Rob Kesseler

PHY-TOPIC

Extending the long history of artists working with plants, Airborne is one of a group of recent projects that reveal a hidden world lying beyond the scope of the human eye.

Airborne uses a combination of Scanning Electron Microscopy and Energy Dispersive Spectrometry to isolate and identify individual pollutant elements such as cobalt, cadmium, magnesium on the surface of leaves on samples collected from botanic gardens in London, Geneva, and Padua.

Seeds of Life is a collection of images of seeds from plants and trees that may be more resilient to drought and diseases and the impact of climate change than other species. These were the focus for a recent article for the BBC to raise awareness of the impact of climate on food production.

Inflorescence uses a range of microscopy techniques is a spectral examination of the internal structures of Cichorium intybus, a common European wildflower cultivated for centuries for its leaves, buds and roots for medicinal purposes.

Giardino di Vetro. A series of glass spheres have been blown and progressively stretched in their molten state until new forms emerge. Filled with plant material from different geographical areas, the vessels allude to scientific models expressing a moment of creation frozen in time.

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Rob Kesseler is a visual artist, Emeritus Professor of Arts, Design & Science at Central Saint Martins, London and Ambassador for the Royal Microscopical Society. For over twenty years he has worked with botanical scientists and molecular biologists around the world to explore the living world at a microscopic level. Using a range of complex microscopy processes he uses a sophisticated combination of hand, eye and intuition to create intense large format photographs and videos that captivate the viewer and extend the traditions of botanical art into a contemporary field. Collaborators include The Jodrell Laboratory Kew, The John Innes Centre, Norwich, MRC Cambridge and the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research, Germany, Oxford Instruments.

SEEDS of LIFE - 1st Prize

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