

## **Orchids -- Wonders of Nature, by Kijima, Takashi**

*Orchids: Wonders of Nature* is a beautifully illustrated guide to the world of wild orchids. Takashi Kijima's stunning collection of photographs, published to commemorate the 12th World Orchid Conference in 1987, reflects the fragility and sensitivity of the wild orchid, its dramatic shapes and colors making it an excellent subject for photography.

These magnificent flowers first appeared on this planet nearly 200,000,000 years ago and have since spread from the equator to the Arctic Circle, from the Himalayas to Australia. The orchid family forms one of the largest in the plant kingdom with over 25,000 species worldwide. Here over 200 species are illustrated in glorious color, each with accompanying botanical notes detailing the species, its origins, individual characteristics, native habitat, blooming season and flowering size.

Takashi Kijima is best-known as a photographer of women, and here he has composed a book around the idea of using orchids to suggest different phases of a woman's life, from childhood to maturity. Kijima's thoughts on these beautiful flowers are recorded throughout, making this unique photographic collection a very personal celebration of one of the finest families in the plant kingdom.

Kijima considers this collection the crowning achievement of decades dedicated to capturing the secrets and mysterious charm of orchids.

Takashi Kijima is considered one of the greatest Japanese photographers and possibly the world's best photographer of orchids. Born in 1920 in the United States, he moved to Japan to study and graduated in Art at Nihon University in 1943. His photography first gained recognition in 1954 when he won the Asahi Advertisement Award followed by several prizes and medals. His first book on orchids was published in 1975 and since then Takashi Kijima has made his fascinating flower the subject of other books and international photographic exhibitions.