

## Chair's Preface

In December 2016, following its consideration of the Kelly & Company report 'A Future for Inverleith House' and its decision not to use Inverleith House solely for the exhibition of contemporary art, the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) tasked the Regius Keeper to review the future use of Inverleith House. Following discussion with Scottish Government and Creative Scotland a short life Working Group was established, convened by an independent Chair, to advise the Board on a clear strategic direction for the development of a high quality arts and cultural programme encompassing a variety of disciplines including visual art, theatre, music, literature and film. The arising strategic direction, described in this report, is benchmarked with that of peer institutions; will align with the core mission of the RBGE; is holistic and connected to RBGE operations; allows RBGE to build creative and sustainable partnerships; responds to the challenges and opportunities of the cultural and visual arts sector in Scotland and beyond; and has relevance for Inverleith House, the four gardens and their diverse audiences.

The Working Group, as constituted in January 2017 included representatives from the RBGE Board of Trustees, Senior Management and the RBGE Friends, senior officers of Creative Scotland, practicing artists and curators, an emeritus scientist and senior representatives of relevant educational, arts, media and science organisations and of funding bodies in Scotland and the UK. The Group met formally in February, March and May 2017 and convened an internal Vision workshop in April, facilitated by the Director of the Edinburgh Book Festival and including further representation from the RBGE Board and members of RBGE staff. During the life of the Working Group, in order to take views and report on progress, the Chair was in contact with a number of key external stakeholders who were involved in the public campaign in support of a contemporary art programme at Inverleith House, RBGE staff not directly involved in the tasks of the Group and other leading arts professionals with an interest in the project.

This summary report, which draws on the discussions of the Working Group over that five month period, delivers recommendations to the Board that seek to provide a firm foundation from which the RBGE can develop and deliver a vibrant and respected arts programme, including the use of the distinctive spaces and legacy of Inverleith House, which capitalises on the unique resources of the Gardens. It reflects robust, committed and informed consideration by all members of the Group who were united in their agreement on a number of core principles and beliefs, that are reflected in this report.

The Group recognizes the importance and quality of the RBGE's programming work across various aspects of the arts to date, including theatre, dance and literature, and the central role Inverleith House has played in delivering a world class series of exhibitions involving the RBGE archive, twentieth century art and contemporary practice, rooted in the Garden context over three decades. It acknowledges the financial and organizational challenges involved in delivering such a programme in the current funding environment, but urges Trustees and staff to grasp the positive opportunities opened up by this review to build on achievements to date and take advantage of strategic opportunities that also enhance the RBGE's core mission.

The Group is unanimous in its agreement that the practice of science and art, at their best, are not mutually exclusive or competing activities, but are grounded in a shared concern with research, interpretation and discovery. Together they have the capacity to generate new perspectives on the world greater than the sum of their parts. The RBGE in particular is in a unique position to be able to lead in this respect, fostering excellence and innovation in its programmes at national and international levels. The existing resources represented by the RBGE's staff expertise, collections, buildings and spaces, networks and legacy are considerable. An integrated arts programme would be a means to lever further support and enhance the RBGE's reputation, increasing the benefits, profile and public impact of its work.

A programme that considers the 'contemporary condition', drawing on the past, working with the present and imagining the future, runs very much in parallel with the current concerns of scientists and artists. The curation of such a programme should be carefully planned to engage with seasonal change, key cultural moments and multiple publics. It will demand sensitive and effective leadership, inspired partnership working and the ability to engage with practising artists from all disciplines. With continuing, well-informed advice, appropriate governance, clear communication and access to resource opportunities the Working Group is confident that an integrated arts programme, with Inverleith House as a core platform for key exhibitions and events, could thrive. This report offers the Board a draft vision, objectives, and outcomes that we hope can be owned and delivered through the coming years.

As Chair I would like to record particular thanks to the Secretariat for the Working Group, including Jennifer Martin, who supported much work during and between formal meetings. The excellent contributions of all members of the Working Group, given freely and independently, were also highly valued, and I am grateful for the opinions and experience of all those who contacted me in relation to the Working Group's task. I hope we have done justice to the challenge and wish the RBGE well in its future programming activities.

Professor Chris Breward

June 2017.

## 1. Working Assumptions

At the outset of the process The Arts Working Group established a set of assumptions to underpin its work, as follows:

The RBGE wishes to consolidate and build upon its achievements in the arts to date to develop an ambitious approach to programming that is closely aligned to its core mission and inclusive of the arts in all their forms - including performance, design, architecture, literature, visual arts, digital/screen-based media and music.

The RBGE expects the future programme to include, but not be restricted to, exhibition making at Inverleith House. Inverleith House will be available for exhibitions and other arts related activity, but the pace, rhythm and regularity of the programme may vary from previous years.

The RBGE operates across four sites in Edinburgh, Dawyck, Logan and Benmore and a future arts, creative and cultural engagement programme needs to reflect and respond to the specific qualities and characteristics of each site.

The RBGE is keen to use an inclusive art and cultural offer to increase and diversify its audiences at all four Gardens, to raise the public impact and benefits of its work. Expanding and extending the visitor base will also support necessary goals to generate commercial and charitable income.

The RBGE seeks to have its unique, living and preserved collections used more effectively by artists in the future, and to create a greater level of public awareness and appreciation of botanical art in its collection.

The RBGE is seeking to establish an approach that will be achievable and sustainable within the current financial climate. Staffing issues are a matter for the RBGE Board and Executive and lie outside the remit of the Working Group. There is, however, an assumption that existing resources will be maintained - and that more effective inter-departmental working will be adopted to support the delivery of an integrated arts programme.

## 2. Strategic Vision

The Arts Working Group was tasked with establishing a clear, strategic direction for the development of an holistic programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement. This draft vision statement was derived from the discussions of the group -

*The Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh seeks to deliver an ambitious and holistic programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement, that will enhance and support its core mission - to explore, conserve and explain the world of plants for a better future.*

*Drawing in local, national and international partners and working with leading and emerging artists we will produce a rich, distinctive and inspiring programme that will engage with a wide range of people, including audiences, staff, volunteers and supporters, in relevant, meaningful and memorable ways.*

*We believe that through the combination of science, horticulture and the arts we are uniquely placed to help people see and respond to the world from new and different perspectives – rewarding our curiosity; feeding our imagination; fostering our spirit of adventure; and contributing to our sense of society and collective well-being.*

### 3. Headline Objectives

Five core objectives underpin the strategic development and effective delivery of this vision. These are -

**i. Audiences and access:** To increase and diversify avenues for the RBGE to reach the public through a programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement, generating a range of regular and co-ordinated opportunities for the public to engage with the work of artists and other creative professionals in ways that are meaningful, memorable and moving. To actively address issues of access, equality, diversity and inclusion, reaching audiences who may not have previously engaged with art in the gardens, and generating higher levels of awareness of the work of RBGE within existing audiences for the arts

**ii. Excellence and ambition:** To produce an arts, creative and cultural engagement programme to match the quality and rigour of the RBGE's scientific, conservation and horticultural ambitions and concerned with contemporary issues, future thinking, and the generation of new knowledge. The programme will build on the reputation and relationships that are in place now, harness existing and future research opportunities, be distinctive and specific to the RBGE context, and nurture emerging talent as well as supporting mid-career and established practitioners.

**iii. Partnership building and collaboration:** To develop mutually beneficial relationships with other bodies who embrace RBGE principles and share an interest in presenting a world class programme of art and cultural activities for the benefit of Garden visitors and the wider community. To make more of existing national and international partnerships to foster creative collaborations into the future; strengthening the creative opportunities associated with RBGE's programmes of research and building on partnerships within the arts sector to develop innovative models for shared programming, co-production and touring.

**iv. Local, national and international profile:** To work towards establishing the RBGE's position as a model of best practice and a leader in its field, consolidating existing programmes and establishing a coherent, creative identity that aligns the values of the arts, creative and cultural engagement programme with the wider values of the RBGE. These should be - bold, open-minded, ethical, environmentally responsible, generous, inspiring and inclusive.

**v. Resilience and sustainability:** To commit to a five-year planning cycle that will foster longer term, strategic partnerships and alliances in support of the arts, creative and cultural engagement programme which will enable a more effective approach to fundraising, delivery, monitoring and evaluation. Through dynamic leadership build a shared vision and sense of value around the programme and its contribution to the delivery of the RBGE's core mission, ensuring its development is sustained through effective team and inter-departmental working.

### 4. Strengths and Opportunities

#### i. Existing position:

Benchmarking with other botanical gardens shows that the RBGE is in a position of strength with a rich offer, including the exhibitions programme at Inverleith House, the John Hope Gateway, work presented outdoors and in other locations in the Edinburgh gardens (the glasshouses). There is an opportunity to create a stronger focus and identity for the work that is happening and to connect across different strands of activity more effectively. This could be done at little additional cost and through prioritising this within the corporate communications and marketing effort, for example by developing effective social media channels for engaging audiences with the exhibitions and events programme.

## **ii. Relevance:**

The practices of the arts and the sciences share much common ground. Many artists and arts organisations are dealing with relevant contemporary challenges in their work, including issues affecting the environments we live in, the sustainable use of resources, and new designs for living in environments under stress. RBGE is in a strong position to build on its work to date and re-assert its ambitions to work with artists and arts organisations to help it 'explore, conserve and explain the world of plants for a better future', and to motivate the public to engage with some of the most pressing issues of our time. This will enhance the RBGE's profile and extend its relevance, impact and reach, especially with a younger generation.

## **iii. Partnerships:**

The RBGE is active within a diverse network of organisations that are already collaborators or potential partners in an integrated programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement. Within Edinburgh and Scotland there are strong opportunities for enhanced partnership working within the arts community, for example with museums and galleries, festivals, universities, colleges and schools and other public arts and artist-run organisations. The RBGE and the other RESAS-supported scientific institutes are keen to share the results of their publicly funded research and are continuously seeking innovative and creative ways of engaging with audiences to provide a deeper insight into their work. There is an opportunity for more effective forward planning within RBGE to ensure that a programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement is fully integrated within the thinking of all staff to exploit existing and new partnerships more fully.

## **iv. Public impacts and wider societal benefit:**

By developing an integrated programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement the RBGE will strengthen its delivery of benefits for the people of Scotland and address the priorities of the Scottish Government in health and well-being, life-long learning and education, culture, tourism & heritage, equalities, inclusion and social justice. Active participation in the RBGE Arts programme would have a positive impact by enriching people's experiences of and engagement with the world around them, and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

## **v. Supporters and networks**

The public concern for the future of Inverleith House that has played out recently in the media indicates significant support from the arts community (artists, public and private galleries) for the exhibitions programme at the RBGE and creates an opportunity for the RBGE to widen its network of active supporters for a programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement. There is also untapped potential for sponsorship from private companies and for patronage from individuals with an interest in supporting high-quality public art or being associated with a distinctive programme that has clear environmental credentials. This will require a compelling vision driven by a strong ambition to deliver artistic excellence, excitement and inspiration. An integrated approach should allow the RBGE to make better use of existing support mechanisms such as The Friends who are open to being more actively engaged in this aspect of the RBGE's work into the future.

## **5. Challenges and Threats**

### **i. Pressure on funding and resources:**

There will always be challenges in securing funding for the arts but the Arts Working Group believes that the RBGE is in a position of strength compared to many other organisations given its achievements in the arts to date, its unique qualities as a scholarly and public institution and its distinctive venues and locations. The success of future fundraising efforts will be predicated on the strength, rigour, creativity and distinctiveness of the RBGE vision and programme plans, the effective management, delivery and evaluation of projects, the nurturing, building and sustaining of key partnerships, the confident communication and promotion of the programme, the corporate pride, interest and value invested in the programme, the assured management of key relationships and the credible, and inspired leadership associated with the programme.

It is imperative for the success of the future arts, creative and cultural engagement programme that all those involved take greater responsibility for raising funds and for making more effective use of existing resources through more collaborative working (internally and externally). A fundraising plan should be developed in tandem with the development of the programme, taking account of the various opportunities available to RBGE from the widest range of sources, including research funding.

### **ii. The lack of integrated thinking and effective team working:**

In an increasingly resource-limited environment the RBGE will need to embrace the idea that a programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement will enhance and support its core mission and enable it to reach audiences, raise impact and unlock resources that are integral to the delivery of that mission. The size of the team directly involved in delivering the arts programme is small and a challenge will be to get the corporate support and collaboration from a wide range of staff from across the organisation. It is the view of the Arts Working Group that the arts programme needs to appear within, and be delivered as, a coherent and essential part of the RBGE corporate and business plan. All members of the RBGE community, from volunteers to Senior Management and Board members, need to engage with the arts programme, and communicate it to others in a positive way.

### **iii. Low levels of artistic ambition, confidence and a failure to commit to excellence:**

The RBGE is a world-renowned centre for its National Collections, scientific research and horticulture and prides itself on the quality, ambition and rigour of its core work. It must aspire to achieve similarly high levels of excellence and recognition for its approach to the arts, creative and cultural engagement. A programme that is inspiring, intelligent, innovative, and distinctive will generate and gather support from a range of partners and stakeholders, and thus be much easier to sustain and develop into the future.

Achieving excellence and ambition requires the RBGE to value and invest in the knowledge and talents of staff who will be curating and delivering this programme into the future. Knowledgeable, connected and respected staff will be essential in forging, sustaining and building partnerships and in maintaining excellent relationships with artists, arts organisations and other cultural institutions, at home and overseas.

#### **iv. A lack of vision and leadership:**

The impact, credibility and sustainability of any future programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement will be reliant on there being a strong and consistent vision which is being championed from within the RBGE. The Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees need to demonstrate their belief in and commitment to the arts (in all their forms) - to raise people's awareness, understanding of, and connection to the world around them, often inspiring them to think and act differently. The open-minded curiosity which fuels the RBGE's scientific research should be echoed in its approach to the arts, responding to the unique qualities of its sites and context in order to reach existing, new and diverse audiences in different ways.

#### **6. Recommendations**

The Arts Working Group believes this is a significant and timely opportunity for the RBGE to build on its achievements to date to establish a more strategic and sustainable approach to its programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement that will enhance and support its core mission 'to explore, conserve and explain the worlds of plants for a better future'. It understands the financial and organisational challenges that need to be addressed for this to become possible. The following 'next steps' are therefore recommended as a suggested way forward for senior staff and Trustees to consider:

- Introduce an Arts Advisory Committee into the governance framework to provide Trustees and the Leadership Team with advice on the development, funding and implementation of the RBGE arts strategy and programme. The Arts Advisory Committee would be chaired by a Trustee of the RBGE to ensure an integrated and holistic approach to this area of work within the corporate structure. Remit, Chair and membership of group to be established by end summer 2017.
- With the Arts Advisory Committee, establish a clear and compelling vision for an integrated programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement across the RBGE, building on what is proposed within this report and identifying priority objectives and outcomes over a five-year period from 2017 to 2021.
- In doing this, take the opportunity to make the programme more distinctive to the RBGE, for example: creating a framework that would reflect the seasonal changes that are important within a Garden context which could lead to a regular cycle of anticipated events, working with festivals, partners or themes, creating a seasonal rhythm and sense of continuity, facilitating longer term planning, and building up a sense of expectation among new and existing audiences. Scottish Government themed years could be used as anchor points to help raise profile and attract new partners, audiences and participants.
- Within the context of an evolving 5 year arts, creative and cultural engagement plan for the RBGE establish the next two years (October 2017 to October 2019) as a time to build and test new ways of working internally and with partners. Identify the core team that is charged with delivering this work and support those staff to establish a two year work plan and budget – to be signed off by RBGE Trustees - that will enable the effective delivery of existing programme commitments, the development of new programming approaches and models of working, the strategic building of partnerships and creative collaborations, and effective reporting and evaluation.

- Establish a fundraising / resourcing approach within the RBGE that will draw on the knowledge, expertise and connections of all relevant staff and Trustees. Agree clear goals and milestones that respect and reflect staff capacity and expertise and explore ways to increase strategic, development capacity - through mentoring and other methods, including new partnership models. Utilise the RBGE's status as an Independent Research Organisation (IRO) to build stronger links and opportunities with the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council).
- Develop research methods as part of this development period that engage with and gather the views of audiences, including hard to reach groups across the community, in order to identify new opportunities for public engagement and to address any real or perceived barriers to access: physical, intellectual, cultural and financial. Use the development of a programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement to develop the RBGE's commitment to actively promote equalities, diversity and inclusion across its work. Further develop opportunities for people to practically engage with the Arts programme as participants, volunteer or supporters.
- Seize the opportunities afforded by the RBGE anniversaries in 2020 to make a strong statement about the importance of the arts, creative and cultural engagement to the future vision of the RBGE by presenting a suitably ambitious and connected programme with key partners. Ensure that the fundraising / resourcing plans for the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary exploit the opportunities to raise public and private funding for this programme and consolidate the key partnerships required to bring these plans to fruition.
- Give profile, prominence and value to the programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement by ensuring internal coherence and visibility and rewarding and investing in the development of staff knowledge and expertise. Establish clear and confident leadership for the development of the programme within the RBGE and enable effective team and inter-departmental working to support its effective resourcing and delivery.
- Maximise the learning opportunities generated by an integrated, team based approach by developing the delivery of formal and informal art education by the established and respected RBGE Education team, working with schools, colleges and other education providers, to develop a learning programme with broad outreach and inclusive values.
- Develop a clear strategy for communicating the programme that is fully integrated with the RBGE's communications, marketing, publications and social media planning. The programme of arts, creative and cultural engagement should come under the RBGE corporate brand and share the same brand values. There is a significant opportunity for the programme to inspire people to actively engage with something new.

Depending on the deliberations and decisions of the Trustees it would be important for the senior team to establish a clear timeline and implementation plan that identifies and describes the internal processes, resources, accountabilities and decision making required to action the recommendations within this report.



## Appendix 1

### Benchmarking RBGE Arts Programme against other Botanic Gardens

The RBGE arts programme is unique in the way it uses the spaces within the Botanic Garden and in the diversity of activity taking place across art forms. Consequently benchmarking is difficult but the two institutions that come closest in terms of scale, quality and variety of art are the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the New York Botanical Garden.

The **Royal Botanic Gardens Kew** (admission £15) has two art galleries: the Marianne North Gallery contains exclusively work by the 19<sup>th</sup> century painter Marianne North <http://www.kew.org/visit-kew-gardens/explore/attractions/marianne-north-gallery> ; the Shirley Sherwood Gallery <http://www.kew.org/visit-kew-gardens/explore/attractions/shirley-sherwood-gallery-botanical-art> shows work from Kew's extensive collection of historical and contemporary botanical art (2600 items) and the personnel collection of work by international botanical artists belonging to the benefactor and art collector Shirley Sherwood. The Gallery does not operate under a particular vision or mission statement, but their focus is predominantly on the showing of contemporary and historical botanical art from the Kew and Shirley Sherwood collections.

They typically have two themed exhibitions a year. A recent exhibition Flora Japonica (2017) celebrated Japanese native flora and the influence of Japanese plants on horticulture in the west. About a hundred Japanese plants were portrayed by 36 contemporary Japanese botanical artists. The exhibition also featured historic drawings and paintings by some of Japan's most revered botanists which had never been seen before in Europe. Works from Kew's Illustration and Economic Botany collections were also on display. The exhibition was supported by private, corporate and public sources, including Japanese businesses and the Japanese Embassy. The exhibition produced a good catalogue (£20) but the only events were the preview and occasional gallery tours. The Kew Education Department have 'explainers' operating in the Marianne North Gallery otherwise interpretation is through detailed labels.

The Kew exhibition department employs a team of seven staff including a Galleries and Exhibitions Leader (curatorial), Gallery Manager (operations), 2 Gallery Assistants (admin/operations), 3 x Front of House Assistants and also have a team of 21 Gallery Volunteers including 10 Gallery Explainers. This team currently sits within the Marketing and Commercial section at Kew (formerly it was under the Library and Archives). Kew is not actively expanding its botanical art collection but does acquire new material through illustration relating to research projects.

Kew has hosted a number of prominent sculpture exhibitions including work by Henry Moore, Dale Chihuly and David Nash. These shows were hugely popular and undoubtedly brought in many people who had never visited a botanic garden before and encouraged repeat visits so visitors could view the sculptures at different seasons (Singapore Botanic Gardens and the National Botanic Garden of Ireland, below, both said that sculpture exhibitions made significant impact on visitor numbers). The Moore and Chihuly exhibitions added considerably to Kew's income from ticket sales paying off the considerable investment. They also achieved very strong media interest. Kew also hosts popular musical events, films and has run literary festivals and craft fairs <http://www.kew.org/visit-kew-gardens/whats-on/kew-the-music>

**New York Botanical Garden** (admission \$20 - \$25) has a wide ranging arts programme which probably comes the closest to RBGE in terms of innovation, ambition and impact. They have developed a program of interdisciplinary, multi-venue exhibitions with the goal of expanding their audience and connecting gardening to the arts and humanities. Typically themed exhibitions might combine: fine art, books or cultural artifacts on display in their Library Gallery; a flower show in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory; performances in various locations across the Garden; a poetry tour and themed dining and shopping opportunities. Since 2008, they have used this model to create exhibitions on Charles Darwin, Emily Dickinson, the Alhambra, the Gardens at Padua, Claude Monet, American Women in Landscape Architecture and Garden Photography and American Impressionism. NYBG described their 2015 Frida Kahlo exhibition (<http://www.fridakahlo.it/en/scheda-eventi.php?id=15>) as a 'blockbuster' gaining wide coverage in the media, resulting in a significant increase in visits (reaching one million visitors for the first time) and earned income, from approximately 20% of revenue to more than 30%. The current show is called Redoute to Warhol: Bunny Mellon's Botanical Art <http://www.nybg.org/exhibitions/2016/redoute-to-warhol/index.php> (interestingly Inverleith House has also had exhibitions by both Redoute and Andy Warhol in the past).

In addition to these Garden-wide exhibitions, NYBG have an annual Orchid Show and a Japanese Chrysanthemum exhibition. NYBG have also held a number of large-scale sculpture exhibitions (Henry Moore, Dale Chihuly, Manolo Valdes, Philip Haas) across their 250-acre landscape.

Many other botanic gardens have art programmes but none have an offer as extensive as RBGE, Kew or NYBG. **Singapore Botanic Gardens**, like RBGE, is free and extremely popular with local people and visitors, mostly as a place of relaxation in the busy City. It has received an incredible 4.7 million visits a year on average in recent years. The reason for increased visitation is complex and has been attributed to a number of factors but a popular art programme has certainly contributed. They have had two very successful outdoor sculpture exhibitions in recent years which further raised the profile of the botanic garden and led to increased visits. The first by Zadok Ben-David was sponsored by Sotheby's who also produced a catalogue. Some of the National Parks Board's Trustees were not entirely comfortable about the use of SBG for a commercial show, although ultimately it was seen to benefit the visiting public more than it did Sotheby's. A second major sculpture exhibition by Ju-Ming was not so commercial. Following the popularity of these shows SBG were inundated with requests from local artists wanting exhibitions and so they have set up a Trustee's Arts Subcommittee to provide an independent assessment. SBG also manage a small art gallery in the Garden used for showing botanical art, landscapes and work by contemporary artists, including the Singaporean artist Eng Siak Loy. SBG are about to take on the management of a historic house, on a recently acquired site, which in the future will become a major gallery for exhibiting natural history art.

The **National Botanic Garden of Ireland** at Glasnevin, Dublin has a regular art and photography exhibitions in its gallery space and has an annual sculpture show in the garden and glasshouses which has become hugely competitive and attracts some of Ireland's leading contemporary sculptors <http://www.sculptureincontext.com/>. The event is so popular that September and October, when the show is on, have become the busiest months of the year for visits. The **National Botanic Garden of Wales** (admission £9.75) has a small art gallery, mostly for commercial

exhibitions, and a larger exhibition space, currently showing RBGE's *From Another Kingdom* exhibition.

The **Eden Project** in Cornwall (admission £25) specialise in what they describe as 'environmental art' see <http://www.edenproject.com/eden-story/our-ethos/environmental-art-with-cape-farewell> and were among the first plant-themed attractions to introduce the idea of 'interpretative sculptures' which dominated the outside landscape in the early years until trees grew up. Eden has worked with an impressive list of artists over the years (including several like Chris Drury and Cape Farewell who have also had shows at RBGE); has an annual series of popular music concerts <http://www.edensessions.com/> and also run botanical art classes <http://www.edenproject.com/learn/for-everyone/botanical-art-courses>

The **Huntington Library, Art Gallery and Botanical Garden**, in San Marino, has a highly respected art gallery within a Botanic Garden but their significant collection of American and European art does not have a particular botanical connection. The **Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation**, in Pittsburgh, however, has one of the best collections of botanical art and books in the world but no garden (<http://www.huntbotanical.org/art/>). The Hunt 'organizes two exhibitions a year featuring historical and contemporary works from the permanent collection or those on loan from artists, collectors or institutions, as well as a revolving sequence of international travel exhibitions *for loan to museums, galleries and botanical gardens*'.

The **Brooklyn Botanic Garden** (admission \$15) has an active exhibitions and art programme (<http://www.bbg.org/collections/gallery>) including contemporary sculpture but the current exhibition in the substantial gallery space seems to be more didactic than art-based. **Missouri Botanical Garden** (admission \$8) is regarded as one of the world's finest but its art programme is disappointing. They do a winter illuminated trail '*Garden Glow*' and have an annual series of 10 popular music concerts, the Whitaker Music Festival, supported by the Whitaker Foundation. Missouri does have a fine library, with a large collection of pre-19<sup>th</sup> century books and recently they showed reproductions from some of these illustrated works in their small gallery space <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/things-to-do/events/special-exhibitions/art-and-science.aspx>. **Denver Botanic Garden** (admission \$12.50) has an art gallery and the recent exhibitions programme can be viewed here <http://www.botanicgardens.org/art-exhibits>. This includes botanical illustration and nature art by students and professional artists (Brinsley Burbidge who established the exhibition programme at RBGE and then went on to Kew to do the same there, was also Executive Director of Denver Botanic Garden).

**Chicago Botanic Garden** (admission free, car parking \$25) possibly has the most commercial approach to art in the Garden with an annual three day Art Festival (basically a selling fair) with 'botanic-themed and botanic-made photography, paintings, ceramics, cement, metal, fibre, wood, jewellery, etc' [www.chicagobotanic.org/artfestival](http://www.chicagobotanic.org/artfestival).

The **Hortus Botanicus in Leiden** (admission Euro7.50) has exhibitions outside in the Garden [www.hortusleiden.nl/en/whats-on/past-exhibitions](http://www.hortusleiden.nl/en/whats-on/past-exhibitions), and has had a position of 'artist in residence'. In common with other European botanic gardens such as the **Hortus** in Amsterdam Leiden occasionally use their unheated conservatory as an exhibition and event space in the summer months when the plants are taken outside in containers but this can cause conflict with other event use, eg weddings. The Dutch botanic gardens have a very strong network, supported by the **Dutch**

**Postcode Lottery** (the sister of the **People's Postcode Lottery** in UK) which allows for the exchange and sharing of exhibitions and other art programmes between gardens.

Several botanic gardens, like Paris, have natural history museums within or adjacent to the garden but the opportunities for joint working on art programmes have not necessarily been realised. One exception is in Copenhagen where the **Natural History Museum of Denmark** within the **Copenhagen Botanic Garden** (admission free) has a very interesting programme by leading contemporary Danish artists who have responded to the botanical collections and archive, and exhibited their work in the museum (eg [http://geologi.snm.ku.dk/english/exhibitions/all\\_things\\_strange\\_and\\_beautiful/](http://geologi.snm.ku.dk/english/exhibitions/all_things_strange_and_beautiful/) and [http://geologi.snm.ku.dk/english/exhibitions/flora\\_danica/](http://geologi.snm.ku.dk/english/exhibitions/flora_danica/) . The major new natural history museum, **Naturalis**, in Leiden is also being designed to take exhibits outside into the Garden and bring plants into the public engagement programme in the museum <http://www.naturalis.nl/en/>.

The **Natural History Museum** in London (admission free) shows historical and sometimes contemporary art, and also photographic work like the *Wildlife Photographer of the Year* exhibitions <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/whats-on.html> although the current exhibition is by the Bauer Brothers plants have only featured in a small number of exhibitions in recent years. The NHM also hire out exhibitions, some of which are art-based <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/business-services/touring-exhibitions/art-of-nature.html>

A number of other museums have an interest in botany or science and art. This includes the **Garden Museum** in Lambeth which exhibits both contemporary art and work from its collections <http://www.gardenmuseum.org.uk> and organises touring shows. The **Wellcome Collection**, in London, is the world leader in art and science collaborations, especially with a medicine connection, but few of the exhibitions that have featured in its temporary exhibition programme have any plant connection (this is one <https://wellcomecollection.org/whats-on/exhibitions/the-generosity-plates>).

The **Royal Horticultural Society** in London sets the international standard for botanical art with its annual show attracting exhibitors from all over the world <https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/libraries-at-rhs/events-exhibitions/Exhibition-of-Botanical-Art> . The RHS do not have a permanent gallery or exhibition space.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Programme Ideas that Emerged during a Visioning Workshop by a Sub-Group of the Working Group and in Conversation with Interested Parties**

#### **Annual Programming**

The exhibition programme should shift seasonally and respond to the seasons with a specific brief:

- Spring – working with emerging artists and producing new small scale commissions
- Summer – a large scale formal exhibition as part of the Edinburgh Art Festival focused around Inverleith House
- Autumn – an uplifting project based on “joy” when the nights are drawing in – thematically this might be a positive, future focused theme, based on environmental or technological innovation, or on globally urgent issues.
- Winter – projects focusing on RBGE’s or another public collection, focusing on research, investigation, and curiosity.

Seasonality can bring together all Garden-wide arts and culture activity under coherent and simplified themes – ensure all programming has a clear, linked identity.

Authoring touring exhibitions or multi-site exhibitions to be delivered across all four gardens simultaneously.

#### **An ‘Artist’s House’**

Invite a leading artist to curate a living artistic environment in Inverleith House responding to both the House and RBGE in a very site-specific way. Display would include paintings, drawings, furniture and elements from the Collection.

#### **Residences**

Artist residencies ensure RBGE is a place of production and dialogue, articulates RBGE’s science research, and is supportive and encouraging of new talent:

- A programme of short ‘garden residencies’ where a living artist has sustained contact with one of the regional gardens, producing work in response to the context of the garden. Residencies would rotate around the regional gardens and the artistic production would also tour the four gardens. Living artists would respond to the life cycle of the Gardens and not just science and art.
- Science research residency pairing artists with scientists (once annually)
- Host international artist residencies reflecting RBGE’s global network
- Initiate Scottish artist exchanges, allowing Scottish artists to undertake residencies in country of relevance to the RBGE, presenting new work there and RBGE

#### **Commissions**

Commission artists to produce new work for the RBGE collection:

As a collecting institution there is a desire to grow and build the botanical art collection.

Contemporary artists can be commissioned to produce a botanical artwork, expanding ideas on what botanical art can be.

Young artists and scientists – pair an emerging artist and scientist to work together to produce a small commissioned body of work

“Pop Up” Gardens – commission an artist to design a temporary garden, working with horticulture team to realise this.

### **Collections**

Invite an artist to curate a collections exhibition, working with RBGE collection to build a personally authored narrative through objects from the collection

Develop an art and wellbeing strand

Create an architectural programme strand e.g. a prize or annual competition for a pavilion in the garden. Consider how the programme might explore current world problems and global issues e.g. environment and sustainability

A triennial outdoor sculpture ‘open’ combining historical and contemporary sculpture in the garden (with similarities to Artzuid, Amsterdam), this could be delivered in partnership with NGS/Yorkshire Sculpture Park/Henry Moore Foundation

### **Partnerships**

Aligning all arts programming with citywide seasonal events such as the Science Festival, Book Festival, Edinburgh Art Festival, Children’s Festival, Storytelling festival, International Festival and Fringe.

Link with cultural organisations across Scotland and nationally including other visual arts organisations to support the co-commissioning of projects, touring, and the display of other institutions’ collections such as WASPS Studios, National Galleries of Scotland (NGS), Wellcome Trust or Royal College of Physicians

Linking with academic and science research institutions including University of Edinburgh, Research Councils, Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), Royal Society of Edinburgh and British Council - exploiting the potential of RBGE’s global connections.

Focusing on RBGE’s global consular networks, build projects around a different country of relevance to the RBGE on an annual basis – this could include projects in the country of origin, touring and exchanges, as well as artist residencies.

Partnering with national institutions– aim to develop closer links with British Council to facilitate international connections mirroring RBGEs global scientific connections. Continuing positive relationships with Hayward Touring.

Relationships with commercial galleries such as Gagosian, Hauser & Wirth, The Modern Institute to continue to be developed although with much less regularity

**Education**

PhDs – there is a PhD research opportunity exploring and developing the archives of IH/RBGE.

Collaborate with a university to provide modular research projects for MA/MSc Fine Art/Art History students to develop research and projects related to RBGE – this could result in an exhibition or presentation of their work