

Spring Exhibition

21 April — 20 June 1969

Graphics

Mr. Peter Takal

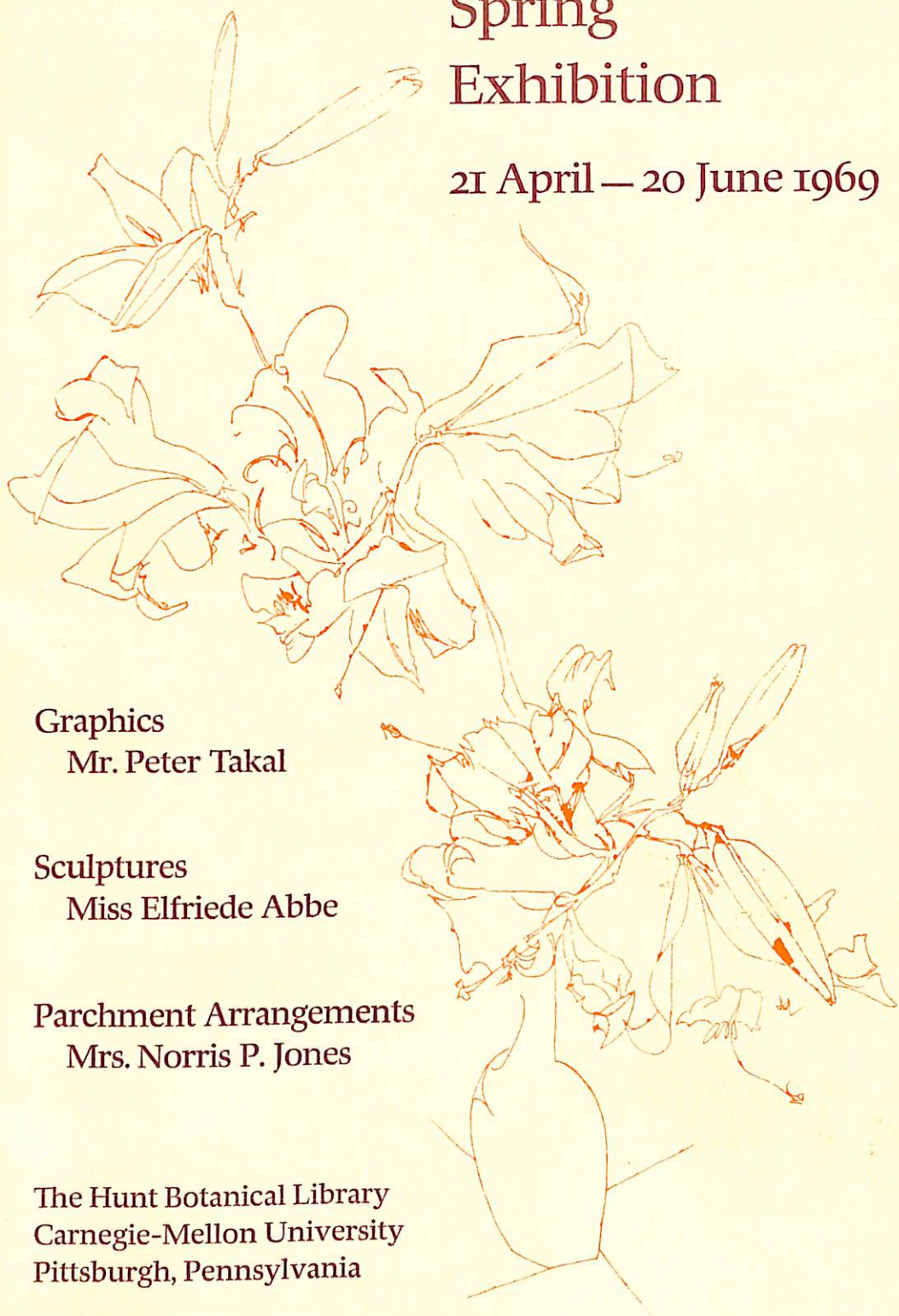
Sculptures

Miss Elfriede Abbe

Parchment Arrangements

Mrs. Norris P. Jones

The Hunt Botanical Library
Carnegie-Mellon University
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Spring
Exhibition

21 April — 20 June 1969

The Hunt Botanical Library
Carnegie-Mellon University
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Peter Takal, 1968

1938 he emigrated to this country in 1939. Here, in the years up to 1953, Takal did commercial illustrations and fabric designs (see No. 43) in New York City, while continuing his own development toward maturity as a creative artist. In 1945 he acquired the farm at Saylorburg, Pennsylvania, which was to become his main base of operations, and by 1953 he was able to free himself completely from the demands of commercial work and to devote himself to creative graphics.

Recognition has been general, in America and abroad. There have been over 40 solo exhibitions in such cities as Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Mexico City, Florence, Bremen, Frankfurt, Hanover, Morocco, Algiers, Casablanca. In 1954-58, the Duveen-Graham Gallery sent a traveling exhibition of his work to museums and galleries in 15 cities; in 1959-60 the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service gave wide circulation to selections from the rich exhibition - Recent Work of Peter Takal - shown in 1958 at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Through the Ford Foundation he received a Tamarind Fellowship, a project which has done so much in recent years to foster the development of lithography as a medium for creative artists. From his sessions at the Tamarind workshop in Los Angeles, there issued a suite of 20 lithographs - Of Nature, Of Man, in 1963-64 (see Nos. 57, 61). In 1965 the

American Federation of Arts made his services available in its Artists-in-Residence-in-Museums program. Honors and awards have been frequent in Takal's career. They bear witness to widespread recognition of an authentic artist.

In his singular dedication to drawing, Peter Takal honors perhaps man's oldest and most basic form of visual expression. The lines scratched in the image of a bison in a dim prehistoric cave, and the lines carrying the action of Dick Tracy's latest misadventure to millions of homes today are manifestations of a mode that has served man's pictorial needs in all ages. Drawing has been an essential tool in the long evolutionary process by which man has learned to see, to interpret, and to delineate the physical world. As such, its role has often been a subordinate one for the craftsman, the designer, the painter, or sculptor. But drawing also has been admired for its intrinsic virtue as the most direct, spontaneous and intimate expression of the artist's personality. Drawing has long held the attention of collectors, but only in this century has it gained general acceptance as a self-sufficient mode of expression. Indeed, in the 40 years since Takal launched his career, "quite lonely as a draftsman," he has seen a noticeable increase in public interest.

Peter Takal is nearly as much poet as draftsman, and his message - strange among current negative tendencies, in which as he has said "beauty is almost sacrilegious in the Temple of No" - celebrates the natural world in a modest, persistent voice. But for him the subject is a pretext for self-expression. The artist and his "how," not the "what," is the important ingredient. Without contact with the outside world, however, expression would be too cerebral, too intellectually abstract. He aims beyond the intellect to deeper modes of knowing, calling on his resources of insight, emotion, and imagination in intuitive response to the images before him. For this purpose, any and all subjects would suffice. Confined to a cell, he says, he would still find some excuse to draw - even the merest crack in a wall. Nevertheless, landscape, and particularly plants and flowers, have increasingly engaged Takal. To paraphrase his words - Flowers are the only things that man takes from nature without ulterior motive ... he uses them to glorify events. Flowers, as a starting point, already contain their own symbolic and emotional meaning for man. Plants - from splendid lily to lowly weed - inhabit Takal's art in profusion: growing in fields, composed as bouquets, or casually held in glass tumblers. Carefully delineated or

rapidly sketched, as the occasion demands, they are structures, patterns, symbols, tokens. Queen Anne's Lace is a favorite. "The variety of this weed, with its scroll-like and straight lines, the striving or limp attitudes of its flowers, their expanded or folded parasols, the display of pomp and the absence of parallel lines often attracted me." (Recent Work of Peter Takal, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1958.)

Botanical description is far from his purpose. Indeed, the last six items in this catalogue cannot be assigned securely to any genus. They remain no less botanical. Often what seems to interest him is not so much the appearance as the process: growth, decay, living matter affected by accident or hostile environment. To quote again from Recent Work of Peter Takal "the poetry of matter, transformed under the influence of the elements and time, is the subject." His eye picks out the odd, unexpected detail - a few beets, lettuce leaves or onion skins, a vase of wilted cut flowers that you or I would have thrown out yesterday, the intricate pattern of tree bark seen close-up, a glimpse out the window through a grille of desiccated rose canes. Or he combines the seemingly incongruous: a vase of flowers set on the ground in a landscape - perhaps the lingering strains of surrealism, by now well sublimated. It is striking how much of the world of plants lends itself to Takal's personal calligraphy.

Characteristic of the appeal of line drawing in general, and richly evident in Takal's draftsmanship, is the sheer excitement of motion, a physical act immediately felt as the gesture of hand and tool moving over paper in disciplined performance of the artist's choreography. We glide along the great arc of a Takal line, lightly as a skater; or we follow the slap-dash of lines, marks, dots, jabs, and jiggles seemingly exploded on paper in an instantaneous burst of energy. The beholder's reaction is kinetic, independent of subject. But this artist's line rhythms, tranquil or vibrantly staccato, are always under control in the service of a lyrical celebration of the natural world. His line is richly descriptive of the textures of nature, but can also be marvelously evocative of the intangible elements of motion, light, atmosphere, achieved through an economy of means, an exploitation of blank areas that suggests Chinese painting. If drawing is intrinsically expressive, it is also the most self-revealing mode. Takal's avoidance of trivial mannerism, belabored rendering, and meretricious technical display, is a measure of the integrity of his art.

Print making has occupied Takal from the early years of his career. He has favored those media affording the most direct transcription of his draftsmanship - lithography, which repeats a design drawn freely on stone or zinc, and drypoint, in which the artist uses a hard-pointed stylus (steel, or diamond) to score the metal plate in a manner much more akin to drawing than to traditional line engraving, where the burin scoops out grooves in the plate surface. In his hands, the electric power drill has been a particularly responsive drawing tool. Numbers 11, 59, and 63 exemplify that nice balance between control and spontaneity which makes his drillpoint prints so attractive. One must agree with the artist that his prints owe their success to drawings they represent. They could with accuracy be termed "drawing prints."

Whatever the technique, Peter Takal's graphic art, as displayed in this exhibition, speaks eloquently for a perceptive and accomplished artist. Above all, the exhibition stands as an invitation to the beholder, an invitation in which the Hunt Botanical Library is proud to join.

This exhibition has been made possible through the generous cooperation of Mr. Peter Takal, who made his works available, aided in the selection, and furnished information about his works and himself. A portion of the above is derived from an interview of Peter Takal taped by George Lawrence.

9 April 1969

John V. Brindle
Curator of Prints



No. 4. Iris and grass

Explanatory Notes

All works are lent by the artist, except for items cited as from the Hunt Botanical Library collection.

All works are signed, except as noted.

Dimensions are cited in inches - height first, then width.

1. Vase in landscape - Milkweed and grasses [Asclepias sp., Rumex sp., Bromus sp.]
Lithograph on zinc. Mat opening 28 3/8" x 20 1/4". 1956.
2. Cauliflower [Brassica oleracea var. botrytis]
Pen and ink on gray paper. Sheet: 19 5/8" x 25 3/4". March, 1961.
3. Wilted peonies in jar [Paeonia officinalis]
Pen and ink, heightened with white, on pale orange prepared ground. Sheet: 28 1/2" x 22 1/2". July, 1966. From the Hunt Botanical Library Collection.
4. Iris and grass [Iris sp., Andropogon sp. (?)]
Pen and sepia, heightened with white, on blue gray prepared ground. Sheet: 28 1/2" x 22 1/2". June, 1968.
5. Falling maple leaves [Acer sp.]
Pen and lithographic ink on gray paper. Sheet: 27 1/8" x 19 3/4". November, 1961.
6. Peony pods [Paeonia officinalis]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 17" x 13 3/4". July, 1966.
7. Beets [Beta vulgaris]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 13 5/8" x 20 5/8". July, 1960.
8. Winter vetch [Vicia villosa]
Pen and brown ink. Sheet: 17" x 13 5/8". Unsigned, July, 1968.

9. Curly dock and barley, in two vases [Rumex crispus, Hordeum vulgare]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 17 5/8" x 15". July, 1957.
10. Poppies in vase [Papaver somniferum]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 19 3/4" x 25 3/4". April, 1961. Hunt Botanical Library collection.
11. Winter - Queen Anne's lace over landscape [Daucus carota]
Drypoint engraving (diamond, and power drill). Plate mark 19 3/4" x 15 3/4". 1963.
12. Wilted poppy in pitcher [Papaver sp.]
Pen and sepia with water color wash. Mat opening 17" x 3 3/8". June, 1957.
13. Herbs and grasses [Geum canadense, Panicum sp., Prunella vulgaris]
Pen and bistre on light brown prepared ground. Sheet: 22 1/2" x 28 1/2". July, 1968.
14. Queen Anne's lace in glass [Daucus carota]
Pen and ink and bistre, on beige prepared ground. Sheet: 19 5/8" x 25 7/8". August, 1964.



15. Closed garden window - Rose canes, wild oats [Rosa sp., Avena fatua]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 24 7/8" x 19". 1957.
16. Rose-of-China [Hibiscus rosa-chinensis]
Pen and ink heightened with white, on beige paper. Sheet: 26 1/8" x 20". July, 1959.
17. Lettuce leaves [Lactuca sativum cv.]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 13" x 18 3/4". June, 1961.

No. 9. Curly dock and barley

18. Oriental poppies [Papaver orientale]
Pen and ink with wash, on gray prepared ground. Sheet: 13 1/2" x 18 1/2". June, 1963.
19. Tawny day-lilies in vase [Hemerocallis fulva]
Reed pen and sepia with water color wash. Sheet: 24 7/8" x 19". May, 1957.
20. Bougainvillea in vase [Bougainvillea sp.]
Pen and ink with water color wash on warm gray paper. Sheet: 26 1/8" x 20 1/8". July, 1959. From the Hunt Botanical Library collection.
21. Day-Lilies [Hemerocallis sp.]
Ink and color wash. Sheet: 25 1/2" x 19 1/4". July, 1967.
22. Larch branch [Larix sp.]
Pen and ink and sepia. Sheet: 20 3/8" x 25 3/4". October, 1961.
23. White pine bough [Pinus strobus]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 20 1/2" x 25 3/4". January, 1965. Unsigned.
24. Clump of violets [Viola sp.]
Pen and ink with water color wash, on beige paper. Sheet: 26 1/4" x 20". May, 1959.

No. 23. White pine bough



25. Morning-glories in vase [Ipomoea purpurea]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 25 3/4" x 20 3/8". April, 1961.
26. Dormant forsythia bush [Forsythia sp.]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 17 3/4" x 15". December, 1960.
27. Onion skins [Allium cepa]
Pen and ink and sepia. Sheet: 17" x 13 3/4". July, 1964.
28. Gladiolus and dahlias in vase [Gladiolus, Dahlia cvs.]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 30 7/8" x 22 1/2". July, 1960.
29. Sorrel, nodding wild-rye in two vases [Rumex sp., Elymus canadensis]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 26" x 20". July, 1957.
30. Dormant forsythia branch [Forsythia sp.]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 17" x 13 3/4". February, 1966.
31. Ear of corn [Zea mays cv.]
Pen and ink with water color. Sheet: 16 7/8" x 13 3/4". July, 1965.
32. Bull thistle in glass [Cirsium lanceolatum]
Pen and bistre. Sheet: 17" x 13 3/4". September, 1964.
33. Petunias in vase [Petunia cv.]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 17" x 13 3/4". May, 1957.
34. Lilies in vase [Lilium sp.]
Reed pen and brown ink with water color wash, on gray paper. Sheet: 27 1/2" x 19 3/4". May, 1961. From the Hunt Botanical Library collection.
35. Wild oat-grass in vase, in landscape [Danthonia sp.]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 28 1/2" x 22 1/2". June, 1966.
36. Swamp, or red maple branch [Acer rubrum]
Pen and ink with wash, heightened with white, on gray prepared ground. Sheet: 19 1/4" x 24 3/8". July, 1966.

37. Queen Anne's lace [Daucus carota]
Silverpoint on light gray prepared ground. Sheet: 19 5/8" x 26". June, 1961.
38. Lilies [Lilium sp.]
Pen and dark brown oil-ink. Sheet: 30 1/8" x 22 3/4". December, 1961. From the Hunt Botanical Library collection.
39. Grass in bottle [Aristida sp.]
Pen and ink and tempera, on light brown paper. Sheet: 26 1/4" x 20". 1962.
40. Clump of grass [Eragrostis sp.]
Pen and sepia, on light orange prepared ground. Sheet: 25 3/4" x 20 5/8". June, 1963.
41. Mountain-laurel in jar [Kalmia latifolia]
Pen and water color. Sheet: 23 1/8" x 28 1/8". Drawn in 1952, finished May, 1957.
42. Tree peonies [Paeonia suffruticosa cv.]
Pen and ink and sepia, heightened with white, on lithographically prepared light green ground. Sheet: 22 1/2" x 30". June, 1968.

No. 41
Mountain-laurel
in jar



43. Fabric designs (in collaboration with Susy Laytha)
- Apples [Malus sp.] Swatch 7 1/8" x 12".
 - Strawberries [Fragaria cv.] Sketch in crayon and designers' colors, 3 5/8" x 14 1/8". Swatch 9 7/8" x 13 7/8".
 - Cherries [Prunus sp.] Swatch 11" x 14 5/8".
 - Pears [Pyrus communis] Sketch in designers' colors and ink, 1 3/8" x 9 7/8". Swatch 6 3/8" x 14 1/2".
44. Queen Anne's lace [Daucus carota]
Bookplate design for Whitney Museum, New York. (Typography by Helen Kirkpatrick).
Printed bookplate (6" x 4 1/2") with three related pen and black ink drawings (17" x 13 5/8"), (12 1/4" x 8 1/4"), (11" x 8 1/4").
45. Anemones in glass vase [Anemone coronaria cv.]
Hot-point and oil-ink. Mat opening: 20 1/2" x 15 1/8". 1954.
46. Queen Anne's lace [Daucus carota] and other weeds in glass, in landscape
Brown and sepia ink on yellow prepared ground. Sheet: 19 1/8" x 24 1/2". August, 1964.
47. Petunias [Petunia sp.]
Pen and sepia on dull orange prepared ground. Sheet: 19 1/8" x 14 1/4". June, 1966.
48. Wilted oriental poppy in vase, with landscape [Papaver orientale]
Pen and ink and bistre. Sheet: 19 1/2" x 25 3/8". June, 1963.
49. Cabbage leaf [Brassica oleracea var. capitula]
Pen and ink, heightened with pastel, on gray prepared ground. Sheet: 13 3/8" x 18 1/2". April, 1961.

50. Avocado leaves [Persea americana]
Pen, brush and ink with water color, on beige paper. Sheet: 13" x 20". 1957.
51. Bouncing-bet in glass [Saponaria officinalis]
Pen and brown ink. Sheet: 22 1/2" x 28 1/2". July, 1968.
52. American hornbeam trunk [Carpinus caroliniana]
Pen and ink with tempera, on yellow prepared ground. Sheet: 25 1/2" x 19 1/2". December, 1961.
53. Queen Anne's lace in jar [Daucus carota]
Pen and ink. Sheet: 26 1/4" x 19 3/4". April, 1961.
54. Milkweed [Asclepias (syriaca?)]
Pen and ink heightened with white, on light brown prepared ground. Sheet: 25 3/8" x 19 1/8". September, 1964. From the Hunt Botanical Library collection.
55. Two oriental poppy flowers [Papaver orientale]
Pen and ink and sepia. Sheet: 17" x 13 3/4". June, 1968.
56. Still life with grass [Asperella hystrix]
Pen and ink, heightened with white, on prepared light brown ground. Sheet: 25 3/4" x 20 5/8". May, 1965.
57. White oak trunk [Quercus albus]
Lithograph. From Tamarind suite, "Of Nature, Of Man," 1963-64. Sheet: 29 7/8" x 22 1/4".
58. Petunia flowers [Petunia cv.]
Pen and sepia with water color wash. Sheet: 14" x 10 3/4". June, 1966.

No. 58. Petunia flowers



59. Bouquet of wood-grass (?) and Sedge [Carex sp.]
Pen and blue ink, heightened with pale yellow, on beige paper. Sheet: 26 1/4" x 20". June, 1959.
60. Bamboo root (?)
Pen and ink, heightened with pale yellow, on beige paper. Sheet: 19 5/8" x 25 1/2". May, 1961.
61. Winter vine
Lithograph. From Tamarind suite, "Of Nature, Of Man," 1963-64. Sheet: 30" x 22 1/4".
62. Tree trunk
Drypoint engraving (power drill). Plate mark: 14 7/8" x 17 1/2". 1961.
63. Growth
Drypoint engraving (power drill). Plate mark: 27 3/4" x 21 5/8". 1958. From the Hunt Botanical Library collection.
64. Roots
Pen and ink and sepia, heightened with white, on gray and yellow prepared ground. Sheet: 18 1/2" x 13 3/8". July, 1963.
65. Flowering weeds
Pen and blue ink and water color, on beige paper. Sheet: 26 1/4" x 20". June, 1959.



No. 62. Tree trunk

Elfriede Abbe

Elfriede Martha Abbe has achieved an international reputation as an expert on many facets of the black art, decorative arts, and fine arts. While her work in this Spring Exhibition is of her botanical sculptures, she has been honored at many centers for exhibitions of her work as a book designer and a master-printer of outstanding limited editions, as a muralist who has sculpted friezes and painted canvases, as a botanical artist and illustrator who has illustrated popular and scientific books of her own authorship and by others, as a portraitist working - as with murals - as a sculptress and as painter, and as an engraver whose wood engravings of botanical and non-botanical subjects are counted by some as representative of Elfriede Abbe at her best.

Miss Abbe was born in Washington, D. C., in 1919, studied at the Art Institute, Chicago, in 1937, and received her B. F. A. degree from Cornell University in 1940. From 1940 to 1967 she was Scientific Illustrator in the Department of Botany at Cornell and since then has held a similar position in the University's Section of Genetics, Development, and Physiology. In 1947, while on leave from Cornell, she studied sculpture at Syracuse University under Ivan Mestrovic. Later, in 1960 and 1961, she studied independently in Italy, at the University of Florence and at the University of Padua.

Awards: Tiffany Fellowship, 1948; R. A. Hunt Foundation grant for study in Italy of the plants of Virgil's Georgics, 1961; gold medal, Pen and Brush, New York, 1964; bronze medal, National Arts Club, 1966.

Commissions: Large statue "The Hunter," New York World's Fair, 1932; statue in library, Woodrow Wilson School, Binghamton, N. Y.; wood sculpture, Unitarian Church, Ithaca, N. Y.; for Magill University library, a wood carving "The Explorer," and a bronze portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte; for the Vermont Council on the Arts, the Governor's Award Panel; for Cornell University several memorial plaques (bronze), portrait bust of Liberty Hyde Bailey, oak frieze in the Albert R. Mann Library, bronze sculptures for the Clive McCay Memorial, and a marble



sculpture in Morrison Hall; for Emma Willard School library the sculpture, in 19th century oak, of "Valley Forge."

Exhibitions: ten one-man shows, including one at the Hunt Botanical Library, Carnegie-Mellon University (1962), the Rutland County Art Center, Vermont (1968), and the Paul Schuster Gallery, Cambridge, Mass. (1968), and a dozen or more other shows here and abroad.

Miss Abbe's productions as proprietress of the Abbe Press have been summarized in accounts of her work in this library's catalogues of its two international exhibitions of 20th century botanical art and illustration (1964, 1968). Her limited editions, designed, printed, and illustrated by her, are out of print and are highly prized collector's items. Her prints and sculptures are to be found in the permanent collections of the leading museums and universities of this country.

Elfriede abbe has been known to me since we worked together at Cornell in the 1940's on mutual botanical interests, and there is personal satisfaction in presenting her work as a sculptress at this time. Tastes of art-lovers, as of artists, vary widely and for some her smoothly chiselled accomplishments in wood and in marble, and the metal castings of her work with clay, hold far more appeal as works of art than do the products of her press or her engravings. While I have never queried her on this point, I sense from the affectionate terms with which she addresses herself to this facet of her work that she too holds such a bias.

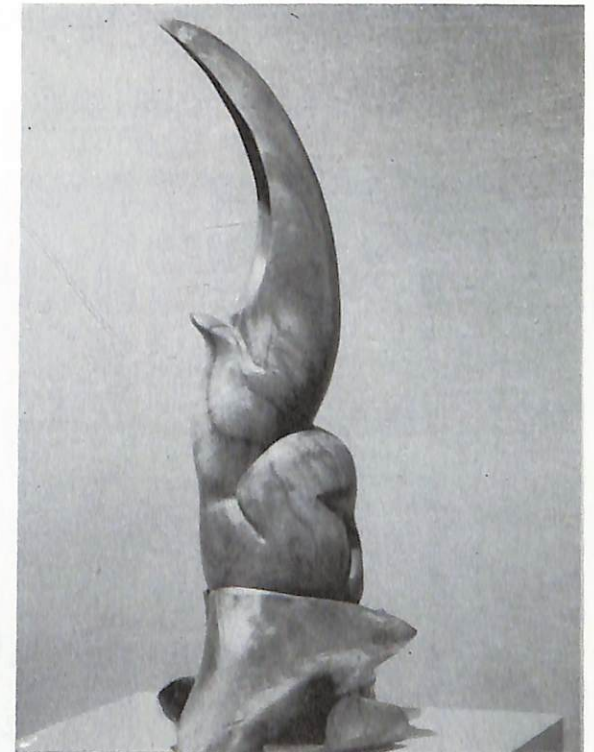
With her widowed mother she shared for many years their Ithaca home at 24 Woodcrest Avenue, one then well-known in the community for her largest of Great Dane dogs in the city, and where she has resided alone since 1957. There, in her studio she works long evenings and weekends with her press and cases of types, there she engraves the blocks and pulls her prints, and there too she sweeps the chips of every new carving. Her art work has been and is her true career. Her scientific illustrations serve as the means to that end. Quiet and sometimes almost too reticent, often so absorbed in her work as to seem wholly immersed in it, Elfriede to her friends is a warm person of great sensitivity, who sees so much of anatomical beauty in nature: of an opening bud of Goutweed (No. 66), an unfolding frond of Moonwort (No. 76), or of the intricacies of a leaf's venation. Often her brobdingnagian enlargements of nature's tiny subjects, as of the Clover flower (No. 71) or the fern

spore (No. 74), give the viewer a wholly new concept of graceful efficiency in botanical forms and subjects. While no artist thinks small of his work, nonetheless Elfriede was amazed recently, and secretly complimented, when a covetous youth thought enough of one of her exhibited sculptures to have tried (unsuccessfully) to escape with it from the show.

The Hunt Botanical Library is proud, in this instance, to have the pleasure of presenting Miss Abbe's work to the public. For her efforts and generosity in assembling the sculptures here shown, our gratitude is abundant, and to Dr. and Mrs. Rolla Tryon, and Dr. and Mrs. Robert Langhans we express our thanks for the loan of pieces from their personal collections.

George H. M. Lawrence

No. 77. Dutchman's-pipe flower



Explanatory Notes

All works of sculpture are lent by the artist, except as noted.

Dimensions are given in inches, in the sequence of depth × width × height. Priced items may be purchased directly from the artist (24 Woodcrest Avenue, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. Tel. (607) 272-9332).

66. Leaf bud of goutweed [Aegopodium podagraria]
Marble. 4" × 9" × 11"
67. Same
Bronze. 1 3/4" × 4 1/8" × 5", on marble base
68. Bean sprout [Phaseolus vulgaris]
Bronze. 3 1/2" × 5" × 10", on natural wood base (left, below)
69. Water-lily flower bud [Nymphaea sp.]
Marble. 8" × 8" × 12"
70. Pitcher-plant leaves [Sarracenia purpurea]
Bronze. 12" × 12" × 17", on wood base (at right below)



71. Clover flower [Trifolium pratense]
Marble. 5" × 5" × 14"
72. Bud of viburnum [Viburnum lantana]
Terra cotta. 4" × 4 1/2" × 15"
73. Arrowhead leaves, emerging [Sagittaria latifolia]
Bronze. 5" × 5" × 13", on turned marble base
74. Fern spore
Marble. 9" × 9" × 10", on circular base
75. Snapdragon flower [Antirrhinum majus]
Bronze. 8 1/2" × 11" × 17 1/2"
76. Winter bud of moonwort fern [Botrychium lunaria]
Marble. 6" × 6" × 12"
77. Dutchman's-pipe flower [Aristolochia sp.]
Myrtle wood. 5" × 5" × 18", on bronze base
Lent by Dr. & Mrs. Robert Langhans
Dept. of Floriculture, Cornell Univ.
78. Moonwort frond [Botrychium lunaria]
Aluminum. 2 1/2" × 5" × 18"



No. 76

Lent by Dr. & Mrs. Rolla Tryon
Gray Herbarium, Harvard Univ.

No. 78



Norris P. Jones

Norris Prather Jones has most kindly made available to this Library's public a striking display of nearly unique material, which represents her astonishing success to create lifelike bouquets of flowers from slips of parchment paper, skillfully cut fitted colored and assembled to form the whole. Endowed with artistic talents augmented by training in the fine arts, Mrs. Jones is believed to be one of the few persons, and perhaps the only one, now active in the making of these arrangements.

Born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, into the fifth Kentucky generation of her family, Norris Jones lived there until 1949, and since then - except for about three years in Europe - has resided in Old Lyme, Connecticut. When asked about her art training she replied "There is hardly a time in my life when I have not been attending art classes." Among places of study are the New York Art League summer school, the Art Center of the University of Louisville, the Paris atelier of the sculptor Ossip Zadkine for much of two years, and later under the tutelage of the printer Bernard Harrison. She is the mother of Mrs. Rogers Morton of Easton, Maryland, and of Mr. Paul Jones of Louisville, and has 6 grandchildren.

Long a persistent gardener and devout lover of flowers, she has painted flowers for many years. One of her friends of Louisville days was Mary Grace Chess Robinson (the late Mrs. Avery Robinson), known to many as founder of the Mary Chess perfume firm. As early as the 1890's Mrs. Robinson sculpted floral bouquets from copper. In 1921 she renewed this interest but with a new technique making the flowers from parchment paper. A London exhibition of them in 1926, attended by Queen Mary, brought much favorable publicity. Later Aldous Huxley dubbed her productions "sculptured flowers," but the hours of patient labor required to complete a single flowering stalk was so great that the venture remained one of love and never of commerce.

Seeing a few of the bouquets in Mrs. Robinson's London house in 1930 ultimately led Mrs. Jones to study



for four periods of one week each under Mrs. Robinson (then in her 80's) at her home in the Shaker Village of New Lebanon, N. Y.

The technique by which these flowers and the arrangements are made was summarized by Mrs. Jones in the Bulletin of The Garden Club of America 55(1): 12-16, (Jan.) 1967. The first step is to dissect the real flower and become thoroughly familiar with its structure and all its parts. Each petal or split and expanded corolla is duplicated precisely by cutting a replica from Italian parchment paper, first dampened and then shaped with tools to produce the form and modeling of the original. The subtending sepals or calyx are made similarly, as are the individual leaves. The stamens are usually formed from steel wire, and the knobs representing their anthers are often produced by dipping the wire tip into pottery slip or clay. Modeling clay is used to convert the stouter wire of stems to simulate forms and shapes of stems in nature. The same clay is used also to imitate flower buds, an ovary within the flower, and sometimes a lobed stigma at the tip of the style. The individual parts are painted with oil paints mixed with shellac and wood alcohol.

The bouquets derive their exquisite beauty from the botanical accuracy of each flower, and the fidelity to nature when painting every part. A single bouquet requires two to three months of patient meticulous effort to complete, and the larger more ample ones may require twice as long. So delicate are the compositions that they are not shipped from place to place, but are carefully packed to prevent tipping and are carried.

At our request, Mrs. Jones has kindly made for this exhibition some demonstration sequences in the making of a flowering stalk of a semi-double zinnia. For this, she cut out four graduated layers of "petals" (the ray florets) and two leaves. With tweezers and manicurist's tools she shaped the dampened bits of paper, allowed them to dry, and painted each layer of "petals" separately before attaching to the stem. The demonstration shows a flower stalk painted and unpainted. Individual components are also shown.

These "flower sculptures" stand in a class by themselves. While not to be pedestalled with Blauschka's world-famous and unique glass flowers at Harvard University, these nonetheless are museum pieces of first rank. Their botanical accuracy permits identification. Their aesthetic charm makes one wish to touch each to test its closeness to reality. Only the fantastic number of hours required to produce a single arrangement precludes their production in substantial number and their availability all to have and enjoy. Since Mrs. Jones is the only person known to be continuing this art, one wonders if ever again will so many examples of this work be assembled in a single exhibition. This Library is honored and grateful to her for the privilege of this sponsorship.

George H. M. Lawrence

Stalk of zinnia,
unpainted and painted
Below: two layers of "petals"
unshaped, unpainted; one
layer, shaped and painted



79. Summer miniature. Fuchsia, Dianthus species, Exacum, Viola, Anchusa, and Aubretia
Arrangement 5 1/2" high, in pale blue cup and ebonized oriental base
80. Demonstration of stages in construction of a flowering stem of zinnia
81. Iris, Dianthus, hellebore, auriculas, and scillas
Arrangement 8" high, in miniature white porcelain urn with gilt rim
82. Asphodel, Primulas, verbenas, anemones, zinnias, and auriculas
Arrangement 9 1/2" high, in Chinese tea cup
83. Tulips, anemones, and carnations. Tulipa clusiana, aubretias, dianthus, anemones, white bouvardia
Arrangement 10 1/2" high, in miniature black and gold iron urn
84. Asphodel, tulips, carnations, narcissus, white bouvardia
Arrangement 15 1/2" high, in gilded terra cotta urn
85. Carnations, narcissus, and scilla, with Dianthus species, and zinnias
Arrangement 7 1/2" high, in white cup with floral decorations
Lent by Mrs. Donald C. Bakewell
86. Spring flowers. Scilla, Ornithogalum, Tulipa clusiana, Dianthus species, Cerastium, Viola, with zinnias, asters, and hawthorn
Arrangement 9 1/2" high in Japanese hand painted cup
Lent by Mrs. Alexander Hunter



No. 82

No. 86





87. Carnations, pinks, forget-me-nots, jasmine, and scilla

Arrangement 8" high, in tea-cup
with maroon floral motif

Lent by Mrs. Henry F. McCance

88. Fuchsias, zinnias, carnations,
orange blossoms, and asters

Arrangement 22" high, in gilt
and white porcelain vase

Lent by Mrs. Rogers C. B. Morton

No. 87

