

# THE RADIANT FOREST

*An energy herbarium*

MARIE-JEANNE MUSIOL

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## *An energy herbarium*

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*Text & photos*

*Translation of essay, plate descriptions  
and notes by the author*

*revised by Nancy A. Locke*

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## *Entering the radiant forest*

**O**n his walks, the poet Goethe observed the forest radiating and, at times, his rapture would bring him to the verge of fainting. He perceived the living as an active principle of perpetual metamorphosis and visualized the leaf-form unfolding on its stem as a condensed version of all vegetal potential. Two centuries later, the physicist David Bohm transposes to the quantum dimension this persistent intuition of the fluid states of matter as they unfold or enfold on increasingly complex planes of existence. He envisions as a holomovement this ceaseless back- and-forth between the manifest reality of things as we experience them in space-time, and their more subtle inclusion in other dimensions.

I assemble the *energy herbarium*—a journey to the heart of the luminous world of plants—at the intersection of these imaginary poles.

For centuries, naturalists have named and classified specimens in herbaria in order to grasp the organizing plan of the vegetal world. Without seeking to achieve the same exhaustive scope, the emblematic herbarium that I create freely assembles small figures of radiating plants. Some species are organized according to logical botanical groupings. More often, they are deposited in the herbarium as representations of an energy state caught live by electromagnetic photography.<sup>1</sup>

The leaves in the energy herbarium are delicate interfaces at the confluence of two highly reactive phenomena: photography and electromagnetism.<sup>2</sup> Their luminous marks, revealed in the electromagnetic field induced by a calibrated device, imprint the silver film. The emulsion also harbours surprising details of micro-states enfolded in the recesses of the leaf and invisible to the naked eye. Extracted and enlarged, they appear as real mirrors of the cosmos, visual echoes of the infinite spaces relayed by the Hubble telescope. The astral landscapes nestled at the heart of radiant leaves embody David Bohm's intuition of an implicate world enfolded in the visible. They materialize the holographic nature of the universe that manifests itself in non-linear dimensions, beyond the strictures of time and space.

In everyday life, we still have only a vague sense of the vast, non-local “field” in which the totality of energy transactions occurs through multidimensional channels. However, this integral field allows us to envision a universe of immaterial forces that shape matter, transmit information, and guide evolution.<sup>3</sup>

Might the small icons of *The Radiant Forest* unsettle our certitudes about the consistency of things and give us to see the luminous matrix of the universe?

## PLATES

All the plates from the *Bodies of Light* consigned to the energy herbarium are identified with the abbreviation *BoL*, followed by a number and the common name of the plant in parentheses. The images in the herbarium cover a period extending from 1997 to 2017. As dates may vary for the use of an image depending on its format or support (photographic print, digital print, positive, light box or video), they are not specified.

p. 2 | *Large maple in forest*

The canopy filters the light that Goethe considers as “the simplest, most integral and homogeneous entity that we know”.<sup>4</sup>

p. 5 | *BoL no. 494 (Maple)*

Life, radiant and ever changing, beats at the heart of visible forms.

p. 6	UPPER LEFT	<i>Configuration no. 4 (Leaf)</i>
	UPPER RIGHT	<i>BoL no. 842 (Currant)</i>
	LOWER LEFT	<i>BoL no. 819 (Maple)</i>
	LOWER RIGHT	<i>BoL no. 148 (Geranium)</i>

Light coming from the integral field ignores boundaries and permeates the plant. Light and matter interpenetrate in a fluid exchange.

p. 7 | *BoL no. 670 (Tiarella, two states)*

Moments of infinity enfolded in the leaf, small distillations of a cosmic universe hidden in the substrate of the plant and in the photographic film encapsulating them.





# Notes

A BRIEF HISTORY that expands upon the notes in certain chapters points to research on the issues raised that particularly interested me.

## ENTRER DANS LA FORÊT RADIEUSE

1. The process consists of inducing an electromagnetic field in which plants and biological bodies express a luminous corona, recorded directly on paper, film, video, or digital media, that indicates their state and specific reactions. For a detailed description, see *Recording method and conditions* in Chapter 5.
2. The interface represents the boundary between two entities where an exchange of information takes place.
3. According to Albert Einstein, “There is no place in this new kind of physics both for the field and matter, for the field is the only reality.”
4. Correspondence between Goethe and Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi cited in *Goethe’s Conception of the World* by Rudolf Steiner (England, Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1928, p. 160).

## 1 | THE FOREST, A SPACE OF LIGHT

5. The process, initially referred to as Kirlian photography or Kirlianography in homage to its pioneers Valentina Kirlian (d. 1972) and Semyon Kirlian (1898–1978) from the former USSR, is also called electrography, electrophotography, bioelectrography, electrophotonics, spectrography, radiation field photography, coronal discharge photography, and GDV (Gas Discharge Visualization).

*Illustration: Soviet researchers Valentina and Semyon Kirlian systematically explored the process’s potential.*

6. See *Recording method and conditions* in Chapter 5 for a summary of some of the conditions that affect the energy state of biological bodies and the capture of their image in real time.
7. The illustrated plates of some perception games require defocusing the eye to discern in 3D out-of-phase details of a 2D image.
8. In Japan, the physiological effects of *Shinrin-yoku* have been studied extensively by Yoshifumi Miyazaki. Dr. Qing Li is also developing a “forest medicine” that uses the effects of the natural environment to strengthen the immune system. The treatment protocols of sylvotherapy, which was widespread in Europe between the two world wars and whose