

Crushed floral photography exhibition to open at Te Kōngahu Museum of Waitangi

Manawatū photographer David Lupton has been photographing pressed flowers for the past six years, constantly experimenting and refining his unique technique for capturing their divine remains on-camera. He thinks he's probably crushed some 4000-plus flowers in pursuit of their inner beauty.

The fruits of his labour can now be enjoyed by the public in an exhibition of riotous colour, now touring the country and about to open at Te Kōngahu Museum of Waitangi on Saturday 10th August. His intensely detailed work reveals the hidden life of flowers, an almost bee's-eye-view of their inner embrace and architectural forms.

It all began with a simple love story. Asked to photograph an inner-city garden in Palmerston North for a book, Lupton got to know the owner who showed him treasured books in her library. Some had flowers pressed between their pages – little love tokens from the owner's late husband that she still finds unexpectedly today.

This sparked Lupton's fascination with pressing flowers, and he began a journey of discovery of his own on how to press, light, shoot and preserve the ephemeral beauty of a garden that nurtured love, and was tended with love.

"I was intrigued by many things, illuminated manuscripts, the Victorian fascination with collecting, the history of botanical drawing, all sorts of stuff like that as I worked. Once I started taking the photos, lots of magical things started to happen."

Instead of labels telling you what flower you are looking at, there is poetry penned by award-winning Honduras-born author and Massey University professor, Leonel Alvarado. His words have been crafted in response to what he sees in each photograph:

"What the flower remembers is contained in its colours. The frame around it has been cleared of weeds, not of memories, noises desires."

Divine Remains, the exhibition, opens at Te Kōngahu Museum of Waitangi on Saturday 10th August 2019 and runs through until 3rd of November. Entry to the exhibition is free for Friends of Waitangi and Day Pass holders.

This exhibition was funded by a grant from the Earle Creativity Trust (www.earletrust.org.nz) and it brought to Waitangi by Haunui Press Ltd.

END

Photo credit: Detail from one of David Lupton's 'crushed flower' photographs.

For more information contact Natalie Jarufe, Marketing Manager, Waitangi Treaty Grounds
nataliejarufe@waitangi.org.nz mobile 021 109 4339