

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Host Major Exhibition of Tree-Related Sculpture

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Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

03 Oct, 2023, 06:00 ET

Forest of Dreams: Contemporary Tree Sculpture features the work of 15 celebrated artists from around the world.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Oct. 3, 2023 /PRNewswire-PRWeb/ -- Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, the nation's premier botanic and sculpture experience, is delighted to announce a compelling exhibition of tree-related works by 15 major artists.

Forest of Dreams: Contemporary Tree Sculpture will run October 20, 2023–February 25, 2024.

"We are excited to present this exhibition that celebrates the grandeur and value of trees," said Suzanne Ramljak, Chief Curator. "While trees are essential to our lives, we tend to overlook them due to their familiarity. These surreal sculptures help open our eyes to these marvelous organisms."

This engaging and timely exhibition unites the diverse work of national and international artists to explore the multifaceted associations and dimensions of trees—from metaphorical and ecological to the mythological and personal. Forest of Dreams delves deep into the intricate realm of trees and invites guests to reevaluate their relationship with nature and the living world around them.

Trees, as a source of life and as symbols of growth and connectivity, have always held a profound place in human culture and consciousness. Bringing a vast range of materials and methods to the subject, the artists in this exhibition convey the full power and poignancy of trees. Several hybrid sculptures, combining human and tree anatomy, serve to remind us of our close kinship with these complex botanical beings.

Visitors will have the pleasure of exploring the enchanting and thought-provoking work of 15 artists, many of them never before exhibited at Meijer Gardens: Emilie Brzezinski, Louise Bourgeois, Nick Cave, Kim Cridler, Tom Czarnopys, Michele Oka Doner, Peter Frie, Hugh Hayden, Jim Hodges, Patrick Jacobs, Maya Lin, Robert Lobe, Roxy Paine, Rona Pondick, Ai Weiwei. Together these artists conjure a lush arboretum of the imagination.

In tandem with the contemporary works featured in Forest of Dreams, Meijer Gardens is showcasing its permanent collection of tree-themed works throughout the Sculpture Park and grounds. Artists such as David Nash, Giuseppe Penone, Ai Weiwei, and Laura Ford have contributed striking botanical creations that meld with the natural beauty of the park, creating a harmonious dialogue between art, culture, and nature.

EXHIBITION ACTIVITIES:

Unless otherwise noted, programs are included in the cost of admission and registration is not required.

Metal Trees: A Sculpture Walk

Wednesday, October 25, 1–2:30 pm

Amber Oudsema, Curator of Arts Education at Meijer Gardens and Adjunct Professor of Art History at Grand Valley State University

Stroll the Sculpture Park and grounds to discover a trove of sculptures resembling and inspired by trees. Compare the outdoor works to those in Forest of Dreams and discuss tree symbolism while discovering the commonalities within our own sculptural arboretum.

Trees as Artistic Metaphor: Identity, Body, Fashion

Sunday, November 12, 2 pm

Suzanne Eberle, PhD, Professor Emerita, Kendall College of Art and Design

Survey the ways trees have been depicted throughout the history of fashion and art as metaphorical stand-ins for humans in various guises. Consider how artists have

chosen to sympathize and identify with trees, as found in the Forest of Dreams exhibition and beyond.

Exhibition Tour: Into the Forest

Friday, December 1, 1 pm

Suzanne Ramljak, Chief Curator of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

Enjoy an intimate journey into the depths of Forest of Dreams with exhibition curator Suzanne Ramljak. Explore the rich associations of the chosen work by 15 artists and trace the thematic connections within the Sculpture Galleries and their larger cultural, historical, and environmental ties.

A full list of exhibition activities can be found at: MeijerGardens.org/calendar

Forest of Dreams: Contemporary Tree Sculpture is made possible by:

Bill Padnos and Margy Kaye

Louis and Helen Padnos Foundation

The Meijer Foundation

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Foundation

Botanic and Sculpture Societies of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

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About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, one of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, was recently named the Top Sculpture Park in the United States by USA Today's "10Best Readers' Choice 2023" and listed as the 81st-most visited museum in the world by The Art Newspaper, the leading global art news publication. Education programs welcome 80,000 students and guests each year. Culinary Arts & Events offerings include weddings, corporate meetings and award-winning catering. The 158-acre main campus features Michigan's largest tropical conservatory; one of the country's largest interactive children's gardens; arid and Victorian gardens with bronze sculptures by Edgar Degas and Auguste Rodin; a carnivorous plant house; outdoor gardens, including a replica 1930s-era farm garden; an eight-acre Japanese garden featuring contemporary sculpture; and a 1,900-seat outdoor amphitheater garden, showcasing an eclectic mix of world-renowned touring musicians each summer. The permanent collection highlights hundreds of sculptures from internationally acclaimed artists Magdalena Abakanowicz, Ei Anatsui, Louise Bourgeois, Alexander Calder, Mark di Suvero, Marshall Fredericks, Henry Moore, Michele Oka Donor, Beverly Pepper, Jaume Plensa, Auguste Rodin, Richard Serra, Yinka Shonibare CBE and Ai Weiwei, among

others. Indoor galleries with changing sculpture exhibitions have presented shows by Jonathan Borofsky, Edgar Degas, Jim Dine, Richard Hunt, Cristina Iglesias, Rebecca Louise Law, Pablo Picasso, George Segal and others. Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park promotes the enjoyment, understanding, and appreciation of gardens, sculpture, the natural environment, and the arts.

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