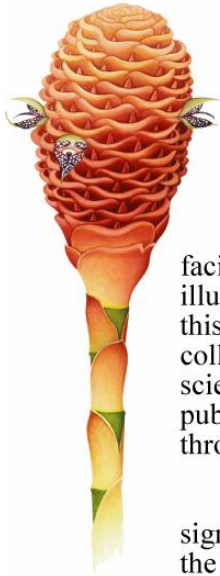


*The Smithsonian Center
for
Botanical Art
and
Illustration*



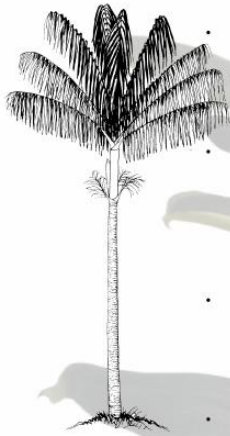
THE SMITHSONIAN CENTER FOR BOTANICAL ART AND ILLUSTRATION



The *Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* is proposed as a unique facility to promote, develop and curate the collections of botanical art and illustration at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. The goals of this new *Center* will be to encourage and enable the formation of critical collaborations between contemporary botanical artists and leading research scientists, cultivate public appreciation of botanical art through exhibits, publications, and events, and preserve the rich tradition of botanical illustration through the establishment of a permanent Smithsonian collection.

The *Smithsonian Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* will bring the significant addition of botanical art, historical documents, and related objects to the U.S. National Herbarium, one of the world's preeminent collections of natural history botanical specimens, and the Botany and Horticulture Library in the Department of Botany.

At the core of the *Smithsonian Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* will be the following programs:



- **The Botanical Art and Illustration Archives.** This new division of the U.S. National Collections will include works of art, historical volumes, scientific documents, and other objects related to botanical art scholarship.
- **Smithsonian Curator of Botanical Art and Illustration.** This endowed position will ensure long-term care of the Botanical Art and Illustration Archives, promote the advancement of botanical art, and emphasize its importance to science and culture.
- **Botanical Art and Illustration Exhibit.** An annual exhibit for the public will feature botanical artists and art at the Museum and at partner institutions in the Washington area.
- **Smithsonian Botanical Art and Illustration Workshop.** This international forum, to be held at the National Museum of Natural History, will bring artists, illustrators and scientists together to collaborate on joint projects, to share advances in scientific illustration, and to encourage artistic growth and partnerships in the field of botanical arts.
- **Smithsonian Award for Excellence in Botanical Art and Illustration.** This award, to be presented during the Botanical Arts Workshop, will honor contemporary artists and encourage excellence in the field of botanical art and scholarship.
- **Botanical Artists-in-Residence.** Visiting artists will spend six to twelve months at the Center interacting with staff and scientists in the Department of Botany to further the goals of art and science.

The Smithsonian Center for Botanical Art and Illustration at the National Museum of Natural History Washington, DC

The *Smithsonian Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* preserves the rich tradition of botanical illustration, cultivates public knowledge and appreciation of botanical art and science, enables pioneering research in botany, and fosters critical collaboration between artists and leading research scientists around the world.

Over five thousand works of important botanical art that are currently maintained by the Museum's Department of Botany and will be archived at the *Smithsonian Center*. The scope of the botanical art collection is expected to grow as the *Center* develops its programs and activities. In conjunction with the 4.7 million plant specimens in the United States National Herbarium (a preeminent assembly of botanical collections and objects) and the Botany and Horticulture Library (one of the largest plant science and taxonomic literature resources in the country) the core collection of art and scientific illustrations curated by the *Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* will function as an international nucleus to bring together science and art for the professional and the public.

The *Smithsonian Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* is part of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, the world's leading natural history museum. With its distinguished partners, the United States Botanic Garden, the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Corcoran College of Art & Design, and the National Gallery of Art, the *Smithsonian Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* will bring together the botanical sciences and art through a series of programs and activities including public exhibitions and workshops for artists, classes in art and illustration, an annual award of recognition for contributions to the field of botanical art, and facilities for promoting the interaction of the arts and sciences.



Background and Breadth of the Smithsonian's Botanical Art and Illustration Collection

The first United States Exploring Expedition returned to Washington in 1842 with thousands of natural history specimens and hundreds of original illustrations of the plants and animals observed during the four year journey around the world. This early documentation of the natural and cultural history of the Earth became the foundation of the Smithsonian Institution founded in 1846. The United States National Herbarium was created to study the 50,000 plant specimens collected during the Exploring Expedition and formed the basis of the Smithsonian's Department of Botany that has grown into a world renowned center for the botanical sciences. Currently the Department houses 16 scientists conducting research around the world, over 4.7 million well-documented plant specimens, the Botany and Horticulture Library, and facilities for carrying out modern investigations in the plant sciences.

Since the mid-1800's the collection of botanical art and illustration, which serve to document the plant species discovered and described by Smithsonian botanists, has grown to include thousands of pen and ink drawings as well as watercolor renditions of plants. Currently a database of each art work is being developed that will provide a complete listing of our collection. Although the majority of these works of art are housed at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, many are maintained off-campus at other institutions due to lack of space and personnel to curate them on-site.

Currently 3400 illustrations are listed in the Botanical Art Catalogue at NMNH with another 2100 illustrations yet to be inventoried. In addition nearly 4800 illustrations are on temporary loan to the Hunt Institute in Pittsburgh. The collection at NMNH includes 22 Margaret Mee paintings, 50 Frederick A. Walpole drawings and paintings, and 311 watercolors by M.E. Eaton from the 4 volume work, "The Cactaceae", by Britton and Rose. Nearly 2700 pen and ink drawings, 550 watercolors and 150 other graphic media are represented in the collection.



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Structure of the Center: The Botanical Art and Illustration Archives

The time has now come to consolidate our botanical art and illustration collections in a centralized state-of-the-art facility in direct proximity to our scientific staff and plant collections in the Department of Botany. The *Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* will be a new division within the Department that will parallel the U.S. National Herbarium and the Botany and Horticulture Library. The *Center Archives* will include art works, historical volumes, scientific documents, and other objects related to botanical art and scholarship. Currently the Department of Botany occupies the fourth and fifth floors of the West Wing of the National Museum of Natural History. An approximately 3,000 sq ft area will be renovated within the Department to house the *Center*. This location will promote interaction between our plant scientists and staff with the botanical artists and guests visiting the *Center* as well as integrate our program of botanical illustration with the other botanical facilities in the Department, including the Library and Herbarium. The *Center* will be placed within close proximity to public access, although it will be open to non-professionals on an appointment-only basis.

The *Center for Botanical Art and Illustration* will include a well-lit studio for use by our resident Botanical Illustrator and visiting artists, a small classroom for teaching and workshops, a laboratory for processing illustrations and artwork, an office for the Curator of Botanical Art, and a 2,200 square foot compactorized and climate-controlled archival subdivision for housing the collection of botanical art and illustration. All works of art will be data-based, digitally imaged, and directly accessible for use by artists and scientists.



Programs and Activities of the Center

Public learning will include events, programs, and exhibits in the Washington area, across the nation, and on-line to share the history of botanical art and science as well as recent discoveries from the field.

The Annual Botanical Art and Illustration Exhibit will allow the public to access and experience the art work currently archived in the *Center* as well as those held by individuals and other institutions around the world. The exhibit will be shown within the National Museum of Natural History or at one of the local Washington area partner institutions, including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the National Gallery of Art, and the United States Botanic Garden. It is anticipated that each year, the Botanical Art Exhibit will focus on a particular theme that may range from a particular group or kind of plant, a specific geographic region, or a type of illustration technique. The Exhibit will be developed by the Curator of Botanical Art and guest artists.



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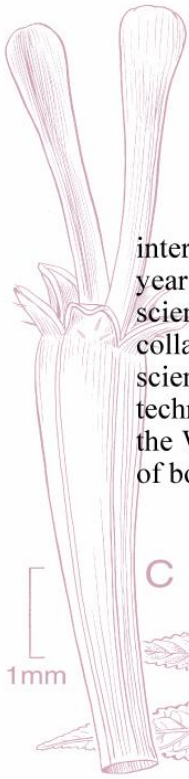
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Programs and Activities of the Center

The **Smithsonian Botanical Art and Illustration Workshop**, an international gathering held at the National Museum of Natural History every two years, will bring artists, illustrators, and scientists together to share advances in science and natural history illustration as well as encourage artistic growth and collaboration in the field of botanical arts. A week-long summit of artists with scientists will convene to explore programs and instruction in various fields and techniques. The Workshop will end with a dinner hosted by the *Center* to include the Workshop participants, Department scientists, as well as guests and supporters of botanical art at our partner institutions in Washington.



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Programs and Activities of the Center

The Smithsonian Award for Excellence in Botanical Art and Illustration will honor and encourage excellence in the field of botanical art and scholarship. No formal competition will be held for the award; rather the recipient will be selected by an outside committee who will make the award based on long-term achievements and contributions to the field of botanical art and illustration. Similar to the Department's annual Jose Cuatrecasas Award for Excellence in Tropical Botany, the Award for Excellence will take the form of an engraved medal and be presented at a formal dinner culminating the Smithsonian Botanical Arts Workshop.



Programs and Activities of the Center

Artists-in-Residence will be encouraged to spend six to twelve months each year at the Center to interact with scientists at the Smithsonian and other artists at our partner institutions. Studio space and access to the botanical art collections will be provided to each Artist-in-Residence who will be expected to develop a portfolio during their tenure that will be exhibited at the conclusion of the semester. Funds will be provided by the **Center** to each Artist for travel and living expenses; candidates will be selected by a committee chaired by the Curator of Botanical Art.



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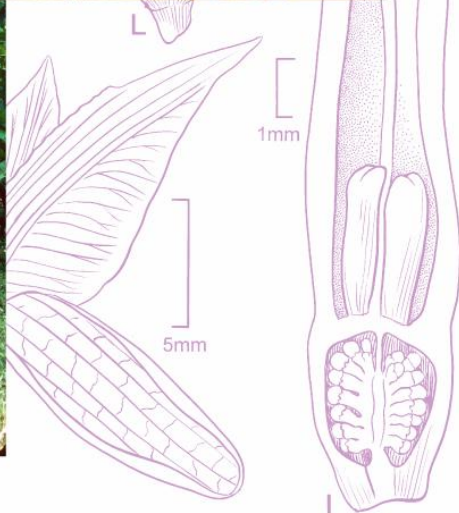


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Administration and Staffing of the Center

In order to insure the proper care and accessibility of the artwork maintained by the *Center*, a permanent **Endowed Chair for the Curator of Botanical Art and Illustration** will be established in conjunction with the physical construction of the *Center Archives*. The Curator for Botanical Art will be responsible to advance the field of botanical art, to safeguard the *Archives*, and to share the richness of these collections with scholars and the public. The Curator will be trained in botanical art and best practice management of artwork, will be responsible for the day to day operation of the *Center* and its activities, will maintain the art and illustrations database, and will report directly to the Chairman of the Department of Botany. It is anticipated that the Curator will hold a Masters or Doctoral degree in art and be selected by a search committee that will conduct a review of international applications.

The **Botanical Illustrator**, a federally supported position currently within the Department of Botany, will work within the *Center* and continue to interact with research scientists in providing botanical illustrations for scientific documentation and publication. In addition the Illustrator will work with the Curator of Botanical Art to promote the activities of the *Center*, including public exhibitions, classes, and workshops.



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