



Limited Edition Print

To celebrate *Anthologia*, Rodrigues and Iniva have produced a limited edition digital giclée print *Banksia*. View the print within Iniva's Education Space and buy at Reception or online at www.iniva.org

All works from *The Secret History of Plants* are available for sale, please ask for a price list and further information at Reception.

£60 each, edition of 30

Join us for two events with the artist:

Collage Making with the Artist: 11 October 3 - 4:30pm

Alida Rodrigues will be leading a collage-making workshop exploring her practice, research methods and encouraging collage skills. Bring along photographs and images you are interested in working and collaging with. Some materials will be provided.

In Conversation: 18 October 3 - 4:30pm

This informal conversation with **Dr Ricardo Leizaola** will consider the overlapping of portraiture, photography and botany in Rodrigues' work - picking apart ideas as diverse as surrealist anthropology and the historical role of women in botany.

please see online for more details and to book

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Alida Rodrigues: Anthologia

Open Studio & Residency, 2 - 18 October 2014

Iniva is delighted to announce an artist residency and open studio as part of its **Emerging Practices Programme**, taking place in Iniva's Education Space at Rivington Place throughout the autumn.

Anthologia, from the Greek and Latin root, describes a collection of poems or writings by one author. But it also, in its most literal sense, means a gathering of flowers. There is a poetry, romanticism and even a logic that brings together these three seemingly distinct groups – text, author and plant – and is vividly demonstrated by artist Alida Rodrigues’ series of the same name.

What characteristics do plants, writings and authorship share in **Anthologia**? Alida Rodrigues’s presentation at Iniva poses (or poses) all of these questions, and more. Curated from the project *The Secret History of Plants*, the collages are created from cuttings of botanical images applied to found 19th century postcards, *carte de visite*, and cabinet cards. The collaged images create anthropomorphic portraits of long-deceased sitters, transformed into human-plant hybrids. The fronds of leaves mimic elaborate hairstyles and transcend the boundaries of the original image. Bulbous seeds become the new faces of children. They are peculiar, grotesque and strangely beautiful re-imaginings of the human form.

The late American author Zora Neale Hurston once said, “*Trees and plants always look like the people they live with, somehow.*” Modern day scientists have found that live plants emit sounds and can respond to certain stimuli – that they can sense extra-environmental and atmospheric triggers. Civilisations have imbued meaning in plants, and recognised the interconnected relationships between plant life and human life. Rodrigues takes these views just one step further, offering a visual narrative of this relationship.

Rodrigues’ process harks back to the painstaking work of the early European botanists, who would take part in exploratory missions and document their finds in intricate drawings. Instead of traveling great distances overseas, the artist pours over rogue collections, house clearance plunder, and car boot sale finds to discover her postcards, whose date and place stamps are testimony to the distances they have travelled and the epochs they were born out of. Looking for affinities between the portraits and the plant specimens she has at hand, Rodrigues then applies images of seeds, leaves and flowers to the faces of the postcard figures, and names the piece according to the plant genus.

The reverse of the postcards, some inscribed with messages of greeting, love, adventure (while others are blank) are obscured and become a hidden aspect of the work. The colonial period that these cards originate from, and the history of botany, marred as it is by the colonial devastation that accompanied these botanical expeditions, is a subtext of the work. There is an undeniable subconscious that feeds into the identities of the portrayed individuals, the history of botany (the act of naming and ‘discovering’ the plant specimens). Nonetheless, Rodrigues has constructed and subverted the facts written into the materials she appropriates, to create her own mythology of the meeting of human and plant, of her hybrid species. In the manner of the surrealists, these works are absurd, dreamlike and mine the meaning imbued in everyday objects and domestic, artistic and commercial imagery.

Rodrigues’ presentation at Iniva is constituted by two parts: the exhibition *Anthologia*, and the residency where she will be experimenting with the space, creating site specific wallpapers that grow out of her postcards and botanical illustrations. The feature wall, painted in Wedgwood-style blue, forms the backdrop for her display of selected works from *The Secret History of Plants*. It is suggestive of the domestic setting of a Victorian home, while the colour blue is imbued with symbolic qualities that suggest water, travel, trade and memory.

With special thanks to Alida Rodrigues, Teresa Cisneros, Jo Cottrell, Priscilla Granozio, Daniella Rose King & Jenny Starr

Captions - Front page: Alida Rodrigues, *Lilium heldreichii*, Collage, 2012; Inside: Alida Rodrigues, *Peumus boldys*, 2012, Collage, Courtesy of the artist; Above: Alida Rodrigues, *Banksia*, Digital, giclée print on Somerset Velvet 255gsm, Edition of 30, signed and numbered verso, 29.7 x 21 cm, 2014

