



**Shirley
Sherwood
Gallery of
Botanical Art**

Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew

**Young Botanical
Artist Competition**

**Deadline:
30 April 2023**

Open to ages 16–25

‘If you can paint one leaf, you can paint the world.’

John Ruskin

Since opening in 2008, the Shirley Sherwood Gallery has championed the very best in contemporary botanical art, alongside the innovative and thought-provoking ways that modern artists respond to the natural world. Renowned collector and gallery founder Dr Shirley Sherwood has worked for decades to bring botanical art to new and broader audiences worldwide.

Now, to continue this pursuit, we're delighted to introduce the Young Botanical Artist competition in collaboration with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.



Submission

Open to artists aged 16-25, The Young Botanical Artist competition invites entrants to submit a 2D botanical artwork on the subject of TREES. This could depict something as large as the entire tree or as small as a leaf bud. You could also choose the fruit, a decaying leaf, a branch, the moss-coated trunk or any other element that inspires you... provided it relates to trees.

We ask that works are:

- 2D
- A2, A3 or A4 (artworks outside these fixed dimensions are not accepted)
- in any medium excluding photography
- representative of the subject and in a botanical art style

We are aiming to uncover the wealth of exciting talent among our 16-25 age groups. This is a crucial moment to engage with the ever-growing genre of botanical art – the scientific capacity of botanical paintings and drawings to document plants and fungi is particularly vital in contemporary society as we work to preserve our planet's biodiversity.

Judging

Submissions will be reviewed by a panel of esteemed judges, from revered contemporary botanical artists to Kew's gallery curators and program leaders. There will be two age-based categories (16–18 and 19–25) and twenty artists from each category will be shortlisted based on their digital image submission.

The judges will be looking for botanical artworks that represent their subject creatively, but with scientific accuracy.



The prize

All artworks shortlisted for the Young Botanical Artist competition will be exhibited at the Shirley Sherwood Gallery, a renowned space that has previously held exhibitions by some of the world's most celebrated artists including Rory McEwen, Rebecca Louise Law, David Nash and Pandora Sellars.

Winners will receive prize money as follows:

- Overall Winner (one per category): £750
- Highly Commended (two per category): £250

Overall winners will be crowned alongside Highly Commended artists and a People's Choice Artist (chosen over the duration of the exhibition). These artists will also receive an art supplies bundle worth £100, supported by Seawhite of Brighton.

How to enter

To enter the Young Botanical Artist competition, visit shirleysherwood.com/youngbotanicalartist.

Deadline: 30 April 2023



The Shirley Sherwood Gallery

It's now almost fifteen years since Sir David Attenborough opened the Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art, the world's first dedicated display space. During that time, the gallery at Kew Gardens has held over 50 exhibitions, welcomed more than a million visitors and become the hub of a worldwide renaissance of botanical art.

So how did this all come about? After 20 years of collecting and exhibiting botanical art all over the world, Dr Sherwood realised she was running out of space. She needed somewhere to share her growing collection with the public and provide a protective environment for the works, many of which were fragile watercolours.

She already had a relationship with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and they knew how strongly she felt about creating a place where old and new art could be safely displayed. So, when Kew asked if she'd be willing to support the construction of a dedicated gallery, she was delighted.

In 2008, the gallery opened with the intention of displaying pieces from Dr Sherwood's collection alongside works from Kew's historical archive of over 200,000 botanical paintings. The collaboration has been a huge success, with the gallery hosting at least four exhibitions a year and showcasing a huge diversity of botanical art.

The Young Botanical Artist competition continues Dr Sherwood's collaboration with Kew, this time with the aim of bringing botanical art to a new generation, ensuring the legacy of this fascinating, ever-growing genre.

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Images in order:

Cover image: Jessica R. Shepherd, UK (Born 1984)
Giant Leaf Poplar Tree (*Populus x canadensis*)
Watercolour on paper

Rory McEwen, UK (1932–1982)
Upper Club, Eton 1979
Watercolour on vellum

Coral Guest, UK (1955–2021)
Dove or Pocket Handkerchief Tree (*Davidia involucrata*)
Acrylic on Gesso primed paper

Phansakdi Chakkaphak, Thailand (Born 1949)
Japanese Pine Cone (*Pinus densiflora*)
Watercolour & gouache on paper

Denise Ramsay, New Zealand (Born 1971)
'Emergence' (*Ginkgo biloba* leaf)
Watercolour and gouache on paper

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