

## MAURICE HARRIS

This Los Angeles artist sculpts flowers into botanical masterpieces.

**AS A BOY**, Maurice Harris loved watching his grandmother, a florist and milliner, create elaborate hats for herself and other churchgoing ladies. Bitten by the creative bug, he moved to LA for art school, later designing displays for Juicy Couture while dabbling in flower arranging. When the recession forced Juicy to downsize, Harris launched Bloom & Plume, a floral studio in hip Echo Park. “When I was a kid, I made flower arrangements for my teachers on the last day of school,” says Harris. “I always thought of myself as an artist, but I didn’t think it would be a sustainable career.” Filled with unusual blooms like clematis, sweet pea and bearded iris, Harris’ striking compositions deliver multisensory encounters. “What I really enjoy about flowers is that they’re experiential. They have fragrance. They have movement. I love flowers like anemones that give you the evolution of their life,” Harris says. But perhaps the quality he appreciates most about his medium is its fleeting nature. “In America, we want things that will last forever,” he says. “Flowers are ephemeral. I like to say that I create minisculptures that are temporary. The best way to experience them is in the moment.”

— GINA DECAPRIO VERCESI



► **Approximately 20 million** flowers are traded daily at Royal FloraHolland, the largest flower market in the world.

► **The bright yellow heads** of sunflowers move throughout the day to follow the sun’s progress from east to west.

► **Saffron, a delicate spice**, comes from the stigma of the saffron crocus. It takes 75,000 flowers to produce 1 pound of saffron threads.

### PETAL POWER

Brilliant blooms take the stage in fine arts, flower gardens and ‘60s sunshine pop.



1 View Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Jimson Weed/White Flower No. 1* at the New Britain Museum for American Art in Connecticut through early June.



2 Tiptoe through the tulips at the Netherlands’ *Keukenhof* gardens in spring, when 7 million bulbs blossom into a riotous display.



3 The Montreal-based psych-pop band *Anemone* launched its debut album, *Beat My Distance*, this past February.