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(54) **HYDRANGEA PLANT NAMED ‘MAGICAL PEARL’**

(50) Latin Name: *Hydrangea macrophylla*
Varietal Denomination: **Magical Pearl**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./250**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **Plt./250**
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Hydrangea* plant named ‘Magical Pearl’, characterized by its upright and mounded plant habit; strong roots and stems; and large and dense inflorescences with light green to white-colored flowers.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical designation: *Hydrangea macrophylla*.
Cultivar denomination: ‘MAGICAL PEARL.’

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Hydrangea*, botanically known as *Hydrangea macrophylla* and hereinafter referred to by the name ‘Magical Pearl’.

The new *Hydrangea* is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Aalsmeer, The Netherlands. The objective of the breeding program was to create new *Hydrangea* cultivars with strong stems, large inflorescences and attractive flower color.

The new *Hydrangea* originated from a cross-pollination made by the Inventor in 2001 in Aalsmeer, The Netherlands, of two unnamed seedling selections of *Hydrangea macrophylla*, not patented. The new *Hydrangea* was discovered and selected by the Inventor as a single flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled greenhouse environment in Aalsmeer, The Netherlands in 2003.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Hydrangea* by vegetative cuttings in a controlled greenhouse environment in Aalsmeer, The Netherlands since 2003, has shown that the unique features of this new *Hydrangea* are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment and cultural practices such as temperature and light intensity without, however, any variance in genotype.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of ‘Magical Pearl’. These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘Magical Pearl’ as a new and distinct cultivar of *Hydrangea*:

1. Upright and mounded plant habit.
2. Strong roots and stems.
3. Large and dense inflorescences with light green to white-colored flowers.

Plants of the new *Hydrangea* differ from plants of the parent selections primarily in plant habit as plants of the new

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Hydrangea are more uniform than plants of the parent selections. In addition, plants of the new *Hydrangea* have larger inflorescences than plants of the parent selections.

Plants of the new *Hydrangea* can be compared to plants of *Hydrangea* ‘Snowball’, not patented. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* differ from plants of ‘Snowball’ in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* are more compact than plants of ‘Snowball’.
2. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have larger sterile flowers than plants of ‘Snowball’.
3. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* and ‘Snowball’ differ in inflorescence color as plants of ‘Snowball’ have pure white-colored inflorescences.
4. Inflorescences of plants of the new *Hydrangea* are longer-lasting than inflorescences of ‘Snowball’.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the unique appearance of the new cultivar, showing the colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. Colors in the photographs may differ from the color value cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the colors of the new *Hydrangea*.

The photograph on the first sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of ‘Magical Pearl’ grown in a container.

The photograph at the top of the second sheet is a close-up view of a typical inflorescence of ‘Magical Pearl’. The photograph at the bottom of the second sheet is a close-up view of a typical leaf of ‘Magical Pearl’.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2001 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used. Plants used in the aforementioned photographs and in the following description were grown during the spring in Boskoop, The Netherlands, in containers in a glass-covered greenhouse and under conditions which

closely approximate commercial production conditions. During the production of the plants, day temperatures ranged from 15° C. to 20° C. and night temperatures ranged from 14° C. to 15° C. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* were pinched one time and had been growing for two years when the photographs and description were taken.

Botanical description:

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Magical Pearl'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—Unnamed seedling selection of *Hydrangea macrophylla*, not patented.

Male, or pollen, parent.—Unnamed seedling selection of *Hydrangea macrophylla*, not patented.

Propagation:

Method.—By cuttings.

Time to initiate roots, summer.—About 20 days at temperatures of 17° C. to 25° C.

Time to initiate roots, winter.—About 30 days at temperatures of 10° C. to 15° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, summer.—About 40 days at temperatures of 17° C. to 25° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, winter.—About 70 days at temperatures of 10° C. to 15° C.

Root description.—Medium in thickness, fibrous; creamy brown in color.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching; moderately dense.

Plant description:

Form/growth habit.—Upright and mounded plant habit; broad inverted triangle. Strong lateral branches; moderately vigorous growth habit.

Plant height.—About 40.9 cm.

Plant diameter or area of spread.—About 58.5 cm.

Branching habit.—Moderate branching with about eight lateral branches per plant; pinching enhances lateral branch development.

Lateral branches.—Length: About 28.1 cm. Diameter: About 5 mm. Internode length: About 5.7 cm. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Strength: Strong. Color: Close to 144A.

Foliage description:

Arrangement.—Opposite, simple.

Length.—About 12.6 cm.

Width.—About 8.9 cm.

Shape.—Broadly oval to broadly elliptic.

Apex.—Acute to short apiculate.

Base.—Attenuate to obtuse.

Margin.—Serrate.

Texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Smooth, glabrous.

Venation pattern.—Pinnate.

Color.—Developing leaves, upper surface: Close to 143A. Developing leaves, lower surface: Between 143C and 144B. Fully expanded leaves, upper surface: Close to 137A; venation, close to 145D. Fully expanded leaves, lower surface: Close to 138B; venation, close to 145B.

Petiole.—Length: About 3.5 cm. Diameter: About 4 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 145C.

Flower description:

Flower type and habit.—Single fertile and sterile flowers arranged on terminal panicles; panicles large, flattened and globular. Flowers face upright to outward. Flowers not fragrant.

Natural flowering season.—Continuous flowering from early April until October in The Netherlands.

Flower longevity.—Flowers maintain good substance and color for about four weeks on the plant. Flowers persistent.

Quantity of flowers.—Freely flowering habit; about 50 fertile flowers and about 225 sterile flowers per panicle.

Panicle height.—About 8.1 cm.

Panicle diameter.—About 14.3 cm.

Fertile flower diameter.—About 6 mm.

Fertile flower depth (height).—About 5 mm.

Sterile flower diameter.—About 2.8 cm.

Sterile flower depth (height).—About 1.1 cm.

Flower buds.—Length: About 4 mm. Diameter: About 3.5 mm. Shape: Broad obovate. Color: Close to 145B; towards the base, between 144D and 145A.

Petals, present on fertile flowers only.—Arrangement: About four in a single whorl. Length: About 3 mm. Width: About 2 mm. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Acute. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color: When opening and fully opened, upper surface: Close to 155D. When opening and fully opened, lower surface: Close to 155D.

Sepals, fertile flowers.—Quantity per flower: About five in a single whorl. Length: About 3 mm. Width: About 1 cm. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Acute. Base: Cuneate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, mature and immature, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 150C to 150D.

Sepals, sterile flowers.—Quantity per flower: About four in a single whorl. Length: About 1.4 cm. Width: About 1.9 cm. Shape: Deltoid to broadly rhomboidal. Apex: Rounded. Base: Cuneate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, immature, upper and lower surfaces: Between 145C to 145D and 157B to 157C. Color, mature, upper and lower surfaces: Close to N155D; color becoming closer to 145C to 145D with development.

Pedicels, fertile flowers.—Angle: About 10° from vertical. Strength: Moderately strong. Length: About 3 mm. Diameter: About 0.8 mm. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 155C flushed with close to 187B.

Pedicels, sterile flowers.—Angle: About 40° from vertical. Strength: Moderately strong. Length: About 1.4 cm. Diameter: About 1.2 mm. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 155C flushed with close to 187B.

Reproductive organs, present on fertile flowers only.—Stamens: Quantity per flower: About ten. Filament length: About 3 mm. Filament color: Close to 157C to 157D. Anther shape: Reniform. Anther length: About 1 mm. Anther color: Close to 155D. Pollen amount: Scarce. Pollen color: Close to 156D. Pistils: Pistil quantity per flower: About three. Pistil length: About 1 mm. Stigma shape: Club-shaped. Stigma color: Close to N155A. Style length: About 0.7 mm. Style color: Close to 155C to 155D. Ovary color: Close to 155C to 155D.

Fruits/seeds.—Fruit and seed development have not been observed on plants of the new *Hydrangea*.

Disease/pest resistance.—Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have been observed to be relatively resistant to Powdery Mildew and Red Spider Mites; plants of the new *Hydrangea* have

not been observed to be resistant to other pathogens or pests common to *Hydrangea*.
Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have been shown to be tolerant to temperatures ranging from about -15° C. to about 32° C.

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It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Hydrangea* plant named 'Magical Pearl,' as illustrated and described.

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