

Elsa M. Felsko Germany (1908-)
36 "Lothario X germanica cv. 'Lothario'"
Watercolor

Harry Marinsky England (1909-)
37 *Iris* sp.
Pencil

Claus Caspari Germany (1911-1980)
38 "*Iris pumila*, Niedrige schwertlilie" 1962
Watercolor on illustration board

James Bostock England (1917-)
39 "Bearded Irises" 1980
Wood engraving

Albert G. Richards United States (1917-)
40 *Iris* sp. 1978
Radiograph

Marta Lexa-Regeczi Hungary (1918-)
41 "*Iris variegata*"
Watercolor

Louise Estes United States (1922-)
42 "Iris" 1986
Watercolor

Marguerite Primrose Gerrard United States (1922-)
43 *Iris* sp.
Tempera on blue paper

Marie Felicity Angel England (1923-)
44 "*Iris germanica* var. Florentina (orris root)"
Watercolor on vellum

Raymond C. Booth England (1929-)
45 *Iris* sp. 1966
Oil on paper, with pencil

Art Hansen United States (1929-)
46 "Irises - A Portrait" 1975
Etching

Jack Freborg United States (1931-)
47 *Iris* sp.
Watercolor

Yvonne Skargon England (1931-)
48 "Iris"
Wood engraving

Marilena Pistoia Italy (1933-)
49 "*Iris: Iris pallida*, *I. pseudacorus*"
Watercolor
For Laura Peroni, *Il linguaggio dei fiori (The language of flowers)*. Milan, Arnoldo Mondadori, 1984.

John Wilkinson England (1934-)
50 "*Iris 'Blue Sovereign'*" 1980
Watercolor

Luce Vera Ferari Musumeci Italy (1936-)
51 "*Iris sibirica* L." 1990
Color pencil

Patricia Wynn United States (1945-)
52 "Irises" 1973
Color pencil

Andrew Brown England (1948-)
53 "*Iris setosa* ssp."
Watercolor
One of 22 watercolors of Alaskan wildflowers prepared from drawings made during the Westminster School Expedition to the Arctic National Park in the Brooks Range in Alaska

Pamela Stagg Canada (1949-)
54 "*Iris pallida* variegata 'Silver Zebra'" 1991
Watercolor

55 "*Iris reticulata* L." 1989
Watercolor

Sarah Evarts United States (1951-)
56 "Wild Iris" 1987
Watercolor

Nanae Ito Japan (active 1955-1966)
57 "Enchanted Violet, Eleanor's Pride, Toll Gate"
Watercolor on illustration board

Kevin Nicolay United States (1957-1990)
58 "*Iris germanica*, German iris" 1982
Watercolor



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Ensigns of the Rainbow Goddess

Portraits of Iris



This exhibition offers a sampling of illustrations and portraits of Iris from the past few centuries, chosen for their intrinsic appeal and representing various artistic approaches to the genus. Included are figures from some of the most famous illustrated works devoted to this popular flower.

The genus *Iris* includes over 200 species of perennial plants which are generally confined to the northern hemisphere but occur in a wide range of habitats. Most Irises are grown as ornamentals, but several Old World species produce orris, the dried powdered rhizomes with the odor of violets which are used in perfumery. The color of the flowers covers a wide range of tints and shades of pink, blue, lilac and purple to white, brown, yellow, orange and almost black. The color patterns often consist of complex markings and shadings that make it virtually impossible to describe them accurately in words.

One of the deities in Greek mythology was named Iris. She was the messenger between the gods on Mount Olympus and the mortals; she was also the goddess of the rainbow because she traveled by way of the many-colored bridge in the sky. The genus *Iris* thus takes its name from the Greek for rainbow because of the diverse colors of its flowers. Irises are said to be the bearers of messages, good wishes and news.

List of works

Basil Besler Germany (1561-1629)

- 1 "I. Iris Calcedonica latifolia; II. Iris Florentina; III. Iris Illýrica" [1. *Iris susiana* L., 2. *I. florentina* L., *I. pallida* Lam.]
Hand-colored engraving
Lent anonymously
- 2 "I. Liliium persicum. II. Iris tuberosa. III. Chamaeiris angustis... IV. Bulbus lily..." [1. *Fritillaria persica* L., 2. *Iris tuberosa* L., 3. *I. graminea* L.]
From Besler, *Hortus Eystettensis*. Eichstätt, 1613 and later editions.
Hand-colored engraving

Daniel Rabel France (1578-1637)

- 3 "Iris Susiana major; Iris bisantina...; Iris bisantina angustifolia..."
Engraving
From Rabel, *Theatrum flore*. Paris, Petrus Firens, 1627.
- 4 "Iris tuberosa...; Iris flore violaceo; Iris flore pupureo; Iris Camerary exotica; Iris Tripolytana; Iris Dalmatica minor."
Engraving
From Rabel, *Theatrum flore*. Paris, Petrus Firens, 1627.

Anonymous (17th century)

- 5 *Iris germanica* L.
Watercolor

Anonymous (17th century)

- 6 *Allium* sp., *Iris* sp., *Hesperis* sp.
Watercolor

Anonymous (17th century)

- 7 *Polemonium* sp., *Hemerocallis* sp., *Iris* sp.
Watercolor

Anonymous (17th century)

- 8 "Iris susiana, Mourning Iris"
Watercolor

Anonymous Austria (18th century)

- 9 *Iris* spp.
Watercolor

Georg Dionys Ehret Germany (1710-1770)

- 10 "Iris Susuana...; Iris bulbosa..." [Mourning Iris and English Iris]
Gouache on vellum

James Goddard England (late 18th century)

- 11 "Variegated iris", *Iris* spp.
Watercolor and pencil
Sketchbook pages

Pierre-Joseph Redouté Belgium (1759-1840)

- 12 "Iris frangée. Iris fimbriata."
Color stipple engraving, finished by hand
From Redouté, *Choix des plus belle fleurs...* Paris, Ernest Panckoucke, 1827-1833.
- 13 "Iris pale. Iris pallida."
Color stipple engraving, finished by hand
From Redouté, *Choix des plus belle fleurs...* Paris, Ernest Panckoucke, 1827-1833.
- 14 "Iris plicata. Iris plissée."
Color stipple engraving, finished by hand
From Redouté, *Les liliacées*. Vol. 6. Paris, Didot, 1802.
- 15 "Iris Pseudacorus. Iris faux-acore."
Color stipple engraving, finished by hand
From Redouté, *Les liliacées*. Vol. 4. Paris, Didot, 1802.
- 16 "Iris Sambucina. Iris à odeur de Sureau."
Color stipple engraving, finished by hand
From Redouté, *Les liliacées*. Vol. 6. Paris, Didot, 1802.
- 17 "Iris Xiphium variété."
Color stipple engraving, finished by hand
From Redouté, *Choix des plus belle fleurs...* Paris, Ernest Panckoucke, 1827-1833.

Jean Louis Prévost France (1760-1810)

- 18 *Iris* sp., *Narcissus* sp., *Rosa* sp.
Color stipple engraving, finished by hand

Guilia Guicciardini Italy (early 19th century)

- 19 *Iris susiana* L.
Gouache

Morley (early 19th century)

- 20 "1. *Iris ochroleuca*, 2. *Iris sibirica*, 3. *Iris xiphoides*."
Watercolor

Josiah Galleymore (19th century)

- 21 "Iris variegata, Variegated iris"
Watercolor
For unpublished manuscript by Josiah Galleymore "Icones plantarium et descriptione de speciarium." Vol. 1. 1820.

Kokei or Kodo Yoshikawa Japan (19th century)

- 22 Top: *Iris* sp., Papaver, sp. 1822
Bottom: *Iris* sp. 1822
Ink, watercolor
From album labelled "Komakei's drawings from life — plants, animals and fish of the four seasons, 1822."

23 Left: *Iris* sp. 1822

- Right: *Iris* sp. 1822
Ink, watercolor
From album labelled "Komakei's drawings from life — plants, animals and fish of the four seasons, 1822."

Dorothy Widdrington England (19th century)

- 24 "Iris"
Watercolor and gouache

Johann Friedrich Starke Germany (1802-1872)

- 25 *Iris* sp.
Gouache

Isaac Sprague United States (1811-1895)

- 26 "Larger Blue Flag. *Iris versicolor* L."
Chromolithograph
From George Goodale, *The wildflowers of America*. Boston, Bradlee Whidden, 1886.

Edward Donovan England (active 1820-1840)

- 27 Left: "Iris crassifolia?"
Right: "Iris fulva" 1827
Watercolor

Henry G. Moon England (1857-1905)

- 28 Left: "Iris leichtlini" 1897
Watercolor
For *Garden (London)*. 1897 (18 Sept.).
Right: "Iris ochroleuca and I. monspur"
Color lithograph
From *Garden (London)*. 1890 (15 Nov.).

Agnes Miller Parker Scotland (1895-1980)

- 29 "Irises, Burweed and Rushes" 1937
Wood engraving

Wilfrid Readio United States (1895-1961)

- 30 "Iris germanica"
Lithograph

Lou Hurst United States (early 20th century)

- 31 "Iris germanica-squaleus, Gypsy Queen"
Watercolor with pen-and-ink

Wilfrid Blunt England (1901-1987)

- 32 "Iris foetidissima" 1947
Watercolor

Gertrude Hermes England (1901-1983)

- 33 "Spanish Irises" 1927
Wood engraving

Hartwell Wyse Priest Canada/United States (1901-)

- 34 "White Iris"
Lithograph

Anne Ophelia Dowden United States (1907-)

- 35 "Flower-de-luce (Florentine iris and wild iris)"
Watercolor on illustration board
For Jessica Kerr, *Shakespeare's flowers*. New York, Thomas Crowell, 1969.