



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEIJER GARDENS CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS WITH MORE THAN 40 INTERNATIONAL TRADITIONS

23rd annual Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World exhibition observes the season of reflection.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – November 6, 2017 – Experience the magic of the holidays at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park with the annual *Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World* exhibition on display from November 21 through January 7, 2018. Guests from all over the world visit Meijer Gardens to experience 42 Christmas and holiday trees and displays representing countries and cultures from around the world. The always favorite and enchanting Railway Garden and the holiday wonderland that encompasses it will once again wind its way through three lush indoor garden spaces, including the recently renovated Grace Jarecki Seasonal Display Greenhouse.

Guests are invited to ring in the holiday season with our most beloved winter exhibition. It's the season of reflection. Forget the hustle and bustle and find calm in a winter wonderland - it's an idyllic spot to reflect on the past and prepare for the coming new year. From the highly polished metal of the Hanukkah Menorahs to the golden glass ornaments adorning many of the traditional Christmas trees, guests will come across a variety of reflective surfaces designed to reinforce the theme of reflection. The holiday season is also a time when many cultures share the custom of turning attention inwards, reflecting upon the past and making preparations for the new year.

Meijer Gardens transforms into a botanic wonderland with fresh poinsettias, orchids and amaryllis. The smell of evergreens as visitors enter the building and the sounds of carolers make it a place to reflect and enjoy the holiday season. Indoors and out, trees sparkle with over 300,000 white lights.

The unique horticultural artistry of the beloved Railway Garden complements the model trolleys, trains and handcrafted buildings replicating 30 Grand Rapids landmarks. Visitors will find familiarity in the Fifth Third Ballpark with its light posts made of willow, as well as striking hydrangea petals that make up the iconic glass

tower of the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. Five landmarks from Grand Rapids sister cities around the world are also represented in the Railway Garden.

"This year we pause to reflect on the many unique and beautiful ways that holiday traditions are observed all over the world," said Steve LaWarre, Director of Horticulture. "What better place to slow down and enjoy the sights of the season than by gathering your family and friends and experiencing the calm beauty of Meijer Gardens' *Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World*."

Mainstays of the exhibition include the Germany tree, adorned with handmade glass ornaments and homemade springerle cookies, the England tree—with antique Christmas cards and mistletoe—and the beautiful *Eid ul-Fitr* display, which celebrates the end of Ramadan.

A variety of family-friendly activities are offered throughout the exhibition.

Exhibition Activities

- **Extended Holiday Hours:** Open until 9 pm on December 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 (PLEASE NOTE: Meijer Gardens is CLOSED on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day).
- **The Original Dickens Carolers:** Tuesdays: November 21 and 28, December 5, 12, 19, 6-8 pm
- **Santa Visits:** Tuesdays: November 21 and 28, December 5, 12, 19, 5-8 pm
- **Rooftop Reindeer:** Saturdays: November 25, December 2, 9, 16, 23, 1-4 pm
- **Christmas Cabaret Gala:** Thursday, December 7, 6 pm ([RSVP required](#))
- **Winter-Time Walks:** (November 21-January 6)
Tuesdays 10:15 am and 11:15 am, Saturdays 11:15 am
Fee: Included with admission
Winter in the Lena Meijer Children's Garden can be chilly, but fun! Bundle up and join us on an outdoor interactive discovery walk to investigate the Children's Garden in new ways. We'll explore different winter themes and gather by the hearth in the log cabin to learn about winter with stories, kid-friendly conversation and finger plays.
- **Christmas and Holiday Themed Classes:** Enjoy festive learning opportunities for adults and families. Fees apply. Visit MeijerGardens.org/calendar for more information.

Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World is made possible by the Meijer Foundation, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Foundation, the Botanic and Sculpture Societies of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

and the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Railway Garden is made possible by Warner Norcross & Judd, LLP.

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Images available [HERE: http://bit.ly/CHTAW17](http://bit.ly/CHTAW17)

About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park serves over 750,000 visitors annually. 158-acre grounds feature Michigan's largest tropical conservatory; one of the largest children's gardens in the country; arid and Victorian gardens with bronze sculptures by Degas and Rodin; a carnivorous plant house; outdoor gardens; and a 1900-seat outdoor amphitheater, featuring an eclectic mix of world-renowned musicians every summer. The internationally acclaimed Sculpture Park features a permanent collection including works by Rodin, Oldenburg, Ai Weiwei, Moore, Serra, Bourgeois and Plensa, among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with recent exhibitions by Ai Weiwei, Picasso, Degas, di Suvero, Borofsky, Calder and Dine. In June 2015, the 8-acre Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park opened. Created by renowned designer Hoichi Kurisu, the garden features sculpture by Anish Kapoor, Zhang Huan and Guiseppe Penone, among others.

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