I entered the world of ancient Rome through Professor Bettina Bergmann of Mount Holyoke College with whom I collaborated on reconstructing Roman domestic architecture. I applied my fine arts training to reimagining the interior spaces — painted walls and mosaic floors — by building 3-dimensional models, watercolor and pencil renderings, and computer-generated plans and graphic layouts.

I first met Wilhelmina Jashemski when she was speaking at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and I had the opportunity to show her my model of the Roman villa at Oplontis. Since I had based my reconstruction of the villa’s extensive gardens on the findings of Professor Jashemski, I was excited to meet her.

For me, it was somewhat of a historic meeting that led to my not only working with Professor Jashemski on garden reconstructions but, after much persuasion, to the project that resulted in these drawings. Not having had any experience in the very specialized field of botanical illustration, I was extremely fortunate in being guided by Professor Jashemski and experiencing firsthand her ability to marshal expert help whenever needed.

For *A Pompeian Herbal*, we worked closely with Dr. Massimo Raccidanti, a long-time associate and botanist in Naples, who took photos of plants and mailed them to us. I also had photos taken at Pompeii by Dr. Jashemski’s physicist husband, Stanley, who assisted her at the excavation site by photographing and drawing ground plans.

Of course, there was Dr. Frederick Meyer, a research botanist in charge of the Herbarium at the U.S. National Arboretum. It was his wife, Lillian, a skilled botanical illustrator, who had started the plant portraits for the book but passed away before finishing. Her drawings, utilizing the painstaking stippling technique, are featured in both the book and this exhibition. Dr. Meyer not only provided plant specimens but also reviewed each drawing for accuracy. It was a strenuous but rewarding collaboration.

Both Dr. Jashemski and Dr. Meyer have passed away, but I remember them with great pleasure. I feel honored to have had the opportunity to work with two scholars whose love for their subject inspired in me a deep appreciation for the world of plants whose aesthetic and curative properties enriched the lives of the ancients just as they do in our modern times.