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ON THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

This publication draws from the rich holdings of the British Council Collection and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh archives.

On the Edge of the World is an inspiring glimpse into how the expeditionists of the past and contemporary artists of the present continue to delight and provoke us with their responses to plants, flowers and gardens.

When Charles Darwin was 22 he embarked on a remarkable foreign adventure which changed the rest of his life.

From his first steps in untouched tropical rainforest, to Tania Kovats' recent personal journey around South America with The Voyage of the Beagle as her trusty travelling companion, this publication uncovers our fascination with exploring the plant world from both artists' and scientists' perspectives.

Included is material revealing the observations and drawings of explorers to South America, including specimens from Darwin and Gardner.

As we struggle to make sense of changing landscapes and climates, today's artists assume the role of modern-day explorers.

They are investigators of life, expressing as much about the fragility of our own existence as about the continuing importance to explore and preserve the natural world.

Published on the occasion of the exhibition *On the Edge of the World* at the John Hope Gateway Gallery, Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, 15 May - 18 July 2010.

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