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# Insight

## THE ART OF THE COVER

by **MARIANNE HAZLEWOOD**

I am officially an *Arisaema* geek... or maybe nerd! Here is a short story of obsession or, if you're kind, a love story...

I came across these strange and interesting plants when I was looking for a topic for my diploma in Botanical Illustration at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. I'd seen them before at our local garden show, and lusted after them, but now I had a legitimate excuse to go nuts...

I planted multiple specimens of each of my selected *Arisaema*. I ended up with a shortlist of *A. costatum*, *A. ringens*, *A. griffithii*, *A. consanguineum*, *A. galieforme* Serizawa, and *A. intermedium*.

Each specimen introduced me to new aspects of these plants. I marveled over their tubers, planted them like treasures, and watched the shoots emerge. Photographing them through their prime, to their soggy demise (they wilt, in the autumn, in a very gooey way). I watched them and when I had true, typical specimens, untampered with by frosts or slugs, I got to work. I planted them into pots so that my subjects could come indoors to color match and paint from.

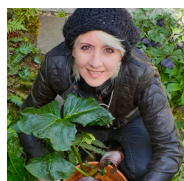


Initially, I didn't know what aspect to focus on. The inflorescences are so fantastic, the foliage follows some set types, with fascinating idiosyncrasies, and when I first started working on them I hadn't yet seen the amazing fruits. I settled, eventually, on broadly depicting two seasons of growth incorporating: inflorescence, foliage and then fruits. I found the pieces worked together as a set of six, the compositions playing off each other.

Starting with rough sketches and then measured drawings, I refined, color matched, and worked on each aspect as it came into season with a dry brush technique.

I particularly love the graceful shape *A. costatum* has in its inflorescence with its long entwining spadix. It is the most graceful of *Arisaema* flowers and the carmine and white striped spathe is candy-cane delicious. The leaflets are edged with carmine, which diffuses up the veins, segmenting the fresh green elephantine trifold leaf. In autumn the vibrant orange fruits are held on a curved peduncle that morphs from deep chocolate to a banana yellow. This truly is a rainbow of *Arisaema*.

I have planted so many of these over the last few years that I now anticipate July (when they emerge here in Scotland) with a silent recitation excitedly whispering through my mind... "The *costatum* are coming..." ■



**Marianne Hazlewood** is an award-winning botanical artist living in Scotland, UK. She studied at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, where she first fell in love with members of the genus *Arisaema*. She works from her garden and studio in an old cottage in the hills, where she creates modern botanical illustrations in various media.

**COVER IMAGE AND ABOVE** *Arisaema costatum*, cobra lily, 17.72 x 13 in, watercolor on paper, ©2018, Marianne Hazlewood