

Miraculous Bouquets: Flower and Fruit Paintings by Jan van Huysum

Anne T. Woollett



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Precisely rendered to dazzle the eye with their botanical accuracy, the sumptuous arrays of fruit and flowers by Dutch painter Jan van Huysum (1682–1749) were among the most avidly collected paintings of the eighteenth century. The arrangements were painstakingly executed over many months and commanded exceptionally high prices from admirers throughout Europe.

This delightful book explores two of Van Huysum's most important still-life paintings, *Vase of Flowers* and *Fruit Piece*, both in the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum. Executed in 1722, they are among the first works to feature the innovations Van Huysum introduced to a beloved Dutch tradition. Like his seventeenth-century predecessors, Van Huysum combined flowers and fruits that flourished at different times of the year into a single bouquet. He worked directly from nature rather than from sketchbooks and animated the arrangements with crawling insects and butterflies. His inimitable technique resulted in an illusionism that continues to captivate us today. The book's sumptuous plates reveal the artist's highly nuanced palette, and his exuberant, asymmetrical arrangements reflect emerging rococo rhythms.

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