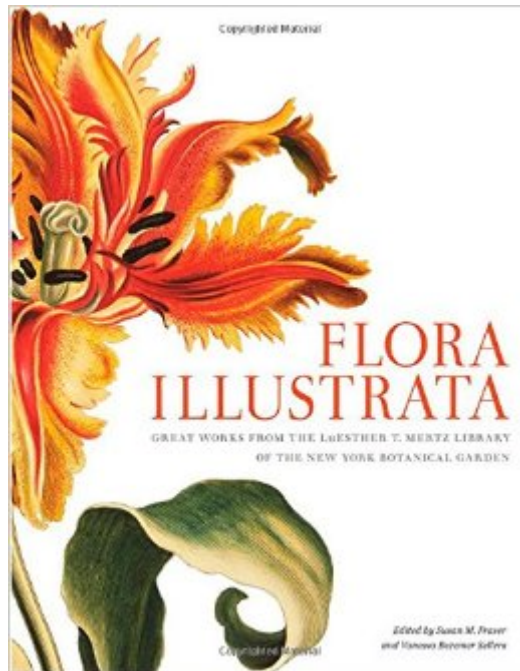


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Flora Illustrata: Great Works From The LuEsther T. Mertz Library Of The New York Botanical Garden



Synopsis

An exquisitely illustrated volume in celebration of the world's foremost library of botanical works. The renowned LuEsther T. Mertz Library of The New York Botanical Garden counts among its holdings many of the most beautiful and pioneering botanical and horticultural works ever created. More than eight centuries of knowledge, from the twelfth century to the present, are represented in the library's collection of over one million items. In this sumptuously illustrated volume, international experts introduce us to some of the library's most fascinating works—exceedingly rare books, stunning botanical artworks, handwritten manuscripts, Renaissance herbals, nursery catalogs, explorers' notebooks, and more. The contributors hold these treasures up for close inspection and offer surprising insights into their histories and importance. The diverse materials showcased in the volume reflect the creative efforts of eminent explorers, scientists, artists, publishers, and print makers. From the rare, illuminated pages of Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis historia* (1483), to the earliest book ever published on American insects (1797), to lovely etchings of the water gardens at Villa Pratolino in Florence (1600s), the Mertz Library holdings will inspire in readers a new appreciation for the extraordinary history of botany and its far-reaching connections to the worlds of science, books, art, and culture.

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Customer Reviews

Flora Illustrata is an intellectual and aesthetic feast for both gourmands and gourmets of gardens,

and will satisfy many other tastes as well; within these pages are history and science--the history of science, of art, of botany and pharmacy, of gardens and garden design, of book illustration and production; even the history of museum and library curation, philanthropy, and civic life. In short, here we have a work to celebrate and cherish for many years to come, and an example of the elegant perfection that can ensue when people of different disciplines collaborate to create; this is a work of love as well as of art and science, engaging all the senses as well as the mind. Honestly, Miss Em is trying not to be giddy, but it's not working. She was unaware, growing up in the wilds, that one can travel a mere two thousand miles to New York's Botanical Garden and be almost as happy as traveling the 5,000 miles to Kew Gardens in London. She was unaware of the presence of these rich treasures of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library of the New York Botanical Garden, acquired in those dizzying years of the expanding American Empire, reaching back to Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis historia* (1483), to especially rare etchings of the water gardens at Villa Pratolino in Florence (1600s), to books that depict the exploration of South America. *Flora Illustrata* highlights key works spanning more than eight centuries, from rare manuscripts and iconic books to Renaissance herbals, precious botanical drawings, elegant engravings, explorers' notebooks, and more. Lilies and lettuces, librarians and landscape theorists, explorers, scientists, philanthropists and shopkeepers, the history of New York and the world--all glimpsed and touched upon in these pages.

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