

Send your text in US letter format (doc, docx, or rtf) to [redaction@esse.ca](mailto:redaction@esse.ca) before **January 10, 2020**. Please include a short biography (35-45 words), an abstract of the text (80-100 words), as well as postal and email addresses. We also welcome submissions (reviews, essays, analyses of contemporary art issues) not related to a particular theme (annual deadlines: September 1, January 10, and April 1). An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent within 7 days of the deadline. If you have not been notified, please contact us to ensure your text has been received.

## PLANTS

For several years now, we can observe the significant presence of plants in contemporary art practices. Numerous artists use plants as motif (botanical abstractions, photographs of gardens, floral projections) or material (through the use of plant dyes or fibres), as a relational object, or even as a form of political resistance (seed bombing, collective garden practices, post-colonial storytelling). This omnipresence of plants in art revitalizes questions raised by art practices addressing the vegetal world in ways that reach beyond simple representation or romanticism. Nevertheless, one must note that if plants are playing an increasing role in current practices, it is not by systematically exhibiting in spaces other than the gallery, or by refusing to enter the art market; on the contrary, plants are perceived as an object to be nurtured, displayed, shared, and owned.

Trade in tropical plants, which has an increasingly significant ecological footprint, has been growing steadily for several years, while millennials explore notions of parenthood through plants. Scientists, meanwhile, have observed a critical rise in the extinction rates of vegetal species, symptomatic of climate change and capitalist extraction. Given the current fragility of biodiversity, it is urgent that we reconsider our relationship with plants.

The collective book *Botanical Speculations: Plants in Contemporary Art*, edited by Giovanni Aloï, highlights specific approaches cultivated by artists that re-examine our relationship with the life of plants, revealing the interconnectivity of the living from a perspective that challenges anthropocentrism. In *The Life of Plants: A Metaphysics of Mixture*, Emanuele Coccia suggests understanding the world as “the site of a veritable metaphysical mixture” by arguing that leaves, roots, and flowers should occupy a fundamental position from which all elements of life be analyzed.

The title of a work by French artist Camille Henrot asks *Est-il possible d'être révolutionnaire et d'aimer les fleurs?* [Is it possible to be revolutionary and to like plants?], a question underlying an apolitical view too long attributed to the vegetal world in intellectual and political circles. Consigned to the domains of the decorative or ornamental, plants would be dangerously passive, yet there's a presupposed distinction between a love of plants, perceived as a trivial or bourgeois distraction, and a revolutionary force. And what if, on the contrary, revolution were possible through plants?

*Esse arts + opinions* invites authors and artists to propose texts that explore the complexities of the plant world and reflect on how it is interwoven in contemporary art practices. How does the presence of plants in contemporary art encourage us to reconsider how works are exhibited, or the distinction between the vocations of museums devoted to science, history, and art? Does the plant kingdom not also offer us a series of compelling metaphors for rethinking our shared existence, motivated by our concern for the wellbeing of others? How do plants invite us to envisage differently the place of the living in both society and art? What can we learn from their diverse modes of existence? Is it possible to reconsider notions of political engagement and social activism through the vegetal world? How do plants foster new approaches, based on speculation, decolonialization, or post-critical reinterpretation?

## EDITORIAL POLICY

1. Published by Les éditions esse, *Esse arts + opinions* is a bilingual magazine focused mainly on contemporary art and multidisciplinary practices. Specializing in essays on issues in art today, the magazine publishes critical analyses that address art in relation to its context. Each issue contains a thematic section, portfolios of artworks, articles critiquing the international culture scene, and reviews of exhibitions, events, and publications. The esse.ca platform also offers articles on contemporary art and an archive of previous issues of esse.

2. Submissions are accepted three times a year: January 10, April 1 and September 1. The texts can be submitted for one of the following 3 sections:

**Feature:** essays between 1,500 and 2,000 words. The guideline regarding the theme is available online 4 to 6 months prior to the deadline: <http://esse.ca/en/callforpapers>

**Articles:** essays, articles or interviews between 1,250 and 2,000 words (including notes).

**Reviews:** reviews of exhibitions, events or publications (maximum 500 words, without footnotes, or 950 words, with one or two footnotes maximum).

3. With the exception of the expressed consent of Les éditions esse, the writer agrees to submit a previously unpublished, original text.

4. All articles are reviewed by the Editorial Board, which reserves the right to accept or refuse a submitted article. Selection criteria are based on the quality of the analyze and writing, the relevance of the text in the issue (in regards to the theme) and on the relevance of the chosen artworks and artists. A text can also be rejected due to the very high volume of submissions for a specific issue. Selection of articles may take up to 6 weeks after submission by the writer. The Board's decision is final. A refused text will not be re-evaluated.

5. With the exception of the expressed consent of the Board, the Board does not consider articles that may represent a potential conflict of interest between the writer and the content of the article (i.e., a text written by the curator of an exhibition).

6. The writers whose pieces are selected commit to format their text according to the typographic standards of esse, following the guidelines sent to them with the publishing contract.

7. With the respect to the vision and style of the writer, the Board reserves the right to ask for corrections and modifications to be made to ensure overall clarity, and coherence of an article.

8. Conditionally accepted articles will be up for discussion between the writer and the Board. If changes are requested by the Board, the writer will have 15 (fifteen) days to carry these out.

9. All costs of typographical correction of the author's text shall be borne by esse except the author's corrections, if applicable, which shall be borne by the author.