

M S MERIAN





W. Exterijng 1840

De Bibliotheek

L. van der Pijl 1840





Maria Sibylla  
**MERIAN**

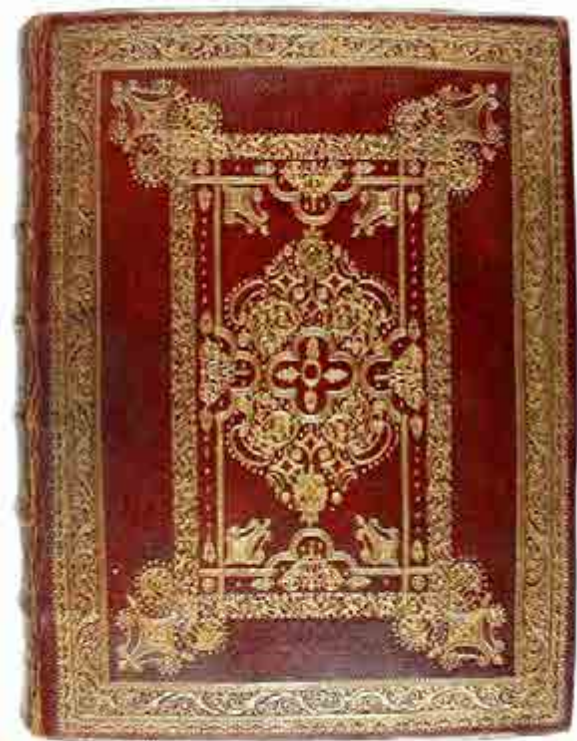
De mooiste platen uit  
'Metamorphosis Insectorum  
Surinamensium'



# *Diny in Amsterdam Hortus*









DER  
R U P S E N  
B E G I N , V O E D Z E L  
E N  
W O N D E R B A A R E V E R A N D E R I N G .

Waar in

De Oorspronk , Spys en Gestaltverwisseling: als ook  
de Tyd , Plaats en Eigenschappen der Rupsen ,  
Wormen , Kapellen , Uilrjes , Vliegen , en  
andere diergelyke bloedeloze Beesjes  
vertoond word,

Ten dienste van alle Liefhebbers der Insecten , Kruiden , Bloemen  
en Gewassen: ook Schilders , Borduurders &c.

Nauwkeurig onderzocht , na 't leven geschildert , in Print geknagt , en  
in 't kort beschreven

Door

MARIA SIDILLA MERIAN.



A M S T E R D A M ,

*Gedrukt voor den Auteur.*

Woonst in de Kerkstraat , tusschen de Leidische- en nieuwe  
Spiegelstraat over de Parfery de Swaan , alwaar dezelve  
Gedrukt , als ook afgezet te bekomen zyn.

Als mede

By GERARD VALKJ, op den Dam in de wakkere Hoop.







PLATE I. THE WREATH. BY MISS M. H. B. 1811.

Maria Sibylla

# MERIAN



kunstenares en  
natuuronderzoekster  
1647-1717



*a "truly ingenious" naturalist explores new worlds*

# THE CURIOUS Mister Catesby

EDITED FOR THE CATESBY COMMEMORATIVE TRUST

BY F. CHARLES HENDER AND DAVID J. SELLOTT

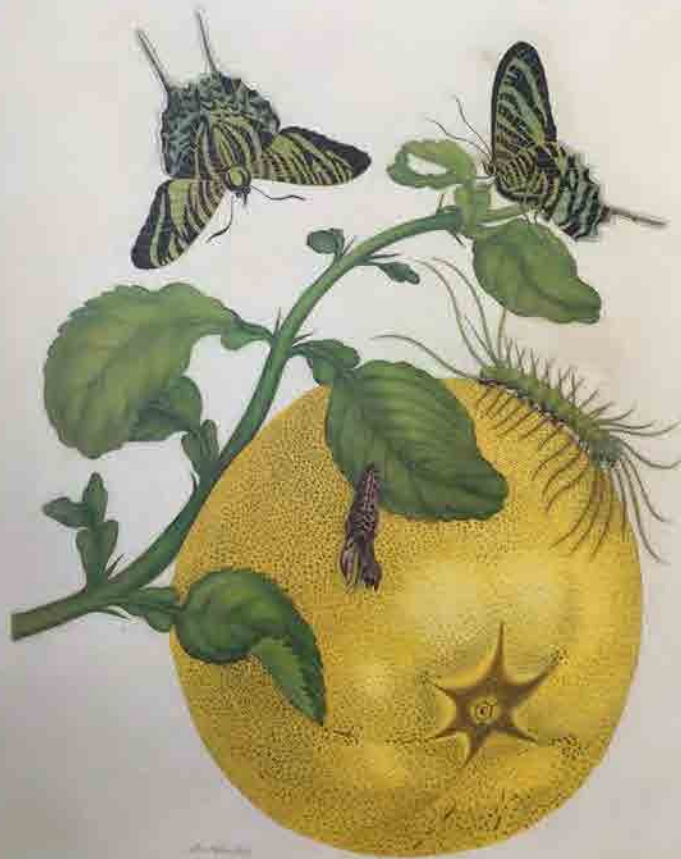
*Foreword by Jane G. Herring*



# MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN

Metamorphosis insectorum Surinamensium  
Verändering der Surinaamsche insecten  
Transformation of the Surinamese insects

1705



# Maria Sibylla Merian

Maria Sibylla Merian  
*Changing the Nature of Art and Science*

Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717), a German-born woman later living in the Netherlands, is famous for her groundbreaking work on caterpillars, moths and butterflies. Her extraordinary story and her contributions to art and science have fascinated many scholars and nature and art lovers, and have inspired artists and writers alike. In 2017 an international conference in Amsterdam celebrated the conjunction of new scholarship and artistic works related to this pioneering naturalist and artist. This book is the result from this cross-pollination.

*Maria Sibylla Merian. Changing the Nature of Art and Science* provides new insights into Merian's life and work, re-examines the existing canon, and explores her influence on the contemporary arts. The contributing authors variously investigate her network, her processes and products, and her impact on art and natural history. Her work is compared to that of artists and scientists that preceded and followed her, as well as to that of contemporaries, both male and female.

Altogether, this richly illustrated volume presents the most recent knowledge about one of the most remarkable women of the early modern period. The book is edited by Bert van de Rooster, Florence Pieters, Hans Mulder, Kay Etheridge and Mariëke van Delft, all members of the Maria Sibylla Merian Society.

*Changing the Nature  
of Art and Science*

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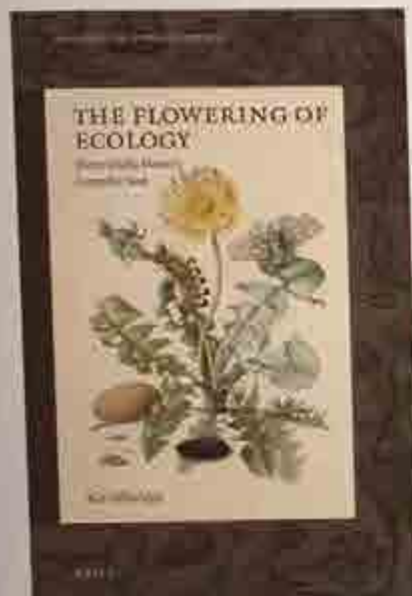




## ABOUT THE MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN SOCIETY

The Maria Sibylla Merian Society is an international group open to anyone interested in Merian studies in the broadest sense, including but not exclusive to artists, historians, and scientists. The Society was founded in May of 2014 following a stimulating interdisciplinary symposium on Merian at the Arts Library in Amsterdam, when an initial board was formed and plans for the future were initiated.

The Society will educate the public about Maria Sibylla Merian and encourage investigations related to her life and work. The Society recognizes that Merian lived and worked in a time when the art, science and commerce were inextricably linked, and will strive to support similar interconnections in sponsored endeavors by providing resources on our website for people to use in their research and art projects. The results of any research or artistic expression is the responsibility of the researcher or artist. The Maria Sibylla Merian Society does not certify the results as being free of error.



### NEW BOOK FROM SOCIETY MEMBER KAY ETHERIDGE

The *Flowering of Ecology* presents an English translation of Maria Sibylla Merian's 1679 "utopian" book, *Der Raupen wunderbare Verwandlung und sonderbare Blumennahrung* ("her processes in making the book and an analysis of its scientific content are presented in a historical context. Merian's work inspired her five decades, revealing the book's true scientific and ecology of ecology



### MERIANIN.DE: NEW INTRIGUING WEBSITE WITH FOCUS ON MERIAN'S NUREMBERG PERIOD 1668-1682

[www.merianin.de](http://www.merianin.de)

The beautifully illustrated website of Merian developed by Margot and Dieter Löhöfel is a rich resource based on years of work in their home city of Nuremberg. In this city she started her career with the help of her husband and many people in her cultural network. In German and English, the site presents detailed information on Merian's life, including high-resolution images from archives not previously published. The page on 'Nuremberg Works' includes links to digital copies of several of her early works. Just one example of the sources provided in this available addition to Merian Studies. Furthermore, it connects the work of the 'first ecologist' with current projects in Nuremberg protecting insects and biodiversity.



### ONLINE EXPO: JOHANN ANDREAS GRAFF DEPICTS THE OLD TOWN OF NUREMBERG

In 2017, the Jungfernturm Kulturhistorisches Museum of Nuremberg organized an exhibition about the life and works of the husband of Maria Sibylla Merian, Johann Andreas Graff (1636-1701). As a 'cityscape painter', he depicted Nuremberg meticulously. The exhibition as well as the comprehensive catalogue were based on research into Merian, her family and her time in Nuremberg by Margot Löhöfel. The Nuremberg Municipal Museums contributed with their rich collection of Graff's works. After the end of the exhibition, the experts in the department of the Nuremberg city administration transformed it into a virtual presentation that is now online as a Google Arts & Culture Project. It offers a fascinating impression of the work of Graff and the town where Maria Sibylla lived for fourteen years. The presentation includes beautiful high-resolution images, and comes in two parts: [www.merianin.de](https://www.merianin.de) and [www.merianin.de](https://www.merianin.de) around the St-

## CHANGING THE NATURE OF ART AND AND SCIENCE

Bert van de Roemer, Florença Pereira, Kay Etheridge, Hans Mulder, & Mareke van Delft eds. *Maria Sibylla Merian: Changing the Nature of Art and Science*; Linnos, August 2022

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# THE FLOWERING OF ECOLOGY

Maria Sibylla Merian's  
Caterpillar Book



Kay Etheridge



consideration that in July 1714 perhaps all of the paintings for Part III had been done; this means a cost of 500 florins for 150 paintings on parchment, or nearly 170 florins per book containing 50 plates each. The same book with 50 plates *gemalill* (painted), meaning coloured counterproof or replica on paper for 20 florins (Merian letter 17), a book with 50 plates coloured for 10 florins (Merian letters 11, 17), and an uncoloured copy for only 2 ½ florins (Luffenbach, Teil 3: 552-554). Obviously, there is an enormous difference between a painted work on parchment and a simple black and white print.



Figure 4 The Dwarf-Triangular White-leaved Fig-marygold. From: Richard Bowley, *Historia Plantarum Succulentarum*, Decade V, Plute 43, 1727. Image courtesy of the library of Kew Gardens, London  
(Click to enlarge)

#### Transcriptions and translations of Merian letters

Merian's letters have been transcribed by Stuldreher-Nienhuis and Rücker.<sup>13</sup> Both refer to the same original handwriting, but differ very often in transcription. Is it *Tugentreiche* (St.-N.) or *tugent Reiche* (R.), *Frauenzimmer* (St.-N.) or *frauwenzimer* (R.), *Vatter* (father) (St.-N.) or *Vutter* (cousin) (R.) (Merian letter 1 (St.-N.), i.e. letter 2 (R.))? Another example: sometimes Stuldreher-Nienhuis writes more words in a sentence than Rücker does. However, the old way of writing a word cannot be changed into the modern way, or words within a sentence should not be changed. Likewise, the translation of the letters from German into English is sometimes problematic, but *2 muschel grundfarb* has nothing to do with *2 shells of ground colour*, it simply means *Primärfarbe = primary colour*, i.e. blue, yellow or red (Merian letter 3).

Another example: the translation from the letters written in Dutch or French into German and English is often wrong. If the original is written in present tense, one should not transfer into imperfect tense: *Les Billetes contiennent* cannot be translated into *the letters contained*, it means instead: they contain. *Souhaiter* remains to *wish* and should not be changed into *hesiter* - to *hesitate*. And *il en est prest plus que la moitié* means *more than half of it is finished* and not *almost half is finished*. To translate *10 procent* into *50 percent* is nonsense, Merian actually did not want to pay 10 percent to Levinus Vincent (all these examples from Merian letter 12). In letter 17 the sentence: ... *so kost das in quart 20 fl hollendisch, der eines in [ ] erwagen hoffe gethan zu haben* ... should be corrected into: ... *deren eines in 3 wagen hoffe gethan zu haben* ... In letter 18, written in Dutch, Merian offered *2 duysent* beer to Pativer. This is translated into *two thousand bones*, but Merian never sold bones! What she offered were *two centipedes or millipedes*, Ella Reitzma and Sandrine Ulenberg give the correct translation.<sup>14</sup>

Obviously, it seems to be necessary to review all transcriptions as well as all translations of Merian's letters. That would be a good aim to set before the next commemoration in Amsterdam in 2017, on the occasion of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death.

#### Endnotes

1. The numbers of the Merian letters refer to Wettengel, K. (1997: 262-269)

2. Wiers (2007); Krukawa (2011)

