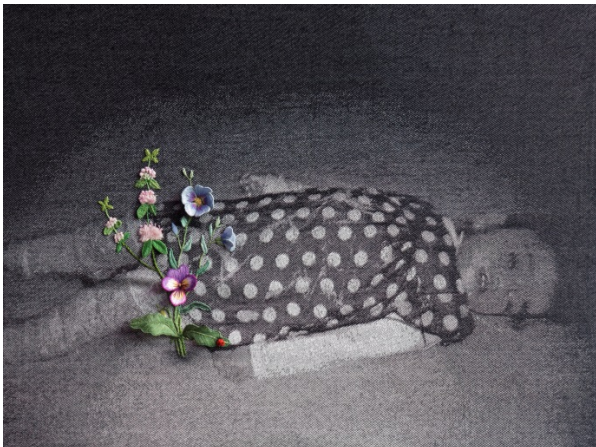


## Where Flowers bloom ...



2018  
4 pieces, 42 x 32 cm each  
Stumpwork on woven cloth

The language of flowers, sometimes called floriography, is a means of secret communication through the use of flowers. Here, these are embroidered on woven photos of drowned refugee children in three-dimensional stumpwork, a technique that had its heyday in England during the 17th century.



**Fritillaries** are a symbol of sorrow as it is said that the flowers droop because they witnessed Jesus Christ's crucifixion and hung their heads in sorrow. Vita Sackville-West, an English poetess and garden planner, declared it to be "a sinister little flower, in the mournful color of decay."

**Hemlock** (*Conium Maculatum*) is a plant that the Ancients were already familiar with. This was the fatal poison Socrates was condemned to drink. The Latin *maculatum* means spotted and

refers to the purple-red stem markings, which - according to an old English legend - represent the brand put on Cain's brow after he committed the first murder. Hemlock is eternally deadly, or is a proverb to express "you will cause my death."

**Churchyard Beetles** (*Blaps mortisaga*) are also called "the Announcer of the Dead" and were regarded as the forerunners of coming disaster. This explains the type name *mortisaga* (foretelling death) given by Carl von Linné, a Swedish botanist.



**Daisies** symbolize innocence and purity. According to a Celtic legend, whenever an infant died, God sprinkled daisies over the earth to cheer the parents up.

**Poppies** have long been used as a symbol of sleep, peace, and death: sleep because the opium extracted from them is a sedative and death because of the common blood-red color of the red poppy in particular. In Greek and Roman myths, poppies were used as offerings to the dead. Used as emblems on tombstones, poppies symbolize eternal sleep. This symbolism was evoked in the children's novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, in which a magical poppy field threatened to make the protagonists sleep forever. Following the trench warfare in the poppy fields of Flanders during World War I, poppies have become a symbol of remembrance.

**Butterflies** are viewed as a symbol of resurrection in Christian tradition. According to the Old Testament story, Christ died on the cross, was buried in a tomb for three days, and came to life again to offer hope of life after death. The butterfly can be seen as the insect that "dies" as a caterpillar, is buried in the cocoon for a length of time, and emerges in a new life. Symbolically, butterflies are creatures with the ability to transcend the ordinary and take flight into the heavens. In many spiritual circles the butterfly represents the spirit or soul.



**Pansies** (*Viola Tricolora*) are distributed by Ophelia in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* with the remark: "(...); and there is pansies, that's for thoughts." In French, the words *pensée* meaning pansy as well as *penser* which meaning thinking are pronounced in the same way.

**Flax** symbolizes fate, gratitude, and simplicity, but also "I feel your kindness."

**Pennyroyal** has two very different meanings in floriography. It is considered as a sign of hospitality but is also used to tell somebody: flee away / go away. In Victorian times, women used it to regulate their menstruation or to cause an abortion.

## Ladybird

*Ladybird, Ladybird,  
Fly away home,  
Your house is on fire,  
Your children shall burn!*

The origins of this rhyme come from England where the hop vines are burned after harvesting is over. These vines were usually covered with aphids and young ladybirds that were feeding on the aphids. When the hop vines were burning, the beetles would take to wing and the larvae would somehow try to crawl away from their homes that were now in flames.



**Tansies** were regarded in Greek Mythology as an herb with eternal properties (the Greek word for Tansy is *athanasia*, meaning immortality). The long lasting, golden button-flowers gave rise to the herb's reputation for being deathless, as did the preserving powers of tansy's aromatic, feathery leaves. The leaves were used to embalm the dead.

**Thistles** are tough plants and associated with resilience, pride, pain, and protection.

**Lilies** symbolize innocence and rebirth of the departed's soul from the complex physical world to a greater place. Chinese give the flower to people who have experienced a recent loss because it is believed to help relieve heartache.

**Spiders'** symbol meaning serves as a reminder that our choices construct our lives. When the spider appears in dreams, it is said that's a message to be mindful of the choices we are making.