

## Beautiful Seed Photos Show Complexity of Life's Beginnings

BY JAKOB SCHILLER  11.05.12 6:30 AM

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*Means of Reproduction no. 807*



Photographer [Svjetlana Tepavcevic](#) is crazy about seeds. Ever since she discovered the intricately woven, vein-like structures of a vine seedpod on a trail in Los Angeles, she's been an avid collector.

She uses a flatbed scanner to capture the seeds she collects in hi-res and make prints of them as large as possible. Just this week she collected two new boxes on a return trip to LA from Northern Virginia where she now lives.

"I can't wait to get home, I'll probably be scanning for a full week," she says.

For Tepavcevic, the series of seed photos, called *Means of Reproduction*, is about seeing the beauty of the mundane and staying aware of life's origins. A perspective influenced by living through the Bosnian War in her early 20s.

"Because I've lived through the war and seen a lot of death and destruction, it's often what's on my mind," she says. "There is going to be a day when all this life is no longer present, everything changes and moves and dies."

Today, she says, there is a pervasive blindness to the natural world and a preoccupation with daily hassles, exemplified for her by people waiting in line for iPhones. She admits she also forgot to look around until her hike on the LA trail. Now appreciating the complexity of seeds is a way for Tepavcevic to see the world differently, and with enthusiasm. The other day, for example, she says she was preparing lunch and when she opened the avocado she was going to eat she immediately saw how beautiful the seed was and rushed to scan it before it dried out and changed colors.

"I literally had 10 minutes because it was changing so much," she says. "Life is here to reproduce itself and if you look around at animals and plants that's what drives everything for them, reproduction. It's a process that is so fascinating yet many of us pay no attention to it." The photo project is not just about finding seeds, it's "about a state of mind, a sense of mindfulness and awareness of what's around me."

Tepavcevic hopes her seed photos are able to cut through audiences' auto-pilots and show them what she sees. Her flatbed scanner can scan images that are up to 6400 dpi which allows her to make prints that are sometimes 60 inches long. By enlarging these small but often complicated seedpods on beautifully crafted prints she says she hopes to make them "an environment unto themselves."

"People should take from [the prints] what they want to take from them," she says. "But if the works manage to surprise and impart a sense of wonder, discovery and a new awareness — that there is so much complexity in nature everywhere around us, complexity we do not or cannot observe — that would make me happy."

*All Photos: Svjetlana Tepavcevic*

<http://www.wired.com/rawfile/2012/11/svjetlana-tepavcevic-seeds/>