



'Route 66'

Singularly Beautiful Roses

A Publication Dedicated to Single,
Nearly Single, and Semi-Double Flowered Roses
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'La Belle Sultane': The Beautiful Queen

'La Belle Sultane' belongs to the class of roses described by Graham Stuart Thomas as "the most ancient, the most famous, and the best garden plants among the old roses" – the Gallicas (*The Old Shrub Roses*, p. 137). Historically, references to a 'Red Rose,' thought to be the original species form of *Rosa gallica*, exist dating back to the twelfth century B.C. Native to central Asia and the Middle East, tradition says *R. gallica* was brought from Palestine to France by Thibaut IV (known variously as *Le Chansonnier*, the Count of Champagne and Brie, and King of Navarre) after a crusade launched in 1239 A.D. Whether true or not, the town of Provins, located in the region of Champagne, became a center of cultivation for a nearly single cerise colored seedling of that red rose used by apothecaries for making medicines, conserves, and various rose confections. During the next six centuries that rose's medicinal and herbal attributes led to its distribution throughout Europe and Britain.



La Belle Sultane (Also known as *R. gallica* 'Violacea')
Photo by Urszula Jretowska



Le Maheca de fleurs simples
Plate 157, *Les Roses*
Joseph Redoute

Known by several names, including 'The Rose of Provins' and 'The Apothecary's Rose,' this cultivar (now known as *R. gallica officianalis*) became the predominant representative of the species.

By the end of the 18th century Dutch breeders, in addition to creating hundreds of Centifolia cultivars, were also raising a large number of Gallica seedlings. Claude-Antoine Thory, the editor of the text that accompanied Redouté's *Les Roses*, noted that over five hundred named varieties of Gallicas were available from Dutch catalogues ("The First Gallicas Raised in France: 1804-1815"). A breeder whose name is associated with one of the very early Gallicas is A. G. Van Eeden of Haerlem, in northern Holland. According to François Joyaux at least fifteen cultivars thought to have been exported from The Netherlands prior to 1815 are in commerce today. Those that were imported into France were often given a French name, in many cases more than one, causing some confusion with identification.

'Holoserica' and 'Mahaeca' are names that appear in several references referring to multiple roses, some nearly single, some very double, but all having in common purple velvety textured petals. Redouté included an engraved plate of one in the third volume of *Les Roses* identified as 'Le Maheca a fleurs simples.' Of it Thory wrote in 1824, "Too well known to require a description, this is one of the most magnificent of all the gallicas. It demands no special care, needing only exposure to full sun to bring out the full brilliance of the colors. Rather rarely, completely single blossoms can be found on it. It came to us from Dutch nurseries almost thirty years ago, and was distributed by Dupont.

Several gardeners refer to it as 'la Belle Sultane' (here quoted from Brent Dickerson's *The Old Rose Adventurer*, p. 53)". Although it is not known for certain it seems probable that 'La Belle Sultane' was one of the many Gallicas planted in Empress Joséphine's gardens at La Malmaison based on its existence in André Dupont's collection and the fact that he sold roses to her ("The First Gallicas Raised in France: 1804-1815").

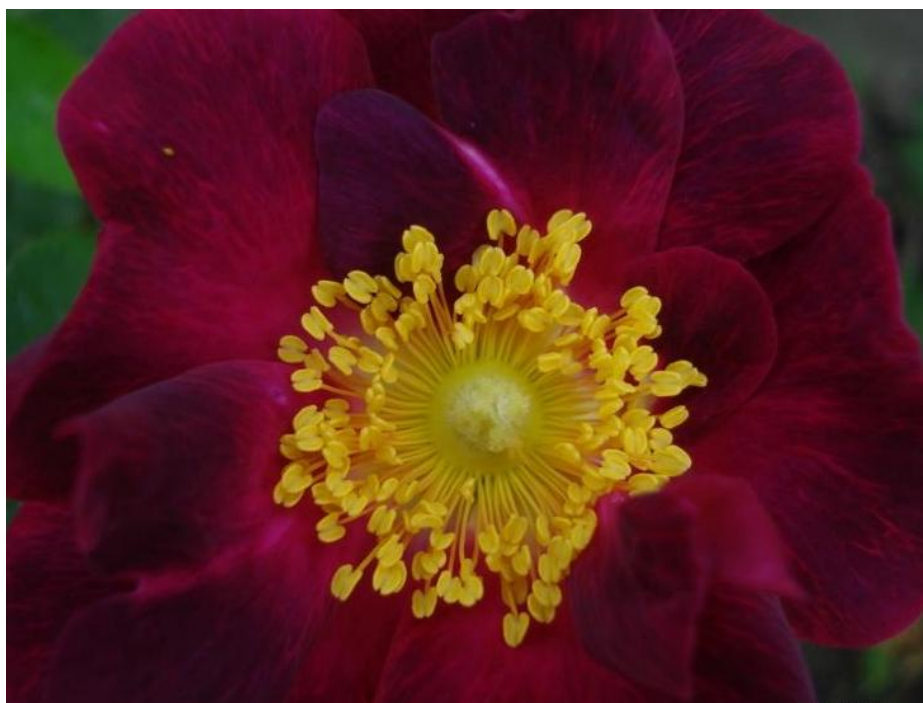
So - how did a rose that most likely originated in the land of frozen canals and windmills receive a name that brings to mind the sultry tales of *The Arabian Nights*? To quote a former British Prime Minister, "It is a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key." A fanciful legend has arisen that might indeed provide "a key." Marie Marthe Aimée Dubocq de Rivéry was born in the French colony of Martinique, an island in the Caribbean. Like her cousin, Marie Joséphe Rose Tascher de la Pagerie (who would later become the Empress Joséphine, the wife of Napoleon), she was sent to France at a young age to complete her education. When returning to Martinique in 1788 Aimée is said to have been captured by Barbary pirates, taken to Algiers on the northern African coast, and sold to the Bey ("ruler"). Shortly thereafter, to curry favor with the Ottoman court, she was presented as a gift to Sultan Abdulhamid I in Istanbul and given the name Nakshidil. After his death, the Sultan asked Aimée to stay in the harem and raise a nephew. This young man, Mahmoud II, would eventually become the thirtieth Sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Here the legend has a faint ring of truth as Mahmoud II was indeed raised by a woman who taught him the French language. Another small clue exists in the form of an engraving said to have been copied from a miniature painted when Aimée was a young girl and inscribed by the engraver, "Devenue Sultane Validé, Mère de Mahmoud II." ("Became queen mother [lit. validated, exalted], mother of Mahmoud II").

Regardless, 'La Belle Sultane' has found a spot in my garden. I

was ignorant of the fact that Gallicas are not supposed to grow in my climate zone when I purchased it. To my own and many others' surprise it is performing just as advertised. Its two rows of wavy petals are the most beautiful velvety purple with a small white halo at the base and offset by bright yellow stamens. The blooms arrived this year in mid-April, a little later than some of my other once-bloomers. New growth has a very



*Aimée Dubocq du Rivéry
Devenue Sultane Validé,
Mère de Mahmoud II*



distinctive vertical habit which will eventually lean outward. Its ultimate height of 5-6' suggests that there may be some Damask influence in its genetic background. The wiry stems have the typical small brown bristle-like prickles that many consider typical of the Gallica class. The medium sized mid-green foliage has a unique textured upper surface and is, amazingly, absolutely free of black spot! It sets hips quite prolifically, perhaps accounting for the profusion of 'Mahaeca' variants. Perhaps there are a few more Gallicas that may find their way into my Georgia garden. Can you say 'Complicata,' 'James Mason,' or 'Scharlachglut?'

*'La Belle Sultane'
Photo by Vera Dousova*

Hot Roses!

For members of the American Rose Society the name Judy Singer may ring a bell. An article written by Judy entitled, “Notes from a Desert Hybridizer,” appeared in the September/October 2011 issue of *American Rose* under Steve Jones’ *Rose Tips* section. I was encouraged to see the roses of a fellow member of the Rose Hybridizers Association being highlighted. The article also caught my eye because I was in planning mode for a speaking opportunity at the Deep South District’s Mid-Winter Meeting (Jan 2012) and was contemplating a program focusing on the great work being done by amateur rose hybridizers. And, of course, I had to learn more about her work because there were several nearly single roses featured!

Judy grew up on the east coast working in the health sciences career field and real estate but has lived in Tucson, Arizona for the last fourteen years. She has been a newsletter judge for the ARS for several years and has created a wonderful rose hybridizing power point program that is posted on her website (www.hot-roses.com) and is available on the ARS website.

The most important aspect of rose culture in the Tucson area is water management. Extreme heat is the norm in her climate – weeks of days over 105° F. Seedlings that can survive in those circumstances have something going for them. Lots of literature addresses breeding for cold tolerance, but heat tolerance is another story (The work with *R. gigantea* by Australian hybridizer Alister Clark early in the 20th century and that of Indian hybridizer Viru Viraraghavan currently ongoing are the only other examples that come to mind.).

Judy’s breeding goals at the very basic level focus on survival of the fittest, but more specifically she is striving to create roses that are remontant in the dry, intense heat of her climate and that have healthy disease resistant foliage that is retained throughout the growing season. Powdery mildew is her biggest fungus problem.

Did I tell you, that Judy has registered several single and semi-double flowered roses? Here are few that have caught my eye. Rogue Valley Roses is in the process of making her roses available to the public.



‘Sweet Milo’ This mauve blend, semi-double floribunda is near the top of the list of Judy’s seedlings. The 2.5” ruffled blooms arrive in clusters and transition from dark pink to lavender pink as they age. As you can see from the outstanding photo flower power is one of this rose’s strong suits. The plant is compact with glossy, blue-green foliage that is highly resistant to powdery mildew. One of its parents, ‘Route 66,’ has probably contributed another outstanding characteristic to this fine rose – an intense fragrance that is both sweet and spicy and that will perfume a whole room when cut and brought in the house.

‘The Blushing Princess’ While the bloom is what mainly attracts us to a particular cultivar, many rosarians are beginning to pay much more attention to foliage, especially plants that stay foliated while others are becoming bare sticks. This phototropic Hybrid Tea undergoes a transformation from blush white with coral edges with hints of yellow at the base of the petals to a pastel coral pink – no two blooms are alike. While having Hybrid Tea form initially the bloom’s most perfect phase of beauty is when fully open. Those interested in a rose with an iron constitution should look into this leathery leafed, powdery mildew resistant variety.



‘Purity’ Judy is also very enthused about this lightly double pure white Floribunda bred from Keith Zary’s ‘Fabulous!’ It blooms quite prolifically even in the hottest weather and makes nice sprays of three to seven blooms. As you can see from her photo the dark green glossy foliage looks outstanding despite her limited spray regimen. Like its parent it will grow to about 4’ in height even on its own roots.

‘Hot Salsa!’ When I looked up Judy’s roses on HMF, this and ‘Sweet Milo’ really caught my eye. Very few single and nearly single Hybrid Teas are being introduced so that when one comes along I get the fever. In addition to its fluorescent coral pink color the reddish stamens are really eye-catching. The large, frilly ten petalled blooms arrive mostly one-per-stem in good hybrid tea fashion. It apparently prompted one observer to remark that it looked a little like ‘Playgirl’ on steroids. Young foliage is a deep burgundy color which makes the whole plant quite striking.



‘Puppy Kisses’ This rose is really quite reminiscent of its pollen parent ‘Route 66.’ The small single lavender-purple blooms have a white center and grow a little lighter in color as they age giving the plant a multi-colored appearance. Expect bigger sprays in the cooler weather of spring. Like others of Judy’s seedlings it is resistant to powdery mildew.

For those of you who enjoy roses with a few more petals check out ‘Rock Star,’ a muted orange red mini bloom machine with exhibition potential, ‘Desert Magic,’ a smoky pink lightly double hybrid tea which “laughs at the heat,” and ‘Elizabeth Bowers,’ a heavily petalled profuse blooming pink shrub that is both mildew and black spot resistant. You can view more photos of her roses on her website and on HelpMeFindRoses.com.

On the *Red* Horizon

With apologies to the editors of the *Horizon Roses* for plagiarizing their name, I'd like to focus some attention on two new blazing red rose cultivars that are demonstrating outstanding remontancy and amazing black spot resistance. As a general rule of thumb my front yard rose beds are reserved for varieties that provide great landscape value by blooming virtually perpetually and by requiring very little in the way of fungus disease prevention or eradication. I do spray several times in the early spring to minimize the impact overwintering fungus spores may have. But during our long growing season my front yard roses must be able to not only survive but thrive. Some are definitely more tolerant or resistant than others – here are two that look very, very promising.

Dr. Jim Sproul's name should be recognizable to most of you. He has been hybridizing roses for years and successfully! Those that love to exhibit are probably familiar with the lovely pink mini 'Heather Sproul,' introduced in 2004. Jim has also been dedicated to furthering work done by Jack Harkness, Ralph Moore, and others with *R. hulthemia* (look for a whole issue dedicated to this sometime in the near future). Avid catalog-aholics have probably seen two of his repeat flowering *R. hulthemia* seedlings marketed by Star Roses this year, 'Eyeconic Lemonade' and 'Pink Eyeconic Lemonade.'

Which brings us to the first of my roses "On the Red Horizon." In addition to the two aforementioned cultivars, Star Roses released another of Jim's seedlings, a deeply hued scarlet red, very floriferous, semi-double, shrub-type rose named 'Thrive!' In a 2006 issue of the *Rose Hybridizers Association Newsletter*, he expressed how excited he was about it, commenting on its resistance to both powdery mildew and black spot, its prolific bloom production, and its vigor. In fact he named it his favorite seedling that year. 'Thrive!'s seed parent is a very clean, glossy-leaved plant resulting from a cross of 'Marmalade Skies' and 'Baby Love.' The pollen parent was the now well-known Tom Carruth cultivar 'Home Run,' familiar to many for its healthy-on-both-coasts foliage.

My plant of 'Thrive!' is growing very nicely out in full blazing sun and although still young appears to meet and exceed my criteria for its spot in the front yard. Its bright yellow stamens contrast brilliantly with the 3" scarlet red flowers. It appears to have 'Home Run's proclivity to produce a canopy of blooms, making it an outstanding landscape plant and a variety I would highly recommend for its colorful display.



'Thrive!'



'Miracle On The Hudson'
Photo by Robert Rippetoe

The second of my two roses "On the Red Horizon" is 'Miracle On The Hudson.' This single flowered red shrub rose was bred by amateur hybridizer Robert Rippetoe of Rancho Mirage, California. Robert specializes in species crosses, using *R. banksia*, *bracteata*, *gigantea*, *hulthemia*, and *filipes*, species that are evergreen in temperate climates. I first became familiar with his work after reading an article he authored in the April 2006 ARS magazine entitled, "Banksia Hybrids – A New Beginning." His persistent work with *R. banksia* has produced re-blooming hybrids with the elongated, narrow foliage typical of the *banksia* cultivars (more about them in a future issue).

Like 'Thrive!', 'Miracle On The Hudson' is also a 2006 seedling. It resulted from a cross of 'Lyn Griffith' (a very clean semi-double seedling from Robert's breeding program) x 'Home Run.' Its five to eight petals are fluorescent cherry red, the color spectacularly accented by glowing golden yellow stamens. Blooms arrive singularly and in small clusters. The foliage is dark green with a burgundy margin and has been immune to black spot in my yard. Robert also reports strong resistance to powdery mildew. The story of this rose's

name deserves the telling. Robert sent this seedling to Pat Henry and Bill Patterson of Roses Unlimited. Pat thought so highly of the velvety, bright red flowers that appeared on the new plant that she suggested the name 'Miracle On The Hudson' to honor the miraculous survival of all the passengers of US Airways Flight 1549 after its captain successfully landed the plane on the Hudson River on January 15, 2009. Couldn't you use a miracle?

'Thrive!'
Photo taken July 22nd showing beautiful
disease free foliage

'Miracle On The Hudson'
Photo taken July 22nd showing beautiful
disease free foliage



From the Editor:

It's hot outside! Here in Georgia this kind of weather also means terrific thunder storms and heavy downpours. Thank God for some rain! It's a great time to draw some attention to roses that survive high temperatures and I hope you will appreciate the effort being taken by Judy Singer to specifically address heat tolerance. You will notice that the majority of the roses featured in this issue have been hybridized by amateurs. With the devastating impact of a struggling economy we can count on amateur hybridizing enthusiasts to keep our hobby alive.

Once again I would like to thank the folks who have graciously shared wonderfully artistic photos of their roses. Through HelpMeFind/Roses I contacted two individuals for permission to use images of 'La Belle Sultane' and was thrilled to get enthusiastic responses from both - Urszula Tretowska from Poland and Vera Doušová from the Czech Republic! A BIG, BIG thank you! Thanks also go to Judy for being very generous with information, time, and photos! And lastly thanks to Dr. Jim Sproul and Robert Rippetoe.

North American Sources:

'La Belle Sultane'

Pickering Nurseries, pickeringnurseries.com; Northland Rosarium, northlandrosarium.com;
High Country Roses, highcountryroses.com; Rogue Valley Roses, roguevalleyroses.com;
Bay Laurel Nursery, baylaurelnursery.com; Hortico, Inc., hortico.com;

Judy's 'Hot Roses'

Rogue Valley Roses, roguevalleyroses.com;

'Thrive!'

Available from numerous sources that market Star Roses;
Edmunds' Roses; edmundsroses.com;

'Miracle On The Hudson'

Roses Unlimited, rosesunlimiteddownroot.com;

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