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'YEAR OF PHOTOGRAPHY'

Contemporary florals exhibition

Event begins today at Selby Gardens

By **GREG LUBERECKI**
GUEST WRITER

SARASOTA — Close on the heels of its blockbuster spring exhibition featuring photographer Robert Mapplethorpe and punk-rock icon Patti Smith, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens will premiere a new exhibition today, July 16, that celebrates the beauty and diversity of flowers through the art of contemporary photography.

Flora Imaginaria: The Flower in Contemporary Photography will display works by 49 internationally acclaimed photographers, many of them at the forefront of their field.

The show, which is organized in partnership with the Foundation for the Exhibition of Photography (FEP), runs from today, July 16, through September 25 at Selby Gardens' Downtown Sarasota campus.

"We are excited to continue 'The Year of Photography' at Selby Gardens with another world premiere of contemporary art in dialogue with nature at our Downtown Sarasota campus," said Jennifer O. Rominiecki, president and CEO of Selby Gardens. "Diverse images of flowers drawn from many different genres of photography will create a vibrant bouquet befitting our model as The Living Museum."

The new exhibition will include a total of 72 photographic prints, some installed amid the living plant collection along a shady path through the Gardens and others displayed inside the Museum of Botany & the Arts.

Some of the photographers to be featured have specialized in flower imagery for many years, while others have done only one serious project or even taken just one or two pictures involving flowers.

Works by celebrated artists such as Pedro Almodóvar, Valérie Belin, Vik Muniz, Viviane Sassen, and Martin Schoeller will appear side by side with compelling photographs by emerging artists. Many of the images to be seen have not appeared previously in a major exhibition.

All were produced over the past three decades.

The innovative indoor/outdoor show was co-developed with FEP, an independent nonprofit organization that produces museum-quality photography exhibitions circulated around the world.

It is curated by William A. Ewing and Danaé Panchaud, an international team of experienced photography experts. "This colorful, wide-ranging show celebrates the flower's perennial attraction and extraordinary endurance as an inspiring subject in art," Ewing said.

"From the humble specimen to the elaborate arrangement, the flower imagery on display will present a sumptuous feast for the eyes, all in the exceptional setting of Selby Gardens."

Following its debut at Selby Gardens, the show will travel to other venues in the U.S. and beyond. Flora Imaginaria also follows a similarly themed exhibition of 30 years ago—"Flora Photographica"—which was first shown in London's Serpentine Gallery and subsequently traveled to New York, Toronto, and elsewhere.

"Flora Imaginaria is a worthy follow-up to our recent exhibition featuring the late Robert Mapplethorpe's iconic flower photographs," added Rominiecki. "Mapplethorpe's exquisite images made floral still life a significant contemporary genre and

SEE FLORALS, 2B



PHOTO PROVIDED BY MARIE SELBY GARDENS

Jeff Koons with floral headpiece



PHOTO PROVIDED BY AIMEE HOVING

Portrait by Aimee Hoving of the Netherlands

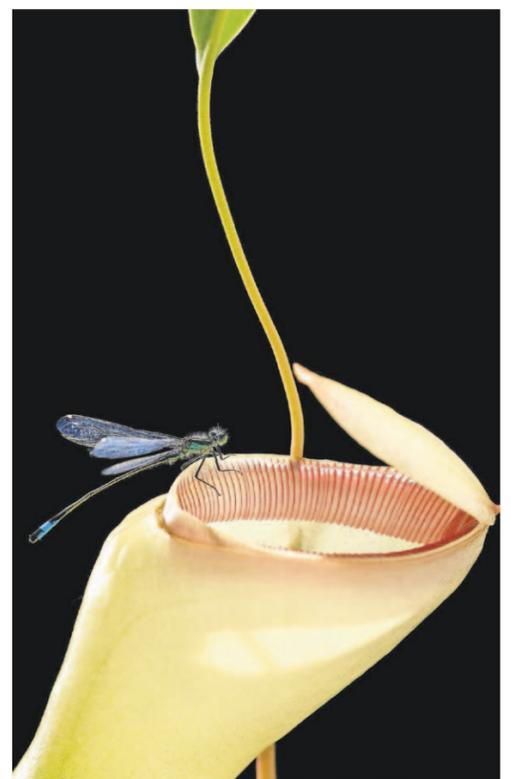


PHOTO PROVIDED BY HELENE SCHMITZ OF SWEDEN

Nepenthes ventricosa with dragonfly



Nadirah Zakariya of Malaysia photographs flowers in all stages, people in all stages and a melange of things and places that seem to strike her fancy. Her work has been featured in Harper's Bazaar.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY NADIRAH ZAKARIYA

FLORALS

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heightened the status of photography as an art form.

“The earliest works in this new show were made a few years after his passing, thus they represent the continued evolution of the art of floral photography.”

Access to the exhibition is included with general admission to the Downtown Sarasota campus.

For more information and to purchase tickets to Selby Gardens, go online to selby.org/visit.

Flora Imaginaria: The Flower in Contemporary Photography is sponsored by Isabel Becker.

ARTISTS (COUNTRY OF ORIGIN/NATIONALITY):

- Pedro Almodóvar (Spain)
- Jessica Backhaus (Germany)

Mandy Barker (United Kingdom) Brendan Barry (United Kingdom) Valérie Belin (France)

• Olga Cafiero (Italy/Sweden)
Sharon Core (U.S.)

• Lia Darjes (Germany)
• Richard de Tscharnier (Switzerland) Elspeth Diederix (Netherlands)

• Xuebing Du (China)
• Elaine Duigenan (United Kingdom) Joanna Epstein (U.S.)

• Erwan Frotin (Switzerland/France) Mathieu Gafsou (Switzerland) Daniel Gordon (U.S.)

• Roberto Greco (Italy)
• Anna Halm Schudel (Switzerland) Pamela Ellis Hawkes (U.S.) Aimée Hoving (Netherlands)

• Nadav Kander (Israel)
• Sandra Kantanen (Finland)
Rob Kessler (United Kingdom) Irene Kung (Switzerland)

• David Lebe (U.S.)
• Laura Letinsky (Canada)



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ERWAN FROTIN

From “Flora Obiensis”, a series of reinterpretations of 19th century botanical studies by Erwan Frotin of Switzerland

• Kathrin Linkersdorff (Germany) Brigitte Lustenberger (Switzerland) Ann Mandelbaum (U.S.)

• Carmen Mitrotta (Italy)
• Abelardo Morell (Cuba)
• Vik Muniz (Brazil)
• Marcel Rickli (Switzerland) Paul Rousteau (France)

• Viviane Sassen (Netherlands)
• Thirza Schaap (Netherlands)
• Helene Schmitz (Sweden)
• Martin Schoeller (Germany)
• Ann Shelton (New Zealand)
• Niki Simpson (United

Kingdom) Rudolf Steiner (Switzerland)

• Miriam Tölke (Germany)
• Ron van Dongen (Netherlands)
• Ruud van Empel (Netherlands)

• Robert Walker (Canada)
• Jo Whaley (U.S.)
Nadirah Zakariya (Malaysia)
• Victoria Zschommler (Australia) Andrew Zuckerman (U.S.)