

For Immediate Release
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Buried Treasures: The Nature and Art of Bulbs

An exhibition in the LuEsther T. Mertz Library of magnificent prints and artwork featuring flowering bulbs

October 7, 2006 – January 7, 2007

Sumptuously illustrated folios, some dating back as far as the 17th century, and original artwork from the outstanding holdings of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library will be presented in the next exhibition in The New York Botanical Garden's library gallery. Among the superb historical illustrations on display will be Basilius Besler's striking and intricately detailed 1713 copperplate engraving of a crown imperial fritillaria and a beautifully hand-colored lithograph of a crinum lily published in 1830-32 from a drawing by Vishnupersaud. The exhibition will also include masterpieces of botanical art by renowned artists such as Georg Dionysius Ehret, Pierre-Joseph Redouté, and Walter Hood Fitch. Media in the exhibition will include engravings (hand-colored, copperplate, and colored stipple) as well as lithographs and watercolors.

Kim Tripp, Ph.D., Director of The New York Botanical Garden, comments, "This exhibition will celebrate the lush beauty of flowering bulbs, in a cross-section of some of the most visually ravishing works of art, rare books, and other treasures in the Mertz Library. The artwork spans more than three centuries and chronicles many gorgeous garden plants, from the ornamental to the culinary."

Exploring the many aspects of bulbs

The exhibition in the William D. Rondina and Giovanni Foroni LoFaro Gallery will be of particular interest to home gardeners. It will include both well-known and unusual bulbs available for outdoor use to the home gardener in the Northeast, and will illustrate other practical uses of these beautiful and versatile plants. The opening of the exhibition coincides with the traditional fall planting season for next spring's flowering bulbs.

Buried Treasures: The Nature and Art of Bulbs will begin with scientific illustrations that help distinguish a true bulb from a corm, rhizome, or tuber. Successive display cases will feature bulbs used for medicine and food—from onions, garlic, and shallots to tubers such as potatoes and Jerusalem artichokes—as well as flowering bulbs used for fragrance and for bouquets. Further themes will include topics dear to home gardeners, such as deer-resistant bulbs and bulbs that flower in the autumn rather than spring, and native bulbs, the early harbingers of spring in woodlands and welcome additions to gardens. The historical role of bulbs will be explored, including a glimpse into the 17th-century Dutch bulb craze known as "tulipomania"—perhaps the first documented instance of irrational exuberance in the

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marketplace. And the exhibition will celebrate the sheer aesthetic beauty of bulbs, displaying several of the most resplendent botanical folios ever created, including Georg Dionysius Ehret's stunning illustration of *Lilium foliis sparsis* in Christopher Jacob Trew's *Plantae selectae* (Nuremberg, 1750-73).

The curator of the exhibition is writer, lecturer, garden consultant, and bulb aficionado Judy Glattstein. Ms. Glattstein is the author of seven books; her two most recent, *Consider the Leaf: Foliage in Garden Design* and *Choosing and Using Bulbs in the Garden*, are published by Timber Press. She is also a popular instructor in the Botanical Garden's Continuing Education program.

Docents will offer guided tours of the exhibition, which will also be accompanied by an illustrated checklist. Visit www.nybg.org for schedules.

Other bulb-related activities at the Botanical Garden

Several Continuing Education courses of related interest are planned at the Botanical Garden this fall. One highlight will be a two-hour tour and lecture based on the exhibition itself and led by curator Judy Glattstein, scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, at the Mertz Library. Other courses and workshops include The History of Botanical Art; Tulips and Tulipomania; The Garden History and Traditions of Holland; Seasonal Highlights: Spring Bulbs; Bulb Basics; Bulbs and Bulb Combinations; Bulbs for Garden Habitats; and Forcing Bulbs. Details are available in the Continuing Education catalog. For more information, visit www.nybg.org or call Continuing Education at 718.817.8747.

At the Botanical Garden's Home Gardening Center on the weekend of October 21–22, demonstrations will feature bulb planting and maintenance, and designing with bulbs. One point of discussion will be how to prevent squirrels from digging up newly planted bulbs.

Shop in the Garden will also focus on bulbs this fall. A wide selection of spring- and fall-blooming bulbs will span the seasons with everything from early spring chionodoxas to autumn-blooming crocuses, and will include colorful and fragrant bulbs for holiday forcing. There will be a large assortment of tulips, from heirlooms to recent cultivars, as well as fragrant hyacinths and deer-resistant alliums and fritillarias. In addition, the Shop will feature an impressive array of bulb-forcing jars, and of course, a wealth of indispensable books on bulb horticulture. Ms. Glattstein's books are all available at the Shop.

Exhibitions in the Mertz Library are made possible by the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust and William D. Rondina and The Carlisle Collection.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road in the Bronx. The Botanical Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday holidays, from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. April through October, and 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. November through March. For more information, visit www.nybg.org or call 718.817.8700.

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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