



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: John VanderHaagen | Public Relations Manager | 616-975-3155 | jvanderhaagen@meijergardens.org

CORPSE FLOWER SET TO BLOOM AT FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK

Rare Amorphophallus titanum has been 18 years in the making.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., – July 10, 2018 –Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is excited to announce the bloom of a rare Amorphophallus titanum, commonly known as a corpse flower. Lovingly named “Putricia” by the Meijer Gardens horticulture staff, peak bloom is expected between Thursday, July 12 and Saturday, July 14, 2018 inside the Lena Meijer Tropical Conservatory. Guests can experience the sights and smells of this rare event during Meijer Gardens’ normal hours of operation.

The corpse flower (Amorphophallus titanum) – also called titan arum – is one of the largest and rarest flowering plants in the world. It can take up to a decade to produce a flowering structure and when it blooms is open for only 24 to 36 hours.

The name corpse flower comes from the nauseating smell that the plant emits when it opens. This feature attracts carrion beetles and flies that are the natural pollinators of Amorphophallus titanum. The plant was first reported in Sumatra, Indonesia, in 1878. Its distinctive odor attracts pollinators that feed on dead animals and is at its most pungent during peak bloom. Amorphophallus titanum is the largest unbranched inflorescence (a cluster of flowers on a spike) in the plant kingdom, growing up to 12 feet tall in its natural habitat and about six to eight feet tall in cultivation. Although the enormous plant in bloom resembles one giant flower, it actually comprises a fleshy central spike called a spadix that holds two rings of male and female flowers, wrapped by the frilly spathe, a modified leaf that resembles a petal.

“As a professional horticulturist, this is incredibly exciting,” said Steve LaWarre, Director of Horticulture at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. “Many people go through their entire careers never seeing an example like this in person. We are thrilled that something that we started as a seedling here at Meijer Gardens 18 years ago is coming to fruition and that the public is showing such great interest.”

Director of Horticulture Steve LaWarre will be available in the Tropical Conservatory for interviews and live shots from 5 am – 9 am on Thursday, July 12. Please contact John VanderHaagen to schedule.

#

[Images available HERE.](#)

About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park served 723,000 visitors in 2017 and was recently listed in the top 30 most visited museum in the United States by *The Art Newspaper*, the leading publication in global art news. The 158-acre main campus features Michigan's largest tropical conservatory; one of the largest interactive 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 Oldenburg, Moore, Hepworth, Serra, Bourgeois, Ai Weiwei and Plensa, among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with exhibitions by Ai Weiwei, Picasso, Degas, di Suvero, Borofsky, Calder and Dine. In June 2015, the eight-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, Jenny Holzer and Guiseppe Penone, among others.

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)