

VEDA

MARIUS ENGH
ESCHSCHOLZIA
CALIFORNICA

I have tried to use my millions creatively. The golden bird, coming to life, has sometimes wriggled out of my hand and flown away.

—Huntington Hartford, Chicago Tribune Magazine, March 1969

California hillsides were ablaze last year and it looks like a similar disaster may occur again this season. Eucalyptus trees are common in California and the warmer states of the United States. They are also found in Australia, of which many are native. The blue gum variety were introduced around the 1850s as ornamental plants and as timber and fuel. So are eucalyptus trees flammable? In a nutshell, yes. These beautiful stately trees are filled with aromatic oil, which makes them highly combustible. The picture this paints is of California and other areas experiencing serious eucalyptus fire damage.

—Bonnie L. Grant, Eucalyptus Fire Hazards, Gardening Know How, 2015

In many countries they were planted to drain marshes. In fact, in the 1930s, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini planted thousands of eucalyptus trees in the marshes around Rome as part of an attempt to drain them and create new agricultural land and destroy the habitat of the anopheles mosquito which transmits malaria.

—Paul Portelli, The Eucalyptus Tree, Times of Malta, 2013

The hillsides were elaborately terraced, fitted with a network of water pipes, and planted with trees—3000 to 5000 in all. There were nut trees, citrus and other fruits, carob, and a large grove of olives with the accompanying facilities for making olive oil. Paved roads were built, lined with trees, and the stream was channeled into a concrete culvert. A gazebo was placed on a vantage point at the

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end of a formal ridge top garden, complete with boxwood hedges. On the terrace below was an elaborate greenhouse, and a huge refrigerated food locker was dug into the western bank of the stream. A high wire fence topped with barbed wire and equipped with an electrically-operated wrought iron gate was installed, discouraging visitors, as did the armed guards who patrolled the property.

—Betty Lou Young and Thomas R. Young, *Rustic Canyon and the Story of the Uplifters*, 1975

IF YOU HAVEN'T
BEEN INVITED,
YOU BETTER HAVE A
DAMN GOOD REASON
FOR RINGING THIS
BELL!

—Frank Sinatra, a signboard informing you on the outside of his residence in Beverly Hills built by Paul R. Williams, 1956

This is Marius Engh's first solo exhibition in Florence. Other recent solo exhibitions include "Eschscholzia Californica" at Emanuel Layr, Vienna; "Ornamental Sleep" (with Morten Slette-meås), Luis Adelantado, Valencia; "Nec Plus Ultra", Taylor Macklin, Zürich; "Nothing in Return", STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo; "My Target Is Your Eyes" at Galleria Gentili, Prato. Marius Engh's works have previously been included in exhibitions at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; Tenerife Espacio de las Artes, Santa Cruz, Tenerife; Henie Onstad Art Center, Høvik, Norway; Kunsthall Oslo, Oslo; Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster; Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen; and Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam.