

# Educating eyes and hands

Masdevallia  
V. Sánchez  
Tempera on paper  
54 x 38 cm  
Royal Botanical Garden  
of Madrid Archive  
Illustration 46

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**With the intention of drawing the *Flora de Bogotá***, José Celestino Mutis set out to create a drawing school that gave lessons free of charge. Under his guidance, candidates learned to produce high artistic value illustrations which guaranteed that the information therein included could be read by 18<sup>th</sup> century scientists.

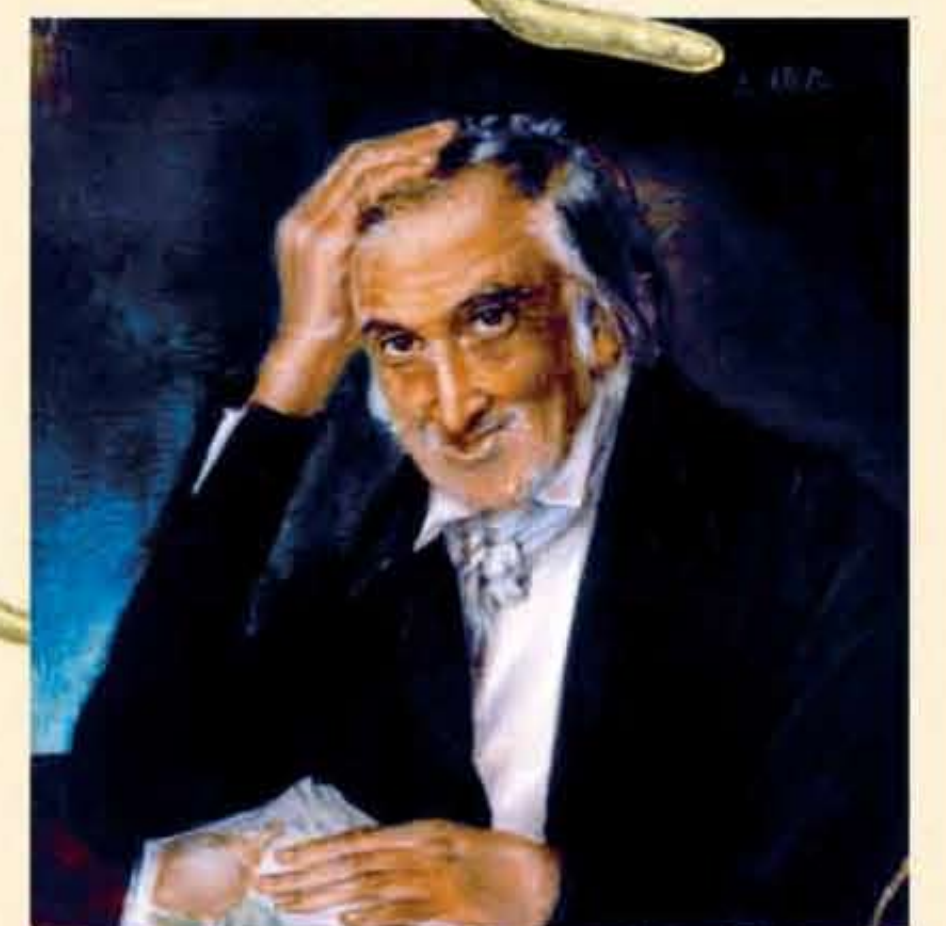
Some of the draftsmen had previous artistic background. Such is the case of Pablo Antonio García del Campo, of brothers Antonio, Nicolás and Francisco Javier Cortés

from Quito, and Cartagena born Salvador Rizo, who was director of the school and was in charge of the Expedition since 1784.

Mutis established the requirements that the draftsman should meet: their age should be between 20 and 30, and they had to complete 9 hour working days. Wages were between 8 and 12 *reales* a day, with the possibility to rise up to 16 if the job had outstanding quality. In order to be admitted, it was necessary to

demonstrate docility and work capacity. In return, the individual would receive accommodation and lunch, not dinner.

The draftsmen began their work copying botanical drafts and illustrations. After this stage, they were faced with the natural sample, and they were always subjected to Mutis' instructions.



Francisco Javier Matís  
José María Espinosa Prieto  
ca. 1845  
Oil paint and watercolor on  
ivory  
7,7 x 7,3cm  
Museo Nacional de  
Colombia  
Reg. 575

Easel of the Botanical  
Expedition  
ca. 1767  
Assembled wood  
160 x 87 x 77cm  
Museo Nacional de  
Colombia  
Reg. 656