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Four Seasons of Flowers - A Selection of Botanical Illustrations from the Rare Book Collection at Dumbarton Oaks

A Selection of Botanical Illustrations from the Rare Book Collection at Dumbarton Oaks

Four Seasons of Flowers is an illustrated volume that presents a selection of the manuscripts, herbals, and printed botanical texts from the Rare Book Collection at Dumbarton Oaks. Representing pivotal works in the intellectual history of Europe from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, these drawings, books, and manuscripts are among the most significant materials conserved in the Rare Book Reading Room. They offer an illuminating overview of the history of botany as a modern science, from its inception to the present day. Each text is accompanied by a remarkable set of botanical illustrations. Their scientific accuracy and aesthetic beauty testify to the importance of the visual image once the efficacy of the printing press as an instrument for the furtherance of knowledge in the sciences and technology—from anatomy to zoology and from astronomy to botany—had been fully recognized. Botanical illustrations constitute an indispensable source of information for historians of not only botanical sciences but also garden and landscape architecture, thus shedding light on the study of plants in different periods, as well as on the evolution of the visual arts in areas where the representation of the plant world played a central role.

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Kundenservice Fachmedien Otto Schmidt

Neumannstraße 10, 40235 Düsseldorf | kundenservice@fachmedien.de | 0800 000-1637 (Inland)

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