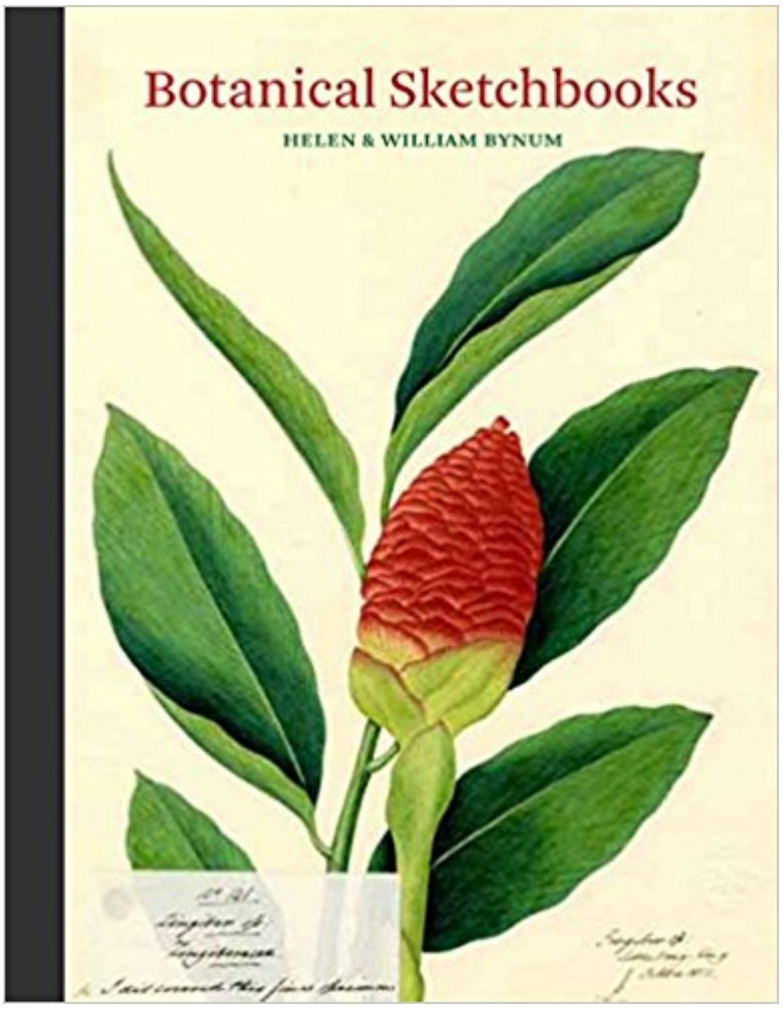
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Botanical Sketchbooks



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Synopsis

Recording the world of plant and animal life and documenting the strange beauty of the natural world have been human passions ever since the first cave paintings. While there are many histories of botanical art featuring beautiful paintings and finished drawings, the artists' preparatory sketches, first impressions, and scribbled notes on paper are rarely seen. But it is often these early attempts that give us real insight into the firsthand experiences and adventures of the botanists, artists, collectors, and explorers behind them.This exquisite visual compendium of botanical sketches by eighty artists from around the world brings these personal and vividly spontaneous records back into the light. Filled with remarkable images from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries, sourced from the unparalleled collections of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Library, Art & Archives, and other libraries, museums, and archives, Botanical Sketchbooks also provides fascinating biographical portraits of the intriguing characters featured within, including such renowned artists, scientists, and amateur botanists as Leonardo da Vinci, Georg Dionysius Ehret, Carl Linnaeus, Maria Sibylla Merian, Mark Catesby, and Helen and Margaret Shelley (sisters of the novelist Mary Shelley), among many others.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Are you a plant lover, or is there one in your life? How about an art lover? Or a plant-art lover? If so, you owe it to yourself a look at Botanical Sketchbooks, Helen and William Bynum's compendium of planty illustrations spanning six centuries and almost 300 pages. This stunning collection - and that's not hyperbole - features 80 artists from around the world - including Leonardo da Vinci, Carl

Linnaeus, and Maria Sibylla Merian - along with ’the motivations and adventures of the makers, and the plants that fired their imaginations." - Omnivoracious"Whether William Swainson’s 19th-century pencil drawings of New Zealand trees in the midst of 19th-century colonization, Conrad Gesner’s 16th-century illustrations detailing plants from root to seed, or Shafi’ ’AbbÃƒÂ¡sÃƒÂ-’s 17th-century compositions that merged Mughal descriptions with European flora, Botanical Sketchbooks demonstrates the diverse ways the fleeting lives of plants have been observed, studied, and immortalized in art." - Hyperallergic"Probably one of the most fascinating books for a plant lover published this year is Botanical Sketchbooks by Helen and William Bynum (Princeton Architectural Press). Although there are gorgeous books of botanical drawings, this one is a look behind the scenes. It contains first drafts and unfinished work copied from scraps of paper, sketchbooks and loose single pages. The work is from some of the world’s most well known artists, scientists and naturalists. Bios accompany the drawings. Born in 1647 in what was to become Germany, Maria Sibylla Merian painted butterflies, cockroaches, pineapples and papayas. She financed her own scientific expeditions to find subjects to draw, which was a pretty scandalous practice for a woman in those days. This is a great housewarming present for a gardener and/or someone who appreciates fine art." -The Plain Dealer"Leave Botanical Sketchbooks sitting out in a guest room, and let your friends delight over illustrations of flowers, trees, seed pods, and leaves, along with field notes from eighty artists and botanists, including Leonardo da Vinci, Carl Linnaeus, and William Bartram, who roamed the South between 1773 and 1777, sketching everything from evening primrose to oak-leaf hydrangea." - Garden and Gun"Botanical Sketchbooks is a beautiful and unique book. Most works on botanical sketching are either "how-to" books for artists or books focusing on a single artist or collection. This text brings together 275 illustrations organized by theme rather than chronology. The four sections of the book are "Made on Location," "Doing Science," "Making Art," and "A Pleasing Occupation." Each section highlights significant artists and their work-from those who worked primarily in the field (as or with scientists and artists) and those for whom botanical illustration was a lifetime vocation. The selection of the 80 artists leans heavily to Europe and North America, and their exploratory and colonial efforts, but does include some non-Western artists. Women artists are well represented. Unlike many similar books, amateurs are profiled alongside famous artists and scientists. As the title implies, these are not necessarily finished works but preliminary sketches, unfinished compositions, test runs, and explorations that form the foundation of such works. The book itself is well made, with a solid binding, heavy paper, and rich color. It should be included in history of science and scientific illustration collections. Summing Up: Recommended. All readers." - ALA/Choice

Helen and William Bynum are historians of science and medicine who also have a particular interest in horticulture and the importance of plants in human culture and society. They have written or edited numerous books, including Great Discoveries in Medicine and, most recently, Remarkable Plants.

Also, beautiful Book I had discovered through a Library. Very interesting to follow the various artists on their trips.

Beautiful

Fantastic!

Beautiful, beautiful book... A delight for artists and plant lovers alike. The reproductions are crisp and clear - and there are lots of them!

Good review of the drawing/painting process.

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