

Maria Sibylla Merian

Flower Painter and Teacher

In her time, many Nuremberg families wanted to embellish their living rooms and private collections in their „cabinets of curiosities“ with pictures of objects in the natural world. The young „Mrs Gräffin, née Merianin“ specialised in colourful, naturalistic watercolours of flowers.

“Maiden Company“ and First Books

Merian gave lessons in arts and craft to girls and women and even went out into nature with her group (the “Combanny”) to observe plants, caterpillars and insects. However, design templates which could be used as teaching material were lacking.

Therefore, her husband published three series with her copperplate etchings. At that time Nuremberg was known as a centre of book printing and the book trade. These prints quickly sold out and were re-issued as a complete edition with all the etchings under the title “Neues Blumenbuch“ (New Flower Book).

In the preface, this new edition was not only recommended to “art lovers for use and pleasure“, but also explicitly to the then called “Frauenzimmer“ (gentlewomen).



Copperplate etching 9 in Merian’s Third Flower Book: *Poppy, blue meadow bells and a goldfinch.* “Magsamen” was the name of the bright red poppy in her home state of Hesse.



Merian Riverside Walk



Please follow the butterflies in the pavement as guides to your route.

