

Twist and Sprout

Press Release
For Immediate Release

Media Contacts:

Jan Clark
United States Botanic Garden
202-226-7674 or jclark@ao.gov

Brian Hyps
American Society of Plant Biologists
301-251-0560 or bhyps@aspb.org

Sue Markgraf
Chicago Botanic Garden
847-835-6819 or smarkgraf@chicagobotanic.org

sLowlife

Unique Exhibition Opens at the U.S. Botanic Garden

October 27, 2005 - March 26, 2006

October 11, 2005 - Washington, DC - We know intellectually that plants are alive, but experiencing it directly is mostly in the realm of gardeners—it takes time. sLowlife is an exciting exhibition that uses science, art, and technology to provide alternative dimensions for experiencing plants. The United States Botanic Garden (USBG), Chicago Botanic Garden, American Society of Plant Biologists, Indiana University, and National Science Foundation have teamed up to present unusual and sometimes unnerving perspectives on how a plant reacts, both short-term and long-term, to its inner and outer worlds. The opening of sLowlife at the USBG on October 27 marks the national premier of this traveling exhibition.

Think of any plant that you know. Can you recall it as a seedling? Do you remember its first bloom or fruit? Chances are, unless you're a gardener, farmer, or plant scientist, these milestones in a plant's life pass without notice. We think of plants in terms of agriculture, environmental science, or landscaping—as inanimate objects—if we think of them at all.

Being alive implies reaction, awareness, animation, or movement, none of which seems to apply to plants. But, contrary to our conscious perception, plants do move . . . be it ever so slowly. sLowlife offers a journey into altered perceptions—a window into the world of plants. Through vivid, time-lapse photography and movies, sLowlife accelerates the "time-scale" of plants into our own frame of reference, allowing us to see a plant's experience as akin to our own. From the fascinating sounds accompanying sLowlife—created by a nationally known composer using the scientific data from the plant studies on which the exhibition is based—to the amazing still photographs that emerged from a national contest to capture the "power of plants," sLowlife is an exhibition not to be missed.

The U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory is open to the public, free of charge, every day of the year from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Conservatory is located at 100 Maryland Avenue, SW, at the foot of the U.S. Capitol. Visitors are encouraged to take Metrobus and Metrorail. Further information is available by calling 202-225-8333 or visiting our website at www.usbg.gov.

###