

Pick of the Bunch



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In the dark, bitter days of winter, when the ground lies frozen and snow-covered, it can be hard to believe that mere months before, gardens and window boxes were bursting forth with fragrant, colorful blossoms. Today on the frosty walk home, at least we can pick up cut flowers at the store to remind us of the spring to come. But before the technological miracles of hothouses and refrigeration, flowers could only be captured for the winter months by artists and painters. Some of the finest flower-pieces ever painted were by Dutch and Flemish artists in the seventeenth century, which depict flowers in vases of metal and porcelain, sometimes with insects and butterflies nestling in petals or clinging to stalks. From these flower-pieces we can see what Europeans of the time considered desirable flowers: the rose, iris, carnation, lily, snowdrop, violet, fritillary, narcissus, tulip, daffodil, and hyacinth--many of which are still our favorites today. Alongside lush color botanical illustrations, "Pick of the Bunch" presents the social history of these flora--how they arrived in our gardens; how they were bought, acquired and displayed; and who were their devotees and cultivators. The book delves into their symbolic associations in classical and Christian traditions and examines the complex language of flowers employed by the Victorians. Beautiful to behold and engagingly written, "Pick of the Bunch" is a wonderful gift for any garden lover and will be a warm, much needed glimpse of spring and summer throughout the cold, barren

months.

作者介绍:

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