

Women, Botany and Art

On view through October 4, 2014

Stark Museum of Art

712 Green Avenue, Orange, Texas 77630

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Elizabeth Blackwell:

Elizabeth Blackwell began producing an herbal as a way to make income since her husband Alexander was in debtor's prison. An herbal is a collection of descriptions of plants put together for medicinal purposes – a book containing the names and descriptions of plants, usually with information on their virtues or properties. For her two-volume publication, this English artist drew over 500 plants, prepared the text, engraved the plates and colored the engravings. Her book had a practical intention and the herbal provided information about the use of plants, especially in addressing illnesses. Blackwell depicted the Iris, and she recommended an extract from the root for “dropsy, jaundice and ague.” The genus of Iris includes nearly 300 species found exclusively in the Northern Hemisphere.

Henriette Antoinette Vincent:

Henriette Antoinette Vincent produced several books depicting flowers and fruits. The works of this French artist were primarily decorative and were valued for their beauty. This English version combined two of her books, and the text provides advice for other artists who aspire to paint flowers. Vincent depicted the Narcissus, a genus of flowering plants. Common names include daffodil, jonquil, and narcissus.

Mary Vaux Walcott:

Mary Vaux Walcott spent many years traveling to document North American wildflowers. This American artist trekked in the Rocky Mountains in search of rare plants. The Smithsonian Institution published her North American Wildflowers and reproduced 400 of her watercolors in five volumes. The Smithsonian also published her portfolio of pitcher plants, which are carnivorous plants. The plant she identified as *Sarracenia sledgei* Macfarlane is referred to today as *Sarracenia alata* (Alph. Wood) Alph. Wood. Its common name is pale pitcher plant or yellow trumpet. Text in Walcott's book said that this plant could be found in Louisiana and in Texas.

This exhibition is included with general admission; Members free.