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GRAINES

Photographs by Paul Starosta. Text by Michel Butor

Paul Starosta is a French nature photographer, famous for finding and highlighting the artistic beauties of nature. The 200 superb photographs in this book illustrate the splendour and complexity of seeds, including the very smallest specimens. Drawing on the collections of Jean Laty and the La Voie des Fleurs society in Draveil (France), they showcase the infinite shapes, colours and stunning details to be found in objects often ignored: some seeds look like flowers, others stones or sculptures, while still others suggest jewels fashioned by some imaginary goldsmith. The almost magical beauty of these little masterpieces, which enclose the mystery of life in both the infinitely small and the infinitely large, is brought out by the play of light and shadow. These little wonders conjure up others and are reminiscent of works of art or architectural features. Human beings are themselves nature and have found inspiration in it to create their own bold and curious works.

At the end of the volume, miniature photographs are accompanied by scientific information on the seeds: their life, characteristics and different families.

Paul Starosta is a biologist and photographer. Combining his twin passions of nature and photography, he has published over 40 award-winning books on plants and animals. He is the subject of issue 129 (2010) of *Photo Poche*, a series created by Robert Delpire and published by Actes Sud, which has become a yardstick in its field throughout the world.

Michel Butor (1926–2016), French novelist and essayist, was one of the leading figures in the Nouveau Roman movement in the 1950s. He studied philosophy at the Sorbonne, graduating in 1947, and taught in Egypt, Manchester, Salonika, the United States and Geneva. He won numerous prizes, including the Apollo Prize, the Fénéon Prize and the Renaudot Prize.