

Artist-in-Residence: May 2015 - April 2016

## Joshua Portway and Lise Autogena

'**Imagining cities like plants**', 2016, is the result of research carried out by the artists during their residency at North West Cambridge Development, partnered with the Sainsbury Laboratory. The aim of the Sainsbury Laboratory is to elucidate the regulatory systems underlying plant growth and development. Inspired by this work, the artists investigated the structure of cities using models of plant growth and techniques acquired from plant biology. The resulting work took a sideways look at the relationship between urban ecology of the city and the cellular biology of plants.

Growing Cities Like Plants was a research project in which the artists attempted to develop an algorithm that simulated the development of cities using metaphors from plant biology. The final exhibition consisted of a drawing robot that slowly drew the unfolding development of a fictional city.

Autogena and Portway have worked together since the early 1990's, developing large scale performances, multimedia installations and site-specific work, usually in collaboration with organisations and experts across many specialised fields. In their work they have sought to transform aspects of cultural and technical history, which typically remains below the level of everyday consciousness, into a shared experience of open possibilities. They have an interest in how visual language, technological interfaces and aesthetic form can impact on collective processes, and thereby open up new processes of inquiry; and the wider potential and impact of these processes on society.

Lise Autogena is a Danish visual artist and a Professor of Cross-Disciplinary Art at The Cultural Communication and Computing Research Institute (C3RI) at Sheffield Hallam University.

[www.autogena.org](http://www.autogena.org)

