

Botanicals

Per Amor a l'Art Collection

A selection of photographs from the Per Amor a l'Art Collection showing different approaches to the representation of the plant world.



Imogen Cunningham, *Magnolia Blossom*, 1925 © Imogen Cunningham Trust

"Botany is not concerned with things that change according to time or place, but with organisms which are thought to be perennial and stable—set abstract forms which can be converted into data."

Antonio Lafuente and Nuria Valverde¹

"Botanicals" draws relationships between fictions regarding the plant world. Different ways of looking give shape to the reality of a flower which, beyond its

¹ Antonio Lafuente and Nuria Valverde, «Linnean Botany and Spanish Imperial Biopolitics», in Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan (eds.): *Colonial Botany. Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2004, pp.134-147.

natural position, becomes a scientific, ornamental, critical or aesthetic narrative. It is by immersing oneself in the archive of works by artists who situate the plants as the protagonists of their works, that we can decrypt a whole series of forms of expression coming from the hegemonic ways of seeing in the West. Through the garden of plants photographed from the Per Amor a l'Art Collection we can see the speculative movement of the representation of a plant, and how it can vary from the projection of its visual form to the scientific observation of its species. The flower as a motif has seen multiple

approaches through the history of art. This exhibition addresses a series of artists who highlight that cathartic moment in the life of a plant. Some aesthetical-leaning approaches, such as Imogen Cunningham's, present the flower as an object of desire, as a form to play with, compositionally, to find an image that the viewer will find beautiful. Cunningham's forms appear along with those of Albert Renger-Patzsch and Karl Blossfeldt, who use the photographic device from an analytical point of view, imbued with the representations of the natural world provided by science.

Botanical analysis and its representation has constructed an imagery and an aesthetic of the representation of a flower—a frontal, descriptive view that isolates the flower from its setting. Such compositional subconscious is shared by different artist in this exhibition. The play



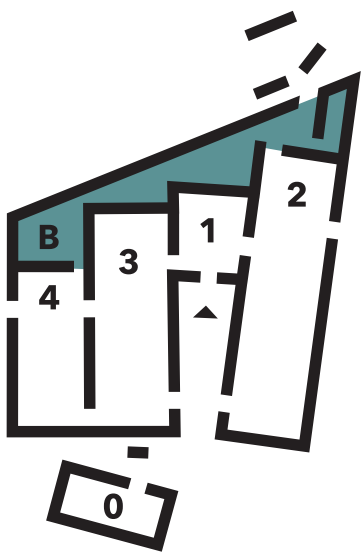
Karl Blossfeldt, *Polystichum munitum. Urformen der Kunst (Art Forms in Nature)*, 1928



Hans-Peter Feldmann, *Blumenbild (Picture of Flower)*, 2006 © VEGAP, València, 2020

of formal repetition ends up dissolving time and aesthetic stances. Photographers such as Hans-Peter Feldmann and Mathieu Mercier have offered new approaches to this way of composing, with the former taking it even into *kitsch*. Other approaches address a *decolonial* narrative. The *collage* work of Alessandra Spranzi, the oeuvre of Jonas Mekas and the journeys of Pierre Verger contribute to this overview as additional testimonies regarding ways of portraying the plant world. The exhibition ends with a room by Jochen Lempert, in an installation that blurs the boundaries between desire, botanical representation and personal idiom.

The exhibition is curated by Carles Àngel Saurí, Nuria Enguita and Vicente Todolí. It is accompanied by a catalogue, co-produced by Fundació Per Amor a l'Art and La Fàbrica, with a text by Carles Àngel Saurí. All the works in the exhibition come from the Per Amor a l'Art Collection except for those by Alessandra Spranzi and Jochen Lempert.



Free entrance

Opening hours:
check web

More information about
the activities related to
the exhibition:



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Botanicals

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Collection

Gallery B

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