

Novelties and Spotlights



Thea Gouverneur

The magical world of Thea...

I was born with a passion for flowers. My father was a bulb grower and exporter, as was my mother's father. My father and my mother's brother first met on a ship bound for America where they were going to sell flowers bulbs. Ever since I can remember, flowers have been part of my life. When I began to draw, and later to stitch, it seemed natural to choose flowers as my inspiration.

I grew up in the village of Sassenheim in The Netherlands, surrounded by bulb fields. When I looked out of my bedroom window in spring and summer I could see row upon row of flowers, stretching as far as the eye could see. My brothers, sisters and I would help in the bulb fields during the spring and summer holidays, harvesting the flowers in readiness for export to the UK, Germany and the USA. First it was the daffodils, tulips and hyacinths, later the irises, dahlias and gladioli. We would cut the flowers by hand using a blade, working up and down the rows and piling the cut flowers in one corner of the field. It was backbreaking work, but we enjoyed it.

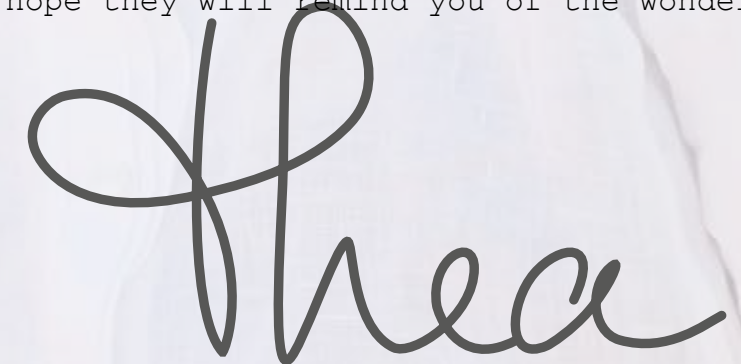
As my father was always busy in the fields, it was my job to do the gardening at home, but it was a chore that I loved. I had green fingers and enjoyed planting and pruning as well as weeding. My favourite flowers were sweet peas which would scramble up one wall of the house. Their fragile scented petals quivering in the slightest breeze. I began to draw and sketch in the garden at home, which is when I developed an eye for detail. I wanted to make my drawings of flowers look exactly like they do in real life. My other passion was sewing, a skill I inherited from my mother. She used to give me offcuts of fabric and I would make clothes and doll clothes of the fabric. It was my aunt who first encouraged me to try embroidery. I used to stay with her each summer, and she was always embroidering exquisite panels, cushions and kneelers which were sold for the church. I was fascinated by the way her needle would flash in and out of the fabric, stitching tiny stitches with lustrous coloured threads. She showed me how to draw a pattern on fabric with a pencil, then embroider over it with twisted chain stitches, french knots and satin stitches.

My love of designing led me to the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, where I completed a teaching course in drawing and fashion design. It was while I was teaching that I began to design my own cross stitch flower design. Some years later I made charts from these initial designs and a friend suggested I should sell them, so I approached a department store in Amsterdam who immediately offered to sell them for me. This was the starting point of my cross stitch kit design company, over 6 decades ago!

Although I now design on a computer, the way I approach each design is still the same. I study the flowers, either in the garden or countryside, or I take photo's and compose a picture from several photo's.

People sometimes ask me where I get my design inspiration. I always answer: Look out of your window and you will see inspiration everywhere - in gardens, in hedgerows, in fields, woods and hills. There are so many beautiful flowers, plants, bushes and trees, that there is not enough time to stitch them all. I know that I will never run out of ideas, it's much more likely that I will run out of time first!

I hope you have great pleasure stitching my designs, and as you gaze on the finished pieces, I hope they will remind you of the wonderful glory of nature.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Thea'. The script is elegant and cursive, with the 'T' being particularly large and stylized.



616 11.8 x 13.8 Inch



616.05 11.8 x 13.8 Inch



615 6.9 x 7.5 Inch



620 BEIJING 31 x 20 Inch



614 5 x 2.6 x 4.3 Inch



604 15 x 8.7 Inch



604.05 15 x 8.7 Inch



555 18 x 10 Inch



555.05 18 x 10 Inch





730 12.2 x 11.8 Inch



DSB017 10 x 10 Inch



DSB018 10 x 10 Inch



731 12.2 x 11.8 Inch



DSB019 10 x 10 Inch



2018 3 x 13.8 Inch



2078 17.7 x 20 Inch



831 24.5 x 31.5 Inch



841 8.7 x 17.5 Inch



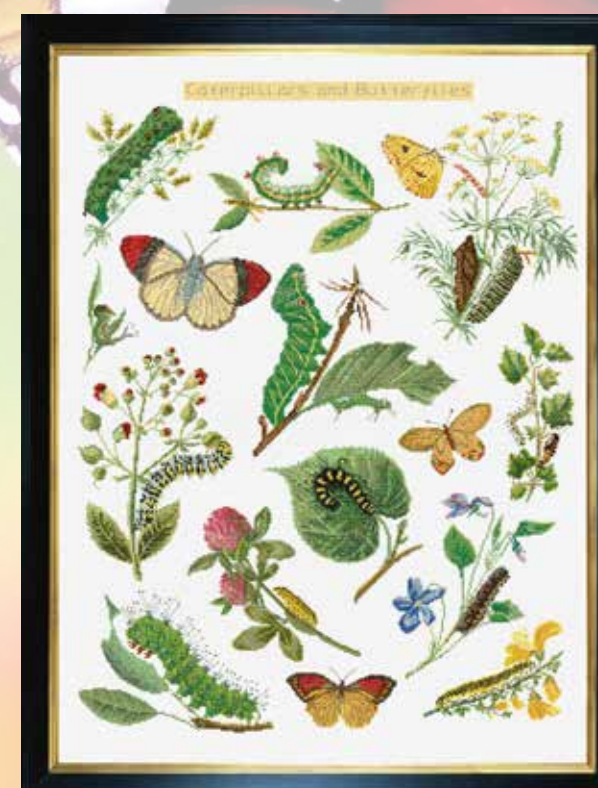
830 22.4 x 35.5 Inch



617 16.4 x 17.5 Inch



566 22 x 30 Inch



587 18 x 24 Inch



587.05 18 x 24 Inch



2076 10 x 15.5 Inch



3027 14 x 19 Inch



2074 16 x 16 Inch



23.5999 16 x 16 Inch



2023 19.7 x 25 Inch



602 32 x 8 Inch



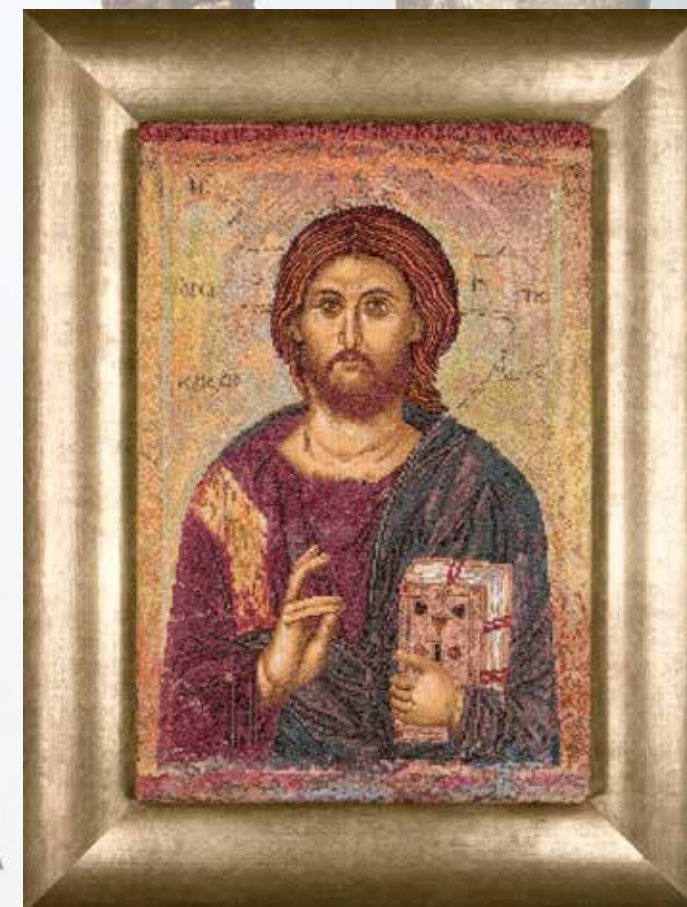
603 32 x 8 Inch



552 10.5 x 4.5 Inch



560 12 x 21 Inch



476 9 x 13 Inch



451 32 x 8 Inch



452 12 x 21 Inch



2045 20.5 x 11 Inch



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