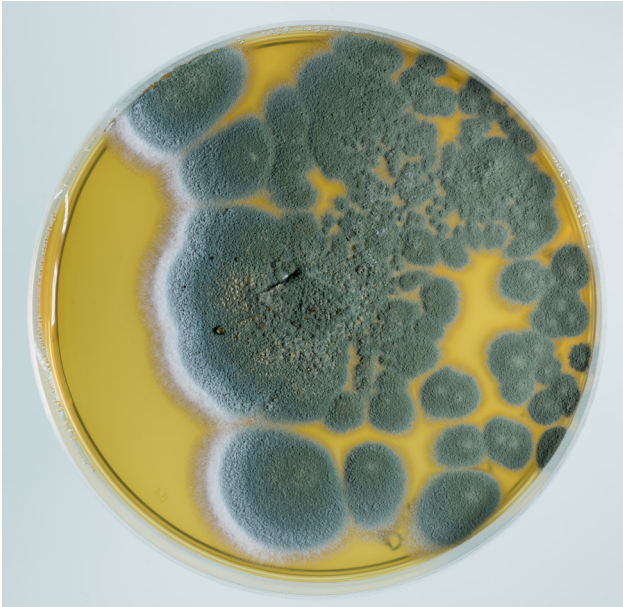


The culture of culture plate photography

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Brightfield photograph of penicillin



Darkfield photograph of penicillin

In medical illustration we all know the role of specimen photography and as part of that the photography of culture plates for records, research and publication. However, there has been a trend towards a wider use of cultures in an artistic context whether part of public understanding of science or as a means of personal expression of identity.

The sequence of culture plate photographs in this gallery are really of the ordinary rather than the extraordinary or artistic. The photography of cultures of different colours has even become an art form in its own right.

A range of images can be seen online including:

Image of the Day: Unusual Fungi Reproduction: A variety of yeasts collected near Woods Hole, Massachusetts, show unconventional cell division, <https://www.the-scientist.com/image-of-the-day/image-of-the-day--unusual-fungi-reproduction-66648>

["We all have a stake in the future of food" say curators of V&A's Bigger than the Plate exhibition](#)

<https://www.dezeen.com/2019/05/16/v-and-a-bigger-than-the-plate-exhibition/>

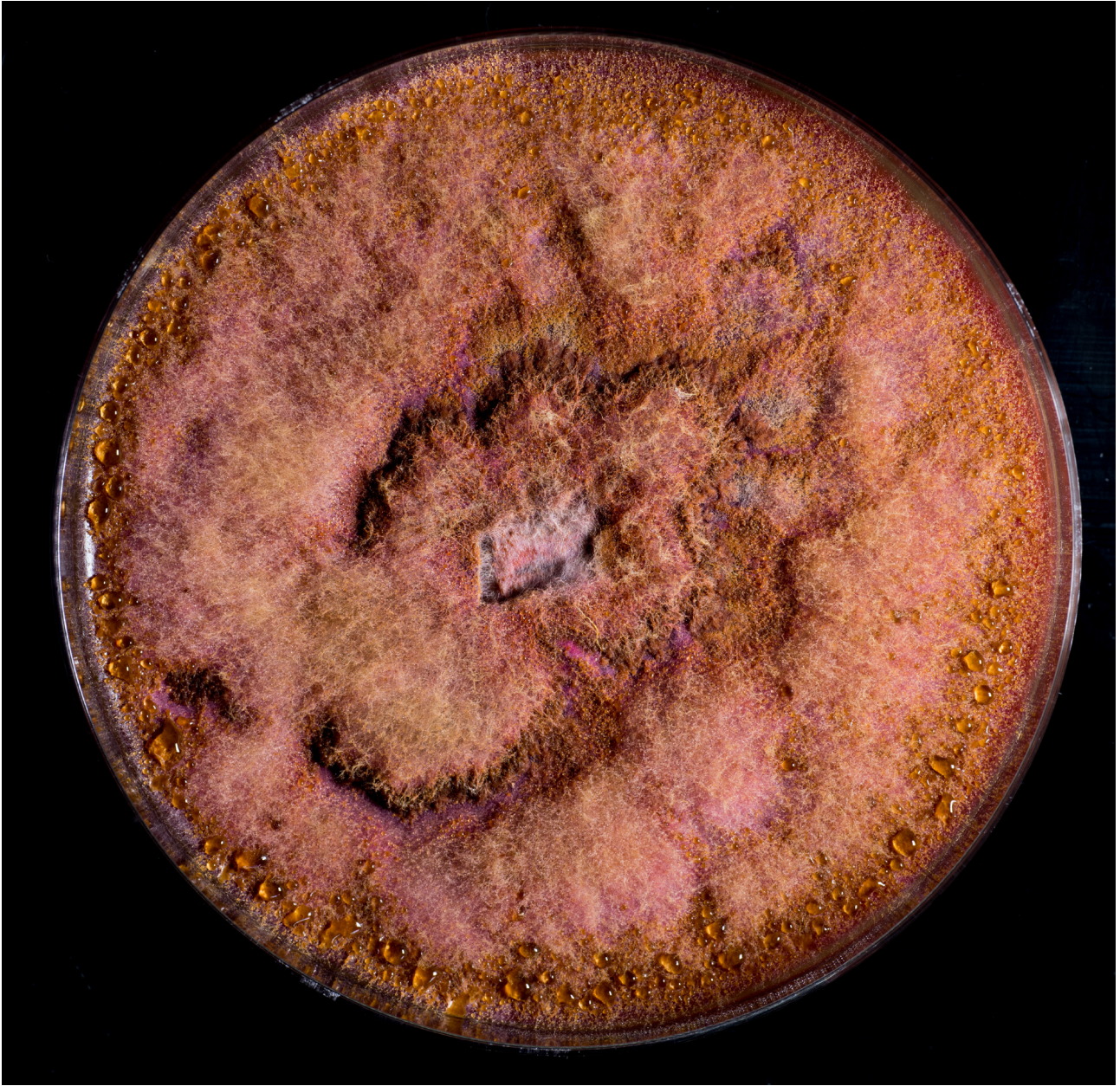
Giant E.coli sculpture forms centrepiece of bacteria exhibition

Back to bacteria <https://www.culturecalling.com/uk/features/back-to-bacteria> and <https://www.independent.ie/entertainment/giant-ecoli-sculpture-forms-centrepiece-of-bacteria-exhibition-37433429.html>

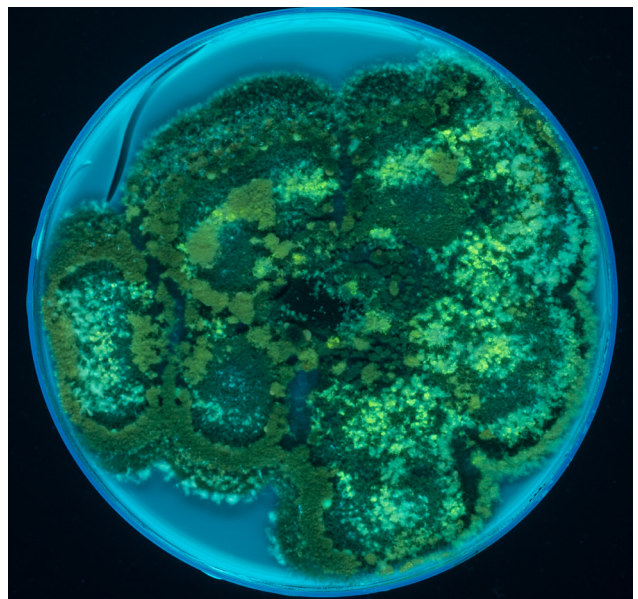
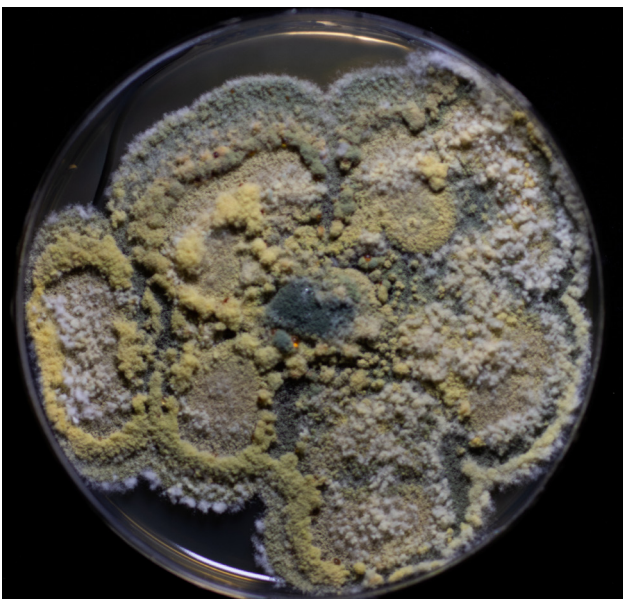
Becoming Acculturated: Techniques for deep dives into the microbial dark matter <https://www.the-scientist.com/lab-tools/becoming-acculturated-33610>

Harvard scientists capture microbes in all their beauty <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/10/harvard-scientists-turn-beauty-of-microbes-into-museum-material/>

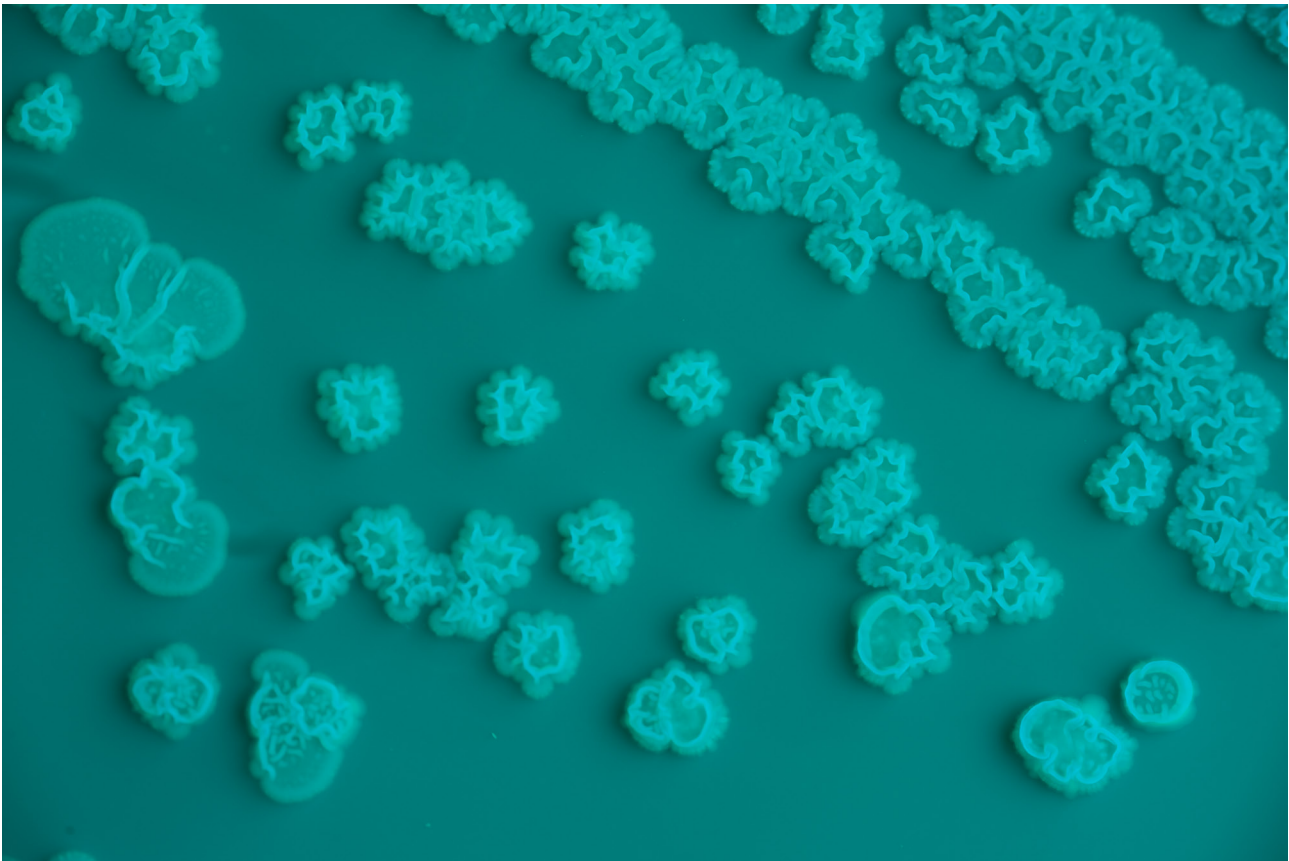
Living Art: Meet the Woman Making Sculptures With Bacteria from Her Skin <https://www.vice.com/en/article/53n7d3/living-art-meet-the-woman-making-sculptures-with-bacteria-from-her-skin>



Darkfield photograph of *Fusarium culmorum*.



Culture plate showing *Penicillin* spp, Left normal daylight record, Right ultraviolet fluorescence.



Close-up of ultraviolet fluorescence of *Pseudomonas fluorescens*.

Photographer transforms bacteria found on the New York City subway into art <https://www.creativeboom.com/inspiration/photographer-transforms-bacteria-found-on-the-new-york-city-subway-into-art/>

Creating visually interesting bacteria, The most beautiful bacteria you'll ever see <https://www.pharmamicrosources.com/2017/05/the-most-beautiful-bacteria-youll-ever.html>

This Art Exhibition Is Made From Bacteria, Live Insects And Human Sweat <https://www.gizmodo.com.au/2017/04/this-art-exhibition-is-made-from-bacteria-live-insects-and-human-sweat/>

There are also the books and papers on how to photograph culture plates, including by Leon Le Beau (1992), a simple method of photographing ouchterlony Plates by Jones and Marshall 1960, historical methods for printing directly onto photographic paper by Buchholz 1930, photography of large colonies with dark field illumination (Kulka 1951) and a range of examples and papers about using time lapse to record bacterial growth (Cobo 2018) and the intelligence of slime molds (Rennie 2017).

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Cobo, M.P., Libro, S., Marechal, N., D'Entremont, D., Cobo, D.P. and Berkmen, M., 2018. Visualizing bacterial colony morphologies using time-lapse imaging chamber MOCHA. *Journal of bacteriology*, 200(2).

Jones, J.H. and Marshall, R.J., 1960. A simple method of photographing Ouchterlony plates. *Journal of clinical pathology*, 13(6), p.532.

Kulka, D., Preston, J.M. and Walker, T.K., 1951. The photographic examination of giant colonies. *Microbiology*, 5(1), pp.18-21.

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Rennie, J. & Reading-Ikkanda L. (2017) Seeing the Beautiful Intelligence of Microbes [Accessed 17/11/2020 <https://www.quantamagazine.org/the-beautiful-intelligence-of-bacteria-and-other-microbes-20171113/>