to be my next subject." With that I threw it in my trunk and headed out.

It was only when I arrived home and could admire the accosting thing that I realized how perfectly this leaf fit into the criteria I look for in a subject: scale, brilliant colors, decay and ludicrous amounts of detail. These qualities piqued my interest and were necessary as I knew I would be spending many valuable hours working on its likeness.

This particular leaf seemed to be a living embodiment of fire. The colors radiated from the stem in hot yellow, then to orange, then to alizarin crimson. Continually changing, the hues darkened across the undulating topography until it reached the far ends which appeared to be blackened like burned out bits of remaining architecture.

This piece always reminds me of that cool, damp fall day when I wasn't paying attention and I was forced by the subject to "Look at me!"

Andreas Hentrich

Nelumbo nucifera (Disc 20), 2013

Nelumbo nucifera

Oil on wood
15 3/4 inches diameter
Courtesy of the artist

$1,700

When I attended an exhibition project in Japan, in fall 2012, I became aware of the numerous lotus plantings. You can find them in the countryside along the roads as well as in private or public gardens. It is a rare sight for a Middle-European viewer, so I decided to go into more detail with the plant as an art motif.

I usually work according to my own photographic drafts, so I was looking for interesting motifs on several occasions while discovering the botanical diversity of the country. My search was successful at the well-known Ritsurin Garden on Shikoku Island, where the lotus grows at many lakes and hidden places. Due to the fall foliage, most of the leaves had already changed their colors, which led to an attractive colorful diversity. In addition, some of the larger leaves folded together in a way that the lighter bottom side of the leaves rested on the yellowish-green upper side. This had the effect that a colorful contrast was created, which I used as a structural element for the composition of the painting.

Since I wanted to use the lotus motif also for my series “Discs”, I paid extra attention to the balance of both color regions when choosing the pictured image detail. The motifs for the series (all oil on wood) were photographed vertically from above, so that actually there is no top or bottom in the picture. The painting is then fixed to the wall with a center screw on the back, so that the viewer is always able to turn the painting, imitating a walk around the plant and discovering new perspectives, giving the viewer the opportunity to encounter the painting again and again.

I often choose only a small detail of a plant or a leaf as a motif, because I am especially interested in the abstract potential of the motif. I did this in the painting Nelumbo nucifera, which developed from numerous tiny color fields combining into an artwork that from a distance can also be perceived as a mere composition of colors.

Exhibition Juror Karen Kluglein

Pink Peony with Dragonfly, 2020

Paeonia suffruticosa, *Celithemis eponina*

Watercolor on vellum
18 1/2 × 14 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,200

Terri Munroe

Dried Date Palm Petiole, 2020

Phoenix dactylifera

Watercolor on paper
21 1/2 × 24 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,500

Living in Southern California provides a plethora of swaying palm trees, ocean air, and strong seasonal Santa Ana winds. Most people do not realize that if the imported plants are removed, you are left with a desert-like atmosphere. One morning after a windy summer night, I came upon a broken piece of petiole from the trunk of a date palm—*Phoenix dactylifera*. Dried, cracked, and frayed with tiny fibers from the rachis of the frond, I decided it would be a great specimen to paint and document.

The petiole is the base of the frond stalk that attaches the midrib to the tree trunk. The frond midrib, spines, and leaflets go on to expand into the branch as the frond grows. If you have ever eaten a stalk of celery at the base, then you have eaten a petiole! The date palm was brought to Southern California from Spain by missionaries who cultivated the dates for food. The Latin word—*petiolus*—meaning "little foot," captures the idea of the base nearest the trunk. As you look closely, the petiole is a critical structure that maintains the chemicals and nutrients in a plant and plays a key role in photosynthesis.

This palm remnant was so unusual and interesting that I knew it presented a challenge to try and capture its detail. Over and over, I explored the composition and kept turning the petiole from front to back. I finally decided on a slight rotation of the frontal view to show the gray and purple hues on the back side, and the amber and burnt umber hues on the front. After sketching the basic composition in graphite, I noticed that I needed to perceive each section as different, almost as if a paint by number set. From the fibers extending out along the edges—to the base containing vascular tissue that provides a water source to the midrib—to the ochre swirls and curls on the front side, I summoned up the courage and told myself, "try."

Although I thought about doing this piece in graphite, I decided to start painting it in watercolor to demonstrate the incredible details of color. I like the way watercolor can lay down saturated color as a base for detail. I have found that my past oil painting techniques of pointillism and dry brush scumble help to create a marbling effect with the colors. I often use the side bristle hairs of my Da Vinci "o" brush as a palette knife. The scrubbing motion leaves a broken color effect in those areas of transition from section to section. I loved showing the tiniest fibers existing deep within the cracks, and the crevices between the crusty veins with coppery shadows. You can see the whole life span in the dried growth pattern.

I truly enjoyed the depth and texture that this dried, old, wrinkled specimen had to offer...much like our own stories that cannot be forgotten.

Robin Moore

Red Warty Thing Squash Blossom, 2019

Cucubita maxima

Watercolor on paper
20 × 23 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,500

On the path to growing heirloom Pumpkin ‘Red Warty Thing’ (*Cucurbita maxima*), a notably ugly variety, I was soon surprised by an unintended consequence in my garden. It was the sparkling transcendence from pumpkin bud to bloom that shook things up for me.

The vine began with tender green leaves and a tight, fuzzy, white pointed bud. It was cute. The bud grew to be piped in dark green with veining along each side. The piping outlined the sepals, splitting to later reveal neatly ordered yellow fans. So far so good! Within a short time, as the bud size expanded, it warmed yellow and the accordion folded fans opened up, exploding like popcorn. Eventually it sorted itself out to a classic ‘squash flower’ format with protruding sticky anther. Within a few days it collapsed in exhaustion. But what a ride! All the time it presented more leaves, more buds, more tendrils and even bigger leaves (10 inches), that grew and protected the fertilized buds.

Sadly, my pumpkin story ends here. The fuzzy, pale little fellows all soon rotted, one by one, and dropped, only reaching silver dollar size. So much for the very enthusiastic “easy to grow” sales copy on the seed packet. And really, I can’t believe my garden’s conditions couldn’t have produced something respectable. Was one ‘Red Warty Thing’ too much to ask for?

Pumpkin ‘Victor’ was the original variety in the late 1800s and was useful because it had a solid thick flesh that stored very well for months over the winter. The bumps apparently aided in this. It was popular for cooking. Perhaps its inability to be more prolific was its downfall. Or maybe it was simply sheer ugliness.

Pat Giancontieri

Blackberry Lily, 2018

Iris domestica

Watercolor on paper
31x 25 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,800

In choosing a specimen for my “scaled-up” project in Dick Rauh’s class at The New York Botanical Garden (for an impending Certificate in Botanical Illustration), I was drawn to the diminutive size of the original specimen which measured a mere three inches; the seeds each only one-eighth of an inch. I had to reconsider a 300 percent enlargement after my freehand color test was inadvertently painted at 500 percent. Begin again I did. Enlarging it to 500 percent invited a more striking view.

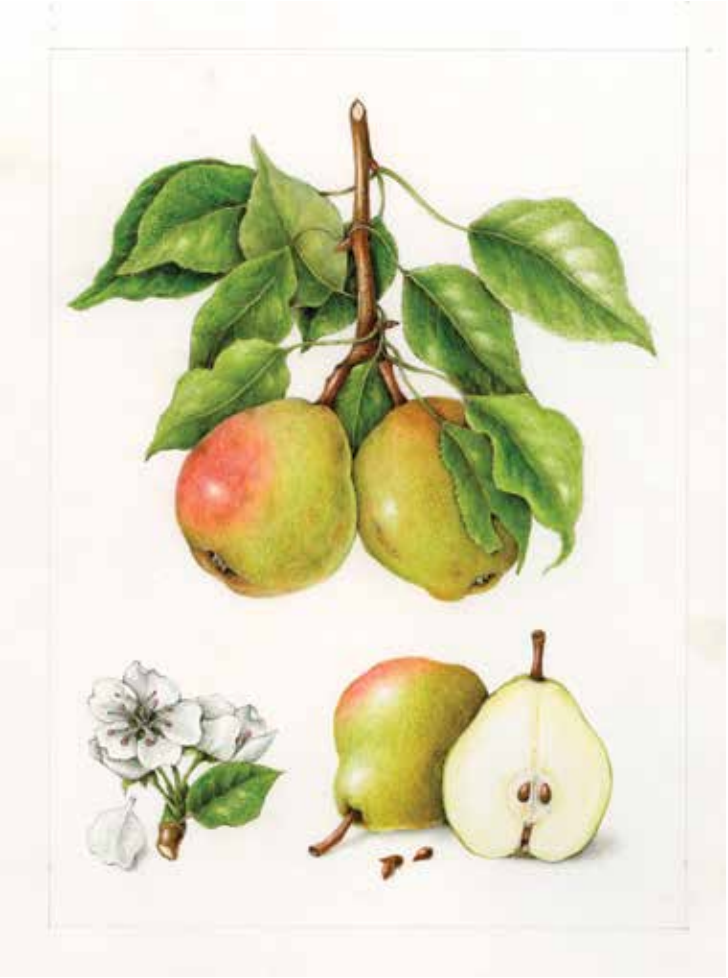
‘Blackberry Lily’ as a dried specimen lets us experience it in its least colorful stage. (Shades of red, orange, yellow, and families of green grace the plant during peak bloom.) Here ‘Blackberry Lily’ is a compelling color choice. The challenge was to represent the depth of indigo color in the seeds, which border on black—without losing the deep vibrancy of the hue. The limited palette at this stage also spoke to me, because in my work as a textile/surface designer, color needs to be “pretty,” or “wearable,” or “livable,” and it is refreshing to be freed from those confines.

In its dried or dormant state, the architectural lines are rigid, while the live plant has a graceful sweep. I saw this as part of its dramatic beauty; lines that directed the eye to rich dark fruit. The stems, capsules, and spathes are softened by their parchment color and transparent paper-like quality. The dark sepia in the cavern of the burst seed capsules is a suitable counterbalance to the indigo.

At this point of its life, ‘Blackberry Lily’ is fragile and delicate, with the fruit dislodging in a gentle breeze or even by the slightest glance.

‘Blackberry Lily’ is simultaneously bold and soft in color; strong and fragile in nature. I sought to capture this precarious yet bold contradiction.

Wendy Hollender



Luscious Pear, 2019

Pyrus communis

Colored pencil and watercolor pencil on paper
21x 17 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,200

Edible trees are a favorite of mine as subjects and I am especially attracted to luscious bunches of fruits.

I have been watching this pear tree grow since we planted it 10 years ago. It started to fruit about three years ago and it was particularly fruitful the year I started this painting, with lovely color variation on each pear.

I cut a nice branch with a few fruits to draw. This composition shows a grouping of fruit and leaves on a branch as they grow on the tree with lots of overlapping of elements for a good contrasting composition. I also show a single pear and cut open fruit with a few seeds spilling out. I knew that come spring I would add in the flowers, so I saved a spot on my composition for a few blossoms.

When we planted on our small permaculture style farm 11 years ago, I chose a lot of edible plants for obvious reasons: they look great and I love to eat them! Pears are a valuable food source and the ability to grow your own fruit is a true gift to have. I am slowly trying to draw many of them. My goal is for the viewer to be enticed to want to pick a fruit off the tree, just as the real tree when fruiting beckons to anyone to come closer and sample a fruit.

Betsy Rogers-Knox

Skunk Cabbage, 2019

Symplocarpus foetidus

Watercolor on paper
20 × 25 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,100

Drawn to the uniqueness of skunk cabbage, in late winter I watch for the plant's spathe, or sheath, to push through the snow-covered wetland. The flowers of the skunk cabbage are among the first to bloom in early spring and they are difficult to see because they are hidden deep down under a horn shaped hood. The most fascinating part of this plant is thermogenesis, its capability to heat its spadix to around 70 degrees Fahrenheit, melting snow around it and attracting flies, beetles and bees. This was the moment I hoped to capture in this painting!

Perhaps the greatest challenge of the piece was how to portray the vivid colors and textures in the plant while also showing the subtle blanket of snow surrounding it and the wooded habitat in winter.

Illustrating plants in their habitat presents the botanical artist with numerous challenges. Accuracy of the ground litter and surrounding plants as well as accuracy of the chosen plants must be included in the painting in a balanced and pleasing format without creating a composition that is too overwhelming and complicated.

Mary Crabtree

Autumn at Pond's Edge, 2020

Typha angustifolia, *Bolboschoenus maritimus*, *Schoenoplectus pungens*, *Juncus torreyi*

Colored pencil on paper
23 1/4 × 19 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$750

I first became interested in wetland plants after taking a course on the botany of wetland grasses and sedges at the Denver Botanic Gardens School of Botanical Art & Illustration. I was fascinated to learn of the diversity of these plants and began to seek out wetland areas on my daily walks so that I could study and illustrate them.

I live in the Colorado Front Range next to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains at the western edge of the High Plains subregion of the Great Plains. While the climate in this region is semi-arid, wetland and riparian ecosystems are surprisingly common and can be found alongside rivers, streams, and ponds as well as in ditches and shallow basins. These areas provide essential habitat for vast numbers of birds and other vertebrate species in an otherwise often harsh environment. They also provide ecological "services," including water filtration, ground stabilization, and flood zone buffering.

The inspiration for this illustration sprang from a group of wetland plants I observed at the Chapungu Sculpture Park, along the Greeley and Loveland Irrigational Canal in Loveland, Colorado. Alongside walking trails and a collection of stone sculptures by Zimbabwean artists, there is a wetland ecosystem that supports a diverse collection of flora and fauna. The drawing includes three obligate wetland plants (occurring only in wetlands: *Typha angustifolia*, *Bolboschoenus maritimus*, and *Schoenoplectus pungens*) and one facultative wetland plant (usually occurs in wetlands but may also occur in non-wetlands: *Juncus torreyi*).

On the left, *Typha angustifolia*, found throughout the Northern Hemisphere, is commonly called narrow-leaf cattail, lesser reedmace, or corn dog grass. Also known as lesser bulrush, the cattail is not a rush but a monocot herb that is often considered invasive, although it is also useful. Many parts of the cattail are edible. Early civilizations used the fluffy down of the flower heads in making diapers and pillows, and the leaf fiber for roof thatching and in woven mats, baskets and shoes. Cattails have many uses in herbal medicine, and the plants have been shown to remove poisons from water. They provide food for ducks, geese, muskrats, beavers, moose, and elk as well as nesting material for many songbirds.

Cattails are hermaphroditic, with male and female parts on the same stalk. In autumn, as illustrated, one sees the stems after the male (staminate) flowers at the top have released pollen and fallen away. Below this is a short section of bare stem that separates the male and female flowers and is specific to the *T. angustifolia* species. The female (pistillate) part of the plant is the characteristic fuzzy brown cylinder.

Next to the cattail is *Bolboschoenus maritimus*, a common wetland plant known as the cosmopolitan bulrush (also not a true rush). Found in much of the world, it is a member of the family of wetland sedges. The culm is triangular, as in most sedges. The flower spikes are clustered near the apex of this slender stem, with bracts that extend above like graceful arms, while leaves below curve fluidly outward as though trying to embrace neighboring plants. The cosmopolitan bulrush provides food for birds in its seeds and rhizomes, and its leaves and stems are eaten by beaver and muskrats. The plants also provide nesting cover for waterfowl, amphibians, small mammals, and fish.

Next is *Schoenoplectus pungens*, the common three-square sedge. It is found in North and South America, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. The stem is sharply triangular, stiff, and straight, with compact flower spikes and a single bract well above shorter leaves. Like the cosmopolitan bulrush, the seeds and rhizomes of this plant are an important food source and nesting habitat for muskrats, waterfowl, fish, and amphibians.

Finally, on the right is *Juncus torreyi*, Torrey's rush, native to north America. A true rush, it has stiff, round stems, globe-shaped flower heads with a single bract, and two to five leaves with a translucent sheath at the base of each blade. The seeds of this plant are eaten by insects, and to some extent by small rodent and ducks, and the plants also provide cover for wildlife.

In composing this illustration, I envisioned a kind of wetland "dance," grouping the four plants to best show their similarities and differences. Because these are tall plants, in order to draw them at life size, I created a "window" to focus on the most descriptive characteristics of each. Illustrating the inflorescence of each plant was fun and challenging, from the dull, fuzzy, multicolored brown of the cattail flower head to the precise details of the sedge and rush flower spikes. It was important to accurately depict the stem shapes, since they are specific to the different types of plants. Also important was getting the greens of the leaves and stems correct, in order to show the plants in autumn colors as they begin to yellow and fade toward winter browns. I enjoyed illustrating each individually, yet always in concert with the others, as in a dance.

Sally Petru

Evie Silk Tassel Bush, 2019

Garrya elliptica 'Evie'

Watercolor on paper
23 × 19 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,500

While serving as board president for ASBA, I felt we had a wonderful opportunity to do something particularly special in celebration of our 25th anniversary. The board met the year prior and had breakout sessions to explore ways in which we could honor this organization. The result was our Celebrating Silver catalog, a collection of artworks by members of ASBA through an open call for entry. This was the specimen that I selected to paint.

I had always wanted to begin a body of work that included natives. I was pleased that this option presented itself to me in such a perfect and timely way. I had just attended our local chapter's annual exhibition in the Berkeley Botanical Garden and had been looking for an interesting 'silver 'subject for the 25th anniversary catalog—and there he was in resplendent silvery bloom! My next step was to procure a cutting. The Northern California chapter has had a 12-year partnership with the garden through our annual exhibitions there. This partnership includes the understanding that, if available, we can arrange for a cutting particularly if it is for an exhibition in the garden. My thanks go to Holly Forbes, curator for UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, who has always helped me when I needed a cutting.

Garrya elliptica is a California native, as am I. I came to know this plant while studying plant identification in college. It is found along the coast in California and Oregon and is widely used in landscaping. It became especially popular for ornamental use following the 1977-1978 drought in California as a drought and deer resistant cultivar.

This specimen was in spectacular, full bloom in January 2019 when I stepped outside of the Julia Morgan Building at the University of California, Berkeley Botanical Garden. Most striking about this large shrub are its long, silvery, pendular male catkins that cascade from branch tips set against a backdrop of dark, dense leaves. The dioecious flowers are concentrated in inflorescences which manifest on separate male and female plants. The cultivar 'Evie' has catkins up to 10 inches in length and tends to be showier than other Garrya cultivars. On closer examination I noted that the silver color comes from a combination of purple, yellow and green features in this very complex set of flowers.

As with all specimens, I had to act quickly to capture the bloom before it faded. As the flowers wither, they throw off quite a lot of pale, yellow pollen, dusting the entire shrub. Aside from its showy flowers are its waxy convex leathery leaves, arranged in an opposite pattern, with wavy margins. While the top side is quite dark, the underside is characterized by fuzzy, pale green hairs. I had to consider the required dimensions for the Celebrating Silver publication—an essentially square format. Yet, these long catkins did not lend themselves to a square format. The specimen I was given by garden staff suggested to me that the cascading catkins could be offset by the striking arrangement of the stiff, leathery leaves on its mahogany-colored branch.

The resulting painting was included in the catalog and shown at the Marin Art & Garden Center in our chapter's Celebrating Silver exhibition which hung alongside the ASBA 22nd Annual International exhibition in the fall of 2019.

Keiko Nibu Tarver

Autumn Horse Chestnut, 2019

Aesculus hippocastanum

Watercolor on paper
25 × 22 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,400

The year 2020 will be one of the most unforgettable years of my life. In the middle of March, we were put in an unprecedented situation: staying and working at home, social distancing, closed stores except for essential ones etc. to prevent the spread of COVID-19. At the beginning of quarantine, without knowing of this terrible virus's nature, I thought I would have a lot of time to paint. But the everyday reports about rapidly increasing numbers of infected and dead people, the death of one of my husband's colleagues and my friend's struggling against the COVID-19 infection gradually weighed heavily on me. I had a feeling as if we were facing a pandemic of plague, remembering The Plague by Albert Camus. I couldn't concentrate on painting. I might have gone stir crazy! The email from Carol Woodin in May announcing the acceptance of my 'Autumn Horse Chestnut' for the ASBA 23rd Annual International was great news and it helped me to get out of that terrible psychological situation. It reminded me of a list of what I want to paint in the future.

I have been watching several horse chestnut trees and buckeyes in several parks and gardens through the years. I love the soft young leaves covered with thick hair in early spring, beautiful erect panicles with many flowers which attract bees in spring, strong and vivid large palmate leaves in summer, colored leaves with green, yellow ocher and brown in autumn, and beautiful tree figures and heart shaped leaf scars in winter. Among them, my favorite season is autumn.

In autumn, the leaves show their endurance against the sunlight, wind, rain, etc. for more than half a year, and at the same time the trees are preparing for the next year with production of seeds and firm sticky buds. I tried to express the beautiful moment of the tree in autumn. Even though the leaflets are faded, the strong straight petioles are still showing dignity. Because of their opposite leaf attachment, the stem and a pair of the petioles make an x shape which is one of the rules not to do when you paint. But fortunately, nature created a very natural x shape with leaflets and seeds. The posture of the branch itself was perfect.

Because of staying at home, I missed seeing my children (horse chestnut trees and buckeyes) for a long time. I hope I can see beautiful autumn leaves in the coming autumn without worries about COVID-19.

Kiyomi Yamamoto

Camellia, 2020

Camellia crapnelliana

Watercolor and pencil on paper
16 1/2 × 21 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$900

I am living as a botanical artist in Toyama City, located 400km north-west of Tokyo in Japan. This region is richly endowed with nature surrounded by the high Northern Alps and the deep Toyama Bay.

In this area, I have met many teachers with a detailed knowledge of plants, and I have been drawing botanical art while exchanging observations and thoughts with my friends.

I am currently a member of the Botanical Art Group in the Botanical Garden of Toyama (BGT), which is known for having a large area and many researchers. Dr. Masashi Nakata, the Director of BGT, has a deep knowledge of botanical art and is loved by our colleagues.

In the Original-Species Camellia Garden (OSCG) in the Inokuchi Tsubakikan museum in Nanto City of Toyama Prefecture, there are many trees of original species camellias collected by late Shuhou Kirino. He was a leading expert in camellia research in Japan, and the OSCG has become one of the best original species camellia gardens in the world. I am allowed to draw a series of precious original camellias through the kindness of the museum.

The camellia drawn this time is also one of the original species, and it is rare and valuable because only one known crapnelliana tree was discovered and described, in 1903, on Mount Parker on Hong Kong Island. First of all, I was fascinated by the size of the fruit. It was also fun to draw while imagining that the fruit was so big because it protected the seeds from dryness or insects couldn't eat them, and so on. I kept the number of branches and leaves to a minimum so that the sizes of a fruit and flowers could be compared with each other more distinctly.

In the future, I would like to make artistic works while challenging myself to create works using a much more scientific viewpoint.

I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Takehiko Ohnishi, Director of the Inokuchi Tsubakikan museum, for his cooperation and his support for my work.

Olga Gudzera

Christmas star, 2020
Honorable Mention

Euphorbia pulcherrima

Watercolor and graphite on paper
26 × 16 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,000

Among the plant symbols of Christmas (such as fir, mistletoe, holly), the brightest and most festive is poinsettia. It is rightly called the Christmas star: the red bracts are like the rays of a star; on the background of the leaves, it looks beautiful and solemn. Horticulturists have bred many varieties of poinsettias with white, pink, or motley bracts, but the plant with red bracts is undoubtedly the brightest and most memorable. By the way, in Old Russian the words “red” and “beautiful” are synonyms: red sun, red maiden, red square, means beautiful sun, beautiful maiden, beautiful square.

Every Christmas in my house there appears this magnificent plant, *Euphorbia pulcherrima*. Unfortunately, it rarely survives flowering during winter, due to dry air and lack of natural light. I wanted to preserve the image of this magical flower on paper, to depict the subtle shades of red bract and the noble cold of the green leaves. It was a challenge for me, and working on the painting was a great pleasure.

Meryl Sheetz

Teasel, 2019

Dipsacus fullonum

Graphite on paper
27 1/2 × 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,350

Teasel is native to Europe and temperate Asia. The plant can be found in all of North America and is considered invasive in several states. During colonial times the sturdy seed pod was mounted on a spindle and used to comb or “tease out” the nap in the making of wool cloth. The seeds are a favorite of the goldfinch and other small birds who cannot compete with larger wildlife for food on the ground. The v-shaped bracts of the florets offer a perfect guide for tiny beaks to slide along and grab the seeds inside.

My background is in jewelry and metalsmithing. I considered the objects I created in metal to be highly detailed hand scale sculptures. The observation and rendering of these small details for accuracy has a real parallel to the skills needed in botanic illustration. I love to draw and graphite is my favorite medium. There is a clarity in being able to focus on the forms, light and textures without the seduction of color. The silvery tones create an atmosphere of calm.

I was working towards my certificate in Botanical Art and Illustration at The New York Botanical Garden and had chosen a final project theme of plants with interesting seed pods. I had already completed a milkweed and datura and was searching for my next subject. One fall day I was wandering a small garden within a local arboretum searching downward for any fallen pods. I stopped in my tracks and crouched down to stare at the most amazing leaves They were large and were drying out into the most unbelievable shapes. Each one was a sculpture unto itself. I thought, too bad I had not chosen leaves as my theme! From my crouched position I looked up three feet and there silhouetted by the sky was the extraordinary Teasel flower spike. I was blown away. The seed pods are wonderous sculptures suspended on the plant’s stems with the beautiful fused bases of the leaves twisting below. The prominent sculptural nature of these plants in the fall season is very compelling to me. The sinuous contours of the leaves with thorny mid-ribs and the perfect floret pattern composing the flower spike were both a joy to observe and difficult portray.

There were two significant challenges for me in creating this drawing. The first hurdle was the composition: how to make a plant with a distinct vertical habit interesting. Full grown teasels can be between three to eight feet tall. What to do with all the space between the radial leaves at the base and the fascinating seed pod three feet away? One of my visits to my spikey friends was on a very windy day. I noticed that several of the stems were bent at almost a 90 degree angle. That was my a-ha moment for the composition. I made quite a few negative space drawings before choosing the one that I felt gave a lyricism to my subject that is not really observed. The most bedeviling challenge for me was the rendering of the bracts in Fibonacci order. I certainly doubted that I was up to the task. I re-drew the main seed pod three times. I was surprised and grateful that the 140lb paper held up!

Seongweon Ahn

Lime Aide Taro, 2020

Colocasia esculenta 'Lime Aide'

Colored pencil on paper
26 1/2 × 20 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,400

Colocasia esculenta, or 'Lime Aide' taro, is a tropical plant discovered in the Philippines. It is grown in Hawaii primarily for its edible corms, which are cooked and mashed to make a traditional dish called poi. It was a great bit of luck for me to come across this plant in front of the greenhouse in the New Jersey Botanical Garden on a sunny day last winter. The noteworthy, fresh, mysterious pattern of the plant drove me to start drawing immediately.

The withering process of *Colocasia esculenta* reminded me of the nobility of human life, and it seemed the plant felt pleasant and happy to embrace newly sprouting leaves, the appearance of an austere flower, and finally to accept dead leaves.

I felt the composition would be more dynamic by placing the main subject into the upper left and leaving one stem to hang down. Because the gesture of the actual *Colocasia* plant was quite simple, it was a bit difficult to decide which leaf should be particularly emphasized. I have put more effort into describing simple leaves with a high degree of completion.

Cynthia Rice

Dragon Kale, 2020

Brassica oleracea

Watercolor on paper
18 1/2 × 25 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,000

Every time I see this kale in a farmers' market, I feel compelled to paint it. I'm sure I'm not alone in admiring this extraordinary foliage. Finally, I had the opportunity and enough repeated availability in the market to see me through the long process of rendering its beautiful puckered texture.

I spent a great deal of time arranging the leaves to reflect the plant's natural habit of growth. I used a limited palette of paints, including Hansa yellow light, Indian yellow, Indanthrone blue and Quinacridone red as the main colors. The paper is hot press 140lb watercolor paper.

Verena Redmann

Paper Spine Cactus, 2018

Tephrocactus articulatus var. *papyracanthus*

Colored pencil on paper
20 1/2 × 16 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$3,000

Living in Germany, I do not have much access to cacti. Sadly, I can see them grow only in glasshouses in botanical gardens and not in their natural environments. Germany's climate is too cold for native cacti. One day while walking through a farmer's market, I saw a stand offering cacti. By a stroke of luck, I found a paper spine cactus that seemed to have chosen me to draw it. I love the unique habit of the plant and the special greens. Most of all, I love the expressive spines because I see them as an intermediate step in the development from leaf to spine.

Before drawing my subjects, I take a long time looking at them, observing their character. Contrary to flowers, cacti do not change quickly, and that is another reason why I fell in love with them.

The Paper Spine Cactus—*Tephrocactus articulatus* var. *papyracanthus*—is a slow-growing cactus native to Argentina. The population is stable and not endangered. The plant grows upright and is slightly branched. The short cylindrical segments are loosely attached to each other. When these segments fall to the ground, they form roots, from which new plants emerge. As the name says, this species has wide, papery spines. The blossoms are white. Unfortunately, I have never seen the flower.

My favourite medium is colored pencil on paper. I mostly use Faber Castell but also Caran d'Ache or Stabilo for very fine lines. Although I always enlarge my objects, the delicate spines of most cacti are almost impossible to capture with colored pencils. That's why I prefer to draw species like the paper spine cactus or the *Leuchtenbergia*.

In this drawing, I originally left out the roots because I didn't want to excavate them and possibly damage the plant. But without the roots, the drawing did not look complete. So, I added the tiny hairs between the segments.

Having been to Wave Hill twice with a friend, I am very grateful that I can exhibit a plant I saw growing there in the glasshouse.

Jane Hancock

Porcelain Berry, 2019

Ampelopsis brevipedunculata

Watercolor on paper
21 1/2 × 28 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,200

I began thinking about the challenges of painting a vine a few years before tackling this project. On one hand, I wanted to suggest the profusion of overlapping stems that fill one's field of vision. On the other hand, I wanted to show clearly the structure and forms of the plant. The composition would require careful planning.

I found a porcelain berry vine growing over a neighbor's fence and became a frequent visitor, photographing and snipping samples to sketch over several seasons. Assembling various drawings into a satisfying whole was a painstaking process.

After refining my sketches into careful drawings of complete stems, I traced each one individually onto tracing paper. I tried various arrangements of overlapping tracings, seeking to balance complexity with clarity. With the overall composition decided, I made many further adjustments to specific leaves, berries, and tendrils, while constantly referring to my original sketches and dozens of photos. Finally, I traced the entire taped-up image onto a single sheet of tracing paper, which became the source for my transfer onto watercolor paper.

Porcelain berry is a vine in the *Vitaceae* or grape family that was introduced from Asia to the U.S. in the 1870s. It is not well known in Minnesota, where I live, but it is widespread and invasive in the eastern U.S. and parts of the Midwest. Its sale and propagation are prohibited in many states. In spite of its problem status, it makes an intriguing subject. The leaves have several forms: heart-shaped, three-lobed, and five-lobed. The striking, speckled berries turn from green to shades of cream, pink, purple, and blue as they mature, and berries of various colors are sometimes found within single panicles.

Claudia Campazzo

Faded Rose, 2019

Rosa cv.

Watercolor on paper
20 × 21 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,000

Late last summer I was pruning a fragile rosebush that grows on the edge of my patio. This poor little bush was planted before my time at this house and has been neglected over the years. The adjoining plants encroach on its space relentlessly, yet the little bush keeps coming back with beautiful, pale-pink blooms. On that day, I held a fading rose in my hand, and its beautiful vulnerability struck me. At first, I was unsure of what to do with it. It felt as if moving just lightly would cause it to disintegrate. I gently sat down with my sketch book and pencils and tried to capture it. I also took several photos before the dying flower fell apart. I was sad to have lost such a gorgeous specimen, and I decided to paint it so that I could spend more time with it.

I used soft washes of pale pink, yellow, and peach colors for the petals, letting the pigment drift on its own in previously wetted surfaces. To give the petals the wrinkly texture of the dying rose, I enhanced the texture of the cold-pressed paper with soft brush strokes. In contrast, I worked on the fuzzy texture of the sepal, using a dry brush and bright greens and yellows.

Elaine Goldstone

3 Nepenthes, 2020

Nepenthes veitchii × *platychila*, *N. ventricosa*, *N. lowii* × *campanulata*

Watercolor on paper
18 × 21 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,100

Two years ago, I was introduced to carnivorous plants in *Sebastopol*, where I visited a large retail greenhouse that specializes in carnivorous plants. I was amazed at the variety of plants as well as the magical beauty of their colors and shapes. Carnivorous plants adapt to their challenging environments with very little soil and nutrients coming to the root structure, so they rely on photosynthesis and attract prey that becomes trapped in the plant. Prey usually consists of insects, but small mammals, amphibians, or even birds have been known to get caught and absorbed by carnivorous plants.

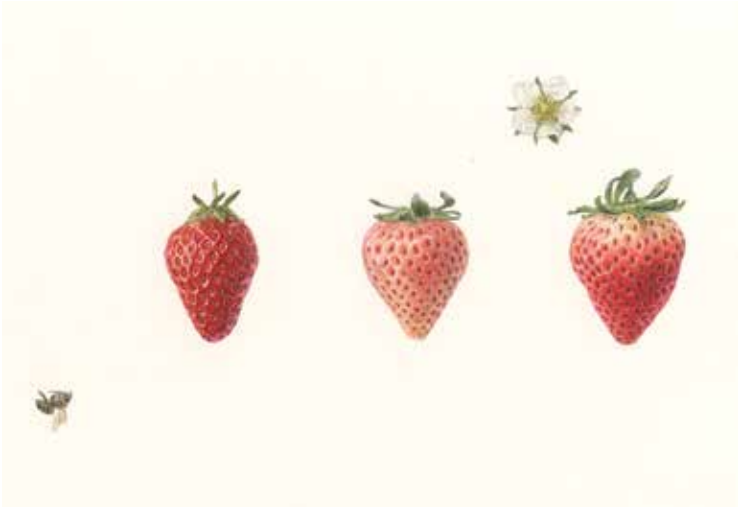
I now have a growing collection of carnivorous plants, including examples of *Sarracenia*, *Nepenthes*, *Drosera*, and *Pinguicula*. They are surprisingly easy to grow with the right conditions.

This painting of "3 Nepenthes" reflects my continuing study and wonder over these fascinating plants. I was inspired by the variety of tropical pitcher plants that exist in nature and the many more cultivars that growers have produced from them. Included in the painting are three varieties of highland (3,000 to 10,000 foot altitude) and highland cross plants. I chose them because they show the variety of shapes and colors that the genus can display.

The *Nepenthes* genus includes about 170 species as well as many natural and cultivated hybrids. Nepenthes are found in tropical and tropical montane regions in Asia and Australia; the greatest diversity is found in Borneo, Sumatra, and the Philippines, where there are many endemic species. Many species are rare or endangered du to habitat loss and poaching.

Nepenthes usually have a shallow root system and a stem that is either prostrate or climbing. In some species tendrils protruding from the tips of leaf aid climbing; at the end of the tendril a pitcher develops into a globe- or tube-shaped trap. In the trap the plant produces a sticky liquid that attracts but eventually drowns the prey; glands in the trap absorb nutrients from the prey. The pitcher may have one or more structural parts that keep the prey from escaping; for example, a slick, waxy coating; a slippery peristome or "lip." *Nepenthes* usually produce two types of pitchers, large, lower ones on the ground at the base of the plant, and upper or aerial pitchers as the plant grows taller. The complexities of the morphology can make the plants difficult to distinguish.

Asuka Hishiki



Strawberry, 2019

Fragaria × *ananassa*

Watercolor on paper
3 × 16 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$1,800

If you are in the supermarket in spring here in Japan, you will find several different varieties of strawberry in the fruit and vegetable section. Then, let's say, you move to the next market just a few blocks apart, and you will also find several different varieties of strawberry packages. However, the varieties can be completely, utterly different from the varieties at the previous market. We Japanese love strawberries. Yes, I think it is one of the cutest fruits although it can be a bit grotesque looking if you see it up close and spend too much time together staring at it. The middle-priced package normally tastes great. Let me tell you, Japanese strawberries are very flavorful and taste really, really good! If you come to visit us, please add "eating strawberries" to your trip do-to-list. A package contains six to 15 strawberries and costs five to 15 USD, depending on the size and variety. Of course, there are super luxury ones. The strawberries sit in a fashionable box in a department store…I didn't pay too much attention to strawberry varieties until this came under my radar for my next painting. I searched a bit and found there are about 300 varieties registered at the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, and there may be about half of them at the market right now. At least I found 86 varieties are surely available. Then I thought of the line between natural and artificial, and whether those strawberries are natural products or our artificial invention. Improving the breed is essential to our survival. That is one of the very important solutions of sustainable agriculture, producing the maximum food from a limited source, and possibly resistance from disease and insect invasion, and hopefully, more tasty, more desirable, more popular, more commercially successful products…Thanks to the effort, we can have tasty and reasonably priced fruits and vegetables at our dinner table. Yet, I cannot stop thinking if somehow, we have crossed a fine line? Between candy like a sweet strawberry and a $100 jewel like a dozen strawberries sitting in a luxury gift box at the department store showcase.

Suddenly I was confused. So, I added a flower and a pollinator, and pondered again. Then, eating the delicious middle priced strawberries, and sitting face to face with my strawberry painting, I pondered more. It is easy to say something reasonable or point out the problem, but it is not easy to find the answer.

Jane Fisher

American Basswood Leaf, 2020

Tilia americana

Graphite and colored pencil on paper
15 3/4 × 16 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,000

For several years I have been fascinated by drawing leaves, often a single leaf that for some reason intrigues me enough to spend many hours trying to capture it. Two years ago I had a drawing of an oak leaf in this exhibition. At the time my husband and I were moving from our home of 28 years, and I had very little time to draw. But when I managed to sneak away, it was comforting to lose myself in the endless detail of the leaf.

This year the situation could not be more different. Comfortably settled in our new home and in the middle of a pandemic, I had nothing but time on my hands. Once again drawing was a comforting escape from reality. I will always associate this basswood leaf with the pandemic, and I am grateful for the focus it required of me when it was hard to get away from stories of illness and hardship. I'm guessing that many of us had this experience and felt fortunate to retreat to painting or drawing.

Yuan Yuan Wang

Super Hot 2, 2020

Capsicum chinense 'Chocolate Champion'

Colored pencil on paper
13 1/2 × 13 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,200

I was browsing around the Union Square farmers market in New York City last fall when a stand with a variety of hot peppers caught my eye. I was struck by the visual diversity of the peppers which seemed to cover a rainbow spectrum of colors. I was also enamored to see obnoxiously bumpy specimens. I ended up picking out a variety based on visual interest. The names caught my attention as well, some of which included 'Carolina Reaper,' 'Apocalypse Scorpion' and 'Chocolate Champion.' When I was paying for the peppers, the cashier eyed me and said, "Very spicy." I nodded and said, "Great!'"

Looking back, there really should have been a warning sign next to these peppers with some kind of disclosure. Perhaps the names should have tipped me off. I was not aware at the time that rattling around in my backpack on the subway to home were some of the spiciest pepper varieties in the world. On my mind was simply the fantastic chili I would cook with these peppers.

When I got home, I was eager to show off my finds to my partner, who immediately looked up just how spicy the peppers were. Turns out the Chocolate Champion pepper drawn here is within range of 1.6 million Scovilles on the Scoville scale of heat units! To give you a comparison, typical grocery store jalapeños range from 2000 to 8000 Scovilles.

I still made a chili that week as planned but put an extremely small amount of spicy pepper into it. Armed with plastic gloves, I cut up a 'Chocolate Champion' into tiny pieces and marinated it in some olive oil. Just a drop of this spiced up my whole pot of chili and added a very unique and addictive earthy flavor.

I am so glad I finally took a colored pencil class this past winter at the The New York Botanical Garden. I have always considered myself a painter and never really gave colored pencil a chance. Just like with the application of watercolor, layer upon layer can be applied with colored pencils to create subtleties and depth. My darkest shadows in this piece were built up by mixing extremely vivid complementary colors together over many, many layers.

I chose to draw this particular 'Chocolate Champion' because of its ultra-bumpy texture and curled up claw-like shape. I hope its unique form and earthy red colors capture and intrigue you, as it did me!

Susan Tomlinson

The Evolution of Cotton, 2020
Honorable Mention

Gossypiodes kirkii, *Gossypium arboreum*, *Gossypium herbaceum*, *Gossypium hirsutum*, *Gossypium barbadense*

Watercolor on paper
12 1/2 × 23 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,000

From the air, the landscape surrounding my hometown looks like a big patchwork quilt. As it happens, that quilt is made of cotton—about four million acres worth of it. So, it is little wonder that Lubbock, Texas, is an epicenter of cotton research. In fact, when I recently began a search for an heirloom species of cotton, I needed only to turn to... my tennis doubles partner, whose husband happened to be a cotton scientist. He, in turn, pointed me in the direction of another scientist who had not just heirloom species growing in the Texas A&M greenhouse north of town, but a rare specimen of what might be the very first ancestor of all cotton, *Gossypiodes kirkii*. She in turn pointed me to my own campus, Texas Tech University, and to Dr. Zhixin Xie, who was studying the genetic evolution of modern cotton. In his greenhouse was a treasure trove of cotton trees.

That is right. The plant in the wild is a tree, not the stubby little shrub that many of us associate with cotton, including me. In spite of spending most of my adult life in cotton country, it turns out there is much I have to learn about this plant. And over the course of the weeks that I was granted access to Dr. Xie's greenhouse, several of the species bloomed, allowing me a rare opportunity to witness the life cycle of each species there, and create sketches of them on site.

There are some mysteries about the evolution of modern cotton, but this much we seem to know: modern cotton, *Gossypium hirsutum* and *G. barbadense* (pima cotton) are the direct descendants of three species, *G. arboreum*, *G. herbaceum*, and *G. raimondii*. And while there is strong speculation that *Gossypiodes kirkii* is the original ancestor, it is not known for certain. Each of these species has subtle, but notable differences in the morphology of their bolls. In this painting, showing the evolution of cotton as we currently understand it, I was able to demonstrate these differences with specimens from all but *G. raimondii*. While the plant flowered, it did not set a boll, which is not uncommon for this species. I could not find a source for a boll anywhere else, so sadly could not paint it. Included in the painting are, in order, *Gossypiodes kirkii*, *Gossypium arboreum*, *Gossypium herbaceum*, *Gossypium hirsutum*, and *Gossypium barbadense*.

Ingrid Finnan

Fan Leaved Boophone, 2020
Wave Hill Best in Show

Boophone disticha

Oil on paper
20 1/2 × 20 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy of the artist

$2,000 / SOLD

I discovered this unusual bulb with its glorious fan-shaped crown in 2012 at Wave Hill. The potted bulb sat on a narrow ledge at eye level in the conservatory. I was immediately captivated by it and returned a number of times with pencil, paper, and camera to fully capture it. (Wave Hill is about one mile from my home, and I was—before Covid-19—a frequent visitor.)

My references were set aside until this themed show renewed my interest in the *Boophone disticha* as the perfect specimen to turn to.

The only possible view to paint was frontal, as it was positioned on the ledge in the conservatory, to capture the round bulb crowned by the "flat" fan of leaves. I painted it to scale, but in its natural habitat in tropical and sub-tropical Africa, the plant can grow much larger.

Boophone, roughly translated from Greek, means ox-killer, because the juice in the above-ground bulb is poisonous. In a controlled setting the juice also has medicinal uses.

I'm not sure if or how this piece relates to my body of work, other than that my work is eclectic—I paint whatever catches my eye.

The plants depicted in the artworks below can be found in various gardens throughout the grounds. The gardens where these plants can be found are listed under each artist's name.

North Gallery

John Pastoriza-Pinol *Pomegranate*
Herb Garden

Gaye Grossman *Morning Glory Frieze*
Wild Garden

Constance Scanlon *Crabapples × 6 Redux*
Wild Garden

Center Gallery

Jeanne Reiner *Oakleaf Hydrangea Nearing the End*
Shade Border

Sengmany Phommachakr *Bitter Melon*
Herb Garden

Terri Munroe *Dried Date Palm Petiole*
Aquatic Garden and Monocot Garden

Andreas Hentrich *Nelumbo nucifera (Disc 20)*
Aquatic Gardenand Monocot Garden

South Gallery

Pat Giancontieri *Blackberry Lily*
Aquatic Garden, Monocot Garden and Wild Garden

Mary Crabtree *Autumn at Pond's Edge*
Aquatic Garden and Monocot Garden

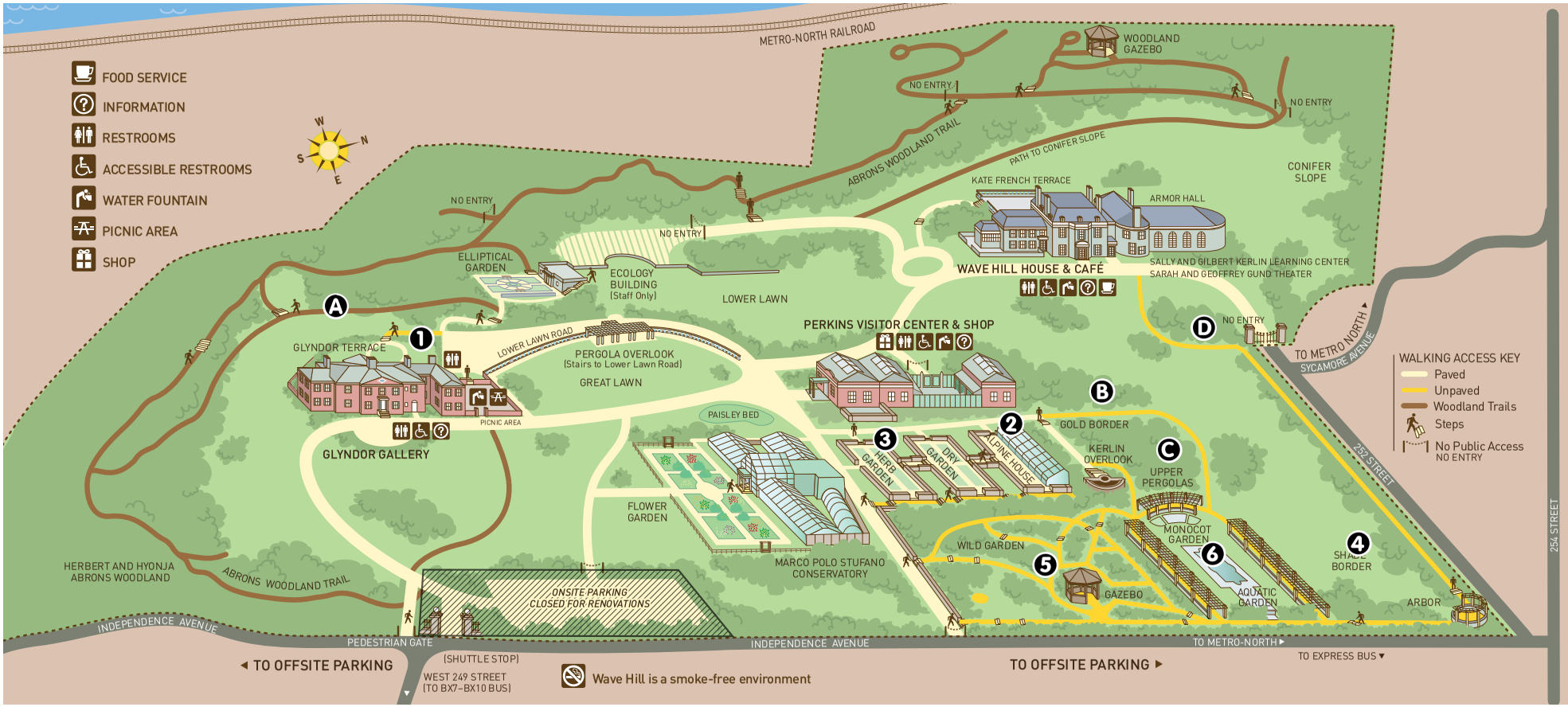
Susan Tomlinson *The Evolution of Cotton*
Herb Garden

Meryl Sheetz *Teasel*
Herb Garden

Cynthia Rice *Dragon Kale*
Herb Garden

Ingrid Finnan *Fan Leaved Boophone*
Alpine House

Seongweon Ahn *Lime Aide Taro*
Aquatic Garden and Monocot Garden



Key to Outdoor Installations and Plants Portrayed in *M for Membrane* and *ASBA 23rd International*

Use this map to see examples of plants (or closely related plants) featured in the exhibitions. Look for green plant labels in each of the gardens listed here.

Please note: as the season progresses, certain plants may go dormant or be removed to their winter storage locations and may not be on view.

Pre-Estate Trees

Ⓐ *Quercus rubra* (Red Oak)
Portrait (Red Oak Tree), 2020

Ⓑ *Acer saccharum* (Sugar Maple)
Portrait (Sugar Maple Tree), 2020

Ⓒ *Ulmus americana* (American Elm)
Portrait (American Elm Tree), 2020

Ⓓ *Prunus serotina* (Black Cherry)
Portrait (Black Cherry Tree), 2020

Gracelee Lawrence

❶ *The Other Escapes, the Ones You Can Open in Yourself*

❷ Alpine House

Boophone disticha
(Fan-leaved Boophone)

❸ Herb Garden

Punica granatum ‘Nana’
(Dwarf Pomegranate)

Gossypium herbaceum ‘Nigrum’
(Dark-Leaved Cotton)

Momordica species (Bitter Melon)

Dipsacus fullonum (Teasel)

Brassica oleracea cultivar (Kale)

❹ Shade Border

Hydrangea quercifolia
(Oakleaf Hydrangea)

❺ Wild Garden

Ipomoea cultivar (Morning Glory)

Malus floribunda
(Japanese Crabapple)

Iris domestica (Blackberry Lily)

❻ Aquatic and Monocot Garden

Iris domestica (Blackberry Lily)

Typha angustifolia (Cattail)

Phoenix roebelenii
(Pygmy Date Palm)

Colocasia esculenta (Taro)

Nelumbo nucifera (Lotus)

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