

Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
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For Immediate Release

HUNT INSTITUTE PRESENTS

ANNE OPHELIA TODD DOWDEN: A BLOSSOM ON THE BOUGH
19 SEPTEMBER 2002 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2003

Pittsburgh, PA—The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation presents *Anne Ophelia Todd Dowden: A Blossom on the Bough* from 19 September 2002 to 28 February 2003. The exhibition, celebrating the artist's 95th birthday, presents an overview of Mrs. Dowden's career as it progressed from textiles to botanical art and illustration, and it includes finished watercolors, layouts, and research paintings, along with books and magazines in which her paintings have been reproduced.

Upon graduating from Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) in Pittsburgh, she continued to study at the Arts Students League and Beaux Arts Institute of Design where she and four other students were successful at designing wallpapers and drapery fabrics. After teaching at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, she developed the Art Department at Manhattanville College and began preparing paintings of edible wild plants for publication. With the publication of these artworks in *Life* magazine, Mrs. Dowden's career developed toward botanical illustration. She completed illustration projects for *House Beautiful* and *Natural History* and then began writing, designing and illustrating her own books.

Flower pollination always has fascinated the artist, and several of her books deal with this subject — *Look at a Flower* (1963), *The Secret Life of the Flowers* (1964), *From Flower to Fruit* (1984) and *The Clover and the Bee* (1990). Other themes in her books, published from the early 1960s until 1994, include roses, city weeds, flowers of trees, state flowers, Shakespeare's flowers, plants of the Bible and of Christmas, and poisonous plants.

A full-color, illustrated catalogue with autobiography by the artist, biographical data and portraits of the artist will be on sale at the Institute. The exhibition will be on display on the fifth floor of the Hunt Library building at Carnegie Mellon University. Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–noon and 1 p.m.–5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m.–4 p.m. The Institute does not have Saturday hours. The Institute will be closed 28–29 November, 22 December–1 January and 5 January. The exhibition is open to the public free of charge. For further information, contact the Hunt Institute at 412-268-2434.

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was founded in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971, the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography, and the Library. The current collections include approximately 28,000 books; 24,000 portraits; 30,000 watercolors, drawings and prints; and 2,000 autograph letters and manuscripts.

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