

## Keeping Flowers Between the Pages: “Preserving” Rare and Curious Flowers through Florilegium Images in the Seventeenth Century

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The pictorial genre of the *florilegium* is commonly used to address a collection of flower images from the long seventeenth century (c. 1575–1725). The flowers featured in florilegia are usually those that were regarded as rare and curious by plant lovers living north of the Alps. Among which are the then newly introduced species and/or varieties from southern Europe and the Mediterranean, Asia Minor, and the Americas, as well as double flowers and new color variations that were products of mutation and hybridization.

This paper explores the use of the genre as a way to “preserve” these rare and curious flowers in the seventeenth century. Florilegium images have long been sandwiched between sixteenth-century herbal illustrations and seventeenth-century flower still lifes and seen as a bridge between art and science. This paper, however, turns to a less considered and seemingly unrelated genre: the *hortus siccus* or the herbarium with dried plants, which had comparatively fluid functions and conventions in the early modern period. This work in progress analyzes how decorative flowers were presented and arranged in selected seventeenth-century florilegia and herbaria. By considering what can and cannot be preserved through dried specimens, this paper aims to better understand the use of florilegium images and their strengths to “preserve” and represent certain flower characteristics.



Folio from the Gottorfer Codex at the SMK (The National Gallery of Denmark),

<https://open.smk.dk/en/artwork/image/KKSgb2949/35?q=anemone%20coronaria&page=0>.