

Séminaire du CREDO en visioconférence

**Vendredi 18 juin 2021**

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**“Drawing on Human and Plant Correspondences  
on the Rai Coast of Papua New Guinea”**

Abstract

In the hinterland of the Rai Coast, technical gardening practice is also ritually and spiritually charged daily activity to ensure the movement of foods and deities from the garden to the village. To approach this ‘art of gardening’ we attend to process and transformation and to how garden produce becomes the matter of beautiful forms. With reference to new pencil drawings of gardens we explore the aesthetic of the garden’s embodiment of myth and history. The drawings and text provide a detailed documentation of lowland taro cultivation. The processes illustrated are at one and the same time attending to plant and human wellbeing. The notion of ‘grace’ from Gregory Bateson’s writings is introduced. Highlighting the connections drawn between spirits and people and plants, we consider an immanence of life in mythic, human, and vegetable reproduction.

Note: Porer and Urufaf will not be able to be present for the seminar. This will make for some potential awkwardness. James will try and indicate how and why the paper is written as it is, and indicate the presence of the other authors in the text. The paper was written for a collection called ‘The Art of Gardens’. It is thus framed with some words about cultural assumptions about both art, and gardens.