

## **“The Botany of Desire” on NET Television**

LINCOLN, Neb. (Oct. 14, 2009) -- Flowers. Trees. Plants. We've always thought that we controlled them. But what if, in fact, they have been shaping us?

Using this provocative question as a jumping off point, “The Botany of Desire,” airing Wednesday, Oct. 28, at 7 p.m. CT on NET1 and in high-definition on NET-HD, takes viewers on an eye-opening exploration of the human relationship with the plant world -- seen from the plant's point of view. Based on Michael Pollan's best-selling book of the same name and narrated by Frances McDormand, the special repeats on Friday, Oct. 30, at 7 a.m. and 1 and 6 p.m. CT on NET2.

Every schoolchild learns about the mutually beneficial dance of honeybees and flowers. To make their honey, the bees collect nectar and in the process spread pollen, which contains the flowers' genes. “The Botany of Desire” proposes that people and domesticated plants have formed a similarly reciprocal relationship. “We don't give nearly enough credit to plants,” says Pollan. “They've been working on us -- they've been using us -- for their own purposes.”

“The Botany of Desire” examines this unique relationship through the stories of four familiar species, relating how they evolved to satisfy humankind's most basic yearnings. Linking fundamental human desires for sweetness, beauty, intoxication and control with the plants that satisfy them -- the apple, the tulip, marijuana and the potato -- the program shows that humans are intricately woven into the web of nature, not standing outside it.

The two-hour program begins with Pollan in a California garden and sets off to roam the world: from the potato fields of Idaho and Peru to the apple orchards of New England; from a medical marijuana hot house to the tulip mecca of Amsterdam, where in 1637, one Dutchman, crazed with “tulip mania,” paid as much for a single bulb as the going price of a townhouse. How could flowers, with no real practical value to humans, become so desperately desired that they drove many to financial ruin?

“The Botany of Desire” argues that the answer lies in the powerful but often overlooked relationship between people and plants. With Pollan as on-screen guide to this frankly sensuous natural world, the program explores the dance of domestication between humans and plants. Through the history of these four familiar plants, the program seeks to answer the question: Who is really domesticating whom?

**To get an advance look at this stunning new program, visit:**

<http://video.pbs.org/video/1220836827>

NET1, NET2 and NET-HD are part of NET Television, a service of NET. For a complete program schedule, visit NET's Web site ([netNebraska.org/television](http://netNebraska.org/television)).

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**NET Television:** NET1 is Nebraska's first public television broadcast service and includes PBS and award-winning, locally produced public television programming; NET2 offers live coverage of the Nebraska Unicameral, and other news and public affairs programming; NET3 is a 24-hour channel featuring the most popular how-to, travel and lifestyle series; and NET-HD presents high-definition digital broadcast programming displayed in a wide-screen format.