



Australian Government

Australian National Botanic Gardens

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MEDIA RELEASE

Bringing botany to the people through art Dombrovskis and Blakebrough at the Botanic Gardens

A spectacular new exhibition at the Australian National Botanic Gardens reveals Tasmania's once-secret botanical world through popular and traditional artistic media.

Flora Tasmanica features the works of renowned Tasmanian wilderness photographer, the late Peter Dombrovskis, as well as Les Blakebrough, one of Australia's greatest ceramic artists and Lauren Black, a leading figure in botanical art.

Dr. Gintaras Kantvilas, Head of the Tasmanian Herbarium, will open the exhibition at 11:00 am on Wednesday 5 April 2006.

Les Blakebrough's porcelain plates depict six endemic Tasmanian plants - *Eucalyptus coccifera*, *Eucryphia lucida*, *Brachyglottis brunonis*, *Nothofagus gunnii*, *Lomatia tasmanica* and *Telopea truncata* - and will be accompanied by the original paintings of botanical artist Lauren Black from which the plate's designs were developed. The limited-edition plates are the outcome of the 'Southern Ice' research project led by the legendary ceramicist, which entailed seven years of painstaking effort to develop world-class domestic porcelain.

The exhibition also includes a selection of large and medium format photographs by Peter Dombrovskis, renowned for his images of remote and inaccessible areas of Tasmania. An environmentalist with a deep love of Tasmania, Peter's photographs have been instrumental in the conservation of various Tasmanian wild places including the prevention of the damming of the Franklin River. His powerful images have been a pivotal medium in showing Australians the rugged beauty of the Tasmanian landscape.

Peter Dombrovskis' photographs are on loan from the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens, Hobart.

The *Flora Tasmanica* ceramic plates and paintings are on loan from the University of Tasmania, Fine Art Collection, where they were opened by HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark in the Plimsoll Gallery in March 2005.

Flora Tasmanica will be on display at the Gardens Visitor Centre from 5 April until 23 July 2006, 9am - 4.30pm daily.

**Media are invited to a pre-opening viewing of *Flora Tasmanica*
Wednesday 5 April at 10:30am
Opening at 11:00am at the Australian National Botanic Gardens**

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