

Exomind

Through *Exomind*, French artist Pierre Huyghe has created a deeply symbolic micro-cosmos that questions the interaction between the man-made world and the natural world. The living entities and inanimate objects in the piece all have symbolic meaning or rare genetic traits. The live colony of bees pollinates flowers from a genetic strain of *tobiume*—the famous “flying” plum tree that grows on the shrine grounds. A pair of axolotls (Mexican salamanders), which retain their tadpole-like fins throughout their lives, inhabits the pond. The central sculpture is a female figure with a living beehive covering her head. Huyghe’s manufactured ecosystem also features water lilies (cross-bred from Claude Monet’s pond in Giverny), insects, a calico cat, and an orange tree.