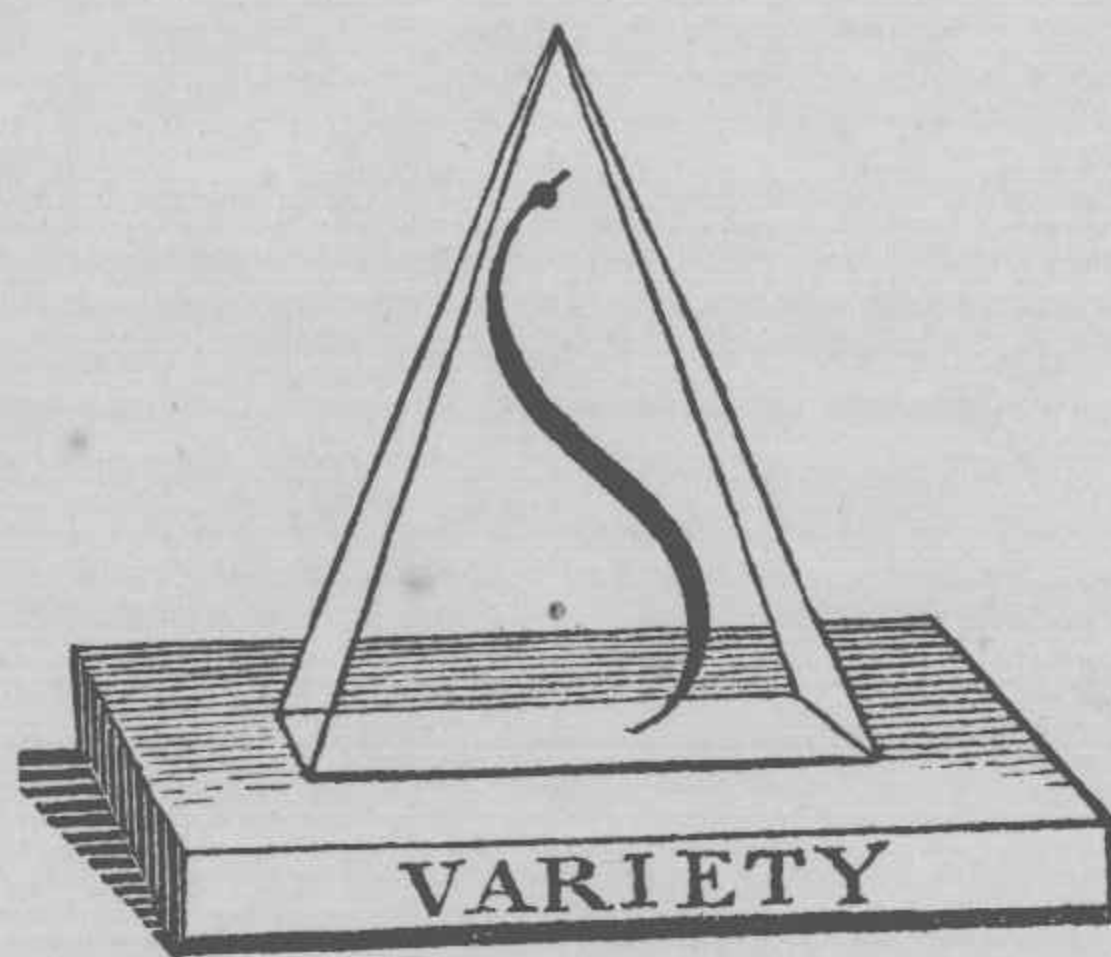






THE ANALYSIS  
OF BEAUTY









FRONTISPIECE SEE CHAPTER XVI



# THE ANALYSIS OF BEAUTY

BY WILLIAM HOGARTH



A REPRINT  
Including the Plates  
Formerly in Portfolio



DONE AT  
THE SILVER LOTUS SHOP  
PITTSFIELD MASSACHUSETTS  
1909



18

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## NOTE

**The Analysis of Beauty**, by William Hogarth, is frequently referred to and quoted by writers and teachers.

Every art student has heard of Hogarth's **line of beauty**. In a vague way it is known to be a serpentine line resembling an elongated S; but few are familiar with Hogarth's explanations and theories, except through the references of others, and these must necessarily be incomplete and less satisfactory than a direct reference to the author's complete book. Former editions of this work are not available to the majority of art students, as it is only possible to find a copy of the book in the libraries of the larger cities where it is kept for reference only and not for circulation. It is very difficult to obtain a copy of any of the early editions at the present time, even at a high valuation. This edition puts this valuable book within the reach of every art student.

The *Analysis of Beauty* was first published in 1753. In this and in subsequent editions, the illustrations were grouped in two plates, each fourteen and a half inches by nineteen and a half inches. The largest illustration in each plate measured about nine and a half inches by seventeen inches, and occupied the center of the plate; the margins outside of this on each plate were filled with about fifty smaller illustrations.



These two plates were bound separately from the text and were very inconveniently arranged for reference.

We have reproduced the small marginal illustrations of the size of the originals and have grouped them on pages in juxtaposition to the text referring to them, and have reproduced each of the large center illustrations as a whole, reduced to fit a page of this book, and have also reproduced these illustrations sectionally, each section being of the same scale as the original.

These full size sections are conveniently located for reference and the relation of each section to the whole may be easily seen by a reference to the reduced reproduction of the complete illustration. These changes in the arrangement of the illustrations necessitated a change in their reference numbers. In reprinting the book we have reduced it to a more convenient size, not by abridging the body of the work, but by using a modern book type, the only abridgment being in the Preface and the Introduction, and in the omission of some unimportant foot-notes. The important foot-notes have been incorporated in the body of the text. The only other changes have been in the spelling of a few words.

Our aim has been to make only such changes as would render the book more convenient and valuable to the reader and especially to the art student.

THE PUBLISHERS.



## PREFACE

The publishers of this edition felt that a Preface concisely stating the facts essential to a clear understanding of Hogarth's theories and his purpose in writing *The Analysis of Beauty*, would be preferable to a reprint of the long Preface and longer Introduction which appear in the earlier editions, both of which contain much which would be of little interest to the art student or general reader of to-day, as well as being unnecessary to an understanding of the scope and plan of the book or of the theories advanced. This plan seemed practicable except in the case of a section of the Introduction, dealing with the advantage of considering objects merely as hollow shells. This subject is much more fully treated in the Introduction than in the chapters which follow and employs illustrations not used elsewhere.

According to modern notions of the limits of an Introduction, this matter would more fittingly have constituted the first chapter of the book. For this reason, and because the matter would suffer by abridgment, this section of the Introduction will be found as the opening chapter of this book under the heading, *The Conception of Form*.

In 1745, Hogarth published a frontispiece to his engraved works, in which he drew a serpentine-line lying on a painter's pallet, and placed under it



the words, *The Line of Beauty*. It immediately gave rise to considerable discussion and in response to the frequent requests for an explanation, Hogarth wrote and published *The Analysis of Beauty*. He felt that his theory found corroboration in the precept of Michael Angelo that a figure should always be made pyramidal, serpent-like and multiplied by one, two and three.

He further refers to the torso of an antique statue, figure 1, plate 6, from which Michael Angelo is said to have discovered this principle which gave to his work a character equal to the best antiques. He quotes from Lomozzo, Du Fresnoy, and others in support of his theory that the greatest grace and life that a picture can have is the motion and spirit imparted by large flowing lines and that no forms express motion so well as those of the flame and the gliding, wavy lines of the serpent. One of the quotations from Lomozzo says:

"The Grecians, in imitation of antiquity, searched out the truly renowned proportion, wherein the exact perfection of most exquisite beauty and sweetness appeareth; dedicating the same in a triangular glass unto Venus the goddess of divine beauty, from whence all the beauty of inferior things is derived."

Hogarth comments as follows: "If we suppose this passage to be authentic, may we not also imagine it probable, that the symbol in the tri-



angular glass might be similar to the line Michael Angelo recommended; especially, if it can be proved, that the triangular form of the glass, and the serpentine line itself, are the two most expressive figures that can be thought of to signify not only beauty and grace, but the whole order of form." See figure on back of frontispiece.

Hogarth further calls attention to the great number of Egyptian, Greek and Roman deities accompanied by some winding or twisted symbol such as a serpent or cornucopia, as in figures 1 and 2, plate 3.

The purpose of the book is to determine that which constitutes beauty and grace in certain forms and lines and the reverse in others, and to consider the nature of the lines and their different combinations, so that the ideas of taste, expressed in the ever fluctuating styles, shall be true to the principles governing beauty and grace. In regard to the illustrations, the author hopes that they will not be regarded as being made by him as examples of beauty and grace, but only to point out to the reader what sort of objects he is to look for and examine in nature and in the works of great masters. In fact, he claims to have been purposely least accurate where most beauty might be expected, so that too much importance would not be given to the illustrations to the detriment of a better understanding of the principles involved.

W. C. O.





Supplementary to Plate 29



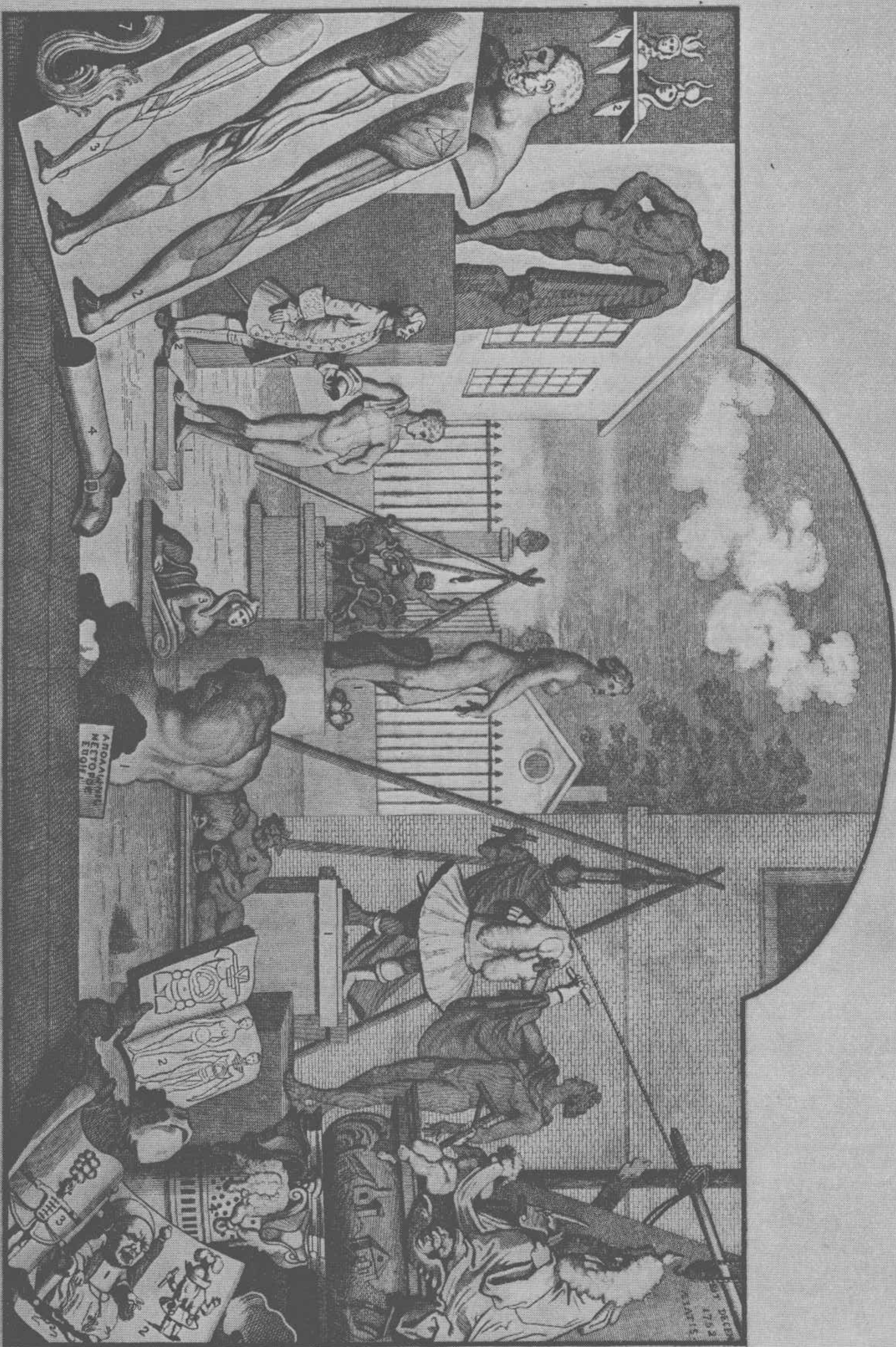


PLATE I





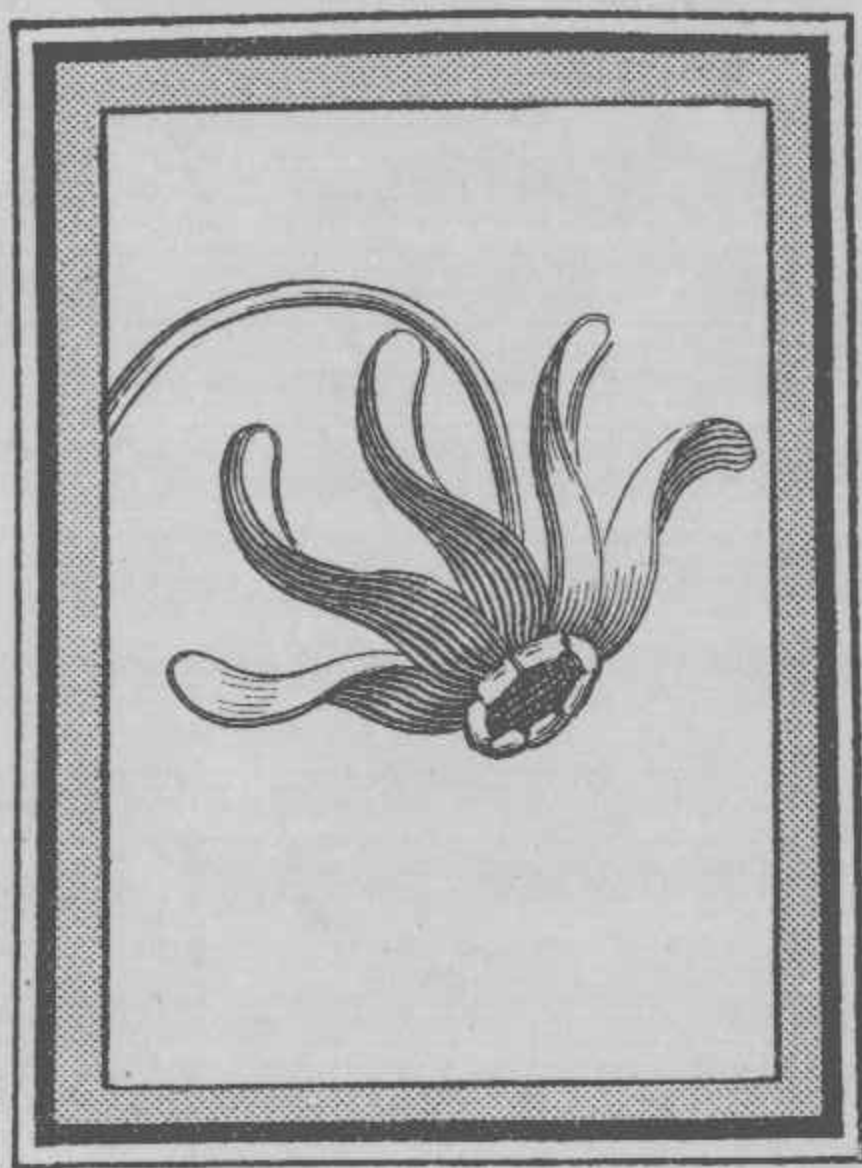


# CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE CONCEPTION OF FORM.....	17
CHAPTER	
I. Of Fitness .....	23
II. Of Variety .....	31
III. Of Uniformity, Regularity, or Symmetry .....	33
IV. Of Simplicity, or Distinctness.....	43
V. Of Intricacy .....	49
VI. Of Quantity.....	57
VII. Of Lines.....	71
VIII. Of what sort of Parts, and how Pleasing Forms are composed.....	77
IX. Of Compositions with Waving Line..	93
X. Of Compositions with Serpentine Line	101
XI. Of Proportion.....	129
XII. Of Light and Shade, and the manner in which objects are explained to the eye by them.....	159
XIII. Of Composition with regard to Light, Shade and Colors.....	175
XIV. Of Coloring.....	187
XV. Of the Face. In the highest Taste, and the reverse. As to Character and Expression. Of the manner in which the Lines of the Face alter from Infancy upwards, and show the different Ages .....	199



XVI.	Of Attitude.....	219
XVII.	Of Action. 1. A new method of acquiring an easy and graceful movement of the Hands and Arms. 2. Of the Head, etc. 3. Of Dancing, particularly the Minuet. 4. Of Country-dancing; and, lastly, of Stage-action.....	225



Serpentine Lines in a Flower