

About American Flowers Week

June 28-July 4, 2020

American Flowers Week is the advocacy, education and outreach campaign produced by **Slow Flowers Society** and *slowflowers.com*. Learn more at *americanflowersweek.com*, where you can download free graphics, social media badges, coloring sheets, photography, fact sheets and more resources.

I created the original domestic flower promotion campaign in 2015, choosing to launch during America's Independence Day. Like everyone in the Slow Flowers Movement, I believe that we should be celebrating American-grown flowers all 52 weeks of the year. But by choosing to devote one full week to an awareness campaign, we can heighten the attention of this cause – both in the media and in the public. In its sixth year, American Flowers Week has gained significant momentum, generating more than 14.5 million impressions across social media platforms since its launch.

I encourage everyone involved in flower farming and floral design to use the **#americanflowersweek** hashtag to draw attention to the campaign.

Debra Prinzing, PFCI



Flowers, Faces and Fashion

Tamara Hough illustrates "flower ladies" using blooms she grows and collects from nature

The playful and charming personalities that **Tamara Hough** posts on her Instagram feed (@morning.glory.flowers) capture the imagination as the perfect expression of **American Flowers Week**. A flower farmer, botanical artist and **Slow Flowers** member, Tamara created an original illustration for the campaign's 2020 branding. Tamara's trio of stylish women symbolize flowers and fashion combined, created originally as a three-dimensional collage on paper. Tamara first drew their faces and poses in pencil, then added bits and pieces from the garden to outline features and expressions. Each wears a botanical headpiece in my requested color palette: red, white and blue. Tamara added all kinds of floral embellishments as jewelry, collars, cuffs and hand-held bouquets. She named the ladies Dae, Makena and Chloe.

Based in Glenville, West Virginia, **Morning Glory Flowers** is a 40-acre family farm located in the center of the state, close to where Tamara grew up. A few years ago, she began growing flowers on about one-half acre, selling bouquets at two regional farmers' markets.

The inspiration for her botanical portrait series originated during her prior career as a high school

art teacher. "One day I decided we needed to be out of the classroom. I divided the students into groups and had them start foraging. And we had the most fun making art out of what we had found," she says.

"After my teaching career, we moved to a farm to live closer to my parents, who need a little help from time to time. I started to grow some flowers, and that high school class project came back to me," she recalls. "I really love portraits, so I started putting them together. I might see a leaf that reminds me of a skirt or a piece of *Celosia* suggesting a beautiful hairpiece. This began as a fun project, but as I started putting together pieces from the garden to make my portraits, these ladies began to have personalities."

A wry expression may happen when Tamara sees a bent blade of grass as a lifted eyebrow or a pepper pod as an upturned smile. A found bird's nest might appear as a fanciful headpiece; a section of moss forms a ruffle-like collar. Rose petals shape a flirty skirt, appearing to be blown in the breeze. "It starts with the flowers, but everything I use is botanical," Tamara says.

Her original pieces are temporary, captured with photography for posting to Instagram or being transformed into



a print to be sold online at Tamara's Etsy shop. She sketches each image on 11-by-14-inch or 16-by-20-inch paper before laying the flowers and other botanical elements in place.

"I take them outside to photograph in the natural light, so that can be a bit of a problem with wind or bugs that come by," she admits. "But sometimes that's a good thing. I photograph the original piece in different types of lighting – all done naturally."

In addition to marketing bouquets of her West Virginia-grown flowers, Tamara sells cards, prints and tote bags featuring her botanical portraits. She brings her artwork to music festivals and craft sales and also sells through a few local gift shops.

It's inspiring to see an artist use the medium of flowers, which for Tamara means combining her fine art training with her newfound passion for "growing" her own art supplies.

"I want these ladies to be joy-bringers, for sure. When my flowers help people remember flowers, it's a great connection to make." ■

DETAILS

Morning Glory Flowers,
@morning.glory.flowers
Shop: etsy.com/shop/morninggloryflowerco