

## IN SEARCH FOR PARADISE

New media based artists Iris-A-Maz are on a journey of serious botanical detection. Like their European forefathers of exploration, Iris-A-Maz are on a global scientific investigation of botanic specimens that commonly inhabit the natural urban landscape. There is no great mission as such but rather a reawakening of observing plants that share our work and living spaces. Iris-A-Maz's specific interest concerns introduced and native species of weeds. The richness of vegetation on our streets is often ignored due its insignificance and low aesthetic qualities. This body of work explores the natural treasures that are close to home and redirects our attention to the plants that take refuge between the gaps along the footpath.

Contemporary art duo Iris-A-Maz arrived in Australia in September 2006 to expand their botanical investigations in weeds downunder. Iris M. Holstein and Matthias D. Hederer met at Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design (HfG/ZKM), Germany. After their studies they formed an art partnership. Over the last five years their contemporary art practice has matured focusing on developing long term projects at home and abroad. Like most conceptual artists their choice and use of materials are secondary. It is the idea of the project that sustains their interest to produce a new body of work.

Iris-A-Maz's use of new media technology such as video, digital photography and web design are simply employed as tools to enhance and capture their visual message.

Iris-A-Maz's actual project *Paradise is Over the Ocean* plays on the history of past scientific expeditions that might appear in a museum than a gallery. Their portraits pay homage to the early photographs of rugged explorers that suggest man's will to conquer the natural landscape. Their interaction is purely an interest to record. Iris-A-Maz's findings are about documenting the changing surface of the landscape. Their botanical research takes them on tours of Sydney's urban spaces in search for a paradise yet to be appreciated.

Julian Wrigley  
Teacher for media and design  
Moriah Warmemorial College  
Sydney 2007

More informations:

**[www.paradise-is-over-the-ocean.de.vu](http://www.paradise-is-over-the-ocean.de.vu)** and **[www.iris-a-maz.de](http://www.iris-a-maz.de)**