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United States Patent [19] Holtkamp, Sr.

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- [54] AFRICAN VIOLET PLANT NAMED CARMEN
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[57] ABSTRACT

A new and distinct cultivar of African violet named Carmen characterized by its large, single violet-shaped, purplish blue flowers with wavy petal tips; strong, upright flower stems that curve slightly toward the center to form a compact bouquet above the leaves; medium green, spear-shaped leaves; profuse flowering, vigorous and compact growth habit, flowering 10–11 weeks after potting, and its long lasting and non-dropping flowers.

Primary Examiner—James R. Feyrer

1 Drawing Sheet

1

The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of African violet plant, botanically known as *Saintpaulia ionantha*, and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name Carmen.

The new cultivar was referred to during the breeding and selection process by the designation 813 bl. sing. and is a product of a planned breeding program. The new cultivar was originated from a cross made by me in the controlled breeding program in Haffen, Federal Republic of Germany. The female, or seed parent was a cultivar designated H 5/1/83. The male, or pollen parent was a cultivar designated 6 F 30/16.

Carmen was discovered and selected by me as a flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross in a controlled environment in Haffen, West Germany. Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by leaf cuttings, as performed by me at Haffen, West Germany, has demonstrated that the combination of characteristics as herein disclosed for the new cultivar are firmly fixed and retained through successive generations of asexual reproduction.

Carmen has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary significantly with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity and day length. The following observations, measurements and values describe the new cultivar as grown in Haffen, West Germany and Nashville, Tenn. under greenhouse conditions which closely approximate those generally used in commercial practice.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be basic characteristics of Carmen, which in combination distinguish this African violet as a new and distinct cultivar:

- 1) Strong, upright flower stems curving slightly toward the center.
- 2) Large purplish blue, single flowers with wavy petal tips.
- 3) Profuse flowering.
- 4) Each plant carries 8–10 and more upright flower stems each of which carries 8–12 and more flowers.
- 5) Long lasting, non-dropping flowers.
- 6) Vigorous and compact grower.
- 7) Plant saleable 10 to 11 weeks after potting.
- 8) Seed capsules push slightly through.
- 9) Medium green, spear-shaped leaves.

2

10) After maturity the flowers dry off, and remain on the peduncle without becoming infected by botrytis.

The accompanying color photographic drawing shows a typical specimen plant of the new cultivar. The colors appearing in the photograph are as true as possible with color illustrations of this type.

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart (R.H.S.), except where general colors of ordinary significance are referred to. Color values were taken under natural sunlight conditions at approximately 12 p.m. in Nashville, Tenn.

Botanical classification: *Saintpaulia ionantha*, Ramat., c.v. Carmen.

Parentage:

Male parent.—6 F 30/16.

Female parent.—H 5/1/83.

Propagation: The new cultivar holds its distinguishing characteristics through successive propagations by leaf cuttings.

Plant: From 8 cm to 11 cm tall when grown in pots, and 25–30 cm in diameter when fully grown.

Leaves:

General form.—Spear-shaped.

Diameter.—65–70 mm wide and 75–80 mm long.

Texture.—Velvety.

Aspect.—Serrated, hairy, slightly shiny.

Veins.—Upperside: visible; underside: well pronounced, light green or purplish red, shiny.

Color (upperside).—Yellow-Green Group 147 A.

Color (underside).—Greyed-Purple Group 186 A with touches of Yellow-Green Group 148 D. Young leaves are almost as dark as Greyed-Purple Group 187 A.

Petiole.—Strong upright, purplish brown, hairy.

Flowers:

Buds.—Bell-shaped, purplish green, 5–7 mm just before opening.

Sepals.—Five (5).

Color: Brownish green.

Calyx.—Shape: Funnel-shaped. Aspect: Spear-shaped, hairy.

Peduncle.—Character: Strong upright, hairy. Color: Brownish green.

Individual flowers:

Size.—50–55 mm.

Shape.—Single violet-shaped with very noticeable size difference between the 2 small and the 3 large petals; wavy petal tips.

Color(upper side).—Violet-Blue Group 89 B. Under cooler temperatures and more intensive lighting, the purplish blue tends to intensity.

Color(lower side).—Violet-Group 88 A to B.

Borne.—Each flower stem carries 8-12 and more flowers on strong, upright peduncles that are free standing above the leaves, thereby forming a compact bouquet.

Flowering habit.—Flowers 10-11 weeks after potting.

Reproductive organs:

Stamens.—Two (2). Anthers: 2 composed of 4 anther cells, seed capsules push slightly through.

Filaments.—Yellowish green with purplish touch, 3-4 mm long.

Pollen color.—Yellow Group 7 A.

Styles.—6-7 mm long, purplish blue, base of ovary light green and hairy.

Roots: Normally developed, white when young, turning slightly brownish when older.

Disease resistance: Up to date, Carmen has shown very good resistance to all major violet diseases.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Carmen is an attractive cultivar due to its large purplish blue flowers contrasting nicely with the bright yellow anthers. The flowers are single violet-shaped, but the size difference between the large and small petals is quite noticeable and the petal tips are wavy. A nice bouquet of flowers free standing above the leaves develops after 10-11 weeks. Each of the 10-12 and more strong flower stems carries 8-12 and more long-lasting, non-dropping flowers. Occasionally, an additional very small petal may develop in the center. Medium green, spear-shaped leaves surround the flower bouquet. The seed capsules push slightly through.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of African violet named Carmen, as described and illustrated, and particularly characterized by its large, single violet-shaped, purplish blue flowers with wavy petal tips; strong, upright flower stems that curve slightly toward the center to form a compact bouquet above the leaves; medium green, spear-shaped leaves; profuse flowering, vigorous and compact growth habit, flowering 10-11 weeks after potting, and its long lasting and non-dropping flowers.

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