Hannah Blumenthal, an art historian, sets Maria Sibylla Merian’s *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* within the historical context of the introduction of commodities like sugar to Europe and the role of the Dutch in this rapidly-developing industry. Following a brief biographical account of Merian’s education and career, Blumenthal notes the conspicuous absence of sugarcane in *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium*. The author argues that Merian’s depictions of fruits and vegetables allowed viewers to visually experience the exotic in comparison to local produce. This introductory information gives way to Blumenthal’s main argument, that “fruit components . . . of Merian’s work serve as a metaphor for and a manifestation of her audience’s desire to assimilate foreign foods into their diet and their larger cultural appetite for exotica during the colonial period” (46). In support of this argument, the author briefly investigates Merian’s depictions and explanations of edible flora including her anthropological discussions of the usage of certain commodities by the local population and comparisons in flavor and usage between Surinamese and European produce. Finally, Blumenthal elucidates notable shared characteristics between Merian’s depictions of produce and spices as exotica and the concept of the *Kunstkammer* or cabinets of curiosities. This article provides a unique perspective on Merian’s drawings and watercolors and may be useful for scholars considering the economic conditions of the time or the pan-European interest in the exotic.

-Lauren M. Freese