



**Dornith Doherty**

By **brainardcarey**

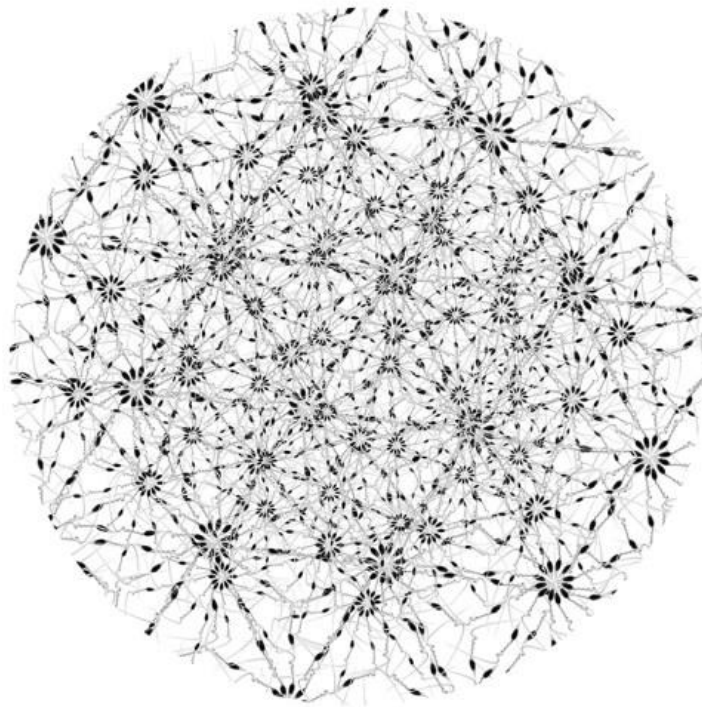
**April 17, 2017**



A 2012 Guggenheim Fellow, [Dornith Doherty](#) received a MFA in Photography from Yale University. She currently resides in Southlake, Texas and is Distinguished Research Professor at the University of North Texas. In addition to the [Guggenheim Fellowship](#), she has also received grants from the Fulbright Foundation, the Japan Foundation, the Indiana Arts Commission, and the United States Department of the Interior. The Texas Legislature named her 2016 Texas State Artist 2D.

Doherty's work has been featured in exhibitions widely in the US and abroad at institutions including the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, TX; the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, Beaumont, TX; the Bluecoat, Liverpool, England; the Centro de Fotografía, Tenerife, Spain; the Chapter Art Centre, Cardiff, Wales; the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR; the Encuentros Abiertos Photography Biennial in Buenos Aires, Argentina; the Exchange, Penzance, England; the Ferens Art Gallery, Kingston upon Hull, England; FotoFest, Houston, Texas; the Grace Museum, Abilene, TX; the Indiana State Museum, Indianapolis, IN; the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, MN; the Museum Belvédère, Heerenveen, the Netherlands; the Museum of Photography, Rafaela, Argentina; the New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM; and the Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ. She has been invited to present scholarly papers and artist talks at over 80 institutions and conferences worldwide.

More on her book, mentioned in the interview [can be learned here.](#)



Spiral Grass Archival Pigment print 36.5 x 36.5 inches

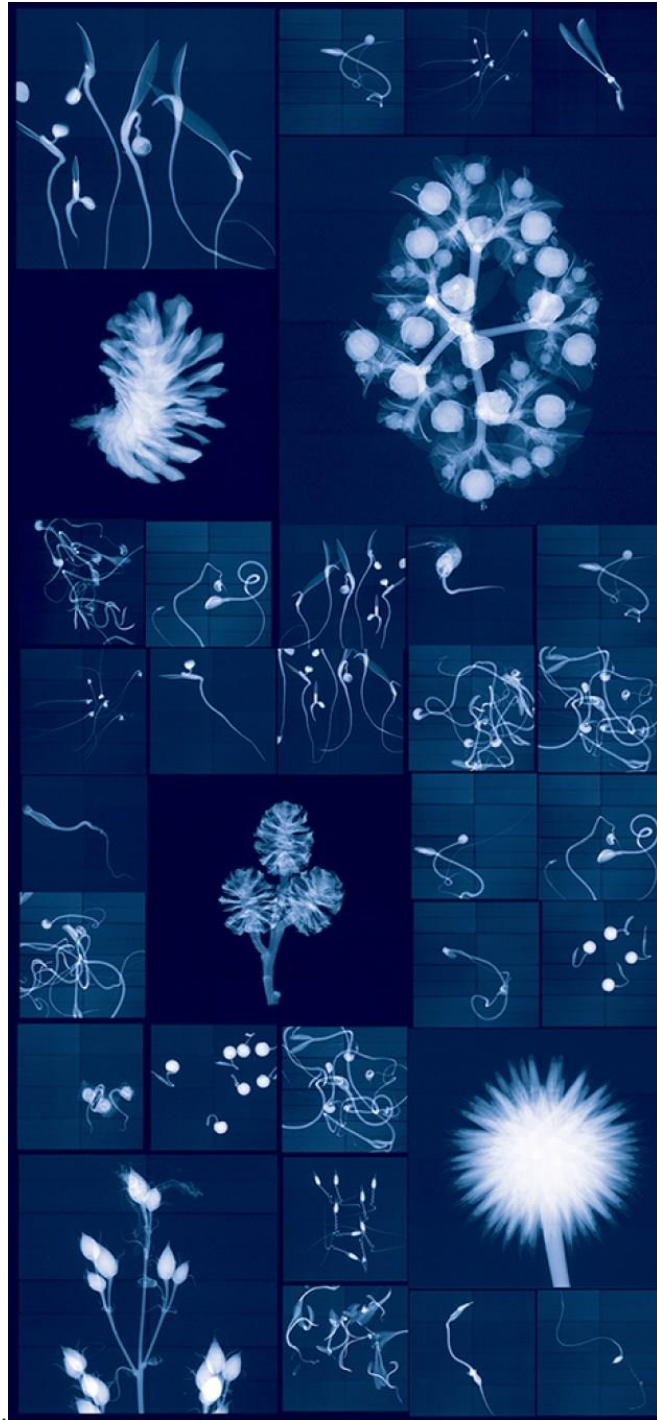
Seed banks are often located in remote locations, and scientists may conduct their research in relative isolation over long periods of time. Supporting their efforts is an expansive professional network that fosters the exchange of research, botanical materials, and information



Vault Interior, Svalbard Global Seed Vault Spitsbergen Island, Norway

The vault itself is a cavern located deep inside a mountain so tall that if both polar ice caps melt, the collection of seeds will remain safe





Millennium Seed Bank Research Seedlings and Lochner-Stuppy Test Garden no. 1 Digital Chromogenic Lenticular print  
79 H x 36 W inches Digital collage made from x-rays captured at the Millennium Seed Bank (England)

Doherty made digital collages of x-rays made from seedlings and seed heads photographed on-site at the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place in West Sussex. The Millennium Seed Bank Project is an international conservation project with more than fifty partner countries. This seed bank has already collected and stored over 95% of all bankable British plant species.



Barley Collection, Vavilov Institute for Plant Industry, St. Petersburg, Russia

The Vavilov Institute is the oldest and most historically significant seed bank in the world. Founded by a prominent botanical geographer and funded by the Russian government, the Vavilov contains an encyclopedic collection of agricultural plants from Asia, Central America, Africa, and Europe. This institution's heroic history includes the death by starvation of twelve scientists protecting the collection during World War II. This Russian seed vault contains a collection of barley, currently at risk due to lack of economic resources.

*[...] Artist Dornith Doherty has spent much of her career photographing specimens at the Svalbard seed vault. There, scientists have amassed a collection of the world's seeds to safeguard in the event of global catastrophe. Doherty's work is a way of exploring our relationship with the fragility of our own existence. In the wake of news last week that the Svalbard vault was jeopardized by flood waters from rising sea levels, this tenuousness is even more pronounced. By examining something very small and unremarkable such as a seed, Dornith Doherty focuses a lens on the very question of human existence. [...]*