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Hansen

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(54) **PHLOX PLANT NAMED ‘UPTOWN GIRL’**

(50) Latin Name: *Phlox paniculata*
Varietal Denomination: **Uptown Girl**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A01H 5/02 (2018.01)
A01H 6/70 (2018.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **Plt./320**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC **Plt./263.1, 320**
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and unique hybrid cultivar of *Phlox* plant named ‘Uptown Girl’ of medium-height, multi-stemmed, upright, compact habit. Foliage is thick with good powdery mildew resistance on stiff stems. Flowers are light pink flowers with dark pink star-shaped center eye produced on large heads of branched peduncles and nearly cover the top of the plant beginning mid-July and continuing and reblooming for about six weeks through late summer. ‘Uptown Girl’ is especially suitable as a potted plant, for the garden, for attracting hummingbirds and butterflies, and for cut flower arrangements.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Botanical classification: *Phlox paniculata*.
Variety denomination: ‘Uptown Girl’.

STATEMENT REGARDING PRIOR
DISCLOSURES UNDER 37 CFR 1.77(b)(6)

The first non-enabling disclosure, in the form of a website with a photograph and brief description was on Feb. 1, 2019 maintained by Walters Gardens, Inc. Subsequently, Walters Gardens, Inc. published an advertisement in their “Walters Gardens 19-20 Catalog” on May 29, 2019, and first sold the new plant on Jul. 8, 2019. Walters Gardens, Inc. obtained the new plant and all information relating thereto, from the inventor. No plants of *Phlox* ‘Uptown Girl’ have been sold, in this country or anywhere in the world, under this or any name, nor has any disclosure of the new plant been made more than one year prior the filing date of this application, and such sale or disclosure within one year was either derived directly or indirectly from the inventor.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct Tall *Phlox* cultivar known as *Phlox* ‘Uptown Girl’ and will be referred to hereafter by its cultivar name or the “new plant”. The new plant was the result of a controlled pollination of the proprietary, unreleased, hybrid known only as 2013-PHL-AA-42 (not patented) as the female or seed parent and the proprietary, unreleased hybrid known only as 2013-PHL-13-AA (not patented) as the male or pollen parent. The cross was performed by the inventor on Aug. 7, 2014 in the greenhouses at a wholesale perennial nursery in Zeeland, Mich., and seed was collected in the autumn of 2014. During the trial process the new plant arising as a single seedling selection from the identified cross was identified by the breeder code 14-599-3. ‘Uptown Girl’ has been asexually propagated by tip and basal stem cuttings in the greenhouses

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at the same nursery in Zeeland, Mich. since 2016, as well as by shoot tip tissue culture. The unique characteristics of the new plant have been found to be reproducible and stable in successive generations of asexually propagated plants and the resultant plants have been found to be identical to the original selection.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PLANT

Phlox ‘Uptown Girl’ is unique from its parents and all other tall garden *Phlox* or other hybrid *Phlox* known to the inventor. The closest comparison cultivars known to the inventor are ‘Ditosmel’ U.S. Plant Pat. No. 20,593 ‘Bright Eye’ (not patented) and ‘Ditopiwi’ U.S. Plant Pat. No. 31,360. ‘Ditosmel’ has smaller flower heads with petals that weakly overlap and have a deeper pink coloration than the pinkish-lavender petals of the new plant. ‘Bright Eye’ has less overlapping petals of deeper pink with defused dark pink eye. ‘Ditopiwi’ has smaller inflorescences of fewer and larger flowers. The new plant may also be compared with ‘Glamour Girl’ U.S. Plant Pat. No. 25,778 which has a similar habit and plants size, but the flowers are hot coral pink. Copending U.S. Plant patent application Ser. No. 16/873,088 ‘Cover Girl’ has a slightly taller habit and lavender-purple flowers. Copending U.S. Plant patent application Ser. No. 16/873,087 ‘Party Girl’ has a slightly shorter habit with flowers that are white with a light pink center eye.

‘Uptown Girl’ differs from all other *Phlox* known to the inventor in the following repeatedly observed traits in combination:

1. Medium to tall height plants of upright habit, producing clean, medium-green, lanceolate leaves;
2. Showing good powdery mildew resistance;
3. Multiple stems produce large branched mounds of flowers starting in mid-July for about six weeks;

4. Light pink flowers with dark pink star-shaped center eye on strong stiff stems;
5. Flowers cover nearly the entire top of the plant;

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The photographs of the new plant demonstrate the unique traits of 'Uptown Girl' and the overall appearance of three-year-old plants grown in a full sun trial garden in Zeeland, Mich. The colors are as accurate as reasonably possible with color reproductions. Variation in ambient light spectrum, source and direction may cause the appearance of minor variation in color.

FIG. 1 shows the habit of the new plant in peak flower in the landscape.

FIG. 2 shows a close-up of the floriferous flower head with flowers and buds.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The following descriptions and color references are based on the 2015 edition of The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart except where common dictionary terms are used. *Phlox* 'Uptown Girl' has not been observed under all possible environments. The phenotype may vary slightly with different growing environments such as temperature, light, fertility, soil pH, moisture and maturity levels, but without any change in the genotype. The following observations and size descriptions are based on three-year-old plants in the full sun garden of a wholesale perennial nursery in Zeeland, Mich. with supplemental fertilizer and water as needed.

Botanical classification: *Phlox paniculata*;

Parentage: 2013-PHL-AA-42 as the female or seed parent and the proprietary, unreleased hybrid known only as 2013 PHL-13-AA as the male or pollen parent;

Plant habit: Hardy herbaceous perennial, densely upright, producing about 25 rigid mostly upright stems; flowering at up to 67.0 cm tall and about 60.0 cm wide; flowering begins mid-July in Michigan and continuing for about 6 weeks with repeating into late summer;

Propagation: Stem cuttings; rooting in about 21 days;

Time to produce finished crop in 3.8 liter pots: About 10 to 12 weeks from a 25 mm liner; moderate rate of growth;

Root: Primary roots to about 1.0 mm thick; secondary fibrous and freely branching; color creamy white to tan depending on soil type; color of active roots nearest RHS NN155B depending on soil components;

Leaves: Simple; opposite; ovoid; acute apex; attenuate base; sessile; entire margin; tough, coriaceous; glabrous adaxial and abaxial;

Leaf size: To about 14.8 cm long by about 60.0 mm wide; average about 12.7 cm long by about 42.0 mm wide; becoming smaller distally;

Leaf surfaces: Glabrous and lustrous adaxial, glabrous and matte abaxial;

Leaf color expanding: Adaxial nearest RHS 137B, abaxial nearest RHS 137B;

Leaf color at flowering: Adaxial nearest RHS NN137B, abaxial between RHS 146A and RHS 147B;

Foliage fragrance: None detected;

Veins: Pinnate; glabrous adaxial and abaxial; midrib about 1.5 mm wide at base, slightly sunken adaxial and raised abaxial;

Vein color: Adaxial midrib nearest RHS 160A and lateral veins nearest RHS 160B, abaxial midrib between RHS 145A and RHS 146D and laterally nearest RHS 146D;

Petiole: Leaves sessile;

5 Stems: About 25 per plant; cylindrical; stiff; wiry; strong; mostly upright; glabrous; to about 67.0 cm long and 9.0 mm diameter at base, average about 60.0 cm long and 7.5 mm diameter at base;

Stem color: Nearest RHS 146D;

10 Nodes: About 13 per stem below initial flowers plus 8 nodes in branched flower head; average internode length about 3.0 cm;

Node color: Nearest RHS 146D;

15 Inflorescence: A loosely-branched compound corymb of about 350 flowers; flowering portion about 21.0 cm long and 21.0 cm across;

Flowers: Perfect; salverform with flat face and long fused tube; actinomorphic; typically with five petals; about 29.0 mm long total with tube about 27.0 mm long and 2.5 mm diameter at base and 4.0 mm diameter below face; face about 26.0 mm across; attitude upright to slightly outward; self-cleaning;

20 Flower longevity: Individually about 5 days on plant or as cut flower;

Flower fragrance: Lightly sweet;

Buds one to two days prior to opening: Narrowly oblanceolate, to nearly clavate; acute apex with petals implicate about each other; base fused; total bud about 28.0 mm long, tube about 19.0 mm long and 3.0 mm diameter in tube base, bulb 9.0 mm long and swollen to 4.0 mm diameter toward apex of convolute petals;

Bud color: Petals nearest RHS 62C in bulb, and corolla tube between RHS 59C and RHS 59D;

35 Petals: Five; sympetalous; margin entire; apex rounded and emarginate with 1.0 mm deep notch; base fused into tube; abaxial and adaxial limb glabrous except distal 4 mm of abaxial corolla tube and adaxial corolla pubescent between 4 mm and 8 mm from base; limbs strongly imbricate, about 40 percent over the next petal;

Petal size: Limb to about 14.0 mm wide and about 11.0 mm long, corolla tube to about 27.0 mm long and 2.5 mm diameter at base and 4.0 mm diameter at face;

45 Petal color: Not fading with maturity; adaxial limb nearest RHS N74D distally, with center and midrib near center portion nearest RHS N74A; abaxial limb nearest RHS 75D with center midrib nearest RHS N74B; adaxial and abaxial corolla tube basal 2.0 mm nearest RHS 157D, adaxial corolla tube distal portion nearest RHS 59C; abaxial corolla tube distal portion nearest RHS 59C;

Androecium: Five;

Filaments.—Typically five; straight; cylindrical; adnate to adaxial corolla tube except free in distal 1.0 mm; varying lengths between 19.0 mm and 25.0 mm, about 0.2 mm in diameter; color nearest RHS NN155D.

Anther.—Five; oblong elliptic; dorsifixed; longitudinal; about 3.5 mm long by 1.0 mm wide; color nearest RHS 11C.

Pollen.—Abundant; color nearest RHS 11C.

Gynoecium: One pistil per flower; to about 25.0 mm long;

Style.—Cylindrical; straight; about 22.0 mm long and about 0.3 mm diameter; persistent after flower abscission; color proximally nearest RHS 145C and distally nearest RHS N186C.

Stigma.—Trifid in the distal 1.0 mm, about 0.3 mm in diameter; color nearest RHS 145D.

Ovary.—Superior; conical; acute apex, base truncate; about 2.0 mm long and 1.0 mm diameter; color nearest RHS 141B.

Calyx: Tubular; adpressed to corolla tube; to about 9.0 mm long and 3.0 mm cross at apex;

Sepals: Five; linear; narrowly acute apex, margin entire; basal 6.0 mm fused; abaxial surface matte and adaxial slightly lustrous; persistent; individually about 9.0 mm long and 1.0 mm wide;

Sepal color: Adaxial nearest RHS 146B with moderate blush nearest RHS 187B and 0.5 mm wide margin nearest RHS 161D; abaxial base nearest RHS 145A, distally nearest RHS 146A moderately blush nearest RHS 187A and 0.5 mm wide margin nearest RHS 161D;

Peduncle: Glabrous, stiff, strong, moderately lustrous, upright, cylindrical; flowering portion average about 21.0 cm long, and 4.0 mm diameter at base of flower branches; branches to about 16.0 mm long and 3.0 mm diameter at base;

Peduncle color: Nearest RHS 146D with strong blush of nearest RHS N187A in distal regions of high light intensity;

Bracts: Subtending upper branches and flowers; lanceolate; ciliolate margin; acute apex; sessile truncate base; glabrous; to about 4.0 cm long and 1.0 cm wide;

Bract color: Same as leaves in both adaxial and abaxial surfaces;

Pedicel: Cylindrical; micro-puberulent; about 3.5 mm long and 1.0 mm diameter;

Pedicel color: Nearest RHS 146D;

Fruit: 1 or 2 seeded; dehiscent septicidal capsule; about 7.0 mm long and 4.0 mm across; acute apex; truncate base; color as nearest RHS 165A to RHS 164B;

Seeds: Typically 1 per capsule; ellipsoidal to slightly arcuate; about 4.0 mm long×2.0 mm wide and 1.0 mm thick; color nearest RHS 202A;

Hardiness and culture: The new plant grows best with plenty of moisture and adequate drainage; hardy to at least from USDA zone 4 through 8.

Disease and pest resistance: *Phlox* ‘Uptown Girl’ demonstrated the excellent powdery mildew resistance caused by *Erysiphe cichoracearum* in the presence and under conditions of intense pressure that would normally show symptoms.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of hybrid *Phlox* plant named ‘Uptown Girl’, as herein described and illustrated.

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FIG. 1

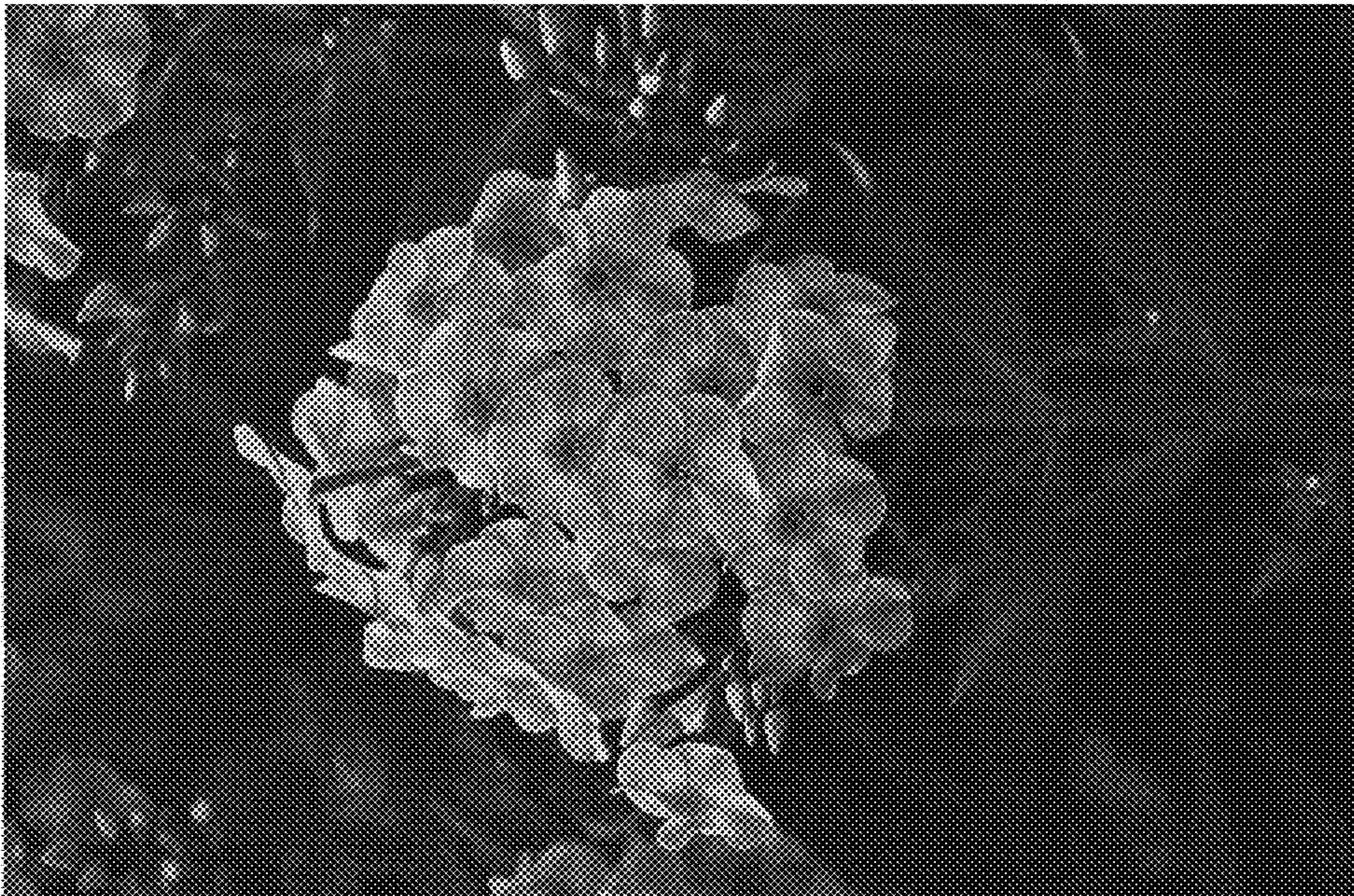


FIG. 2