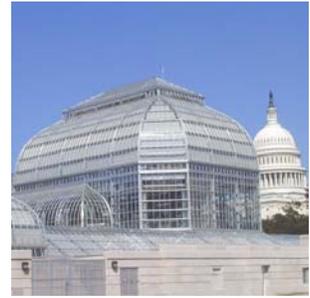




# Press Release



Public Programs Division  
245 First Street SW  
Washington DC 20024

July 4, 2002

For Immediate Release:

## **U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory Showcases the Botanical Photography of Sir Peter Smithers**

“Principles For My Garden”  
a photo exhibition by Sir Peter Smithers  
July 4 - September 29, 2002  
West Gallery

“In 1930, a freshman at Oxford, I saw an extraordinary object in a shop window. It said it was a camera but it was unlike the boxes and ‘concertinas’ of those days. It was called “Leica”. A rather extravagant young man, I went in and bought it.” This is how Sir Peter Smithers describes his first camera purchase.

Sir Peter Smithers was born in England in 1913 and his life has been divided between national and international politics and gardening. The true test of a gardener is his garden and over the course of 18 years, Sir Peter Smithers has grown about 10,000 different species and cultivars. It is no accident that Smithers is also an accomplished photographer, for much of the genius in both rests in the eye, in the choice of placement and subject. To his credit, the Royal Horticultural Society has awarded Sir Peter Smithers with eight Gold medals for photography and the Veitch Gold Medal for contribution to horticulture. In 1995, the President of the Royal Horticultural Society said it best, “Sir Peter may have some equals around the world as gardener, but probably none as a plant photographer.”

Since 1984 Smithers has exhibited 24 one-man shows, in six countries. His work has been displayed in prominent galleries and botanic gardens including the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh and the National Academy of Sciences. Smithers’ work was last displayed in the United States in 1993 at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

The exhibit will open July 4, 2002 and run through September 29, 2002. It features flowers that were grown by Sir Peter in his garden on the Lake of Lugano. The photographs were taken with a mahogany and brass Zone VI 4"x5" all manual view camera hand made in Vermont.

For more information about the U.S. Botanic Garden or the art exhibit, please contact Taya Dunn, at 202-226-7674.