

Big Botany: Conversations with the Plant World

Spencer Museum Media Release

[Opening March 27: 'Big Botany' addresses critical role plants play for life on Earth](#)

KU News Media Release

['Big Botany' brings art to bear on climate-change debate](#)

Washington Post Review (scan of printed article on following page)

[If you haven't talked to a plant in a while, here's your opportunity](#)

Hyperallergic Review

[Unearthing Centuries of Interdependence Between Humans and Plants](#)

KC Studio Review

[A Plea for the Planet: Spencer Museum of Art's 'Big Botany' Exhibit Examines Human/Nature Relationship](#)

[Exhibition Brochure](#)

[Exhibition Catalogue](#)

[Link to download installation images](#)

[Link to video series](#)

BOTANY

Art museum encourages people to engage in a dialogue with the plants that sustain us

When's the last time you talked to a plant? After visiting a new exhibition at the University of Kansas, you might think now is a good time to start.

"Big Botany: Conversations With the Plant World" takes a 360-degree view of things green. Science, art, philosophy and wonder are on full display at KU's Spencer Museum of Art in Lawrence, which is hosting an exhibition about plant-human interactions.

Those interactions are endless — and endlessly important to our planet. Biologists have long contemplated how to address how humans hurt plants, and such factors as deforestation and climate change threaten the greenery that sustains human life. Meanwhile, plants feed us, intrigue us and decorate the world around us.

More than 50 pieces by contemporary and historical artists show the sometimes tense relationship between people and plants. These works include seed-

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University of Kansas,
Spencer Museum of Art

packets-turned-butterflies by Eduardo Kac and a 1906 art nouveau watercolor of lichens that shows how art might color humans' perceptions of the natural world. There are specimens from the school's herbarium and live plants. And four artists-in-residence have created works for the exhibition, such as art made from sprouted grass and sound representing stressed-out plants.

The exhibition kicked off with a research symposium in late March, but there's more to learn. Conversations with philosophers, art historians and curators will be live-streamed on the museum's YouTube channel. And the exhibition's works of art are available online, too — just in case your next plant conversation can't involve a trip to Kansas.

— Erin Blakemore



COURTESY OF SPENCER MUSEUM OF ART, UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

"King of Weeds" is one of more than 50 pieces showing the sometimes tense relationship between people and plants.