

Plant Thinking and Human Movement

a research/creation project informed by a philosophical approach to vegetal life
by Oana Suteu Khintirian

The project started from the will to better understand plant psychology and find expressive ways to translate it into an interdisciplinary practice encompassing dance, installation art and film. A collaboration with renowned choreographer Ginette Laurin and the O Vertigo Dance Company, the project will grow out of a series of research labs hosted by TML and will be informed by the Plant-Thinking Reading Seminar as well as by other parallel research and artistic practice concerned with vegetal life.

By using mainly, but not exclusively, time-lapse techniques, we will be looking at plant movement in an attempt to change our usual perception of time and allow for a deeper understanding of vegetal life, its behavior and intelligence. A cinematographic technique by excellence, time-lapse is extensively used as a research tool by plant botanists for rescaling time in an attempt to level perception.

During the months of October, November and December 2014, we plan on recording several known plant movements such as germination, photomorphogenesis, tropism, nastic movements and circadian responses, in order to create an image database that will both inspire and inform the movement exploration, which goes beyond emulation in creating an attempt to a new choreographic language that questions the notions of time and movement itself.

In a second stage, we plan to deepen our understanding of plant-thinking, by setting up and observing interactions between distinct vegetal subjects, as well as their reactions to changes in the environment.

The goal is to challenge our current ways of representation that display vegetal life as 'passive' in contrast with an animated human experience.

The results of the research period will crystallize in the form of a multi-screen installation for the 'Mosaic Wall' at the Place-des-Arts, to be opened in March 2015. The project will continue in the coming year with other iterations for film and stage (planned for the fall of 2015).