



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

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MEIJER GARDENS' FALL EXHIBITION CELEBRATES CONTEMPORARY DISABILITY SCULPTURE

The group exhibition Process and Presence: Contemporary Disability Sculpture features 16 international artists.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., – August 20, 2018—Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is honored to host 16 contemporary sculptors in an innovative exhibition jointly organized by DisArt, a Grand Rapids based arts and cultural organization promoting the full participation of Disabled people in and through the arts. The exhibition is titled *Process and Presence: Contemporary Disability Sculpture*.

Through examples of three-dimensional practice including sculpture, performance, installation and video art; this exhibition emphasizes the relationship between disability and the fundamental human experiences of change and embodiment. The exhibition offers audiences a survey of contemporary Disability sculpture through artists whose work represents local, national and global perspectives on the experiences of living with disability.

Cornerstone to this exhibition is the Sister-State relationship between the State of Michigan and the Shiga Prefecture in Japan, a region long celebrated for its commitment to artists with disabilities. A survey of contemporary disability sculpture, it also celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Sister-State relationship and expands globally in a dynamic collection of objects contextualized by both contemporary and legacy artists from Michigan, Europe, Australia and Japan, including works by the world-renowned Judith Scott.

"Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is honored to collaborate with DisArt in this landmark exhibition. Three years in the making, the curatorial team has sought to organize a broad-based and enlightening exhibition featuring artists from across the globe," said Joseph Becherer, Chief Curator and Vice President of Collections and Exhibitions.

Officially beginning the Friday prior to ArtPrize, *Process and Presence: Contemporary Disability Sculpture* will be on display as Meijer Gardens' fall exhibition from September 14 through January 6, 2019. ArtPrize runs from Wednesday, September 19 through Sunday, October 7, 2018.

"This exhibition presents some of the finest examples of contemporary Disability sculpture in a wide variety of media, from ceramics to video installations and traditional sculptural techniques to performative works. The depths and dimensions of this exhibition are both enlightening and rewarding." said Becherer.

Visitors will be welcomed into the exhibition by several accessibility measures carefully designed by DisArt and Meijer Gardens to encourage the full participation of all visitors, including audio descriptions, altered installation practices and other digital resources.

This exhibition coincides with DisArt's *Process and Presence* 2018 season of events which includes a fashion show (September 22), an international conference (October 27-28) and multiple educational opportunities and artist engagements, all to be held at Meijer Gardens.

"The objects in this powerful collection speak to the global experience of disability, offering visitors new understanding of how creativity and identity are directly linked," said DisArt Co-Director Christopher Smit.

"The exhibition is a collection of art objects that are both intriguing and relatable to the experienced art lover and those new to the gallery setting. When displayed together, the work strengthens our understanding of disability as a cultural identity and successfully challenges commonly held negative assumptions about the Disabled experience." explained Jill Vyn, Co-Director of DisArt.

As part of the tenth annual ArtPrize competition, Meijer Gardens is an official ArtPrize venue. Visitors can register to vote and purchase official ArtPrize merchandise at Meijer Gardens. *Process and Presence: Contemporary Disability Sculpture* will be free of charge during ArtPrize (September 19 – October 7, 2018). The exhibition areas will be open to the public during Meijer Gardens' regular business hours, as well as during official ArtPrize hours (Sundays 11 am to 6 pm; Mondays, Wednesday-Saturday, 9 am to 8 pm; Tuesdays 9 am to 9 pm). On ArtPrize's opening day, the public will be able to register to vote in ArtPrize and ArtPrize exhibition areas will be on display from 9 am to 8 pm. All other areas of Meijer Gardens observe regular hours and standard admission fees.

This exhibition will continue after ArtPrize and will run through January 6, 2019.

Exhibition Programming

Exhibition programs are included with admission, drop-in, and do not require advanced tickets or registration.

- Artist Demonstrations

See process and presence first hand! Before or after you see the artwork in the galleries, observe and interact with an artist in the exhibition. Each artist will be working on a piece similar to their complete artwork on display. Feel free to take a seat and enjoy watching an artist at work or get a bit closer and ask the artist questions directly.

Norimitsu Kokubo, paper installation artist

September 15th, 11:00 am

Wesley DeVries, credit card installation artist

October 14, 1:00 pm

- Gallery Chat

Sandie Yi

Wednesday, September 26, 1:00-2:00 pm

Sandi Yi is both an artist and activist. Stop by the gallery to view her artwork and listen to her speak about how she envisions her own body as an artistic medium for advocacy, creativity, and identity. This chat is informal – the artist will be stationed near her artworks and available for conversation.

- Curators Lecture

November 4, 2:00 pm

Join Dr. Lisa VanArragon as she highlights and interprets much of the artwork in the exhibition. She will explore themes of disability cultural identity through the artistic methods, meaning, and materials present in the galleries. This lecture will be closed captioned.

- Film Screening

November 6, 6:00 pm

ART21 Episode 9: San Francisco Bay

In the latest installment of the Peabody Award winning series on art happening in the 21st century, several artists in the San Francisco Bay area are highlighted for their thoughtful and critical practice.

Among them are several artists working with the Center for Creative Growth, a disability arts organization also featured in the exhibition *Process and Presence: Contemporary Disability Sculpture*.

The film will be closed captioned.

For information about DisArt's 2018 *Process and Presence* season of events, visit disartnow.org

Process and Presence: Contemporary Disability Sculpture is made possible by:

The Meijer Foundation

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Foundation

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[Images available HERE.](#)

About DisArt

DisArt's mission is to increase the participation of Disabled people in our communities through carefully curated contemporary art exhibitions, cutting-edge public events, and organizational coaching. All DisArt programs center on disability, identity, design, and community making in order to engage Disabled and non-disabled audiences in ways that change how they think about, speak about, and act towards each other. DisArt employs multiple creative avenues to challenge cultural norms and to increase the participation of Disabled people. These programs include art exhibitions, public workshops, fashion shows, conferences, speaking engagements, podcasts, publications, curriculum development for K-12 students, community conversations, and performances for Disabled and non-disabled audiences. Each of these activities pushes beyond ADA standards through the use of digital technologies, virtual reality, audio description, interior design, and other access innovations. As a result of this work, DisArt is setting new standards in the contemporary art world for access design, community development, and participation-centered education for all audiences.

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.

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