

MARY KOCOL
ICE GARDENS:
THE POETICS OF NATURE



SEEING ROSES IN DIFFERENT WAYS

ROSES INSPIRE ART

A master gardener as well as an artist, Mary Kocol extend's her love of roses into her art which incorporates roses that she grows in her own rose garden.

by Mary Kocol

My art is inspired by the gardens within my urban environment in Somerville, Massachusetts. I remember the gardens of my childhood belonging to my Polish-born father and his immigrant friends who came to the U.S. after World War II. Though his garden of vegetables and fruits was mainly utilitarian, my father also planted for beauty – growing roses, morning glories and towering sunflowers.

For the *Ice Gardens* series, the blossoms are collected from gardens of friends, family, and my own, frozen into ice and photographed in sunlight to become fanciful and ephemeral constructions. Blooms and ice are temporary; the photograph becomes the permanent art object — the record that they once briefly existed.

Garden roses work especially well for this project. David Austin Roses are my favorites to grow and photograph. While the water turns into ice, the plants inside drift and float before freezing into place. I don't know what the final result will look like until the sculpture is held up to sunlight. Then the unexpected details are revealed — sunlight brings

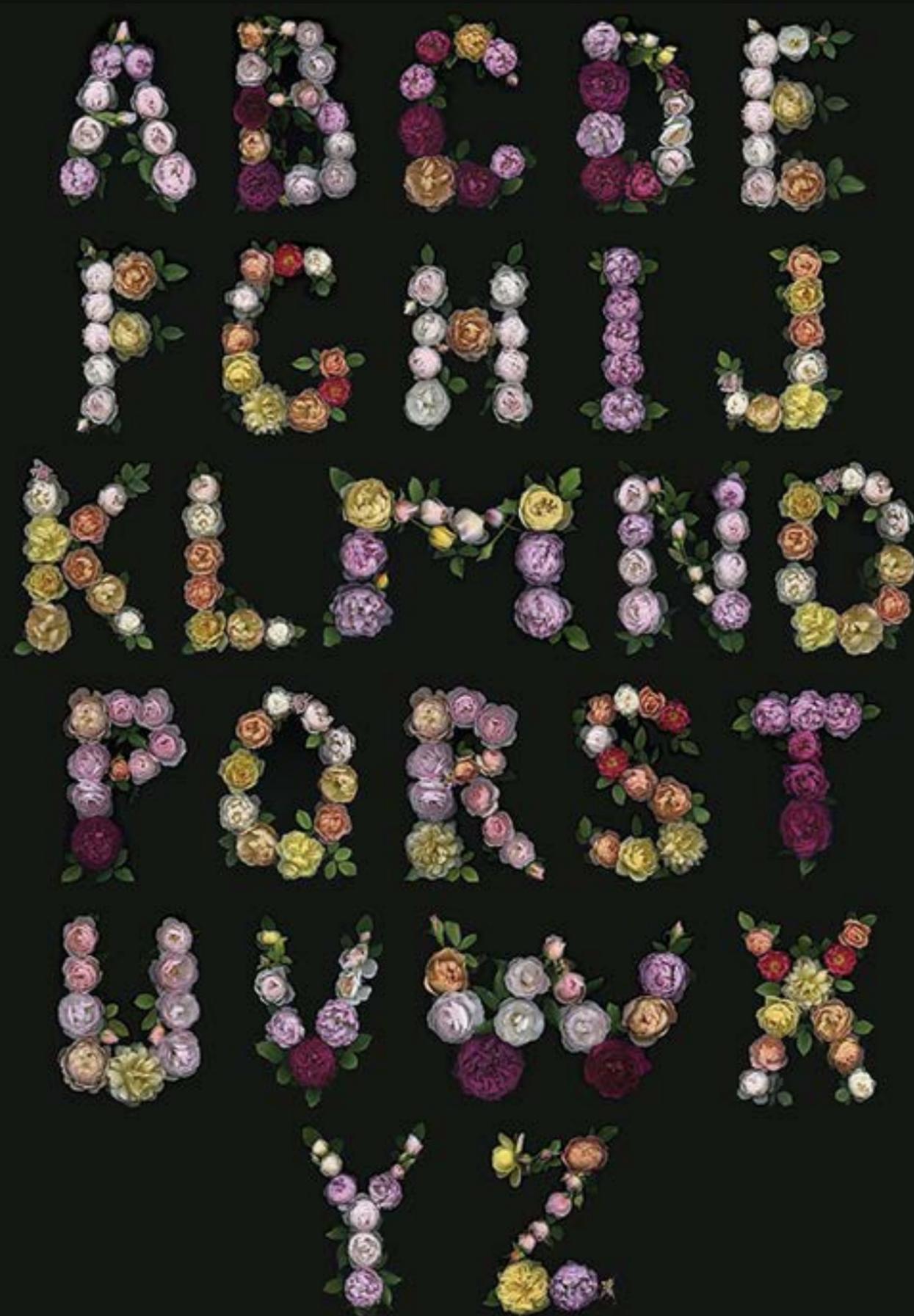
radiance to the photograph, lighting up the ice and frozen blooms like shimmering jewels. Ice is depicted in a way that we're not used to seeing it: with sunlight beaming through, showing off its intricate details of fissures and effervescence. The fragrant rose scent actually permeates the ice!

I experience real delight in making this work, while being reminded of what it reflects: that which is ethereal, exquisite, spiritual and ephemeral.

About the Rose Garden Alphabet

This is from my new *Botanica* series where I scanned garden roses and other flowers at high resolution using a flatbed film scanner. I have seven varieties of David Austin roses that were used to create this project. *Rose Garden Alphabet* is part of a series of other garden and tree alphabets made to encourage people and kids to garden and learn about plants that grow mostly in the New England area.

Learn more about Mary, and see more of Mary's art at marykocol.com



Rose Garden Alphabet
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