Litchi chinensis

Citrus aurantifolia

Monika E. de Vries Gohlke

NATIONAL MUSEUM of WOMEN in the ARTS
Litchi chinensis, 2007
Citrus aurantifolia, 2008

Artistic (By) Nature

Monika E. de Vries Gohlke (b. 1940) grew up within walking distance of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, which she and her family often visited. Gohlke credits the site’s natural beauty with inspiring her art (and her mother’s embroidery).

Take a closer look

Gohlke incorporates earth tones into her ink to achieve subtle gradations. She hand-colors select details and experiments with varied papers for contrast.

Something to talk about

Historically, botanical illustrators depicted specimens in the center of a white page, demonstrating a certain control over nature. In what ways do Gohlke’s works depart from this tradition? What might that suggest about contemporary views of the natural world?

Who knew?

Gohlke has created designs for fabrics, rugs, wallpaper, and dinnerware for Polo/Ralph Lauren, Spode, and Williams-Sonoma.

Monika E. de Vries Gohlke, *Litchi chinensis*, 2007; Etching and aquatint with acrylic on paper; 14⅜ x 11⅝ inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Monika E. de Vries Gohlke; Photograph by Lee Stalsworth

Monika E. de Vries Gohlke, *Citrus aurantifolia*, 2007; Etching and aquatint with acrylic on paper; 15¼ x 12½ inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Monika E. de Vries Gohlke; Photograph by Lee Stalsworth