

## Dear Visitors,

The textile exhibits from our collections often offer graphic evidence of the world that surrounded them in their day. The embroidered screen Nature's Bounty, which we have picked for you as an example for close inspection, depicts the realm of plants:

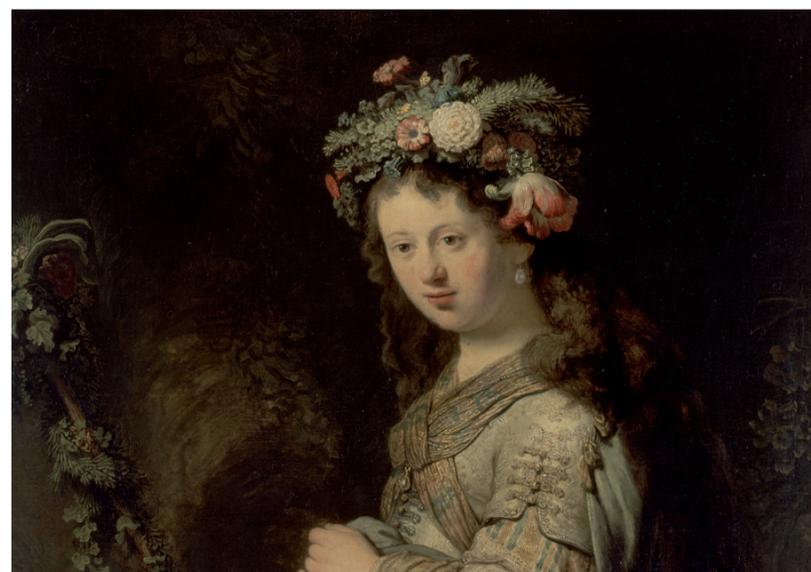


**Screen**  
Bohemia, late-18th century embroidery, screen adjustment of a later date  
MATERIÁLY — Silk, cotton, wood, metal, embroidery, needle painting  
PURCHASED — in 1970 from an antiques shop  
UPM  
CONSERVATION — Radka Kalabisová



### Rembrandt Tulip (Tulipa)

This variety took its name from the celebrated painter, Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), who captured them in his canvases, including among others a portrait of his wife, Saskia, of 1634. The characteristic streaks are caused by a viral disease. In its time they ranked among the most expensive varieties.



**Detail of Rembrandt's portrait of his wife Saskia**  
REPRODUCTION — Wikipedie

## The Language of Flowers

Attaching symbolic connotations to various flowers is a habit that originated in the Orient where flowerspeak, or selam, was used by the female occupants of harems. In Europe, interest in the language of flowers came to mount during the 18th century, and peaked in the 19th century. In this country, the custom was most widespread in the era of the Czech national revival.

One of the first flowerspeak vocabularies written in the Czech language was compiled by the author Božena Němcová in collaboration with Hanuš Jurenka. It was published in 1835 under the title *The Most Up-to-date and Most Original Selam, or Flower Speak*. Listed below here are the flower species embroidered on this screen, with their arcane meanings.



Can you find in the details of reproductions of the screen representatives of the animal kingdom?

**We have prepared for you a contour drawing of an exhibit to fill in the colours, either following the original, or giving free rein to your own imagination. Acquaint yourselves with the botanical names of the flowers embroidered here, as identified for us by botanist Radka Möllerová, and with their meanings in the language of flowers:**

Have a close look at the screen and find those plants you can easily encounter in nature today. Are the flowers' colours true to reality? You can keep the completed working sheet – but beware! Be sure to reposit it in the proper way, that is, as you believe tapestries are kept in a museum. As you depart, the custodians will tell you whether you have done it well enough.

Wishing you to enjoy your exploration,  
Your Museum

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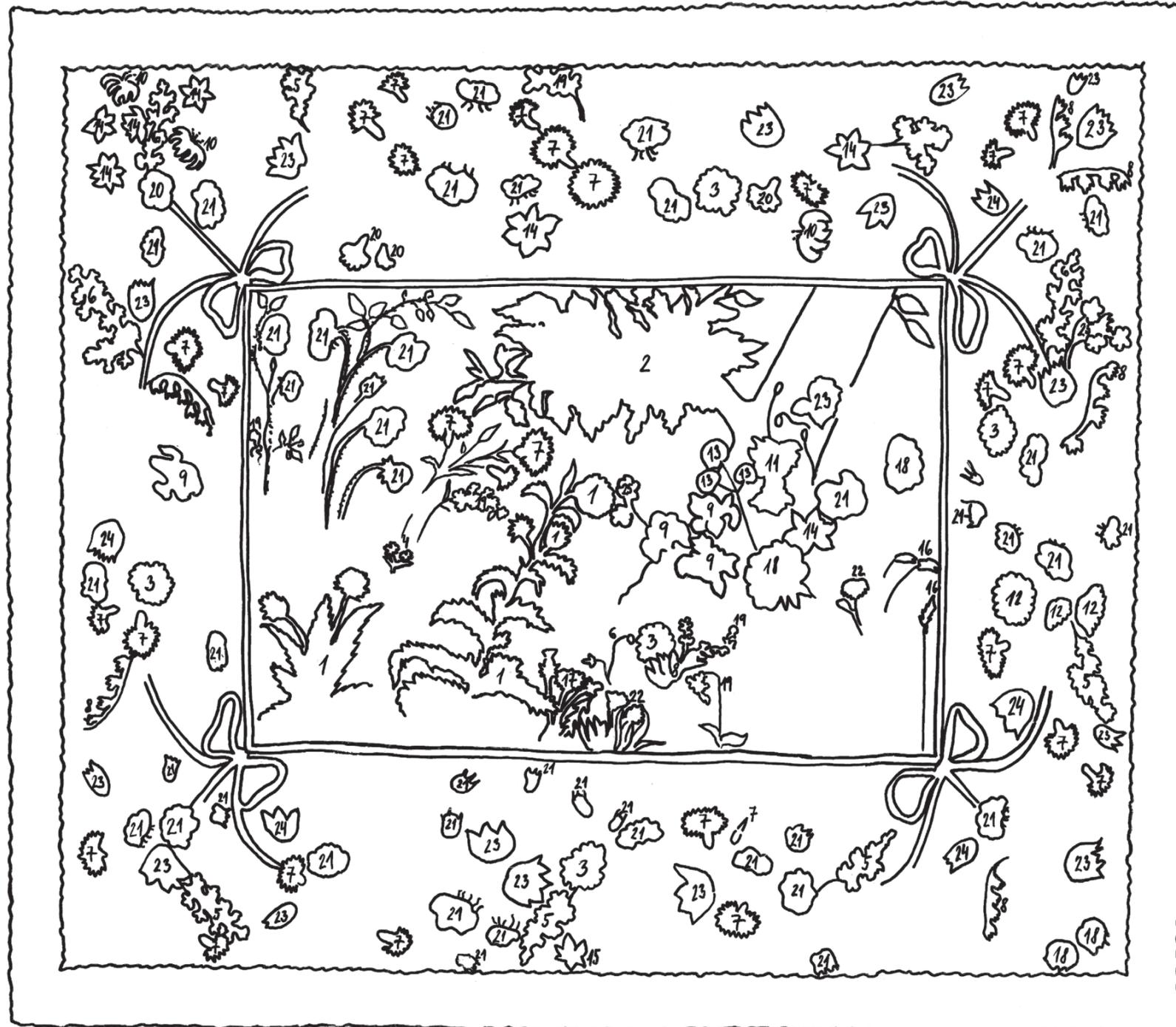
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1. — **Thistle** (*Carduus*), or **Cirsium**  
*Thistle – Don't love them who trespass against the rights of others and are pricklingly contemptuous.*
2. — **Oak** (*Quercus*)  
*Oak – I wish I would stay in your company all life long.  
Oak leaves – I will love only him who prides in manly deeds.  
Oak twig – I am too proud to kowtow to you as a slave.*
3. — **Hortensia** (*Hydrangea*), or **Guelder Rose** (*Viburnum opulus* "Roseum")  
*Hortensia – You've forgotten all to readily  
Guelder Rose – You are to impassive to awaken my interest.*
4. — **Pink** (*Dianthus*)  
*Pink – Everything will wither.*
5. — **Garden Hyacinth** (*Hyacinthus Orientalis*)  
*The variety of the hyacinth we know, with a flowering stem topped by a dense array of apical flowers, is the product of 19th-century cultivation. What we see here is its predecessor.  
Hyacinth – my heart beats for you.*
6. **Strawberry** (*Fragaria*)  
*Strawberry – Whoever can describe your immeasurable inner goodness?*
7. **Carnation** (*Dianthus Caryophyllus*)  
*Carnation – After you only, my love forever, does my heart crave.*
8. **Lily of the Valley** (*Convallaria Majalis*)  
*Lily of the Valley – For a long time already, my dearest dear, I've cherished your image in my heart.*
9. **Iris**  
*Iris – It will refresh my lamenting soul, as you have made it weep.*
10. **Lily** (*Lilium Candidum*)  
*Lily – For all your innocence and purity, earthly life is too short.*
11. **Poppy** (*Papaver*)  
*Poppy – You fell asleep as we were talking about our love, that I will never forgive you.*
12. **Marigold** (*Calendula*)  
*Marigold – Love's whispers are the sweetest when the moon takes her stride across the clouds.*
13. **Wild Carrot** (*Daucus Carota*)  
*Wild Carrot – I do love you but I'm too timid.*
14. **Poet's Daffodil** (*Narcissus Poeticus*)
15. **Wild Daffodil** (*Narcissus Pseudonarcissus*)  
*Daffodil – Your kiss is fast as an arrow.*
16. **Wheat** (*Triticum*)  
*An earful of wheat – We must believe in an early turn for the better in our love.  
An empty ear of wheat – My love was just a dream.*



17. **Dandelion** (*Taraxacum*)  
*Dandelion – Oh but you're still only a child.*
18. **Peony** (*Paeonia*)  
*Peony – You exude joy.*
19. **Forget-me-not** (*Myosotis*)  
*Forget-me-not – My fair lady, will you keep me in your memory?*
20. **Morning-glory** (*Ipomoea purpurea*)  
*Morning-glory – does not feature in available 19th-century flowerspeak vocabularies.*
21. **Rose** (*Rosa*)  
*Rose – Oh how your beauty and your innocence ennoble you, my fair lover!  
White rose – May death take me in his arms, as you despise me.  
Red rose – You've conquered!  
Moss rose – May you be as a thorn-free rose, my tenderest one.  
Moon rose – Keep up your spirit and you will keep your virtue.  
Wild rose – What of the body unless it enwraps a fine spirit.  
Field rose – You smile so sweetly.  
Provence rose – In silent wedlock ineloquent, you will leave me to abandon in bliss.  
Dog-rose – In the garden of my homeland countless roses blossom for me.  
Rosa Mystica – I love you more than my life.  
Rose blossom – My dearest girl, we'll soon be wed.  
Rose leaf – "Yes indeed!"  
Rosebud – For whom does your bosom bloom?  
Rose twig – "No!"*
22. **Daisy** (*Bellis Perennis*)  
*Daisy – You're full of conceit and indolent pride, where are your attractions?*
23. **Tulip** (*Tulipa*)
24. **Rembrandt Tulip** (*Tulipa*)  
*Tulip – There you are, conceited brat, I'll send you packing.*
25. **Heart's Delight** (*Viola Tricolor*)  
*White violet – Let's enjoy being unheard and unseen.  
Blue violet – Will our love not be cross-starred?  
Mountain pansy – You will reward my ardent love with marriage.*

Language of Flowers  
Visitors working sheet

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