

Abstract

Question: (De/constructing the Human: Self, Identity and Other) Compare and contrast the work of two contemporary artists in relation to plant intelligence and the mycorrhizal network. Questioning the hierarchal position of the human.

Essay Title: Interconnected and Rhizomatic: Contemporary research in the field of plant studies challenges the perception that humans are exclusively intelligent

Interconnected and Rhizomatic delves into the exploration of plant intelligence through a post-humanist lens, challenging the perception that plants are an inanimate object that are a backdrops to human existence. Through engaging in the works of textile artist Lorraine Roy and multidisciplinary artist Sommer Roman, it draws an emphasis on the complex nature of plant communication through the mycorrhizal network. Roy works with researchers in the field of plant studies and tree communication to create an interplay between textiles and science, through considering theories such as the wood wide web, the Mother tree and kinship. Roman prompts the reconsideration of the human as the focal point to philosophy and interprets the interconnected relationship between plant, human and animal in her oeuvre, she challenges outdated views of the human hierarchy in philosophy. Both collectively investigate plant intelligence and cognition prompting an inquiry into our ubiquitous connection with nature, by examining the texts of key researchers in the field of plant studies. With an emphasis on interconnectedness, both artists weave in symbolism, theory and science in their practice creating a blurred line between science and art.